Lesson 41
Doctrine and Covenants 1:4–5, 30; 65; 109:72–74; 115:3–6; 123:12

Doctrine and Covenants 1

Verses 4–5: When the Lord describes the gospel in 3 Nephi 27:13–21, he defines it as the announcement that he came into the world to do the Father’s will: he would be lifted up on the cross so that he could draw all people to him in order to be judged. That announcement means, he teaches, that if we will repent and be baptized and endure to the end, our sins will be forgiven when he makes his judgment. That is a message of good news, of the gospel. Why then is that message so often accompanied by a “voice of warning”? Why is missionary work described as such a warning, especially when we know from Doctrine and Covenants 76:50–119 that though all will not inherit life in the presence of the Father, all but a few will inherit a kingdom of glory?

How is the term disciple used here? To whom does it refer? What does the word disciple mean? Its basic meaning is “a student of someone.” Does that add meaning to your understanding of what discipleship means for us? The word disciple is related to the word discipline? Why do you think there is that relationship?

Verse 30: To what specific commandments does the phrase “these commandments” refer? Considering the context of
this revelation and the specific commandments that are referred to, to whom have those commandments been given?

This verse has antecedent conditions. It begins “And also.” Is verse 30 the relevant antecedent: “my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., might have power . . .”? Or is this part of the series that begins at verse 24?

Is “true and living” a case of using two words to say the same thing, as the scriptures often do, as when they say “heart and mind” or “without form and void”? That kind of pairing of different words for one meaning is called hendiadys. What does true mean here? Living? In other words, what does it mean for an institution, like a church, to be true? What does it mean for it to be living?

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**Verses 81:** Is “testify and warn” a hendiadys? If so, how might testify mean the same thing as warn? Why does the Lord described being preached the gospel as being warned rather than, perhaps, being invited?

Here the word *becometh* means something like “is appropriate or suitable for.” Why do you think the Lord uses such relatively mild language? Why doesn’t he instead use the language of command: “every man must”?

**Doctrine and Covenants 109**

This revelation is a prayer. What does it mean for a prayer also to be a revelation? Does the fact that the verses we will
study for this lesson are part of a prayer change our understanding of them? If so, how? Or how not?

Verses 72–74: These verses are part of a long sentence that begins in verse 72 and ends in verse 76. How do the three verses assigned for this lesson relate to that larger sentence? What, for instance, is the theme of that sentence as a whole?

Verse 72: We promise to remember the Lord when we take the elements of the sacrament. What does it mean for him to remember us?

The prayer is that the Lord will remember the church and the people of the church, and their families and their relations who suffer, as well as all of the poor in the earth so that his kingdom may be established. How does the Lord’s remembrance of the church and those in need make the establishment of his kingdom possible?

Verses 73–74: The last clause of verse 72 is part of a series of that-clauses which are parallel to each other in meaning. Verse 72 speaks of the establishment of the church and of it filling the whole earth. Verse 73 repeats that idea using images that come from other passages of scripture. In particular, the language of verse 72 comes from the Song of Solomon (3:6 and, especially, 6:10). Why does the Lord use the language of Hebrew love poetry to describe the establishment of the Church and its spread throughout the earth?

Verse 74 uses the language of Isaiah 64:1 and 40:4. Look at those chapters in Isaiah and ask yourself what their subject matter has to do with this prayer for missionary work.
Doctrine and Covenants 115

The lesson materials call for using only verses 4–6. However, since verse 4 is the second half of a thought that begins in verse 3, I have included that verse.

Verse 3: Why does the Lord address this to “all the people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints”?

In 1838, when this revelation was given, where would we have found Latter-day Saints in any significant numbers? Given the limited geographical distribution of Saints at the time, why is this addressed specifically to those “scattered abroad in all the world”?

There were two high councils in the Church when this revelation was received, that in Jackson County, Missouri, and a “Traveling High Council” that later became the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Which of them do you think is addressed in these verses? Does it matter?

Verse 4: In the name of the Church, how should we understand the adjective *latter-day*? Does it mean “in distinction from the first-century Church” or does it mean “of the last days”? What gives you the basis for your answer to that question?

Verses 5–6: Look back at verses 1–3. Whom is the Lord addressing when he says “I say unto you all”? What positions do each of the leaders addressed hold? Is that important to this announcement of the Church’s official name?

The image of persons “shining forth” comes from the Old Testament. A phrase similar to this one is in Job 11:17, although it occurs there in advice from one of Job’s false
friends: “thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morn-
ing.” Similar phrases are in Psalm 80:1 and Deuteronomy 33:2. But perhaps the phrase most like this is in the New Testament, Matthew 13:43, a prophecy of the end of the world: “then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun.” How do you understand this image?

How is the word *standard* being used in verse 5, to mean “an authoritative exemplar of correctness or some other quality” or to mean “a flag or other object raised on a pole to signify the rallying point for those engaged in a battle”? Compare Jeremiah 50:2 and 51:27, as well as Alma 62:4–5.

**Doctrine and Covenants 123**

**Verse 12:** This verse begins with the word *for*, which tells us that it is the consequence of something else. What is that something else?

What does the Lord have in mind when he refers to “all sects, parties, and denominations”? Sects and denominations are groups of people who follow a particular religion. But how is he using the word *parties*?

We seldom think of those who belong to other churches as blinded by people who are intentionally deceiving them. In my experience, though, very few people belong to the sect or denomination they are members of because they have been intentionally “blinded by the subtle craftiness of men.” How should we understand what this verse says about the many people who are so blinded? Who are the deceivers?
Whatever your answer to the previous question, what does it mean to believe that many people “are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it”? What does that suggest about our responsibility for missionary work? What does it suggest about how to do missionary work?