



Ether 12.^{32-34, 41}— Meditation

³²And I also remember that thou hast said that thou hast prepared a house for man, yea, even among the mansions of thy Father, in which man might have a more excellent hope; wherefore man must hope, or he cannot receive an inheritance in the place which thou hast prepared. ³³And again, I remember that thou hast said that thou hast loved the world, even unto the laying down of thy life for the world, that thou mightest take it again to prepare a place for the children of men. ³⁴And now I know that this love which thou hast had for the children of men is charity; wherefore, except men shall have charity they cannot inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father.

⁴¹And now, I would commend you to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written, that the grace of God the Father, and also the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever. Amen.

Elsewhere, Moroni, the translator of today's passage, will declare that "charity is the pure love of Christ."¹ In his telling, then, charity can mean, 1) Christ's love for others, mortal and immortal; 2) Our love for Christ; and 3) the kind of love Christ has that is possessed by others toward others. There is no doubt that we must love Christ (2) and love others with a Christ-like love (3). But we sometimes gloss over our need to embrace the first aspect of Charity—Christ's love for us.

The apostle John reminds us that "We love him, because he first loved us."² This should squash any self-righteousness we may possess about whatever humble successes we may have in following him. We didn't start the fire, as Billy Joel reminded us a couple of decades ago.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."³

We are able to possess a pure love for Christ only because he has exhibited, and we have accepted his pure love for us. We can purely love others only because and as we see what his love, extended to us, looks and feels like. This is utter and complete dependence. It might seem that accepting Christ's love is a no brainer. Who would not? Yet, Jesus himself calls it a "labor."

"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."⁴

For some, the suggestion of our utter dependence upon him is humiliating. It is thus resisted through

¹ Moroni 7.⁴⁷

² 1 John 4.¹⁹

³ 1 John 4.¹⁰

⁴ John 6.²⁹

“another gospel;”⁵ a “gospel” that often and inordinately exalts “man” and his capacities and goodness. Korihor was one such resistor. Rather than acknowledge his dependence upon another, he created a system of “salvation” in which “every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength...”⁶ But such rhetorical resistance cannot camouflage the private rebellion that lurks in the darkness.

“Thou art angry, O Lord, with this people, because they will not understand thy mercies which thou hast bestowed upon them because of thy Son.”⁷

Note, please, it isn't that they can't understand his “mercies.” It is that “they *will not* understand.” It is a choice. Hence, Ether's warning, “wherefore, except men shall have charity they cannot inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father.” Father's mansions are inhabited by those who accept and take possession of Christ's love for them notwithstanding the potential humiliating implications of their own insufficiencies and their requisite utter dependence upon another for their eternal wellbeing.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

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⁵ See Galatians 1.^{6 ff}

⁶ Alma 30.¹⁷

⁷ Alma 33.¹⁶