

## Lesson Outline: The Atonement, Charity, & Divine Worth

- 1) As we purify our lives and strengthen our relationship with Heavenly Father & Jesus Christ through prayer, we receive the Holy Ghost more fully.
- 2) As we cultivate the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives, we are filled with the pure love of the Savior.
- 3) Our Savior's pure love helps us to see others from His perspective, helps us notice their needs, and fills us with compassion for them.
- 4) Compassion motivates us to act—alleviating heartache and serving others in the ways THEY need.
- 5) As we love and serve others as Jesus Christ would, we become more secure in our own divine worth.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; **as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. ([John 13:34-35](#))

**In what ways does Christ show His love for us each day?**

*What is the very next step you will take to show more Christ-like love to others this week?*

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.** ([Matthew 22:39](#))

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **There is none other commandment greater than these.** ([Mark 12:30-31](#))

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

10 **Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.** ([Romans 13:9-10](#))

**Why do you think Christ says that there is no law or commandment more important than loving one another?  
What is the very next step you need to take so you can love others better?**

**14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this;  
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

**15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye  
be not consumed one of another. ([Galatians 5:14-15](#))**

**Why is it sometimes difficult to love ourselves?**

*What is the very next step you need to take so you can better love yourself?*

**44** But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

**45** That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for **he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**

([Matthew 5:43](#))

**Why is it sometimes difficult to love others unconditionally?**

*What is the very next step you need to take so you can show more unconditional love?*

## Bible Dictionary: Charity

The highest, noblest, strongest kind of love, not merely affection; the pure love of Christ. **It is never used to denote alms or deeds of benevolence, although it may be a prompting motive** ([1 Cor. 8:1](#); [13:1–4, 8](#); [13](#); [14:1](#); [Moro. 7:47](#)).

**What is charity if it is not acts of service?**

*What is the very next step you will take this week in order to learn more about charity?*

**“Charity . . . is the pure love of Jesus Christ. As we learn of Jesus Christ and strive to become like Him, we will begin to feel His pure love in our lives and be prompted to love and serve others as He would” ([Visiting Teaching Message, October 2015](#))**

**“There is a serious need for the charity that gives attention to those who are unnoticed, hope to those who are discouraged, aid to those who are afflicted. True charity is love in action. The need for charity is everywhere”**  
**([President Thomas S. Monson, October 2010](#))**

**Who are the people around you that fit this description?**  
*What is the very next step you will take in order to actively pour love into their lives?*

45 And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

46 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for **charity never faileth**. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

47 But **charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.** ([Moroni 7:45-47](#))

**Why do you think charity comes with such a strong guarantee?**

*How have you demonstrated some of these qualities this week?*

45 Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

46 The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.

([Doctrine & Covenants 121:45-46](#))

What promises are associated with the cultivation of charity?

*(Confidence, knowledge, peace, power, & influence)*

*What will you change in order to increase the presence of virtue in your home?*

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. ([1 Corinthians 13:4-8](#))

Why does charity matter more than amazing words and works?

*Who in your life displays one of these qualities toward others?*

"The next attribute mentioned by Paul is charity, which has been defined as 'the pure love of Christ.' I am confident there are within our sphere of influence those who are lonely, those who are ill, and those who feel discouraged. Ours is the opportunity to help them and to lift their spirits. **The Savior brought hope to the hopeless and strength to the weak.** He healed the sick; He caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. He even raised the dead to life. **Throughout His ministry He reached out in charity to any in need. As we emulate His example, we will bless lives, including our own.**

Next, we are to **be an example in spirit.** To me that means we strive to have in our lives kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, and goodwill. **These qualities will provide for us a spirit which will touch the lives of those around us.** It has been my opportunity through the years to associate with countless individuals who possess such a spirit. **We experience a special feeling when we are with them, a feeling that makes us want to associate with them and to follow their example. They radiate the Light of Christ and help us feel His love for us"** ([President Thomas S. Monson, General Women's Conference, October 2010](#))

**How has your life been blessed by a Christ-like person?**

*What is the very next step you will take in order to develop more Christ-like attributes?*

**1** Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

**2** And though I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and **though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.**

**3** And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and **though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.** ([1 Corinthians 13:1-3](#))

**Why does charity matter more than amazing words and works?**  
*What step have you already taken in your life to obtain more charity?*

**16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

**17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?**

**18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. ([1 John 3:16-18](#))**

**Why is it sometimes easy to love in word,  
but hard to love “in deed” or “in truth?”**

*What is the very next step you will take to show love to those around you “in deed and in truth?”*

**9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. ([Isaiah 63:9](#))**

**Why is it sometimes hard to feel compassion for others?**

*How do you help others endure the hard things they face in their lives?*

**"I ask: if attitudes, deeds, and spiritual inclinations were reflected in *physical features*, would the countenance of the woman who complained be as lovely as that of the woman she criticized?**

My dear sisters, each of you is unique. You are different from each other in many ways. There are those of you who are married. Some of you stay at home with your children, while others of you work outside your homes. Some of you are empty nesters. There are those of you who are married but do not have children. There are those who are divorced, those who are widowed. Many of you are single women. Some of you have college degrees; some of you do not. There are those who can afford the latest fashions and those who are lucky to have one appropriate Sunday outfit. Such differences are almost endless. Do these differences tempt us to judge one another?" ([President Thomas S. Monson, October 2010](#))

**Why do you think we are so often judgmental of others?**

*What is the very next step you will take in order to respond to others in less judgmental ways?*

48 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, **pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love**, which he hath **bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ**; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen. ([Moroni 7:48](#))

**How does one obtain charity?**

*How might changing the nature of your prayers allow you to feel more charity?*

26 And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and **because of meekness and lowliness of heart** cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which **Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love**, which **love endureth by diligence unto prayer**, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God. ([Moroni 8:26](#))

**How do gratitude, repentance, and prayer help us to maintain charity in our lives?**  
*What will you do differently this week to reduce pride and increase meekness in your life?*

“In the work of salvation, there is no room for comparison, criticism, or condemnation. It is not about age, experience, or public acclaim. This sacred work is about developing a broken heart, a contrite spirit, and a willingness to use our divine gifts and unique talents to do the Lord’s work in His way. It is having the humility to fall on our knees and say, ‘O my Father, … not as I will, but as thou wilt’” ([Carol F. McConkie](#)).

“Charity is having patience with someone who has let us down,” said President Thomas S. Monson. **‘It is resisting the impulse to become offended easily. It is accepting weaknesses and shortcomings. It is accepting people as they truly are. It is looking beyond physical appearances to attributes that will not dim through time. It is resisting the impulse to categorize others’**” ([Visiting Teaching Message, October 2015](#))

**Why is it difficult to treat others with patience and acceptance?**  
*What is the very next step you will take in order to accept your family, friends, or neighbors as they truly are?*

“He knows your fears and your dreams. He relishes your potential. He waits for you to come to Him in prayer. Because you are His child, you not only need Him, but **He also needs you. Those sitting around you right now in this meeting need you. The world needs you**, and your divine nature allows you to be His trusted disciple to all His children. **Once we begin to see the divinity in ourselves, we can see it in others.... Divine nature breathes into us the desire to serve others”** ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).

“The divine nature within us **ignites our desire to reach out to others and prompts us to act**. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ can **help us find the strength to do so**. Could the Lord be asking us, ‘What can be done for this daughter, this brother, this father, or this friend?’” ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).

**How does strengthening our relationship with Heavenly Father & Jesus Christ increase our ability to express charity?**

*What is the very next step you will take in order to strengthen your relationship with your Savior?*

One way we can become charitable is by **studying the life of Jesus Christ and keeping His commandments**. We can **study what He did in certain situations** and do the same things when we are in the same kinds of situations.

Second, when we have uncharitable feelings, we can **pray to have greater charity**. Mormon urges us, "Pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love [charity], which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ" ([Moroni 7:48](#)).

Third, we can **learn to love ourselves**, which means that we **understand our true worth as children of our Heavenly Father**. The Savior taught that we must love others *as we love ourselves* (see [Matthew 22:39](#)). To love ourselves, we must **respect and trust ourselves**. This means that we must be **obedient to the principles of the gospel**. We must **repent** of any wrongdoings. We must **forgive ourselves** when we have repented. We will come to love ourselves better when we can **feel the deep, comforting assurance that the Savior truly loves us**.

Fourth, we can **avoid thinking we are better than other people**. We can **have patience** with their faults. Joseph Smith said, "**The nearer we get to our heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs**" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*[2007], 428–29). ([Gospel Principles Manual: Lesson 30—Charity](#))

## How can we be more charitable?

*What is the very next step you will take to become a more charitable person?*

"A young couple, Lisa and John, moved into a new neighborhood. One morning while they were eating breakfast, Lisa looked out the window and watched her next-door neighbor hanging out her wash.

'That laundry's not clean!' Lisa exclaimed. 'Our neighbor doesn't know how to get clothes clean!'

John looked on but remained silent.

Every time her neighbor would hang her wash to dry, Lisa would make the same comments.

A few weeks later Lisa was surprised to glance out her window and see a nice, clean wash hanging in her neighbor's yard. She said to her husband, 'Look, John—she's finally learned how to wash correctly! I wonder how she did it.'

John replied, 'Well, dear, I have the answer for you. You'll be interested to know that I got up early this morning and washed our windows!'

Tonight I'd like to share with you a few thoughts concerning how we view each other. Are we looking through a window which needs cleaning? Are we making judgments when we don't have all the facts?"  
[\(President Thomas S. Monson, October 2010\)](#)

**Why do you think we sometimes judge without "all the facts?"**

*What is the very next step you will take to purify your own life so that you see others more clearly?*

**“The divine nature within each one of us is refined and magnified by the effort we make to draw nearer to our Father and His Son” ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).**

**“We identify with our divine nature as we feel and give the love of our Father in Heaven.** We have the agency to nurture it, let it flourish, and help it grow” ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).

**“If you ever question that spark of divinity within you, kneel in prayer and ask Heavenly Father, ‘Am I really Thy daughter, and dost Thou love me?’ Elder M. Russell Ballard said, ‘One of the sweetest messages the Spirit will relay is how the Lord feels about you’” ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).**

**“We are His.** Paul said, **‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God’” ([Rosemary M. Wixom](#)).**

**How does understanding our own divine nature  
increase our ability to express charity?**

*What can you do to help those around you notice the divine qualities they naturally possess?*

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for **he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.**

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.  
**For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.** ([Luke 6:35-38](#))

**What helps you to remember your own divine heritage?**

*Would you be excited to receive the things you said and did to others last week back into your own life this week?*

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is **the bond of perfectness.** ([Colossians 3:14](#))

125 And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace. ([Doctrine & Covenants 88:125](#))

**How does one “put on” or “wear” charity?**

*How will you add more pieces of charity to the wardrobe of your life?*

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but **the greatest of these is charity.** ([1 Corinthians 13:13](#))

5 Now the end of the commandment is **charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:** ([1 Timothy 1:5](#))

5 And faith, hope, charity and love, **with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.** ([Doctrine & Covenants 4:5](#))

24 And see that ye have faith, hope, and charity, and then **ye will always abound in good works.** ([Alma 7:24](#))

19 And if you have not faith, hope, and charity, **you can do nothing.** ([Doctrine & Covenants 18:19](#))

8 And above all things have **fervent charity** among yourselves: for **charity shall cover the multitude of sins.** ([1 Peter 4:8](#))

29 Therefore, if ye do not remember to be charitable, ye are as dross, which the refiners do cast out, (it being of no worth) and is trodden under foot of men.

30 And now, my brethren, I would that, **after ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the holy scriptures testify of these things, ye come forth and bring fruit unto repentance.** ([Alma 34:29-30](#))

**Why do you think charity is so powerful?**

*What will you change in your life so you can be filled with more "fervent charity?"*

**15** But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will **teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.**

**16** And also, ye yourselves will **succor those that stand in need of your succor;** ye will **administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need;** and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish.

**17** Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—

**18** But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God.

**19** For behold, **are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have,** for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind? ([Mosiah 4:16-19](#))

**Why is it sometimes easy to forget the true source of all that we own?**  
*What will you teach your children or apply to your own life from these verses?*

A woman by the name of Mary Bartels had a home directly across the street from the entrance to a hospital clinic. Her family lived on the main floor and rented the upstairs rooms to outpatients at the clinic.

One evening a truly awful-looking old man came to the door asking if there was room for him to stay the night. He was stooped and shriveled, and his face was lopsided from swelling—red and raw. He said he'd been hunting for a room since noon but with no success. "I guess it's my face," he said. "I know it looks terrible, but my doctor says it could possibly improve after more treatments." He indicated he'd be happy to sleep in the rocking chair on the porch. As she talked with him, Mary realized this little old man had an oversized heart crowded into that tiny body. Although her rooms were filled, she told him to wait in the chair and she'd find him a place to sleep.

At bedtime Mary's husband set up a camp cot for the man. When she checked in the morning, the bed linens were neatly folded and he was out on the porch. He refused breakfast, but just before he left for his bus, he asked if he could return the next time he had a treatment. "I won't put you out a bit," he promised. "I can sleep fine in a chair." Mary assured him he was welcome to come again.

In the several years he went for treatments and stayed in Mary's home, the old man, who was a fisherman by trade, always had gifts of seafood or vegetables from his garden. Other times he sent packages in the mail.

"When Mary received these thoughtful gifts, she often thought of a comment her next-door neighbor made after the disfigured, stooped old man had left Mary's home that first morning. 'Did you keep that awful-looking man last night? I turned him away. You can lose customers by putting up such people.'

Mary knew that maybe they *had* lost customers once or twice, but she thought, 'Oh, if only they could have known him, perhaps their illnesses would have been easier to bear.'

After the man passed away, Mary was visiting with a friend who had a greenhouse. As she looked at her friend's flowers, she noticed a beautiful golden chrysanthemum but was puzzled that it was growing in a dented, old, rusty bucket. Her friend explained, 'I ran short of pots, and knowing how beautiful this one would be, I thought it wouldn't mind starting in this old pail. It's just for a little while, until I can put it out in the garden.'

Mary smiled as she imagined just such a scene in heaven. 'Here's an especially beautiful one,' God might have said when He came to the soul of the little old man. 'He won't mind starting in this small, misshapen body.' But that was long ago, and in God's garden how tall this lovely soul must stand!"

[\(President Thomas S. Monson, October 2010\)](#)

## Why do you think we sometimes blame God for our situations?

*What is the very next step you will take to bring joy to others in spite of your own misfortunes?*

"Our Savior experienced and suffered the fulness of all mortal challenges 'according to the flesh' so He could know 'according to the flesh' how to 'succor [which means to give relief or aid to] his people according to their infirmities.' He therefore knows our struggles, our heartaches, our temptations, and our suffering, for He willingly experienced them all as an essential part of His Atonement. And because of this, His Atonement empowers Him to succor us—to give us the strength to bear it all.... And so we see that because of His Atonement, the Savior has the power to succor—to help—every mortal pain and affliction. Sometimes His power heals an infirmity, but the scriptures and our experiences teach that sometimes He succors or helps by giving us the strength or patience to endure our infirmities." ([Elder Dallin H. Oaks, General Conference, October 2015](#))

## **How can we obtain the strength to endure hardship?**

*What is the very next step you will take to use the atonement more fully in your life?*

"Our willingness to take a step is not just met; it is exceeded by the Lord's promised blessings.

Heavenly Father and our Savior are *eager* to bless us.... Whenever we willingly act with faith in Jesus Christ and take another step, especially an uncomfortable step requiring change or repentance, we are blessed with strength.<sup>10</sup>

I testify that the Lord will guide us to—and *through* —our next steps. He will more than match our efforts with His power if we are willing to keep trying, repenting, and moving forward with faith in our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Spiritual gifts are promised not only to those who love God and keep all of His commandments but also, gratefully, to those of us who "[seek] so to do."<sup>11</sup> Strength is given to those who keep seeking and trying....

As we progress along the covenant path, we will make mistakes, some multiple times. Some of us struggle with behaviors or addictions we feel powerless to overcome. But faith in Heavenly Father and in Jesus Christ is a principle of action and power.<sup>18</sup> If we are willing to act, we will be blessed with the strength to repent and with the strength to change.

We fail only if we fail to take another faithful step forward. We will not, we cannot, fail if we are faithfully yoked to the Savior—He who has never failed and will never fail us!" ([Elder Randall K. Bennett of the Quorum of the 70, General Conference, October 2015](#)).

## Why is it so important to keep trying even after we have failed?

*What will you try again tomorrow that you have had trouble accomplishing in the past?*