

Burying Our Weapons of Rebellion

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Tatanuina o a Tatou Auupega o le Fouvale

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O Le Korama a Aposetolo e Toasefululua

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May we bury—very, very deep—any element of rebellion against God in our lives and replace it with a willing heart and a willing mind.

The Book of Mormon records that approximately 90 years before the birth of Christ, the sons of King Mosiah began what would be a 14-year mission to the Lamanites. Unsuccessful efforts had been made over many generations to bring the Lamanite people to a belief in the doctrine of Christ. This time, however, through the miraculous interventions of the Holy Spirit, thousands of the Lamanites were converted and became disciples of Jesus Christ.

We read, “And as sure as the Lord liveth, so sure as many as believed, or as many as were brought to the knowledge of the truth, through the preaching of Ammon and his brethren, according to the spirit of revelation and of prophecy, and the power of God working miracles in them—yea, I say unto you, as the Lord liveth, as many of the Lamanites as believed in their preaching, and were converted unto the Lord, never did fall away.”

The key to the enduring conversion of this people is stated in the next verse: “For they became a righteous people; they did lay down the weapons of their rebellion, that they did not fight against God any more, neither against any of their brethren.”

This reference to “weapons of rebellion” was both literal and figurative. It meant their swords and other weapons of war but also their disobedience to God and His commandments.

The king of these converted Lamanites

Tau ina ia tatou tanumia—ia matuā loloto lava—soo se elemene o le fouvale e faasaga i le Atua i o tatou olaga ma suia i se loto naunautai ma se mafafau naunautai.

Ua tusia i le Tusi a Mamona e faapea, pe tusa ma le, 90 tausaga a o le'i soifua mai Iesu Keriso, sa amata ai e atalii o le Tupu o Mosaea le mea o le a avea o se misiona e 14-tausaga ia Sa Lamana. E tele augatupulaga sa lei manuia ai taumafaiga e aumaia le nuu o sa Lamana i se talitonuga i le aoaoga faavae a Keriso. Peitai, o le taimi lenei, e ala i le aofia ai faavavega o le Agaga Paia, e faitauafe sa Lamana na liua ma avea ma soo o Iesu Keriso.

Ua tatou faitauina, “Ma e pei ona mautinoa o loo soifua le Alii, mautinoa tele lava e pei o le toatele o e na talitonu, pe e pei le toatele o e na aumai i le malamalama o le upumoni, e ala i le talaiga a Amona ma ona uso, e tusa ma le agaga o faaaliga ma valoaga, ma le faia e le mana o le Atua o vavega e ala atu ia te i latou—ioe, ou te fai atu ia te outou, e pei ona soifua le Alii, o le toatele o sa Lamanā o e na talitonu i la latou talaiga, ma faaliliuina i le Alii, sa lei pauu ese lava.”

O le ki i le liua tumau o lenei nuu o loo ta'ua i le isi fuaiupu: “Sa avea i latou ma tagata amiotonu; sa latou tuu i lalo auupega o lo latou fouvale, sa latou le toe tau faasaga i le Atua, pe faasaga i soo se tasi o o latou uso.”

O lenei maufaasino i “auupega o le fouvale” sa o ni auupega moni ma ni auupega faafaatusa foi. O lona uiga o a latou pelu ma isi auupega o le taua ae o lo latou le usiusitai foi i le Atua ma Ana poloaiga.

Sa faaupuina e le tupu o nei sa Lamana na

expressed it this way: “And now behold, my brethren, ... it has been all that we could do ... to repent of all our sins and the many murders which we have committed, and to get God to take them away from our hearts, for it was all we could do to repent sufficiently before God that he would take away our stain.”

Note the king’s words—not only had their sincere repentance led to forgiveness of their sins, but God also took away the stain of those sins and even the desire to sin from their hearts. As you know, rather than risk any possible return to their prior state of rebellion against God, they buried their swords. And as they buried their physical weapons, with changed hearts, they also buried their disposition to sin.

We might ask ourselves what we could do to follow this pattern, to “lay down the weapons of [our] rebellion,” whatever they may be, and become so “converted [to] the Lord” that the stain of sin and the desire for sin are taken from our hearts and we never will fall away.

Rebellion can be active or passive. The classic example of willful rebellion is Lucifer, who, in the premortal world, opposed the Father’s plan of redemption and rallied others to oppose it as well, “and, at that day, many followed after him.” It is not hard to discern the impact of his continuing rebellion in our own time.

The Book of Mormon’s unholy trio of anti-Christ—Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor—provide a classic study of active rebellion against God. The overarching thesis of Nehor and Korihor was that there is no sin; therefore, there is no need for repentance, and there is no Savior. “Every man prosper[s] according to his genius, and ... every man conquer[s] according to his strength; and whatsoever a man [does is] no crime.” The anti-Christ rejects religious authority, characterizing ordinances and covenants as performances “laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and authority.”

A latter-day example of willful rebellion with a happier ending is the story of William W. Phelps. Phelps joined the Church in 1831 and was appointed Church printer. He edited several early Church publications, wrote numerous hymns, and served as a scribe to Joseph Smith.

liua faapea: “Ma o lenei faauta, ou uso e, ... ona pau lea o le mea e mafai ona tatou faia ... tatou te salamo ai mai ia tatou agasala uma ma fasiotiga tagata e tele sa tatou faia, ma faia i le Atuaia ona aveese i latou mai o tatou loto, aua ona pau lea o le mea sa mafai ona tatou faia ia lava ai lo tatou salamo i luma o le Atuae aveese ai e ia o tatou pisia.”

Matau upu a le tupu—o lo latou salamo faamaoni na taitai atu ai e le gata i le faamagaloina o a latou agasala, ae na aveesea ai foi pisipisia ona agasala e oo lava i le manao e agasala mai o latou loto. E pei ona outou silafia, nai lo le lamatia mai soo se toe foi i o latou tulaga na i ai muamua o le fouvale i le Atua, ae sa latou tatanu foi a latou pelu. Ma ina ua latou tatanuina a latou auupega faaletino, faatasi ai ma ni loto ua suia, sa latou tatanuina foi lo latou mananao e fai le agasala.

Atonu tatou te fesili ifo ia i tatou lava pe o le a se mea e mafai ona tatou faia e mulimuli ai i lenei mamanu, e “tuu i lalo auupega o [lo tatou] fouvale” po o a lava ma avee ai ua matuai “liua i le Alii” ina ia aveesea ai pisipisia o le agasala ma le manao e fai le agasala mai o tatou loto ma tatou le toe pa’u’u ese ai lava.

O le fouvale e mafai ona malosia pe leai foi. O le faataitaiga masani o le fouvale ma le loto i ai o Lusifelo, o lē, i le muai olaga, na tetee i le fuafuaga a le Tama o le togiola ma sa ia taena’iina isi e tetee foi i ai, “ma, i lenei aso, e toatele na mulimuli ia te ia.” E le faigata ona iloaitino le aafiaga o lona fouvale faifaipea i o tatou foi taimi.

O le toatolu o aneti-Keriso i le Tusi a Mamonā—Serema, Ne’oa, ma Kori’oa—o loo tuuina mai ai se aoaoga masani o le fouvale faamo’imo’i i le Atua. O le manatu laualuga o Ne’oa ma Kori’oa e faapea, e leai se agasala; o le mea lea, e leai se mea e moomia ai le salamo, ma e leai se Faaola. “E manuia tagata taitoatasi e tusa ma lona atamai, ma ... e manumalo tagata taitoatasi e tusa ma lona malosia; ma o soo se mea lava e faia e se tagata e le o se solitulafono.” E teena e le aneti-Keriso le pule faalelotu, e aofia ai sauniga ma feagaiga o tu ia “na faataatitia e faitaulaga ana-mua, e latou te maua ai le mana ma le pule.”

O se faataitaiga i aso e gata ai o le fouvalega faamo’imo’i e i ai se taunuuga e fiafia atu, o le tala ia Viliamu W. Phelps. Sa auai Phelps i le Ekalesia i le 1831 ma sa tofia o ia e fai ma lomitusi a le Ekalesia. Sa ia faasa’osa’oina lomiga e tele o le popofou o le Ekalesia, sa tusia le tele o viiga, ma

Unfortunately, he turned against the Church and the Prophet, even to the point of giving false testimony against Joseph Smith in a Missouri court, which contributed to the Prophet's imprisonment there.

Later, Phelps wrote to Joseph asking for forgiveness. "I know my situation, you know it, and God knows it, and I want to be saved if my friends will help me."

In his reply the Prophet stated: "It is true that we have suffered much in consequence of your behavior. ... However, the cup has been drunk, the will of our Heavenly Father has been done, and we are yet alive. ... Come on, dear brother, since the war is past, for friends at first are friends again at last."

With sincere repentance, William Phelps buried his "weapons of rebellion" and was received once more in full fellowship, never again to fall away.

Perhaps the more insidious form of rebellion against God, however, is the passive version—ignoring His will in our lives. Many who would never consider active rebellion may still oppose the will and word of God by pursuing their own path without regard to divine direction. I am reminded of the song made famous years ago by singer Frank Sinatra with the climactic line "I did it my way." Certainly in life there is plenty of room for personal preference and individual choice, but when it comes to matters of salvation and eternal life, our theme song ought to be "I did it God's way," because truly there is no other way.

Take, for instance, the Savior's example regarding baptism. He submitted to baptism as a demonstration of loyalty to the Father and as an example to us:

"He sheweth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments. ...

"And he said unto the children of men: Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?"

There is no "my way" if we are to follow Christ's example. Trying to find a different course

sa avea ma tusiupu ia Iosefa Samita. Ae paga lea, sa fulitua o ia i le Ekalesia ma le Perofeta, na oo ai lava ina ia tuuina atu se molimau sese e faasaga ia Iosefa Samita i se faamasinoga i Misuri, lea na saofagā ai i le faafalepuipuiina o le Perofeta iina.

Mulimuli ane, na tusi atu ai Phelps ia Iosefa e talosagaina ai se faamagaloga. "O loo o'u iloa lo'u tulaga, o loo e silafiaina, ma o loo silafia foi e le Atua, ma ou te manao ia faaolaina a'u pe afai o le a fesoasoani a'u uo ia te a'u."

I lana tali atu na tāua ai e le Perofeta: "E moni ua matou mafatia tele ona o le taunuuga o au amioga.... Ae ui i lea, ua uma ona inuina le ipu, ua faia le finagalo o lo tatou Tama Faalelagi, ma o loo matou ola pea. Sau ia, le uso pele, talu ai ua uma le taua, aua o uo sa i ai muamua e toe uo foi i le faaiuga."

Faatasi ai ma le salamo faamaoni, sa tanuina ai e William Phelps ana "auupega o le fouvale," na toe taliaina i le faaumeaina atoatoa, ma e le'i toe pa'ū ese lava.

Atonu o le ituaiga e sili atu ona faataumaoni faasaga i le Atua, ituaiga faatagāfai--e faatuatuaanai ai i Lona finagalo i o tatou olaga. E toatele atonu e le mafaufau lava i le fouvale faamo'imo'i atonu o la lava e tetee i le finagalo ma le afioga a le Atua e ala i le tulitulimatagauina o lo latou lava ala e aunoa ma le mafaufau i le taitaiga faalelagi. Ou te manatua ia le pese na lauiloa i le tele o tausaga ua mavae a le tagata pese o Frank Sinatra ma se laina sa faalauaialuga ai, "Sa ou faia i la'u lava ala." Ioe, i le olaga e tele avanoa mo mea patino ma filifiliga mo le tagata lava ia, ae a oo i mataupu o le faaolataga ma le ola e faavavau, e ao ona avea ma a tatou pese autu le, "Sa ou faia i le ala a le Atua," aua e leai lava se isi auala.

Mo se faataitaiga, le faaāoāoga a le Faaola o le papatisoga. Sa Ia faamatuu atu i le papatisoga e fai ma faataitaiga o le tuuto i le Tama ma se faataitaiga foi ia i tatou:

"Ua faaali mai e ia i le fanauga a tagata, ua ia faamaualaloina o ia lava e tusa ma la le tino i luma o le Tamā, ma molimau atu i le Tamā o le a ia ususitai ia te ia i le tausia o ana poloaiga. ...

"Ma ua fetalai mai o ia i le fanauga a tagata: Ia outou mulimuli mai ia te a u. O le mea lea, o u uso pele e, e mafai ea ona tatou mulimuli atu ia Iesu vagana ai ua tatou loto e tausi poloaiga a le Tamā?"

E leai se "la'u ala" pe afai e tataua ona tatou mulimuli i le faataitaiga a Keriso. O le taumafai

to heaven is like the futility of working on the Tower of Babel rather than looking to Christ and His salvation.

The swords and other weapons that the Lamanite converts buried were weapons of rebellion because of how they had used them. Those same kinds of weapons in the hands of their sons, being used in defense of family and freedom, were not weapons of rebellion against God at all. The same was true of such weapons in the hands of the Nephites: “They were not fighting for monarchy nor power but ... were fighting for their homes and their liberties, their wives and their children, and their all, yea, for their rites of worship and their church.”

In this same way, there are things in our lives that may be neutral or even inherently good but that used in the wrong way become “weapons of rebellion.” Our speech, for example, can edify or demean. As James said:

“But the tongue [it seems] can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

There is much in public and personal discourse today that is malicious and mean-spirited. There is much conversation that is vulgar and profane, even among youth. This sort of speech is a “weapon of rebellion” against God, “full of deadly poison.”

Consider another example of something that is essentially good but that could be turned against divine directives—a person’s career. One can find real satisfaction in a profession, vocation, or service, and all of us are benefited by what devoted and talented people in many fields of endeavor have accomplished and created.

Still, it is possible that devotion to career can become the paramount focus of one’s life. Then all else becomes secondary, including any claim the Savior may make on one’s time and talent. For men, and for women as well, forgoing legitimate opportunities for marriage, failing to cleave to and lift one’s spouse, failing to nurture one’s children, or even intentionally avoiding the

e su’e se auala e ese ai, e pei o le faavalevalea o le galulue ai i luga o le Olo o Papelu nai lo le taulai atu ia Keriso ma Lana faaolataga.

O pelu ma isi auupega na tatanuina e le au Sa Lamana na liua, o auupega o le fouvale ona o le ala na latou faaaogaina ai na mea. O na foi ituaiga o auupega i lima o o latou atalii, na faaaoga e puipuia ai aiga ma le saolotoga, sa le o ni auupega o le fouvale i le Atua. E faapena foi i auupega faapena sa i lima o sa Nifae: “Sa latou le tau mo se pule toatasi po o le pule, ae sa ... tau mo o latou aiga ma o latou saolotoga, a latou ava, ma a latou fanau, ma a latou mea uma, ioe, mo a latou sauniga o tapuaiga ma la latou ekalesia.”

I lea lava foi ala e tasi, e i ai mea i o tatou olaga atonu e le afaina pe tatou fananau mai e lelei, ae a faaaoga i le ala sese ona avea ai lea ma “auupega o le fouvale.” O a tatou tala, mo se faaitaiga, e mafai ona faagaeitia pe tuumauaaloaina ai. E pei ona fai mai ai Iakopo:

“Peitai [e foliga mai] e le mafai e se tagata ona faalata le laulaufaiva; o le mea leaga e le mataofia, ua tumu i le mea oona e oti ai.

“O lea ua tatou vivii ai i le Atua, le Tama; o lea foi ua tatou fetuu a’i i tagata ua faia e foliga i le Atua.

“E luai mai i le gutu e tasi le vivii ma le fetuu. O’u uso e, e le tusa ona faia faapea o na mea.”

Ua matuai tele naua mea i lauga po o talanoaga faalauaitele ma faapatino i nei ona po, e ‘ano’anoa ma faatuaupua. E tele talanoaga e leaga ma masoā, e oo lava i le autalavou. O ia ituaiga o saunoaga, o se “auupega ia o le fouvale” faasaga i le Atua, “e tumu i le mea oona e oti ai.”

Manatu i se isi faaitaiga o se mea e lelei moni ae e mafai ona liua i le fouvale faasaga i le taitaiga faalelagi—o se matata faalegaluega a se tagata. E mafai e se tasi ona maua le lotomalie moni i se pisinisi, galuega, po o se tautua, ma ua faamanuiaina i tatou uma i mea ua ausia ma fatuina e tagata tuuto ma talenia i le tele o vaega o taumafaiga.

Ae, e mafai foi ona avea le tuuto i le matata faalegaluega ma taulaiga laualuga o le olaga o se tagata. Ona faatulagalua ai lea o isi mea uma, e aofia ai le taimi ma taleni e ono moomia e le Faaola mai se na tagata. Mo alii, ma mo tamaitai, o le faapasi o avanoa e tata ai mo se faaipoipoga, o le toilalo e pipiimau ma siitia se toalua, toilalo e faafilele se fanau, pe aloese ma le loto i ai mai

blessing and responsibility of child-rearing solely for the sake of career advancement can convert laudable achievement into a form of rebellion.

Another example concerns our physical being. Paul reminds us that we are to glorify God in both body and spirit and that this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, “which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.” Thus, we have a legitimate interest in spending time caring for our bodies as best we can. Few of us will reach the peak of performance we have seen recently in the achievements of Olympic and Paralympic athletes, and some of us are experiencing the effects of age, or what President M. Russell Ballard called “the rivets coming loose.”

Nevertheless, I believe it pleases our Creator when we do our best to care for His wonderful gift of a physical body. It would be a mark of rebellion to deface or defile one’s body, or abuse it, or fail to do what one can to pursue a healthy lifestyle. At the same time, vanity and becoming consumed with one’s physique, appearance, or dress can be a form of rebellion at the other extreme, leading one to worship God’s gift instead of God.

In the end, burying our weapons of rebellion against God simply means yielding to the enticing of the Holy Spirit, putting off the natural man, and becoming “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.” It means putting the first commandment first in our lives. It means letting God prevail. If our love of God and our determination to serve Him with all our might, mind, and strength become the touchstone by which we judge all things and make all our decisions, we will have buried our weapons of rebellion. By the grace of Christ, God will forgive our sins and rebellions of the past and will take away the stain of those sins and rebellions from our hearts. In time, He will even take away any desire for evil, as He did with those Lamanite converts of the past. Thereafter, we too “never [will] fall away.”

Burying our weapons of rebellion leads to a unique joy. With all who have ever become converted to the Lord, we are “brought to sing [the

faamanuiaga ma le tiutetauave o le fanauina o fanau ina ia faalautele ai le matata faalegaluega, e mafai ona faaliliuina ai mea matagofie viia e ausia, i se ituaiga o fouvalega.

O se isi faaitaiga e faatatau i o tatou tino faaletino. Ua faamanatu mai e Paulo ia i tatou e faapea e ao ona tatou faamanū atu i le Atua i le tino ma le agaga, ma o le tino lenei o le malumalu o le Agaga Paia, “o loo ia te outou mai le Alii, e le aia foi outou ia te outou.” O lea, ua ia te i tatou se naunautaiga aloa’ia e faaalu ai le taimi e tausia ai o tatou tino i le mea sili tatou te mafaia. E toaititi i tatou o le a taunuu i le tumutumu o le faatinoga na tatou vaai i ai talu ai nei i ma na ausia e le au afeleti o le Olimipeka ma le Paralimipeka, ma o nisi o i tatou ua iloa aafiaga o le matua, le mea lea na ta’ua e Peresitene M. Russell Ballard “o nati ua amata ona ‘o’o”

Ae ui o lea, ou te talitonu e faamalieina lo tatou Foafoa pe a tatou faia le mea silisili e tausia ai Lana meaalofa matagofie o se tino faitino. O le a avea o se faailoga o le fouvale le faamatagā e le tagata o lona tino, pe faatautala ona fai, pe le faia foi le mea e tataua ona fai e tulimatai ai se ituaiga olaga maloloina. I le taimi foi lava lea, o le faalialiavale ma le taunapa i lou fika, foliga, po o ofu e mafai ona avea o se ituaiga o fouvale i se isi itu, e taunuu ai i le tapuai i le meaalofa a le Atua nai lo le Atua.

I le iuga, o le tatanuina o a tatou auupega o le fouvale faasaga i le Atua o lona uiga o le faamatuu atu i faatosinaga a le Agaga Paia, tuu ese le tagata natura ma avea “o se tagata paia e ala i le togiola a Keriso le Alii.” O lona uiga o le tuu faamuamua o le poloaiga muamua i o tatou olaga. O lona uiga o le faamuamua lea o le Atua. Afai o lo tatou alofa i le Atua ma lo tatou naunautaga e auauna atu ia te Ia ma o tatou loto atoa, mafaufau, ma le malosi atoa ua avea ma uiga faaauropo tatou te faamasinoina ai mea uma ma faia ai a tatou faaiuga uma, ua tatou tatanuina a tatou auupega o le fouvale. E ala i le alofatunoa o Keriso, o le a faamagalo ai a tatou agasala ma fouvalega o le tuanai e le Atua, ma o le a aveesea ai pispisia o na agasala ma fouvalega i o tatou loto. E oo mai le taimi, o le a Ia aveeseina ai foi soo se manao mo mea leaga, e faapei ona sa Ia faia i na sa Lamana na liua o le tuanai. Ma oo ai foi, o i tatou foi “[o le a] le pauu ese ai lava.”

O le tatanuina o a tatou auupega o le fouvale, e taitai atu ai i se olioli tulagaese. Faatasi ai ma i latou uma ua liua i le Alii, ua “aumaia i tatou e

song of] redeeming love.”Our Heavenly Father and His Son, our Redeemer, have confirmed Their unending commitment to our ultimate happiness through the most profound love and sacrifice. We experience Their love daily. Surely we can reciprocate with our own love and loyalty. May we bury—very, very deep—any element of rebellion against God in our lives and replace it with a willing heart and a willing mind. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

usu [le pese] o le alofa togiola.”Ua faamautu mai e lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma Lona Alo, lo tatou Togiola, la Laua tautinoga e lē gata i lo tatou fiafia tupito e ala i le alofa ma le ositaulaga sili ona loloto. Tatou te lagonaina lo Laua alolofa i aso uma. E mautinoa lava e mafai ona tatou tali atu i lo tatou lava alofa ma le faamaoni. Tau ina ia tatou tanumia—ia matuā loloto lava—soo se elemene o le fouvale e faasaga i le Atua i o tatou olaga ma suia i se loto naunautai ma se mafaufau naunautai. I le suafa o Iesu Keriso, amene.