

Aligning Our Will with His

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Faaogatusaina o Tatou Loto ma Lona [Finagalo]

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O Le Korama a Aposetolo e Toasefululua

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Following the Lord's will in our life will enable us to find the most precious pearl in the world—the kingdom of heaven.

On a certain occasion, the Savior spoke of a merchant man who was searching for “goodly pearls.” During the merchant man’s search, he found one “of great price.” However, in order to acquire the magnificent pearl, this man had to sell all his possessions, which he promptly and joyfully did.

Through this short and thoughtful parable, the Savior beautifully taught that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a priceless pearl, truly the most precious treasure that should be desired over all else. The fact that the merchant instantly sold all his possessions to obtain that valuable pearl clearly indicates that we should align our mind and desires with the will of the Lord and willingly do everything we can during our mortal journey to attain the eternal blessings of God’s kingdom.

To be worthy of this great reward, we certainly need, among other things, to give our best effort to set aside all self-centered pursuits and abandon any entanglement that holds us back from full commitment to the Lord and His higher and holier ways. The Apostle Paul refers to these sanctifying pursuits as “hav[ing] the mind of Christ.” As exemplified by Jesus Christ, this means “[doing] always those things that please [the Lord]” in our lives, or as some people say nowadays, this is “doing what works for the Lord.”

O le mulimuli i le finagalo o le Alii i o tatou olaga o le a tatou mafai ai ona maua le penina aupito sili ona taua i le lalolagi—o le malo o le lagi.

I se taimi patino, sa fetalai ai le Faaola e uiga i se faipisinisi sa sailia “penina ‘anagata.” I aluga o le sailiga a le tagata faipisinisi, sa ia maua ai se tasi “e sili ona taugata.” Ae peitai, ina ia maua le penina maoae, sa tatau i lenei alii ona faatau ese atu ana meatotino uma, lea sa ia faia loa lava ma le fiafia.

E ala i lenei faataoto puupuu ma le ‘anoa, sa matagofie le aoao atu a le Faaola e faapea o le malo o le lagie faatusa i se penina ‘anagata, o le ‘oa taua moni e tatau ona manaomia i lo isi mea uma. O le mea moni faapea na vave loa lava ona faatau ese atu e le faipisinisi ana meatotino uma ina ia maua ai lena penina taua, ua ta’u manino mai ai e faapea e tatau ia i tatou ona faaogatusa o tatou mafaufau ma manaoga ma le finagalo o le Alii ma faia mea uma e mafai ona tatou fai ma le naunautai i le taimi o la tatou malaga i le ola neiina ia maua ai faamanuiaga e faavavau o le malo o le Atua.

Ina ia agavaa mo lenei tauai sili, e tatou te manaomia moni, faatasi ma isi mea, ona tuu atu la tatou taumafaiga silisili e faataatia ese ai tulimataiga manatu faapito uma, ma lafoai soo se mea faalavefau o loo taotaomia ai i tatou mai le tuuto atoa atu i le Alii ma Ana ala maua luga ma sili ona paia. Na ta’ua e le Aposetolo o Paulo nei tulimataiga faapaiaina o le “ua tatou maua le finagalo o Keriso.” E pei ona faataitaia e Iesu Keriso, o lona uiga “o le faia pea o mea e fiafia i ai [le Alii]” i o tatou olaga, po o le pei ona fai mai ai nisi tagata i aso nei, o le “faia lea o mea e aoga mo le Alii.”

In a gospel sense, “[doing] always those things that please [the Lord]” relates to submitting our will to His will. The Savior thoughtfully taught the importance of this principle while instructing His disciples:

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

“And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

“And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The Savior achieved a perfect and divine level of submission to the Father by allowing His will to be swallowed up in the Father’s will. He once said, “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” In teaching the Prophet Joseph Smith about the anguish and agonies of the Atonement, the Savior said:

“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; ...

“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

“Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.”

During our sojourn in mortality, we often wrestle with what we think we know, what we think is best, and what we assume works for us, as opposed to comprehending what Heavenly Father actually knows, what is eternally best, and what absolutely works for children within His plan. This great wrestle can become very complex, especially considering the prophecies contained in the scriptures for our day: “This know also, that in the last days ... men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”

One sign that indicates fulfillment of this prophecy is the current growing trend in the world, adopted by so many, of people becoming consumed with themselves and constantly pro-

I se tulaga faaletalalelei, o le “[faia] pea o mea e fiafia i ai [le Alii]” e faatatau i le gauai atu o o tatou loto i le finagalo o le Alii. Sa aoao mai ma le manatunatu loloto o le Faaola le taua o lenei mataupu faavae a o Ia aoaoina Ona soo:

“Aua ou te lei alu ifo mai le lagi e fai lo’u lava loto, a o le finagalo o le ua auina mai a’u.

“O lenei foi le finagalo o le Tama o le ua auina mai a’u, ia le māumau lava se tasi ua ia foaiina mai ia te a’u, a ia ou toe faatuina o ia i le aso gataaga.

“O lenei foi le finagalo o le ua auina mai a’u, ia maua le ola e faavavau e i latou uma o e vaai i le Atalii, ma faatuatua ia te ia, ou te toe faatuina foi i latou i le aso gataaga.”

Sa faataunuaina e le Faaola se faamatuu atu i se tulaga atoatoa ma le paia i le Tama, e ala i le faatagaina o Lona finagalo ia tofatumoanaina i le finagalo o le Tama. Na Ia fetalai foi, “O Ia o le na auina mai a’u o loo faatasi ma a’u: e le tuua au e toatasi e le Tama; aua ou te faia pea lava o mea e lelei ia te ia.” I le aoaoina o le Perofeta o Iosefa Samita e uiga i le mamafatu ma mafatiaga o le Togiola, sa fetalai ai le Faaola:

“Aua faauta, o A u, o le Atua, na mafatia i nei mea mo tagata uma, ina ia latou lē mafatia pe afai latou te salamo; ...

“O le mafatia lea na oo ai ia te a’u lava, o le Atua lava lea, o lē ua silisili i tagata uma, le gatete ona o le tiga, ma tafe toto ai i pu afu uma, ma mafatia ai i le tino atoa ma le agaga—ma manao ai ia Ou lē inuina le ipu oona, ma ma’ēē—

“E ui i lea, ia i ai i le Tama le viiga, ma sa ou inu ma faauma ai a’u tapenapenaga mo le fanau-ga a tagata.”

I le taimi o la tatou malaga puupuu i le olaga nei, e tele taimi tatou te tauivi ai ma mea ua tatou manatu ua tatou iloa, o mea ua tatou manatu e sili, ma mea ua tatou faapea lava e aoga mo i tatou, e ese mai i le malamalama i mea ua silafia lelei e le Tama Faalelagi, o mea e sili e faavavau, ma mea e aoga moni mo fanau i totonu o Lana fuafuaga. E mafai ona matuai lavelave lenei tauiviga tele, aemaise pe a mafau i valoaga o loo i ai i tusitusiga paia mo o tatou taimi: “Ia e iloa foi lenei mea, o ona aso e gata ai ... e avea tagata ma e e alolofa ia i latou lava, ... ua tele le manao i mea faafiafia ae leai se manao i le Atua.”

O se tasi faailoga o lenei mea e ta’u mai ai le faataunuaina o lenei valoaga o le mea ua faateleina le lilifa i ai o le lalolagi i le taimi nei, ua talia e le toatele naua, o tagata ua matuai faama-

claiming, “No matter what, I live my own truth or I do what works for me.” As Paul the Apostle said, they “seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” This way of thinking is often justified as being “authentic” by those who indulge in self-centered pursuits, focus on personal preferences, or want to justify certain types of behavior that frequently don’t match God’s loving plan and His will for them. If we let our heart and mind embrace this way of thinking, we can create significant stumbling blocks for ourselves in acquiring the most priceless pearl that God has lovingly prepared for His children—eternal life.

While it is true that each of us travels an individualized discipleship journey on the covenant path, striving to keep our hearts and minds centered on Christ Jesus, we need to be careful and constantly vigilant to not be tempted to adopt this type of worldly philosophy in our life. Elder Quentin L. Cook said that “being sincerely Christlike is an even more important goal than being authentic.”

My dear friends, when we choose to let God be the most powerful influence in our life over our self-serving pursuits, we can make progress in our discipleship and increase our capacity to unite our mind and heart with the Savior. On the other hand, when we don’t allow God’s way to prevail in our life, we are left to ourselves, and without the Lord’s inspiring guidance, we can justify almost anything we do or don’t do. We can also make excuses for ourselves by doing things our own way, saying in effect, “I am just doing things my way.”

On one occasion, while the Savior was declaring His doctrine, some people, particularly self-righteous Pharisees, rejected His message and boldly declared that they were children of Abraham, implying that their lineage would grant them special privileges in the sight of God. That mentality led them to lean unto their own understanding and to disbelieve what the Savior was teaching. The Pharisees’ reaction to Jesus was clear evidence that their presumptuous attitude left no place in their hearts for the Savior’s words and God’s way. In response, Jesus wisely and cou-

lieina ia i latou lava ma tautino e le aunoa, “Po o le a lava, ou te ola lava a’u i a’u mea moni, pe ou te faia foi le mea e aoga mo a’u.” E pei ona fai mai le Aposetolo o Paulo, ua latou “saili a latou lava mea, ae le o mea a Iesu Keriso.” O lea ituaiga o mafaufauga e tele ina ta’uamiotonuina e “faamaoni” e i latou o e nopi’i i tulimataiga manatu faapito, o faamuamua faaletagata lava ia, pe mananao e ta’uamiotonuina ituaiga patino o amioga ia e tele taimi e le fetaui ai ma le fuafuaga alofa a le Atua ma Lona finagalo mo i latou. Afai tatou te tuu atu o tatou loto ma mafaufau e talia lenei ituaiga o mafaufauga, e mafai ona tatou fatuina ni ‘alā e tautevateva ai mo i tatou lava, a o taumafai ia maua le penina e sili ona taugata na saunia ma le alofa e le Atua mo Ana fanau—le ola e faavavau.

E ui ina moni faapea e tofu malaga i tatou i se malaga faaleso’o taitoatasi i luga o le ala o feagaiga, ma tauivi e tuu o tatou loto ma mafaufau ia totonugalemu ia Keriso Iesu, e tataua ona tatou faateete ma mataala e le aunoa ia le faaosoosoinae talia lenei ituaiga o filosofia faalelailagi i o tatou olaga. Na saunoa Elder Quentin L. Cook e faapea “o le faamaoni e faapei o Keriso o se sini e sili atu ona taua nai lo le moni.”

A’u uo pele, pe a tatou filifili ia avea le Atua ma tosinaga aupito mamana i o tatou olaga nai lo a tatou tulimata’iga manatu faapito, e mafai ona tatou alualu i luma i lo tatou tulaga faaleso’o, ma faateleina ai lo tatou malosī e tuufaatasia ai o tatou mafaufau ma loto ma le Faaola. I se isi itu, a tatou le faatagaina ala o le Atua e manumalo i o tatou olaga, e tuua na o i tatou lava, ma e aunoa ma le taitaiga musuia a le Alii, e mafai ona tatou ta’uamiotonuina toetoe o mea uma tatou te fai pe le faia foi. E mafai foi ona tatou faia ‘alofaga mo i tatou lava e ala i le faia o mea i a tatou lava ala, ma faapea ai, “O lea e na ona ou faia o mea i la’u lava ala.”

Sa i ai se taimi, a o ta’utino mai e le Faaola Lana mataupu, sa i ai nisi tagata, aemaise lava o le au Faresaio faafia-amiotonu, na teena Lana savali ma fai atu ma le totoa, o i latou o fanau a Aperaamo, e ta’u mai ai o lo latou gafa o le a tuu atu ai ia i latou ni avanoa faapitoa i le silafaga a le Atua. O lena manatu na taitai ai i latou e faalagolago i lo latou lava atamai ma lē talitonuina ai i mea sa aoao atu e le Faaola. O le tali atu a le au Faresaio ia Iesu o se molimau manino lea o o latou uiga faafiapopoto, na leai ai se avanoa i o latou loto mo afioga a le Faaola ma ala o le Atua.

rageously declared that if they were true covenant children of Abraham, they would do the works of Abraham, especially considering that the God of Abraham was standing before them and teaching them the truth at that very moment.

Brothers and sisters, as you can see, acting on these mental gymnastics of “what works for me” versus doing “what always pleases the Lord” is not a new trend that is unique to our day. It is an age-old mentality that has crossed the centuries and often blinds the wise-in-their-own-eyes and confuses and exhausts many of God’s children. This mentality is, in fact, an old trick of the adversary; it is a deceptive path that carefully leads God’s children away from the true and faithful covenant path. While personal circumstances such as genetics, geography, and physical and mental challenges do influence our journey, in things that truly matter, there is an inner space where we are free to choose whether or not we will decide to follow the pattern the Lord has prepared for our life. Truly, “He marked the path and led the way, and ev’ry point [defined].”

As Christ’s disciples, we desire to walk the path He marked for us during His mortal ministry. We not only desire to do His will and all that will please Him but also seek to emulate Him. As we strive to be true to every covenant we have entered into and live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,” we will be protected against falling victim to the sins and errors of the world—errors of philosophy and doctrine that would lead us away from those most precious pearls.

I have been personally inspired by how such spiritual submissiveness to God has impacted the lives of faithful disciples of Christ as they chose to do those things that work for and are pleasing in the sight of the Lord. I know a young man who was unsettled about going on a mission but felt inspired to go and serve the Lord when he listened to a senior leader of the Church sharing his own personal testimony and sacred experience of serving as a missionary.

In his own words, this young man, now a returned missionary, said: “As I listened to the testimony of an Apostle of the Savior Jesus Christ, I was able to feel of God’s love for me, and I desired to share that love with others. At that

I le tali atu i ai, sa tautino atu ai ma le poto ma le lototoa e Iesu e faapea, afai o i latou o ni fanau moni o le feagaiga a Aperaaamo, semanu ua latou faia galuega a Aperaaamo, aemaise ai ia manatua o le Atua o Aperaaamo lea sa tu i o latou luma ma aoao atu i latou i upumoni i lena lava taimi.

Uso e ma tuafafine, pei ona mafai ona outou vaai, o le faatinoina o nei mafaufauga lavelave “o le mea e lelei mo au” faasaga i le faiga “o le mea e lelei mo le Alii” e le o se faiga fou ua tulagaese i o tatou aso. O se manatu ua loa ona sopoia sene-turi, ma ua tele ina faatauasoina ai e ua popoto i o latou lava matama ua faafenumia’i ma faa’ivavā ai le toatele o fanau a le Atua. O lea ituaiga o mafaufauga, o le mea moni, o se togafiti tuai a le fili; o se ala taufaasese lea e ta’ita’i ese atu ai ma le faaeteete fanau a le Atua mai le ala moni ma le faamaoni o feagaiga. E ui o tulaga patino e pei o kenera, faataatiaga faalefaafanua, ma luitau faaletino ma faalemafaufau i la tatou malaga, i mea e taua moni, o loo i ai se avanoa i totonu tatou te saoloto ai e filifilipe o le a tatou filifili pe leai foi e mulimuli i le mamanu ua saunia e le Alii mo o tatou olaga. O le mea moni, “Sa Ia faailoga le ala ma taitai le auala, ma itu uma [ua maioio].”

I le avea ai ma soo o Keriso, tatou te mananao e savavali i le ala na Ia faailogaina mo i tatou i le taimi o Lana misiona i le ola nei. E le gata ina tatou mananao e faia Lona finagalo ma mea uma o le a faamalieina ai o Ia, ae saili foi e faa’o’o ia te Ia. A o tatou taumafai malosia ia faamaoni i feagaiga uma ua tatou ulu i ai ma ola ai “i upu uma e luai mai i le fofoga o le Atua,” o le a puipuia i tatou mai le afaina fua i agasala ma mea sese a le lalolagi—mea sese o manatu ma aoaoga faavae o le a taitaiese ai i tatou mai na penina aupito sili ona taua.

Sa musuia patino lava a’u i le auala na aafia ai i lena faamatuu atu faaleagaga i le Atua ia olaga o soo faamaoni o Keriso a o latou filifili e faia mea e finagalo i ai le Alii. Ou te iloa se alii talavou sa le mautonu e uiga i le alu i se misiona, na lagona le musuia e alu ma auauna atu i le Alii ina ua ia faalogo i se taitai sinia o le Ekalesia, na ia faasoa maia lana lava molimau patino ma le aafiaga paia o le auauna atu o se faifeautalai.

I ana lava upu, o lea alii talavou, lea ua mae’a mai lana misiona, na ia fai mai ai: “A o ou faalogologo i le molimau a se Aposetolo a le Faaola o Iesu Keriso, sa mafai ona ou lagonaina le alofa o le Atua mo a’u, ma sa ou manao ai e faasoa atu

moment I knew that I should serve a mission despite my fears, doubts, and concerns. I felt totally confident in the blessings and promises of God for His children. Today, I am a new person; I have a testimony that this gospel is true and that the Church of Jesus Christ has been restored on earth.” This young man chose the Lord’s way and became an example of a true disciple in every aspect.

A faithful young woman decided not to compromise her standards when she was asked to dress immodestly to fit into the business division of the fashion company where she worked. Understanding that her body is a sacred gift from our Heavenly Father and a place where the Spirit can dwell, she was moved to live by a standard higher than the world’s. She not only gained the confidence of those who saw her living by the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ but also preserved her job, which for a moment was in jeopardy. Her willingness to do what was pleasing in the sight of the Lord, rather than what worked for the world, gave her covenant confidence amidst difficult choices.

Brothers and sisters, we are constantly confronted by similar decisions in our daily journey. It takes a courageous and a willing heart to pause and pursue an honest and meek introspection to acknowledge the presence of weaknesses of the flesh in our life that may impede our ability to submit ourselves to God, and ultimately decide to adopt His way rather than our own. The ultimate test of our discipleship is found in our willingness to give up and lose our old self and submit our heart and our whole soul to God so that His will becomes ours.

One of the most glorious moments of mortality occurs when we discover the joy that comes when doing always those things that “work for and please the Lord” and “what works for us” become one and the same! To decisively and unquestioningly make the Lord’s will our own requires majestic and heroic discipleship! At that sublime moment, we become consecrated to the Lord, and we totally yield our wills to Him. Such spiritual submissiveness, so to speak, is beautiful, powerful, and transformational.

lena alofa i isi. I lena taimi, sa ou iloa ai e tatau ona ou auauna atu i se misiona e ui i lo’u fefe, masalosalogā, ma atugaluga. Sa ou lagonaina atoatoa le talitonu i faamanuiaga ma folafolaga a le Atua i Ana fanau. O le asō, o a’u o se tagata fou; ua i ai sa’u molimau e moni lenei talalelei ma o le Ekalesia a Iesu Keriso ua toefuatai mai i le lalolagi.” Na filifili e lenei alii talavou le ala o le Alii ma sa avea ai o se faa’ao’ao o se soo moni i ona itu uma.

Na tonu i se tamaitai talavou e lē faaluafesasia ona tulaga faatonuina ina ua talosagaina o ia e fai ona ofu i se tulaga e le tusaafia, ina ia fetauti ai ma le vaega o le pisinisi a le kamupani o faigā sitaili lea sa faigaluega ai. O le malamalama o lona tino o se meaalofo paia mai lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma o se nofoaga e mafai ona mau ai le Agaga, sa musuia o ia ina ia ola i se tulaga e maua atu nai lo le lalolagi. Sa le gata ina ia mauaina le talitonuga mautu a i latou o e sa vaai atu ia te ia o ola i le upumoni o le talalelei a Iesu Keriso, ae sa ia faasaoina foi lana galuega, lea sa faaletonu mo se taimi. O lona naunautaga e fai le mea sa faamalieina ai le finagalo o le Alii, nai lo le mea e lelei mo le lalolagi, na tuu atu ai i ana feagaiga le talitonuga i le lotolotoi o ana filifiliga faigata.

Uso e ma tuafafine, o loo faafetaia’ia pea lava pea i tatou i faaiuga faapena i la tatou malaga i aso taitasi. E moomia ai se loto e toa ma le naunautai e tu ai, ma tulitulimatai se vaaiga faamaoni ma le agamalu e faailoa ai le i ai o vaivaiga o le tino i o tatou olaga, lea e mafai ona faalavelaveina ai lo tatou gafatia e faamatuu atu i tatou lava i le Atua, ma i’u ai ina tonu e talia Lana auala nai lo o tatou lava ala. O le suega laualuga o lo tatou avea ai ma so’o, e maua i lo tatou naunautaga e lafoai ma faamaamulu o tatou tagata tuai ma faamatuu atu o tatou loto ma o tatou agaga atoa i le Atua ina ia avea ai Lona finagalo mo tatou.

O se tasi o taimi aupito sili ona mamalu i o tatou olaga e tulai mai pe a tatou iloina le olioli lea e oo mai pe a faia e le aunoa mea na pe a tasi ma tutusa ma mea e “lelei mo le Alii” ma “mea e lelei mo i tatou.” Ina ia lēmatatalaina ma lēfesiilia le avea o le finagalo o le Alii ma o tatou lava, e manaomia ai le tulaga faalesoo malualii ma le totoa! I lena taimi paia, e avea ai i tatou ma ni e ua faapaiaina i le Alii, ma ua tatou gauai atu atoatoa o tatou loto ia te Ia. O lena gauai atu faaleagaga, e faapea, e matagofie, mamana, ma faigofie ona suia ai.

I testify to you that following the Lord's will in our life will enable us to find the most precious pearl in the world—the kingdom of heaven. I pray that each of us, in our time and turn, will be able to declare, with covenant confidence, to our Heavenly Father and Savior Jesus Christ that “what works for Thee works for me.” I say these things in the sacred name of the Savior Jesus Christ, amen.

Ou te molimau atu o le mulimuli i le finagalo o le Alii i o tatou olaga o le a tatou mafai ai ona maua le penina aupito sili ona taua i le lalolagi—o le malo o le lagi. Ou te tatalo ia taitasi i tatou, i o tatou taimi ma avanoa, o le a mafai ona tautino atu, faatasi ai ma le talitonuga i feagai-ga, i lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma le Faaola o Iesu Keriso e faapea “o le mea e lelei mo Lua Afio, e lelei foi mo a'u.” Ou te fai atu ai nei mea i le suafa o Iesu Keriso, amene.