

Aligning Our Will with His

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Kufungamanisha Mapenzi Yetu na Yake

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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.”

In a gospel sense, “[doing] always those

Kufuata mapenzi ya Bwana katika maisha yetu kutatuwezesha kupata lulu ya thamani kubwa katika ulimwengu—ufalme wa mbinguni.

Wakati fulani, Mwokozi alizungumza juu ya mfanyabiashara ambaye alikuwa anatafuta “lulu nzuri.” Wakati wa utafutaji wa mfanyabiashara huyu, alipata moja “ya thamani kubwa.” Hata hivyo, ili kupata lulu adhimu mtu huyu ilimbidi akauze mali yake yote, ambapo alifanya mara moja na kwa furaha.

Kupitia fumbo hili fupi na la kufikirika, Mwokozi alifundisha kwa uzuri kwamba ufalme wa mbinguni unafanana na lulu ya thamani mno, kwa kweli hazina ya thamani sana ambayo inapaswa kutamaniwa zaidi ya kitu chochote kingine. Ukweli kwamba mfanyabiashara huyu mara moja aliuza mali yake yote ili kupata lulu ya thamani sana inaonyesha kwamba tunapaswa kufungamanisha akili zetu na hamu zetu kwenye mapenzi ya Bwana kwa hiari kufanya kila kitu tunachoweza wakati wa safari yetu duniani kupata baraka za milele za ufalme wa Mungu.

Ili kustahili zawadi hii kubwa, sisi kwa dhati tunahitaji, miongoni mwa vitu vingine, kufanya juhudi zetu bora kuweka kando mambo yote ya kujiona sisi wenyewe na kuachana na mtego wowote ambao hutuzuia kuwa na utiifu kamili kwa Bwana na njia Zake kuu na takatifu. Mtume Paulo alifaninisha mambo haya ya kutakasa kama “kuwa na nia ya Kristo.” Kama mfano uliotolewa na Yesu Kristo, hii inamaanisha “[kufanya] mambo yale daima ambayo yanampendelea [Bwana]” katika maisha yetu, au kama baadhi ya watu wanavyosema siku hizi, hii ni “kufanya kile kimpendezacho Bwana.”

Katika hali ya injili, “[kufanya] daima kile

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

kinachompendeza [Bwana]” huhusiana na kusalimisha mapenzi yetu kwenye mapenzi Yake. Mwokozi kwa kina alifundisha umuhimu wa kanuni hii wakati akiwafunza wanafunzi Wake.

“Kwa kuwa mimi sikushuka kutoka mbinguni ili niyafanye mapenzi yangu, bali mapenzi yake aliyenipeleka.”

“Na mapenzi yake aliyenipeleka ni haya, ya kwamba katika wote alionipa nisimpoteze hata mmoja, bali nimfufue siku ya mwisho.

“Kwa kuwa mapenzi yake Baba yangu ni haya, ya kwamba kila amtazamaye Mwana na kumwamini yeye, awe na uzima wa milele; nami nitamfufua siku ya mwisho.”

Mwokozi alipata kiwango cha ukamilifu na utukufu kwa kujisalimisha kwa Baba kwa ku-ruhusu mapenzi Yake yamezwe na mapenzi ya Baba. Yeye wakati mmoja alisema “Naye aliyenipeleka yu pamoja nami, hakuniacha peke yangu; kwa sababu nafanya siku zote yale yampendeyo.” Katika kumfundisha Nabii Joseph Smith kuhusu uchungu na maumivu ya Upatanisho, Mwokozi alisema:

“Kwani tazama, Mimi, Mungu nimeteseka mambo haya kwa ajili ya wote, ili kwamba wasipate kuteseka kama watatubu; ...

“Mateso ambayo yalisababisha Mimi mwenyewe, hata Mungu, mkuu kuliko wote, kutetemeka kwa sababu ya maumivu, na kuto-ka damu kwenye kila kinyweleo, na kuteseka mwili na roho—na kutamani nisinywe kikombe kichungu, na kusita—

“Hata hivyo, utukufu na uwe kwa Baba, na Mimi nikachukua na kukamilisha maandalizi yangu kwa ajili ya watoto wa wanadamu.”

Wakati wa maisha yetu hapa duniani, kila mara tunahangaika na kile tunachodhani tunajua, kile tunachofikiria ni bora, kile tunachodhani hufanya kazi kwetu, kinyume na kufahamu kile Baba wa Mbinguni hasa anajua, kile kilicho bora milele na kile kinachofanya kazi vyema kwa watoto ndani ya mpango Wake. Kuhangaika huku kukubwa kunaweza kuwa tata sana, hasa ukizingatia unabii uliopo katika maandiko ya siku yetu: “Lakini ufahamu neno hili, ya kuwa siku za mwisho ... watu watakuwa wenye kujipenda wenyewe, ... wapendao anasa kuliko kumpenda Mungu.”

Ishara moja ambayo inaashiria kutimizwa kwa unabii huu ni mtindo wa sasa unaoendelea duniani, unaokubaliwa na wengi sana, wa watu

consumed with themselves and constantly proclaiming, “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

wanaokuwa wanajipenda wenyewe na kila mara kutangaza, “Bila kujali chochote, ninaishi ukweli wangu mwenyewe au ninafanya kile kinachofanya kazi kwangu.” Kama Paulo Mtume alivyosema, “Maana wote wanatafuta vyao wenyewe, sivyo vya Kristo Yesu.” Njia hii ya kufikiri mara nyingi huthibitishwa kama kuwa “halisi” kwa wale waliofokasi kwenye mambo binafsi, kujipendelea binafsi au kutaka kuhalalisha aina fulani ya tabia ambayo kila mara haioani na mpango wa upendo wa Mungu na mapenzi Yake kwa ajili yao. Ikiwa tutaruhusu mioyo yetu na akili yetu kukumbatia njia hii ya kufikiria, tunaweza kujenga vikwazo vikubwa sana kwetu wenyewe katika kupata lulu ya thamani mno itolewayo bure ambayo Mungu kwa upendo ameandaa kwa ajili ya watoto Wake—uzima wa milele.

Wakati ni dhahiri kwamba kila mmoja wetu husafiri safari ya uanafunzi ya kibinafsi kwenye njia ya agano, kujitahidi kuiweka mioyo yetu na akili zetu kufokasi juu ya Yesu Kristo, tunahitaji kuwa makini na jasiri katika kutojaribiwakutwaa aina hii ya falsafa za kilimwengu katika maisha yetu. Mzee Quentin L. Cook alisema kwamba “kuwa mwaminifu kama Kristo ni lengo muhimu sana kuliko hata kuwa halisi.”

Marafiki zangu wapendwa, tunapochagua kumuacha Mungu kuwa ushawishi wenye nguvu sana katika maisha yetu kuliko mambo yetu ya kibinafsi, tunaweza kufanya maendeleo katika uanafunzi wetu na kuongeza uwezo wetu wa kuunganisha nia zetu na mioyo yetu kwa Mwokozi. Kwa upande mwingine, wakati tunapokosa kuruhusu njia ya Mungu kushinda katika maisha yetu, tunaachwa peke yetu, na bila mwongozo wenye maongozi ya Bwana, tunaweza kuhalalisha karibia kila kitu tunachofanya au tusichofanya. Tunaweza kutoa sababu kwa ajili yetu wenyewe kwa kufanya mambo katika njia yetu wenyewe, tukisema kwamba, “Mimi ninafanya mambo katika njia yangu.”

Wakati mmoja, wakati Mwokozi alipokuwa akitangaza mafundisho Yake, baadhi ya watu, hasa Mafarisayo wenye kujikweza, walikataa ujumbe Wake na kwa ujasiri kutangaza kwamba walikuwa watoto wa Ibrahimu, kumaanisha kwamba ukoo wao ungewapatia fadhila maalumu machoni pa Mungu. Tabia hiyo iliwapelekea wao kutegemea uelewa wao wenyewe na ku-toamini kile Mwokozi alichokuwa anafundisha. Mapokeo ya Mafarisayo kwa Yesu yalikuwa ushahidi wazi kwamba mtazamo wao wa kibu-

and God's way. In response, Jesus wisely and courageously 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.

ri hautoi nafasi katika mioyo yao kwa ajili ya maneno ya Mwokozi na njia ya Mungu. Katika kujibu hili, Yesu kwa hekima na ujasiri alitamka kwamba ikiwa walikuwa watoto wa agano wa Ibrahimu kweli, wangepanya kazi za Ibrahimu, hasa kuzingatia kwamba Mungu wa Ibrahimu alikuwa amesimama mbele yao na akiwafundisha ukweli wakati ule.

Akina kaka na dada, kama mnavyoweza kuona, kushughulikia jambo hili la kiakili la "kile kinachofanya kazi kwangu" dhidi ya "kile kinachomfurahisha Bwana" sio jambo jipya katika siku yetu. Hii ni tabia ya miaka mingi ambayo imevuka karne nyingi na mara nyingi hupofusha wenye busara katika macho yao wenyewena hukanganya na kuwachosha watoto wa Mungu. Tabia hii ni, kwa kweli, ujanja wa zamani wa adui, ni njia ya ulaghai ambayo kwa makini inawaongoza watoto wa Mungu mbali kutoka kwa agano la kweli na uaminifu. Wakati hali za kibinafsi kama nasaba, jiografia, changamoto za kimwili na kiakili hushawishi safari yetu, katika mambo ambayo kwa kweli ni muhimu, kuna nafasi ya ndani ambapo tuna uhuru wa kucha-guaikiwa tutafuata au kutofuata mpangilio wa Bwana alioundaa kwa ajili ya maisha yetu. Kwa kweli, "Alitonyesha njia na kuonyesha mfano, na kila kipengele [kufafanuliwa]."

Kama wanafunzi wa Kristo, tunatamani kutembea katika njia ambayo Yeye aliitengeneza kwa ajili yetu wakati wa huduma Yake duniani. Sio tu tunatamani kutenda mapenzi Yake na yale yote yatakayompendeza Yeye bali pia tunataka kufuata mfano Wake. Tunapojiandaa kuwa kweli kwa kila agano tunalofanya na kuishi "kwa kila neno litokalo katika kinywa cha Mungu," tutalindwa dhidi ya kuwa wahanga wa dhambi na matatizo ya ulimwengu—matatizo ya falsafa na mafundisho ambayo yangetuongoza mbali kutoka kwenye zile lulu za thamani kubwa.

Mimi binafsi nimevutiwa na vile kuwa mwenye kujisalimisha kiroho kwa Mungu kumbadilisha maisha ya wanafunzi wa Kristo kwa kadiri wanavyochagua kufanya yale mambo ambayo yanafanya kazi kwa ajili ya na yanayopendeka machoni pa Bwana. Ninajua kuhusu mvulana ambaye alikuwa na wasiwasi wa kwenda misheni jinsi alivyopata msukumo wa kiungu kwenda na kumtumikia Bwana wakati alipomsikiliza kiongozi mkongwe wa Kanisa akishiriki ushuhuda wake binafsi na uzoefu mtakatifu wa kutumikia kama mmisionari.

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 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

Kwa maneno yake mwenyewe, mvulana huyu, sasa ni mmisionari aliyerejea, alisema: “Niliposikiliza ushuhuda wa Mtume wa Mwokozi Yesu Kristo, niliweza kuhisi upendo wa Mungu kwa ajili yangu, na nilitamani kushiriki upendo huo na wengine. Wakati huo nilijua kwamba ninapaswa kutumikia misheni licha ya uoga wangu, mashaka na wasiwasi. Nilihisi kujiamini kabisa katika baraka na ahadi za Bwana kwa ajili ya watoto Wake. Leo mimi ni mtu mpya, nina ushuhuda kwamba injili hii ni ya kweli na kwamba Kanisa la Yesu Kristo limerejeshwa duniani.” Mvulana huyu alichagua njia ya Bwana na kuwa mfano wa mwanafunzi wa kweli katika kila njia.

Msichana mwaminifu aliamua kutovunja viwango vyake wakati yeye alipoombwa kuvaa kwa njia isiyo ya uadilifu ili kuendana na kiten-go cha biashara cha kampuni ya fasheni pale alipofanya kazi. Akielewa kwamba mwili wake ni zawadi takatifu kutoka kwa Baba yetu wa Mbinguni na mahali ambapo Roho anaweza kukaa, ilimpelekea kuishi viwango vya juu sana kuliko vya ulimwengu. Sio tu alikuza kujiamini kwake kwa wale waliomuona akiishi kweli za injili ya Yesu Kristo bali pia alihifadhi kazi yake, ambayo wakati fulani ilikuwa hatarini kupotea. Utayari wake wa kufanya kile kilichopendeza machoni pa Bwana, badala ya kile kilichofanya kazi kwa ajili ya ulimwengu, kilimpa kujiamini kimaagano katikati ya chaguzi ngumu.

Akina kaka na dada, kila mara tunakabiliwa na maamuzi kama hayo katika safari yetu ya kila siku. Inahitaji ujasiri na moyo ulio tayari kutulia na kujichunguza kwa uaminifu na unyenyekevu ili kutambua uwepo wa udhaifu wa mwili katika maisha yetu ambao huzuia uwezo wetu wa kujisalimisha wenyewe kwa Mungu na hatimaye kuamua kukubali njia Yake badala ya yetu wenyewe. Mtihani mkuu kabisa wa uanafunzi wetu unapatikana katika utayari wetu wa kuachana na kupoteza uzamani wetu wenyewe na kusalimisha roho yetu na nafsi yetu yote kwa Mungu ili kwamba mapenzi Yake yawe mapenzi yetu.

Mojawapo ya nyakati tukufu za duniani hutokea wakati tunapogundua shangwe ambayo huja wakati daima tunapofanya yale mambo ambayo “yanafanya kazi kwa ajili ya na kumpendeza Bwana” na “kile kinachofanya kwa ajili yetu” vinakuwa kitu kimoja na sawa! Kwa dhamira na kutokuwa na shaka, kufanya mapenzi ya Bwana kuwa yetu kunahitaji uanafunzi adhimu na wa

Lord, and we totally yield our wills to Him. Such spiritual submissiveness, so to speak, is beautiful, powerful, and transformational.

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.

kishujaa! Katika wakati huo adhimu, tunawe- kwa wakfu kwa Bwana, na kutoa mapenzi yetu Kwake. Kujisalimisha kiroho kama huku, tuseme, ni kuzuri, kuna nguvu sana, na kunabadilisha.

Ninashuhudia kwenu kwamba kufuata mapenzi ya Bwana katika maisha yetu kuta- tusaikia kupata lulu ya thamani kubwa katika ulimwengu—ufalme wa mbinguni. Ninaomba kwa kila mmoja wetu, katika wakati na zamu yetu, tutaweza kutangaza, kwa ujasiri wa kimaagano, kwa Baba yetu wa Mbinguni na Mwokozi Yesu Kristo kwamba “kile kinachofanya kazi kwa ajili Yako, hufanya kwa ajili yangu.” Ninasema mambo haya katika jina la Mwokozi Yesu Kristo, amina.