

# Heartbeats

The Official Newsletter of  
Heart t' Heart

May 2009

A Twelve Step Support Group for the LDS Community

Volume 19 – Issue 5

## The Twelve Steps of Heart t' Heart

1. We admitted we were powerless over compulsive/addictive behaviors--that our lives had become unmanageable. (*Mosiah 4:5; Alma 26:12*)
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. (*Mosiah 4:9; Alma 26:12*)
3. Made the decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. (*2 Ne. 10:24; Omni 1:36; Mosiah 3:19; 2 Nephi 4:34*)
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. (*Alma 15:17; Mosiah 4:2; Jacob 4:6-7; Ether 12:27*)
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. (*Mosiah 26:29; Alma 22:18*)
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. (*Helaman 3:35; 2 Nephi 31:19; Mosiah 2:20-21*)
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. (*Alma 36:18; Alma 38:8; Moroni 10:32; Mosiah 5:2; Alma 34:15-16*)
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. (*3 Nephi 12:9, 24, 44-45.*)
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. (*Mosiah 27:35; 3 Nephi 12:25; Mosiah 26:30*)
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. (*2 Nephi 4:18; 2 Nephi 10:20; Mosiah 26:30*)
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. (*2 Nephi 32:3; Alma 37:37; Helaman 10:4*)
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others still suffering from the effects of compulsive behaviors and to practice these principles in all our affairs. (*Mosiah 27:36-37; Alma 5:7; Moroni 7:3*)

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## WHAT I HAVE LEARNED FROM MY CHILDREN ABOUT THE SUPREME PRINCIPLE OF AGENCY

I count it as one of my greatest blessings that twelve of our Father's children allowed me to help them obtain physical bodies. And though I spent a great deal of my strength and time in being their mortal mother, they remain who they were from "the beginning," from even before they were "my" children.

It has taken me the better part of my mortal life (over 60 years now) to bear the truth that each of these twelve souls who I carried in my womb, are on their own very personal and totally individual and unique journey—and at their own speed. And though I would like to see them all inherit eternal life ASAP, they are no more prepared to "bear all things now" than I am. This is the truth the Lord testifies of in D&C 50:40-44. In those verses He speaks to all of us, His brothers and sisters, and calls us "little children" who "cannot bear all things now," who must each and all of us grow in grace (power given of Him) and a knowledge of the truth." Then He goes on to invite us to "Fear not," even though we cannot bear all things yet. Why? Because we "little children" have all been given to Him by the Father. He goes on to assure us of our salvation because we are His and for our sake/rescue He has laid down His life to "overcome the world," and that "none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost."

Some of "my" children are active in the Church, attending all of their meetings, holding positions in their wards, taking their children to church, listening to General Conferences, reading some portion of the Ensign—engaged in that kind of life style. Of this group, some seem to have a pretty adequate degree of "internalized religion" or spiritual experience, as well. They believe in and receive personal revelation that comforts and counsels them as they take time to have their own private, individual communion with the Lord, guided and anchored in their personal feasting and supping upon the scriptures. In other words, they follow all the way through to live the life described in verse 44 and allow the "good shepherd" to be consciously "in their midst," and they build upon Him, the "stone of Israel." Meanwhile, there are others in this group

**(What I Have Learned...--cont. from p. 1)**

of “my” children who even while being active in the Church, are stressed by their activity, having not yet connected with the Lord Jesus Christ in whose church they serve.

There are also among my mortal children, some who are not able to honestly bear participating in the degree of light and knowledge it would take to be active in the LDS Church—or in any church. I am so grateful that, as far as I know, none of them are actually hostile toward the LDS Church. In fact, most of them speak respectfully of it, if they speak at all. At least they speak respectfully of my involvement in it and take it in good humor and tolerance of our differences. Nevertheless, they require me to have a living experience of the principle expressed in the 11th Article of Faith—that I respect their right to “worship” (believe in, give honor to) who, what and where they may. None of them have turned to other religious denominations, as far as I know. None of them are seeking God in any other way. They’re just not ready to bear seeking God in any form, period. For their sake, especially, I am grateful for the knowledge I have through the Restoration that there will be a 1,000 years in the millennium for them to either be persuaded to turn to God and His Love manifest in an through Jesus Christ—or not. In other words, they (and us all) have whatever years we spend in mortality, plus a thousand more to become ready to bear “all things” pertaining to God and to accept our own potential for Godhood. How great the God of our understanding—the God of LDS theology—is! How generous, patient, longsuffering, and kind He is (D&C 121:42)! How merciful He is toward those of us who are not ready to believe Him yet (John 12:47) or who can—in all honesty—only partially believe Him, even as the father in Mark 9:

*Mark 9: 23-24 – Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. 24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

How grateful I am for the further light and knowledge that is available to me about agency, just as soon as I’m humble enough to accept it and bear the reality of it. Over and over in the scriptures of the Restoration, I find testimony that God holds the sovereignty of each of us as the supreme principle that can never be, *must* never be, violated. Either our participation must be voluntary, drawn out of each of us by love, not by compulsion (D&C 121:37), or not at all. God, Himself, must stand

powerless before His children’s reluctance or resistance to receive more than they are ready to receive. He cannot force anyone of us to embrace the truth any faster than they choose to. Even He weeps over His children who choose to reject the plan—the way and the truth—that leads to genuine joy and reunion with Him and all our Eternal Family in the Celestial glory.

*Moses 7:28-29 – And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people, and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains? 29 And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?*

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I will never forget the impact it had on me when, as I sought the Spirit of the Lord to attend my scripture study time and to open the scriptures to me—and lead me to those truths I needed as a parent dealing with my children’s choices to leave the Church—He brought me to these three:

Alma 29:1-4

*1 O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people!*

*2 Yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, repentance and the plan of*

*redemption, that they should repent and come unto our God, that there might not be more sorrow upon all the face of the earth.*

*3 But behold, I am a man, and do sin in my wish; for I ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me.*

*4 I ought not to harrow up in my desires, the firm decree of a just God, for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desire, whether it be unto death or unto life; yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable, according to their wills, whether they be unto salvation or unto destruction.*

Here we find Alma wishing that he could have the power of a heavenly being—an angel—to get others attention and wake them up immediately, instantly. But he admits that he actually is thinking in a “sinful” way—a way separate from God’s way—by thinking like that. Why? Because (as he goes on to explain in v. 4), God Himself has set unalterable degrees—bounds—around the agency of each of us. We are each free to choose according to our own wills (not another’s will, not our parents’ will, not even God’s will) whether we will live according to the principles of life (fellowship with Truth, with God), or the principles that lead to death (to existence separate from Truth and from God.)

*Alma 10:6 Nevertheless, I did harden my heart, for I was called many times and I would not hear; therefore I knew concerning these things, yet I would not know; therefore I went on rebelling against God, in the wickedness of my heart,*

I knew . . . yet I would not know. Here we find Amulek admitting that he knew something, but chose to not know. “I would not.” I willed to not know. I find it so interesting that the phenomenon of “denial” is actually validated in the scriptures!

*D&C 88:32 And they who remain shall also be quickened; nevertheless, they shall return again to their own place, to enjoy that which they are willing to receive, because they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received.*

Because they were not willing. Here, yet again, we find the truth taught that each and every one of us is free to inherit whatever degree of glory, of truth and light, of nearness to God, that we choose to inherit. And that reality is already in affect, even here and now, during

our mortal sojourn and probation. We are each and all—even our dearest loved ones, children, spouses, parents, friends—all—allowed to refuse that “which they might have received.”

The bottom line, the final word, in time (here and now) and in eternity is that agency reigns supreme. Nothing happens that is not voluntary. We are the ones who volunteer, you step up or step down to what we choose to receive from God. He would that we all would receive a fullness—all that He is and all that He has—just as soon as we are ready to bear it. No one can say it with more power than the Prophet Joseph Smith:

*“God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, for the day must come when no man need say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know Him . . . from the least to the greatest.” (Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, p. 268.)*

—end—

Post Script: I have recorded, yet again, the testimony I have obtained from the Lord about the principle of agency—and how I can’t overrule it—and that not even He can overrule it. All participation in Godliness and the truths that are foundational to Godliness must be 100% intrinsic and voluntary. It must be genuine—coming truly from the core of the person participating. If any outward activity is faked or coerced, it is not counted as good, because it is not a fruit of the truth, but rather a product of a falsity.



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Colleen H. ☐



# FOOLS FOR THE LORD

My son loves April Fool's day. He is quite a prankster and almost waits with Christmas-like anticipation for the day each year when he can unleash all sorts of practical jokes on friends and family with impunity. He thoroughly enjoys the notion that he can get away with almost anything and his humor "victims" have to acknowledge that he "got them."

I've noticed this behavior in others as well, and have to admit having pulled a few doozies myself over the years. The day presents itself with the opportunity to act foolishly and some people seem to let it all hang out.

As I was chuckling about one of my son's latest capers, a quiet thought ran through my mind, "Brooks, what would you choose to do?"

"What?" I said to myself.

"If I gave you a day to do whatever you wanted, without fear of accountability or side-effect; if I could promise that it would have no lasting effect on you or anyone else, what would you choose to do today?"

I felt my smile leave my face and a more somber mood fill me. The Lord has presented such perfectly timed questions to me before. Usually they have the affect of causing me to sit down and catch my breath and this one was no different.

The Lord had just presented me with the ultimate "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas" scenario. I felt that there was something extremely important behind this question. Rather than just a temptation to let it all hang out; I felt the patient and loving hand of the Lord reaching out to me to help me understand something at a much deeper level.

I had been studying this morning about the topic of Agency. We've all heard the Sunday School lesson. God gave us the freedom to choose our course in Life. And this most basic of all principles had been hard won in the Pre-Existence. The Great War in Heaven had been fought over the Father's determination to maintain that right for his children. Lucifer, or Satan, had been cast out, along with one-third of God's children, because of his desire to overthrow that principle for everyone.

But Agency is more, or perhaps less, than the power to choose. There are all sorts of choices in life, and to bring all choices under the umbrella of Agency is

missing the point. My ability to choose chicken pot pie or chocolate cake for dinner, or even my ability to go to church on Sunday or stay home and watch the game doesn't begin to reach the real point, the essence of the divine gift of Agency.

The principle of Agency is really about just one choice. Lehi describes that choice in the Book of Mormon.

*"...they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil..." (2 Nephi 2:27)*

God himself summarizes this choice again for Enoch in the Pearl of Great Price.

*"...Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency; And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood; (Moses 7:32-33)*

**The most supreme and powerful Being in the Universe will not force me to acknowledge him as someone important to me. Do I choose the Father on my own will? Do I choose eternal life (life with God)?... Or, do I choose to try to find another way? The choice is and will always remain mine to make. The simplicity of the choice seems so obvious when put into these terms.**

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However, The Lord's question to me, "What would you

# FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND CHRIST

choose today?" seemed to me to be getting at another layer of this choice. Not only was he asking me what; but why? Would I still choose Him even without the threat of consequences, the inevitability of death? Would I choose to do the right thing, not because of the negative consequences assigned to doing the wrong thing, but because doing the right thing was what I REALLY desired... deep, deep down where no one can see, down where sometimes, even I have a difficult time seeing clearly.

As I look into that abyss, I learned a little something about myself. I learned that the answer for me isn't all that clear cut.

Even five years ago, I would have said, "Alright, a free day of sinning!" I would have been on the acting out express headed to zone-outs-ville. And I have to admit that, even after having been in recovery for several years and having been blessed of the Lord with one of my longest stretches of sobriety, I still feel a fairly strong pull in the direction of "wild abandon."

But, on the other end of this spectrum, through applying the principles and tools associated with 12 "simple" steps, I've come to know Someone that has begun to mean a great deal to me. I have come to know a Friend that has been with me through not only every major event in my life, but also through the lonely doldrums, the times when the days just seemed to melt one into the next with no real distinctions. I've begun to come to know about His tender and precious mercy, his loving kindness and patience with my stubborn and prideful nature. I have come to look forward to the moments when I am more aware of His presence in my day and for the deeper and more meaningful interactions.

So, I am still a fool - still susceptible to the wiles of the adversary, to the constant drumbeat of temptations. But, the Lord showed me today that I have come a step in the right direction. C.S. Lewis makes the comment that we don't run to Heaven so much as that we back slowly away from Hell... but back away we can... and finding distance away from that misery I am... and that isn't so foolish after all.

May we all be found fools for the Lord, this and every day.

Brooks L. ☐



As I pondered the epistles of John in order to prepare for a Gospel Doctrine lesson titled "God is Love," I was amazed at how full John's teachings are of the principles the Lord has been guiding me to in my 12-step recovery work.

Permit me to share a few passages with you, along with my comments on them. (Words in square brackets are my comments, and words in italics are changes to the King James version made in the Joseph Smith translation)

1 John 1

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full [through your fellowship with God and Christ and the saints].

5 [How do we enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son?] This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [Note 1 John 5:17 that says "All unrighteousness is sin", meaning there are no "big sins" and "little sins", just sin.]

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us

What does it mean to have fellowship with the Father and with Jesus Christ?

*Father is inviting me to have a daily walk with him – to converse with him every hour, even every minute.*

D&C 107: 18, 19

18 The power and authority of the higher, or

Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church—

19 To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.

Enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father and Jesus! What a blessing! How do we receive that blessing? I believe that's what John is talking about when he says "our fellowship is with the Father and with Jesus." And I believe John is telling us how to achieve that fellowship.

Turn to Christ. Ask him to apply his atoning blood. Repent every time you sin. Ask him to take all desires for evil out of your heart. Walk with him. Abide in him. Make him your favorite friend. Spend time with him.

As you do, he will fill you with his love. He will take you in his arms, and heal you from your addictions, your compulsions, your weaknesses, your sins, your spiritual illnesses. Sometimes, he will also heal you from your physical illnesses, but it is SO much more of a blessing for him to heal you from your spiritual illnesses than from your physical ones. If you are healed spiritually, if you are filled with his love, if he becomes your best friend and your most fervent desire is to be with him, then your physical illnesses really don't matter, because it matters not whether you are in this life or the next. Your fellowship with him and with Father can exist here, or it can exist in the next world, in like measure. It can exist whether your life is easy or your life is hard. For some of us, it is our hardships that bring us to that fellowship with God. For some of us, it is our addictions. Perhaps there are some who find that intimate personal relationship with God without needing hardships or opposition, but I suspect most of us do not fall into that category.

As you strive to be close to God and Jesus, take advantage of the blessings of the temple. As you serve "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" in the temple, by doing ordinance work for those beyond the veil who cannot do it for themselves, you can enjoy the communion with them referred to in D&C 107:19. And you can enjoy the communion and presence of God and Jesus.

If you have a temple recommend, I urge you to spend as much time as you can with your brothers and sisters

beyond the veil, and with Father and Jesus, in the temple. Open your mind and heart to them and they will begin teaching you things you never realized.

Take a notebook and leave it in your locker, and after each session, write down the thoughts and impressions that have come to you during the ceremony. Write down the name of the person you officiated for. Perhaps you will meet them again, in this life or the next.

Ask Heavenly Father questions during the ceremony. Try and understand why things are done the way they are done, what the symbols mean.

Study what the scriptures say about how we communicate through the Spirit, for it is through the spirit that we communicate with God, with Jesus, and with those who are on the other side of the veil—who I believe are part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn.

If you do **not** have a temple recommend, I urge you to study Mosiah 4, and seek a personal relationship with your savior, and go to your bishop and ask him what you need to do to get a temple recommend, and make it the central focus of your life. As you learn to rely on the Savior each day, I promise you that a change will come in your life, and the day will come that you can enter the temple worthily, and there experience the peace that surpasseth understanding, and deepen your relationship with the Lord and with his children.

I testify that as you make your relationship with Christ the central focus of your life, the day will come that he will wrap you in the arms of his love, and you will *know* that he lives and loves you. You will want nothing more than to continue to feel that love, and to have everyone you know feel that love. Nothing in life will compare to that experience. The things you once thought important will fall away, and your whole focus will be "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" All desires for evil will be taken from your heart, and you will want to do nothing but share his love with others. That day may come much sooner than you expect, or it may not, but it will come, in the Lord's time.

I bear this witness in the name of Jesus Christ, who is my Lord and Savior and Redeemer and my best friend. Amen.

Keith H. □

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Editor's Note: Please remember, the opinions shared in Heartbeats are of the person sharing. We hope and pray that you will read, ponder and pray for direct inspiration and counsel from the Lord. Take what you feel confirmed in your own heart concerning the sharing and toss the rest.

### Online Meetings

To attend one of the online meetings go to:  
<http://www.heart-t-heart2.org/chat>.  
(Note: New address)

All are welcome to attend. If this is your first time, review the information on the regular Heart t' Heart webpage: <http://www.heart-t-heart.org>.

**OL-04 - Sunday through Friday:** Every morning, 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m. General Focus (MST).

**OL-02 - Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).** General Focus, Book Study: HDDMFB. Open Sharing.

**OL-05 - Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).** Food Focus, Book Study: AA Big Book.

**OL-03 - Saturday, 7:00 - 8:30 a.m. Mountain Time Zone (USA).** General Focus, Book Study: HDDMFB. Open Sharing.

### Phone Meetings

Thursday-11:00 am, MDT  
Sunday-4:00 pm, MDT  
(See website for details)

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We encourage reader contributions to Heartbeats. Ideas for articles:

- 1 In-depth study/analysis of principles found in Steps or Traditions
- 2 Personal experiences with the Steps, Traditions, Tools – how they work in your life
- 3 Capturing from the scriptures, *Big Book* or *He Did Deliver Me From Bondage*
- 4 Open sharing with positive recovery messages
- 5 Program from the Prophets – quotations from modern prophets with a “recovery” message
- 6 Short quotes, thoughts or one-liners

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## What's Inside *Heartbeats* ...

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2009 HtH CONFERENCE FLYER AND REGISTRATION FORM – See enclosed flyer and plan to come!

