

The Trial by Fire Church

Lupton Branch has a long and glorious history, a history that has just experienced challenging times. We have started calling ourselves the “trial by fire” church.

Jó, kq’ bee óola baah hadoolyí’ígíí biláhídi át’éego nihe’oodlq nabóhonitaahgo ílíggo bééhodoozjii. 1 Peter 1: 7-9. “Trial by fire” is a term used by Peter to refer to the intensity of the challenge to the people’s faith. “That the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire... yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory... t’aa íyísi íł hózhóonii doo baa yájóoiti’ át’éii bee nihił nidahoozhqoh!... receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls “Háálá nihe’oodlq’ ła’ yiyiilaagíí binahji’ hihii’ sizíinii yisdá’iildééh shódayoost’e’. Peter reminds us that the trial of our faith, even if tried with fire, has the potential to bring us great blessings.

It is with the hope of receiving great blessings that the members of the Lupton Branch continued to meet each Sunday, even though we had to travel to Gallup. “And also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning... Dóó ałdó’ díí Jesus Christ, Diyin God biYe’, Yá’qash dóó nahasdzáán yiTaa’ nilíinii, t’áa ałtsoní hodeeyáádáqá, yiilaaii doogáłgíí, nihił béédahózin biniyé...”

After His series of visits with the people in America, they organized a church ”and they who were baptized in the name of Jesus were called the church of Christ.” Dóó Jesus bízhi’ binahji’ tó bee dabi’doolzi’éqé éí Christ bisodizin bá hooghan da’atahgo bee dabi’dééji’. 3 Nephi 26:21.

The 12 disciples traveled to preach and baptize. They were not alone; they knew they were acting in the name of Jesus Christ and under His direction. “...it came to pass that the disciples were gathered together and were united in mighty prayer and fasting. ádóó naakits’áadahii t’ááfa’ yéigo sodadilzin díí ch’iyáán ádaah deit’íggo áłah daazlıı’.” And Jesus again showed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father in his name. Dóó Jesus yich’i’ íshjání ánáá’diilyaa, háálá éí bízhi’ binahji’ aTaa’ yich’i’ sodadilzin.” 3 Nephi 27:1, 2.

Jesus continued to teach them and answer their questions...”ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name. éí ání Christ bízhi’ ák’idadidooh’t’ááł... For by this name shall ye be called at the last day; Jó díí ázhi’ éí akée’di yookáłgíí biyi’ bee danihi’dójii dooleeł. And whoso taketh upon him my name and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day... dóó t’áa háishjii shízhi’ ák’iidootáqago, dóó nihoniyáajj’ yá’átéhgo iinánígíí bidiniłkaalgo, éí akée’di yookáłgíí biyi’ yisdádoogááł... and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake...dóó shízhi’ binahji’ aTaa’ bich’i’ sodadidoolzjii áko sodizin bá hooghaan shinahji’ yik’ijidoodliił.” 3 Nephi 27:5-7.

He makes it clear to them that each person must take upon himself the name of Christ and endure to the end to be saved, and explains what that means...”and this is my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you, that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me...Jó shin’nitin nihich’i’ kwíshłaa, dóó díí éí shina’nitin nihich’i’

kwíishłaaígíí át'é, shizhé'é bíni' be'eshłéehgo biniyé nahasdzáán bikáa'gi nýá, shizhé'é shiní' a'ígíí biniinaa. that I might be lifted up upon the cross...that I might draw all men unto me..to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil. Dóó tsin ałnáo' a'í bikáa'gi dah shidi' dooltééł biniyé shiTaa' shiní' a', dóó bik'iji' tsin ałnáo' ai bikáa'gi dah shidi' diiltúgo... And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world... ádóó baa hodoolzhish, t'áá háishíł bąhagi át'éii yóo iidii' ánígíí dóó shízhi' biinahji' tó bee bi' doolzi' ígíí éi Iisizí Diyinii biyi' dooleeł; dóó nahasdzáán bikáa' bá nihoot' áąji' yéigo át'úgo iiná hazhó'ó áyiilaago; jó, nihookáá' dinee' bá ndáhwiist' áąji' ahoolzhiizhgo éi díi' diné shizhé'é bidááhdóó nizhónigo iiná áyiilaago bá hadeesdzih." 3 Nephi 27:13-16.

Endure to the end, is clearly the doctrine of maintaining oneself clean by obeying the commandments throughout life. "Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day. K'ad díi' éi beehaz' áanii át'é: Nahasdzáán ndaneez' áąji' kéédahoht' íinii, nihe' iina' łahgo ándaahdlééh, dóó shaa hohkááh dóó shízhi' binahji' tó bee danihi' dilziłh, áko Ii' sizí Diyinii doo niąąh chingóó shidááhdóó nihidoohkah." 3 Nephi 27:20.

He did not ask them to do anything that he wouldn't do himself, in fact, he said, "...for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do; dashinół' ú'go íishłaaígíí jó éi ádadoohłíł... therefore if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day... Éi bąą, díi' óohłaaago nihik' ihojıdıi dooleeł, háálá nihoníyá bijııdi éi yisdánihidii' doo' nił". 3 Nephi 27:21, 22.

He did not leave them without the resources to accomplish this great task: "Therefore, ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for he that asketh, receiveth; and unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Éi bąą, bí' dífnóhkeed, dóó nihaa doolyééł; dáádılkał nahóhłts' in, dóó nihich' i' ąą ádoolníł; háálá t'áá háiida adókeedígíí, éi ba' doolyééł, dóó dáádılkał neiniłts' inígíí, éi bá ąą ádoolníł. 27: 29.

He expressed great joy, knowing they would indeed endure to the end, "and now, behold, my joy is great, even unto fulness... Jó dóó k'ad, ts'ídá yéigo éiyá, nihaa shił hózhó..." 3 Nephi 27:30.

"And it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these saying he said unto his disciples: Enter ye at the strait gate; for strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many there be that travel them in, until the night cometh, wherein no man can work. ádóó díi' Jesus ałtso yee haadzii' go naakits' áadahí kónigo yich' i' hanáánaádzii': hoołts' ózigo yah a'atiindéé' yah ahohkááh' háálá iiná doo ninít' i' ii éi ałts' ózigo bił yah ahóót' i', doo ahoołts' ózigo bich' i' atiin, dóó t'áá díkwíhigo t' éiyá yik' i' hakááh, ndi hool' áágóó anoonééł éi hóteelgoo yah a'atin, dóó hóteelgo bich' i' atiin, dóó t'óó ahayói éi yikáá' yikah, ł' éé' hodooleełji', éi biyi' éi doo ła' diné naanish íidoolııł da." 27:33.

The people of Zarahemla did not bring the Lamanite refugees brought by Ammon into their own city, but set aside a refuge for them. Their reservation was called “Jershon”(Alma 27::22-24). The land of Jershon became a place of refuge for all who were rejected by their families and communities (Alma 35:6,7).

We pray that our little church may become a place of refuge and peace for all people; a place where our family and community differences are forgotten and the gospel of Christ brings harmony and order to our lives, progress to our lives, and prosperity to our families; a place where we can become “fellow citizens with the saints”, a place where we belong.

Roy Howard	Delbert Brown	Edision Wauneka
Branch President	1st Counselor	2nd Counselor

Circles of Influence

When we moved to Texas, our high school daughter said she felt like she was in a bubble looking out at the world. Her circle of friends was gone, and she rejected all those who would reach out to her. She even rejected us, and left us with no option but to leave the door open and love her. Years later this strategy paid off and now she calls us every day expressing gratitude and love to us. Now she reaches out to others in love, blessing the lives of many.

He drew a circle that shut me out--
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!
"Outwitted" an Epigram by Edwin Markham, 1852-1940

Isaiah describes God as one who draws a circle to take us in: “It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isaiah 40:22). Jesus was often criticized for who he associated with, but he kept expanding his circle to include the neglected of his region and beyond. “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10: 16).

We can choose each day who to include in our circle. Jesus returned to his “own country” to teach, “and they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief” (Matthew 13:57, 58). Some chose to reject him, others chose to take him in. When he heard of the death of John the Baptist, “...he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, [thousands] followed him on foot out of the cities” (Matthew 14:13).

We can choose each day how to react to our trials. Two years ago I was assigned to the Lupton Branch of the church and my circle expanded and dozens of people included me in their circle. When the arsonist burned down our meeting house, the church members in Gallup took us in. Some in Lupton decided to wait for a new building rather than following us to a “place

apart”. Now that our new building is nearly ready, we expect that many will come and see whether any good thing can come out of Lupton (John 1:46). “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7). Lupton’s trial by fire is not just a trial of faith, but a test of each person’s ability to take in others in during a time of great need.

When the fire destroyed a place of worship for one group, did those of other groups consider their grief? When the new building becomes available will the community come together to encourage the members? Will the members reach out to all those in need, members or not? Will brothers forgive one another? Will each accept a responsibility to be of service?

What happens to anyone affects us all. Can we, like Jesus, show empathy to our families as well as to those who are different from us? “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). To be a fellow citizen is to draw your circle to let others in, and reach out to include others through your interest and service.

Teach me, Father, how to be
Kind and patient as a tree.
Joyfully the crickets croon
Under the shady oak at noon;
Beetle, on his mission bent,
Tarrys in that cooling tent.
Let me, also, cheer a spot,
Hidden field or garden grot-
Place where passing souls can rest
On the way and be their best.
from “A Prayer” by Edwin Markham, 1852-1940