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Eternal Beings Need You

1 message

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Sat, Feb 20, 2021 at 10:43 PM

Hello my friend,

I care about you. That's why I keep writing these emails every week.

I do hope you and your family are doing well. (It feels like I say that every time, but that's how I feel, and it's what I want to say to you.)

In this email I'd like to share some thoughts about the bigger picture. I think I say that a lot too, but when it comes down to it, that's what religion is, understanding a bigger picture. And we naturally want to know what is beyond us. That's why there are so many kinds of religions. Why would we yearn to know the bigger picture if there wasn't one? One of my favorite concepts from C. S. Lewis is that if none of us had eyes, then light would have no meaning, we wouldn't talk about it all the time (from "Mere Christianity").

But people do talk about God, the heavens, afterlife, and the eternities all the time, so there must be something true about it. (And we know what it is, mostly.)

And when there's truth, there's also falsehood.

Since we have so much knowledge revealed to us about the eternities, we can see how the partial truths of other religions fit in. Many religious concepts are still 'true' but only partially so. There are also a few concepts that are just outright false.

So, the truth I wanted to mention today is that we are eternal beings. And if that's true, then when we die, we don't cease to exist, but just change forms and move into another realm. And if that's true, then there are a lot of people in that other realm. And, if that's true, then that begs the question, what are they doing?

We don't know.

But we do know that the essence of a soul is its ability to choose. So, if we can choose, then we can learn. And if we learn, we can progress.

So, while we don't know exactly what they are doing, because we know some fundamental truths, 1) that good and evil exist (or truth and error), and 2) that we can choose between good and evil, then we know that the spirits that depart this life are doing something that involves them choosing between good and evil. And that means they are either progressing by choosing more good, or digressing by choosing more evil.

Of course, our Heavenly Father wants His children to progress and choose more good to become more like him and experience divine joy.

So, He laid out the path pretty clearly, or, in other words, the good choices we need to make. We call them covenants. They are wrapped in ordinances to give them more meaning to us and our finite minds, and to teach us how these spiritual matters work.

And while we don't know a lot about this other spiritual realm, we know that these physical ordinances are important, and apparently can't be done anywhere else. So we build temples to perform these sacred, critical ordinances here on the earth, so that those who have left can continue to learn, progress, and choose the path that our Father in Heaven has laid out for us to become like Him.

This is why temple and family history work is so important. We enable our ancestors, and all those myriad of people who have already had their earthly journey before us, to progress along the path of progress and divine joy.

It's a wonderful work. It helps us remember the bigger picture, and helps us stay on the path by remembering our own covenants we made when we performed these ordinances for ourselves. (It's a very smart plan. Of course, God knows what He's doing :)

This week, we all have an amazing, unique opportunity to learn how to get involved in this work of connecting the generations of our Heavenly Father's children, our brothers and sisters, with each other and with our divine paths to true joy and eternal progression.

I'm talking about RootsTech Connect, the church sponsored, worldwide online conference event, free for anyone. Learn about the incredible speakers and classes offered here: <https://www.rootstech.org/?lang=eng>

With new technology and functionality in online family history applications such as FamilySearch.org there is a whole new world of things you can do that apply to creating or discovering your family history. No matter how much you think you know, I'll bet you'll be able to learn something new during this online conference, Feb 25-27.

You should also know that because this is God's work, He is able put you and other people in specific places to help you find ancestors who may be lost because of some misplaced earthly records. Our fellow Penny Creek ward member, and family history expert, Peg Kelly, has shared a wonderful story on our web site about that kind of experience happening to her. Read it here:

<https://pennycreek.org/2021/02/18/inspired-family-history/>

Remember, you are an eternal being. And that means a lot.

It means that everyone else is eternal too, and there have been a lot of them who have missed out on important ordinances. So that means we have a lot of work to do.

Thank you for all the work you do to bless the lives of others (no matter when they lived on the earth.)

Take care!

Bishop

P.S. Tomorrow, Group A can attend our Sacrament meeting in person (and anyone who feels the need). Everyone else can attend at our Zoom link here:

<https://zoom.us/j/92685846361>

And today was a wonderful broadcast from the church for Primary Children and their parents, but I encourage everyone to watch the recording because it was a wonderful presentation, with fun activities for the children, great stories from around the world, and messages from church leaders, including President Nelson.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/broadcasts?lang=eng&video=13346447279889993049&mode=watch>

You received this email because you made your email address available to your local Church leaders. It was sent by Rex Williams, whose calling is Bishop.