

Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 123.1)

LESSON 46 (CORE)

[“A Kingdom, Which Shall Never Be Destroyed”](#)

Hook	It's rolling fast and covering the earth, but what precisely is the stone, anyway?
Goal	
Overview	
Conclusion	

Manual Goal: To strengthen class members' testimonies of the restored Church of [Jesus Christ](#) and encourage them to help build the kingdom of God on earth.

EGD Goal: To encourage class members to build up the kingdom of God by living gospel principles and putting into practice elements of a perfected world.

Nice straightforward and focused lesson.

I. Sunday School

- a. Daniel's vision in LDS interpretation and culture
- b. Review the reading
- c. Is there a distinction between the "Kingdom of God", "the Gospel", the "Restored Gospel", and the "LDS Church"? Which one is the "stone that will fill the earth?" (Nephi's vision, two Churches)
 - i. Gospel
 - ii. Restored Gospel
 - iii. Kingdom of God (The Greek "basileia" also means "dominion of God", as can the Hebrew here, "Malchoot")
 - iv. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- d. What is the stone? (Here is the argument I propose: If the Millennium is the fullness of God's dominion and kingdom, then anything that increases Millennial principles makes up part of the stone) What are the traits of the Millennium? Peace, all needs fulfilled, safety, security, love, etc. It is our job to perfect creation, "Tikkun Olam" (Look at Environmentalism and Stewardship as one application),
- e. Our role in filling the earth with Millennial perfection ("lived as if the kingdom had already come")
- f. Timing of the Millennium/our role in preparing for it (Go back to D&C 65 and Packer's quote)
- g. Our lives as stones, and what knocks off the rough bits
- h. Conclusion I

I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priest-craft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty.

History of the Church, 5:401.

Narrative: Move away from Mormon triumphalism (challenge American exceptionalism as well) and see the “stone cut out of the mountain without hands” as human flourishing, respect for life, helping the earth move forward into a Paradisiacal state. Mormonism as one small part of that

Bring in Joseph’s quote, life knocking off our rough bits

The Millennium is the Kingdom of God in its fullness, so anything that contributes to that well being, peace, etc is part of the Kingdom of God

Links

Packer’s Second Coming isn’t immediate talk

Sometimes you might be tempted to think as I did from time to time in my youth: “The way things are going, the world’s going to be over with. The end of the world is going to come before I get to where I should be.” Not so! You can look forward to doing it right—getting married, having a family, seeing your children and grandchildren, maybe even great-grandchildren.

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/10/counsel-to-youth?lang=eng>

Environmentalism FAQ

<http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/environmental-stewardship-conservation>

All humankind are stewards over the earth and should gratefully use what God has given, avoid wasting life and resources and use the bounty of the earth to care for the poor and the needy.

Approaches to the environment must be prudent, realistic, balanced and consistent with the needs of the earth and of current and future generations, rather than pursuing the immediate vindication of personal desires or avowed rights. The earth and all life upon it are much more than items to be consumed or conserved. God intends His creations to be aesthetically pleasing to enliven the mind and spirit, and some portions are to be preserved. Making the earth ugly offends Him.

<https://www.lds.org/topics/environmental-stewardship-and-conservation?lang=eng>

If the earth will be changed at the Second Coming of Jesus, why does it matter if we care for the earth and conserve?

It pleases God that He has given the earth and the good things that come of it as blessings to us (see [Moses 2:31](#); [D&C 59:20](#)). They not only provide for our temporal needs but are given to “gladden the heart” and “enliven the soul” ([D&C 59:19](#)). They are living souls (see [Moses 3:4-5, 9, 19](#)). To be complacent with His creations offends Him (see [D&C 59:18-21](#)).

The earth and all living things on it were first spiritually created, were blessed by God as “good,” and are to fulfill the measure of creation that God has given them. In our care and preservation of the creation, we either accept or reject our accountability to God.

How does the Church practice stewardship and conservation?

The Church strives to conserve and manage energy appropriately. It has implemented a green building initiative that incorporates sustainable design and construction practices. Water conservation efforts include the use of smart controllers, hydrometers, rain sensors, drip irrigation, and secondary or reclaimed water. In 2013, the Church headquarters campus recycled about 180 tons of cardboard, 65 tons of paper, 26 tons of plastic, and 2 tons of aluminum. Farm and ranch lands are protected from overgrazing to nutrient depletion. Natural, organic resources are used.

How can I get involved in my community to care for the earth?

Check with your local utility company, local community groups, or on the Internet to find suggestions to conserve energy and to recycle. Support community recycling programs. Consider starting a community garden. Support local civic groups that promote stewardship and conservation. Be an involved citizen in government. Be informed, respect the views of others, and treat everyone with civility.

What can I do?

Learn, ponder, and pray about what you can do to be a better steward. Use the resources of the earth sparingly and reverently. Adopt lifestyles and personal habits that respect the creation. As you can, fix up and keep clean the places where you live, work, recreate, and worship. Make your own living space more beautiful and inspirational. Contemplate the ways that nature bears testimony of God and the harmony between the laws and patterns of nature and the gospel of Jesus Christ.