

October 17, 2004

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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 39 "Behold, My Joy Is Full" ([3 Nephi 17-19](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 38 "Old Things Are Done Away, and All Things Have Become New" ([3 Nephi 12-15](#))



In providing representations of Jesus' character, different artists have portrayed Jesus in many different ways. Think about the following question without answering aloud:

- If someone asked you to describe Jesus' character, what would you say?

President Harold B. Lee spoke of one accurate description of Jesus' character, he said:

"In His Sermon on the Mount the Master has given us somewhat of a revelation of His own character, which was perfect, or what might be said to be 'an autobiography, every syllable of which He had written down in deeds,' and in so doing has given us a blueprint for our own lives" (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 342).



When Jesus visited the Nephites, He gave a discourse similar to the Sermon on the Mount. As we study and apply the teachings in this discourse, we will learn more about the Savior's character. We will also be able to develop a blueprint, or plan, to pattern our lives after the life of the Master.

### 1. Jesus teaches the Beatitudes to the Nephites. ([3 Nephi 12:1-12](#))

Compare [3 Nephi 12:3-12](#) with the similar teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, found in [Matthew 5:3-12](#).

- [3 Nephi 12:3](#). What does it mean to come unto Christ? ([3 Nephi 9:13-14](#), [3 Nephi 9:20-22](#) and [Ether 12:27](#).) How does being "poor in spirit," or humble, help us come unto Christ?
- [3 Nephi 12:4](#). What are some ways the Lord provides for us to be comforted? (See [John 14:26-27](#); [Mosiah 18:8-9](#).)
- [3 Nephi 12:5](#). What does it mean to be meek?



President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “Meekness implies a spirit of gratitude as opposed to an attitude of self-sufficiency, an acknowledgment of a greater power beyond oneself, a recognition of God, and an acceptance of his commandments” (“With All Thy Getting Get Understanding,” [Ensign, Aug. 1988, 3–4](#)).

- D. [3 Nephi 12:6](#). What do you think it means to “hunger and thirst after righteousness”? What will we be filled with as we “hunger and thirst after righteousness”?
- E. [3 Nephi 12:7](#). Why is it important that we be merciful? Why do we need the Lord’s mercy? (See [2 Nephi 2:8–9](#).)
- F. [3 Nephi 12:8](#). Why must we be pure in heart to be able to see God? (See [1 Nephi 10:21](#).) In what ways can we purify our hearts? (See [D&C 93:1](#))
- G. [3 Nephi 12:9](#). How can we be peacemakers in our homes and communities?
- H. [3 Nephi 12:10–12](#). Why are the righteous sometimes persecuted? How should we respond to persecution? (See [3 Nephi 12:44](#); [Luke 6:35](#).)

**2. Jesus declares that His followers are to be the salt of the earth and a light to other people. ([3 Nephi 12:13–16](#))**

Jesus said, “I give unto you to be the salt of the earth” ([3 Nephi 12:13](#)). To help understand what it means to be “the salt of the earth,” Let’s read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“Among the ancient Hebrews *salt* ... was used as a preservative, in seasoning food, and in all animal sacrifices. (Lev. 2:13; Ezek. 43:24; [Mark 9:49–50](#). [[Leviticus 2:13](#); [Ezekiel 43:24](#)]) So essential was it to the sacrificial ordinance that it was the symbol of the covenant made between God and His people in connection with that sacred performance. (Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5. [[Numbers 18:19](#); [2 Chronicles 13:5](#)])

“Accordingly, our Lord’s statement, made first to the Jews and then to that other great body of Hebrews, the Nephites, that they had power ‘to be the *salt of the earth*,’ takes on great significance. ... They had power, in other words, to be the seasoning, savoring, preserving influence in the world, the influence which would bring peace and blessings to all others” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 667–68).

- A. How can our influence help others receive peace and other blessings?

Let's read the following statement by Elder Carlos E. Asay: "A world-renowned chemist told me that salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1980, 60; or [Ensign, May 1980, 42](#)).



- B. How can we avoid being "contaminated" by the things of the world?
  - C. Let's read Doctrine and Covenants [D&C 101:39–40](#) and [D&C 103:9–10](#) aloud. What do these passages teach about being "the salt of the earth" and "the light of [the] people"? How can Latter-day Saints be "saviors of men"?
  - D. How can we let our light "shine before [the] people"? (See [3 Nephi 12:16](#); [3 Nephi 18:24](#).) What should be the result of our letting our light shine? (See [3 Nephi 12:16](#).)
3. **Jesus declares that He has fulfilled the law of Moses. He teaches the people a higher law. ([3 Nephi 12:17–48](#); [3 Nephi 15:1–10](#))**

The law mentioned in these verses is the law of Moses. The law of Moses was a strict system of performances and ordinances, including animal sacrifice ([Mosiah 13:29–30](#)). It had been given to help the Israelites look forward to the Atonement of Jesus Christ ([2 Nephi 25:24](#); [Mosiah 13:31–33](#); [Alma 34:13–14](#)).

- A. Who gave the law of Moses to the Israelites? (See [3 Nephi 15:4–5](#).)
- B. Jesus declared to the Nephites that He had fulfilled the law of Moses ([3 Nephi 12:17–19](#); [3 Nephi 15:2–5](#)). How did Jesus fulfill this law?

The Savior fulfilled the law of Moses when He atoned for our sins ([Alma 34:13–16](#)). After His Atonement, the people were no longer commanded to make animal sacrifices, which had been required as part of the law of Moses to point toward the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Instead, the people were commanded to "offer for a sacrifice ... a broken heart and a contrite spirit" ([3 Nephi 9:20](#); see also verse [3 Nephi 9:19](#)).

After Jesus declared that He had fulfilled the law of Moses, He gave the Nephites a higher law. Write the following chart on the chalkboard, listing the scripture passages that you feel will be most helpful for class members. Have class members read each passage listed under "The Law of Moses" and then read the corresponding passage listed under "The Higher Law." Ask them to discuss the differences between these laws. Invite them to share ways that the higher law can help us draw closer to the Lord.

THE LAW OF MOSES	THE HIGHER LAW
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:21</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:22–24</a>
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:27</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:28–30</a>
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:31</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:32</a>
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:33</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:34–37</a>
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:38</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:39–42</a>
<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:43</a>	<a href="#">3 Nephi 12:44–45</a>

C. After teaching the Nephites that they should love their enemies, Jesus said, “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” ([3 Nephi 12:48](#)). Why do we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ in order to be perfected? (See [2 Nephi 2:7–9](#); [3 Nephi 19:28–29](#); [Moroni 10:32–33](#).)

**4. Jesus teaches the Nephites how they must live to be His true disciples. ([3 Nephi 13–14](#))**

These chapters contain teachings on how we can be true disciples of Jesus Christ.

- A. [3 Nephi 13:1–8](#), [3 Nephi 13:16–18](#). Why did Jesus condemn some people who did good things such as doing alms (giving to the poor), praying, and fasting? What should our motives be when we give service and do other good works?
- B. [3 Nephi 13:9–13](#); [3 Nephi 14:7–11](#). What do Jesus’ words in these verses teach about how we should pray?
- C. [3 Nephi 13:14–15](#). Why is it important that we forgive others? How can we become more forgiving?
- D. [3 Nephi 13:19–24](#). What does it mean to have an eye that is “single”? (See [D&C 88:67–69](#).) Why is it impossible for us to serve both God and mammon (worldliness)?
- E. [3 Nephi 13:25–34](#). To whom did the Savior direct the words recorded in these verses? (See [3 Nephi 13:25](#).) How can we apply these words in our lives, even though we have not received the command to “take no thought” for food, drink, or clothing? (See [3 Nephi 13:33](#).) What blessings come to people who put the things of God first in their lives?
- F. [3 Nephi 14:1–5](#). How can we avoid improperly judging or criticizing others?

- G. [3 Nephi 14:6](#). This same teaching is found in [Matthew 7:6](#). In the Joseph Smith Translation of that verse, Jesus commands His disciples to preach repentance rather than teach the mysteries of the kingdom (Joseph Smith Translation, [Matthew 7:9-11](#)). Why is it important to focus our gospel teaching on basic doctrines?
- H. [3 Nephi 14:12](#). How does following this principle make us better disciples of Christ?
- I. [3 Nephi 14:13-14](#). Why is it significant that the way to eternal life is narrow, while the way to destruction is broad?
- J. [3 Nephi 14:15-20](#). Why is this teaching particularly important today? (See [Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22](#), which describes the last days.)
- K. [3 Nephi 14:21-23](#). Why must we do the will of Heavenly Father to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven? (See [D&C 130:20-21](#).)
- L. [3 Nephi 14:24-27](#). In what ways does Jesus' parable about building a house on rock or sand apply in our lives? (See [Helaman 5:12](#).)

Let's read [3 Nephi 15:1](#) aloud. As we live according to the Savior's teachings, we will have a sure foundation and be strengthened to withstand whatever trials or temptations we may experience. We will become "the salt of the earth" and "the light of [the] people," and we will be able to help others draw nearer to the Savior ([3 Nephi 12:13-16](#)).

## 5. Jesus' teaching about divorce ([3 Nephi 12:32](#))

In ancient Israel a man could put away, or divorce, his wife for insignificant reasons. However, in a perfect world, such as the celestial kingdom, divorce does not exist. Because the earth is not yet perfect, divorce is allowed but should not happen except for the most serious reasons. In [Matthew 19:9](#) Jesus indicates that a man who divorced his wife for a frivolous reason was still married to her in the eyes of God, and the man thus committed adultery if he married another woman. (See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 473-75, 484; see also Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979-81], 2:138-39.)

## 6. "Ye are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have" ([3 Nephi 15:21](#))

Let's read [John 10:16](#) aloud. Who were these "other sheep"? (See [3 Nephi 15:21](#); [3 Nephi 16:1-3](#).) Why were the disciples in Jerusalem unable to understand Jesus' teaching about "other sheep"? (See [3 Nephi 15:14-19](#).) How does unbelief prevent people from understanding the word of God in its fullness?