

Dear People of the Recent Covenant:

It is proposed that we vote to adopt by mutual agreement the original Governing Principles as we were asked to do when it was presented to us by the scripture committee in St. George. We have criticized it, torn it to pieces, written up alternates, and voted between documents until we are more divided and confused than at the beginning. The one thing we haven't done is lay down our fears, doubts, pride, etc. and in a spirit of meekness, agree to adopt what has been given to us.

Jeff was given the assignment to produce the Governing Principles. He agreed and then prayerfully and faithfully worked to produce that to the best of his understanding. It may not be perfect—but, then again, it may be perfect—I don't have enough understanding to judge. When he finished, we were invited to adopt it by mutual agreement. We were also given permission to make suggestions, alter, or reject it. I believe that opportunity was given to teach us and test our hearts. What were we to learn and what was God testing about our hearts?

Jeff was called by the Lord to write the governing principles. This is how: He was the one who answered the call to be a part of recovering the scriptures and as that work progressed he was the one who felt D&C 20 needed to be re-written. This was the Lord's voice to him because he was concerned and asking. The rest of us either did not hear the Lord's call to recover the scriptures, or if we did hear it, we did not respond. We were not aware of the need for D&C 20 to be rewritten. Jeff did not build on another's foundation—He saw the need to rewrite D&C 20 before it was cool. He studied it out and wrote what he felt was according to the Lord's mind. If you believe that D&C 20 needed to be rewritten at all, that it was according to God's will and an errand from the Lord, then it follows that Jeff was called to that errand. Not that there is anything special about Jeff except he was there and willing.

We do need to be equal and we do need to be on the same footing. But how can we accomplish much of anything if being equal means we all must oversee the process, have a voice in how things are done, and personally get our fingerprint on every job that needs to be done? This will only delay and burden us. As we can see has happened with this. There is a principle to be learned here. When there is a work to be done, it will be accomplished most effectively if each person undertakes the tasks they have been qualified and called to do and doesn't bother to be an overseer of another's work, only keep their nose in their own task to make sure it is done well and right, trusting that every other worker is doing the same. The precedent we need to set and the lesson we need to learn in order to be able to accomplish the greater work the Lord has for us to do is to treat our brother the way we would like to be treated—that is accept their efforts and work and rejoice in what they have done, rather than find fault with it, undermine it, or seek to overthrow it. Let each person be about their own errands and busy with the work they have been asked to do rather than spending their days in idleness, waiting to find fault with the efforts of others, (as if that is their area of expertise). That is the lesson for us to learn.

If we can't appreciate and respect the work Jeff has done to write the Governing Principles, why would we appreciate and respect the work of any other person? How can we expect our labors to be appreciated and respected if the standard we set is criticizing, tearing down, and re-doing our brother's work to have it redone to our specifications. If we value each other as brothers and sisters then why do we think we are seeking equality by tearing apart Jeff's work. Is that equality? Is that thinking of our brother like unto ourselves? Do we think we are better than Jeff? Think of our behavior and reaction to Jeff's work -- Is that how we hope for our work to be received? How are we justified in criticizing or tearing his work up? Do we know the mind of God? Do we KNOW exactly what the Lord wants included as statement of principles or are we just using our best guess by what we can deduce from the Answer? Is our best guess any better than Jeff's best guess when he went about writing the original?

If there is correction that needs to take place, let the Lord do the correcting. This is His work after all, and He is the one who sees the end from the beginning. He is involved in this. He will walk beside us. We don't need to be afraid that He will leave us without answers, help, or guidance. Let's trust Him with all our hearts and not rely on our own understanding. This is another important principle for us to learn. God does not expect us to know more than we know. It takes humility to acknowledge that we really do not know enough to judge whether the Governing Principles Jeff wrote up was sufficient. We can only judge it according to our mind and understanding, but the Lord's ways are not our ways. So, let us trust the

process. The Lord called Jeff to write it. Jeff wrote it and presented it to us. It fairly accurately represents teachings we believe and have accepted although perhaps not quite right, but we don't have enough understanding to know for sure if our understanding is the correct one or if Jeff's is correct. But if we mutually agree to accept Jeff's effort, we show that our hearts are one in desire for equality, justice, and peace; and one in trusting in the Lord to correct us when we are wrong.

When the "Governing Principles" was presented to us, we were given permission to make suggestions, alter, or reject it -- but we were asked to adopt it.

Please, let us agree to adopt the original Governing Principles, bury our weapons of war, for peace (LE Alma 24:19) and move on to the important tasks we have covenanted to do: Teaching our children to honor God, Seeking after the lost sheep, and caring for the poor among us. All the time we spend working on something that has already been completed is a distraction and waste of precious time.

Michelle Jensen