

ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE (EPISODE 195)

LESSON 22

“Have Ye Received His Image in Your Countenances?”

Hook	The paradox of empathy and Atonement is that by increasing the total suffering experienced, that suffering becomes bearable.
Manual Goal	To help class members understand what it means to experience a change of heart and continue in the process of conversion.
EGD Goal	To inspire class members to live well through accessing their best selves, and to help them appreciate the singular power of knowledge through experience

Meredith gave a truly exemplary lesson on Lesson 19 and I wanted to share:

I spent the first 10 minutes of class talking about how there are only 6 women names in the BOM and how women's narratives are excluded. I talked about how it pains me that the scriptures are written for men and aboutmen. I connected to the Lamanite Daughters and mentioned how there isn't even one word about them in the manual, even though their rape and abduction is a major plot event in the story. I talked about how their marriages to the evil priests follow ancient Israelite traditions, but it doesn't consider the women's well being which I connected to an Elizabeth Smart interview about the psychological chains her captor put on her were stronger than the physical chains. I talked about how this atrocity isn't an anomaly - how human trafficking is at an all time high in 2016, that people continue to exploit and kidnap and rape at an alarming degree and it's evil and heartbreaking -- that was my segue to the baptismal covenants in chapter 18 and the necessity of turning our hearts to the Lord to combat such evil. Can I tell you how amazing it was to discuss feminism in the BOM so vehemently during my lesson? It felt so good to point out this glaring inequality that most people in the room had probably never considered. Many people were nodding with me as I tearfully spoke, but some people looked uncomfortable and looked down. But I am okay with any dissension or complaints to the Bishop. I paid tribute to those Lamanite daughters and I needed to do it, even if I am given a talking to.

- I. Sunday School
 - a. Framing
 - b. Two minute take-home
 - i. Sharing suffering
 - ii. Knowing “according to the flesh”
 - iii. How to hold ourselves accountable.
 - c. Reading commentary
 - d. Lesson
 - i. Atonement, empathy, and suffering
 - ii. Knowing “according to the flesh”: the power of learning through living
 - iii. Themes in Alma 5
 - iv. Alma’s masterful, challenging interview
 - v. Who are your mentors? Heroes? Inspiration? (“his image in your countenance”)
 - vi. How are we “born of God”? How does conversion work?
 - vii. How can we be “awakened to remembrance”
 - viii. What do we see with an “eye of faith”? How can we use this in our lives?
 - ix. “stripped of pride”
 - x. “putting the Church in order” (because church and Church don’t line up)

- II. Scripture Study
- III. Study Notes (Mirror neurons? Seeing ourselves compassionately)
 - a. The science of empathy
 - b. The science of conversion

5: General thoughts on chapter 5. experiencing a change of heart: light, life, love. What does it mean/feel like to “sing redeeming love”? Sharing personal stories of change. How do we attain peace of conscience? Being brought to a remembrance of past changes, maintaining our conversion. How can we wake up? What does it mean to receive God’s image in our countenance?

6: Excommunication and community boundary maintenance

7: I want to focus on 7:13 and the difference between knowing something theoretically and experiencing it.

Themes in chapter 5

“retain in remembrance”

Light and love imagery

“sing the song of redeeming love”

“souls did expand” (this is one of my favorite phrases)

“awakened unto God”

Alma’s persuasive techniques (this is really impressive)

Vivid, evocative language

Asks direct questions

Imagine ultimate accountability (imagine standing before God, accountable for your actions)

Access future self (“will you at that day be able to”)

Access past self

Status, respect, comparison (“could you sit with the prophets...”)

Imagine if we were to die right now