

# Gospel Doctrine Sunday School Lesson

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Slippery Rock Branch

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Today's Word: Testified

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Are You:

- Praying Morning and Night?
- Having Family Home Evening Regularly?

## Today's Scriptures

Acts 21-28

Next Week:

Lesson 39:

"For the Perfecting of the Saints"

Ephesians

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## Lesson 39: "Thou Hast Testified of Me"

### Tributions Are Necessary for Our Progression

"Friction, or resistance, is an interesting phenomenon. Without this force, a person or vehicle could not move about, or if already in motion, could not be stopped except by collision. Simple things like nails, screws, and bolts would not stay in place; a cork would not stay in a bottle; a light globe would drop from its socket; a lid would not stay on a jar.

"The law of friction or resistance that we think of as only applying to science seems to find application in our personal lives. This is probably what Lehi was referring to when he spoke to his son Jacob. He reminded Jacob of the afflictions and sorrows that had come to him because of the rudeness of his brethren, and told him how these afflictions would ultimately result in good. These are the words of Jacob to his son: "Thou knowest the greatness of God; and he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain" (2 Ne. 2:2).

"In other words, the afflictions that had come to him in the form of opposition or resistance would be for his good. Then Lehi added these words that have become classic: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, ... righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad" (2 Ne. 2:11).

"We came to mortal life to encounter resistance. It was part of the plan for our eternal progress. Without temptation, sickness, pain, and sorrow, there could be no goodness, virtue, appreciation for well-being, or joy. The law of opposition makes freedom of choice possible; therefore, our Heavenly Father has commanded his children, "Choose ye this day, to serve the Lord God who made you" (Moses 6:33). He has counseled us to yield to his spirit and resist temptation. Free agency, of course, permits us to oppose his directions; thus, we see many who resist the truth and yield to temptation... As we look back in retrospect, we see that it was because of the opposition encountered in our early history that our progress today has been made possible. Out of that caldron of persecution and heartache, the Lord answered the soul-cry of the Prophet Joseph Smith in these words: "Thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; "And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high" (D&C 121:7-8). "If thou art called to pass through tribulation, ... know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:5, 7). . . .

"The New Testament records the life of one Paul of Tarsus. From the day of his dramatic conversion, he experienced great trial and personal affliction. He was imprisoned for his faith, beaten, stoned, and in his own words, buffeted by Satan. Yet he wrote: "Most gladly ... will I ... glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9). Comparing his own adversity to that of Paul, the Prophet Joseph once wrote, "I feel, like Paul, to glory in tribulation; for to this day has the God of my fathers delivered me" (D&C 127:2). . . There will be tribulations collectively and hardships personally—that resistance so essential to the eternal plan.

"What makes us imagine that we may be immune from the same experiences that refined the lives of former-day Saints? We must remember that the same forces of resistance which prevent our progress afford us also opportunities to overcome. God will have a tried people!" (Howard W. Hunter, "God will Have a Tried People," *Ensign*, May 1980, 24).



### Questions to Ponder

- How has the Lord helped you to be of "good cheer" during difficult times?
- What attitudes or other problems keep people today from accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ?