

Tuesday May 5th, 2020

Brothren,

this morning I had a dream. I awoke briefly right at dawn and as I recall it was about a baseball or some sport team (I know it seems silly). I and my brother Phil, a priest in the church living with my family, had been active players on this team, an organization my parents had some control or participation in. Others I knew from my past were also on or involved with the team. The team had fallen into disrepair and there was a legal battle over who had rights to the team and resurrecting it to its former strength and vitality. There were struggles and little scenes of people left out and fans who had been loyal to the organization who had been betrayed by the new legal owners and lawyers blocking participation. I began with others with a dedicated sense of purpose to help rebuild the team, not the organization, but the participation in the game because I remember how much I loved the game and how I was born to play in that particular activity.

As I awoke, realizing I had this dream, I asked God in my musings I often have in the morning, attempting praise and prayer but partially awake, if this was a spiritual dream and did it relate to the dreams of Richard, as I had been praying for validation of Richard's dream for me so I could testify it was true as a member of the council. As Vim, and Steve, and Richard can attest, I have mentioned to them specifically that I believe our direction toward the assembly is correct but as yet had no spiritual confirmation of Richard's specific dreams or their full meaning. I asked God was this dream I had the answer I was seeking, a testimony, or did my subconscious conjure up something to go along with the council (sorry I am a man of education and science as well as faith). I was taken back into sleep once or several times, not sure, and the dream continued.

Finally, in another scene, in a room one evening I believe, a group of men, very excited about our efforts and activities and lead by the spirit were gathered in the dream, several men spoke, one reminded me of Ron Smith, but as I strained to recall his face, a tall man and forthright in his speech, I believe I was led to understand he was representative of several men I know called to the office of Seventy. I spoke in the dream and said George Thomas had been in the work lately and desired to travel and bear his testimony. George and I are close friends, he has been one of my mentors for many years beginning at our time together at the Warrensburg restoration branch when I was pastor there, and other than Richard, a member of the Seventy which I know with the most familiarity. (I attribute no special reason for these two men in particular to be identified just as Richard said the same about his young son)

I finally awoke the last time to a clear mind and asked God if this was a spiritual dream, as I have had only one or maybe two brief spiritual dreams in my life. One two years ago ended abruptly with a spiritual message to me that led my family to gather back to Independence and gave me detailed instruction concerning the things that would transpire in my family and my life which have come true remarkably in the last year as I had previously shared. I do not have a lot of dreams.

As I asked God in prayer if this was the answer I was seeking, and if Richard's dreams were of God and this dream was a testimony to and for me, I was made to know by what I believe is the spirit, that Richard's dreams, especially the first dream, did not have to be **plenary** to me to be valid and true. I was amazed at that word for I had studied revelation and in particular plenary revelation and what that means as we interpret and validate gifts of the spirit. The remembrance of that word brought confirmation immediately of the direction the council is trying to pursue for an assembly.

The spirit then clearly reminded me that Nephi had asked of God to understand his father Lehi's dream, and because of his faith he was given his own similar dream...that was a **plenary** experience-his own between Nephi and God. But the the spirit reminded me of the experience

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of Joseph in the grove, how he saw the vision and heard the voices and instruction of God the father and His Son. Many have believed in his testimony, us included, but not all, in fact very few, have had a similar open vision, yet the spirit confirms that the angel message and the restored gospel is true. The words of Jesus came to me "But more blessed are they when they believe on your words..." This was my feelings concerning the direction given us at the retreat as we prayed about our focus and as Richard shared his initial dream.

I came into my study and wrote these thoughts down as soon as I awoke while they were fresh in my mind. I hope they may be of worth to you. I believe I now understand Richard was given these dreams, I perceive, because he is currently the leader, the focal voice and chair of the council of the elders, the same reason he has been prompted to write the letters or papers of research and instruction, based upon his years of study and preparation concerning the church and its history and function. And because he is the most active and visible member of the Seventy in *our* midst and has a special witness of Jesus according to the office which has been bestowed upon him.

Brethren, I have believed in a need for a solemn assembly for some time beginning with the restoration branches, long before our current discussion, maybe not calling it by that name specifically. As many can attest, I have spoken over the last several years, sometimes harshly, about our failings as individual branches and how I detest the label 'independent branches' and the 'lists' and divisions in the restoration.

My heart is now content on our endeavors and on the testimony of Richard's recent dreams. Moreover brothers I agree with brother Brian, I sensed an urgency in my dream during the resurgence in the 'team', not concerning an official organization or legal right to organize, but to move with all diligence toward solemn assembly and other activities already in motion with the results of a living and moving group of dedicated people, what has been coined 'the living church'.

I can't help but wonder at the timing of this dream (at least for me) and the meeting called for this evening.

May the good spirit move in us to serve unreservedly in these portentous times.

Tom (the lesser elder)

PS forgive any typos