

“A Mission of Saving”

Outline

- I. Framing
- II. Discussion of new resources

- III. Productive Sunday Schooling

“Pure religion” The Gospel is something we DO, not just talk about (Young’s sermon).

Questions to discuss

- i. How can we benefit from our suffering and hardships?
- ii. How can we separate out those benefits from the idea that those hardships were “meant to” happen?
- iii. How can do what is required of us and serve others in a responsible way?
- iv. How do we know when people need to be “rescued”?
- v. How can we effectively “rescue” others?

Full episode overview

Framing:

(As discussed last episode)

Overcoming adversity, challenge, and tragedy is powerful, inspiring, and essential. And sometimes the most meaningful victories are when we overcome challenges that we ourselves have caused. Because as humans, that’s what we do.

Life is complicated, both/and. We can benefit from hard experiences that we put ourselves in, but if accountability is not assigned where it belongs, that hinders learning, growth, transformation, and causes undeserved harm.

We need to find a balance with this episode, or we risk glorifying tragedy and mistakes. The balance is that we can lament mistakes and tragedy, while also appreciating the good that can come from even mistakes and tragedy. That’s a lesson I am grateful to have experienced)

Manual Goal: To teach about the rescue of the Martin and Willie handcart companies, to show that the gospel of [Jesus Christ](#) is a message of rescue, and to encourage class members to help rescue those in need.

EGD Goal: To encourage class members to live the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is a “message of rescue”, while also acknowledging the complex factors that put us in need of rescue.

Discussion of new resources

[Lesson 35: “A Mission of Saving”](#)

- [“Five Things You Might Not Know about the Handcart Rescue”](#): This gallery highlights some key facts about the rescue of the Willie and Martin handcart companies. Too many internet articles have turned me off from this kind of wording. 😊 President Young’s call to help rescue the handcart companies (a call that was given while the weather was still good), and how quickly and courageously the saints responded.
- [Willie and Martin Remembered](#): This online exhibit gives artistic depictions of the two handcart companies’ experiences. I love art, and enjoyed looking through these pieces that depicted different aspects of travel by handcart.
- [“How the Rescue of Handcart Pioneers Helped Revive the Relief Society”](#): This article discusses the connection between the handcart rescue and Relief Society history. The Relief Society had been disbanded 10 years earlier as part of the exodus from Nauvoo. Nevertheless, women throughout the territory played significant roles in saving the handcart pioneers, and their efforts indirectly led to the reestablishment of the Relief Society. While Churchwide reinstatement of the organization did not begin until 1867, the cry for handcart aid spurred many wards to formally reinstate Relief Societies locally.
- [“Time Line: Rescues of the Willie and Martin Handcart Companies and the Hodgetts and Hunt Wagon Companies”](#): This time line helps lay out the order of events for the companies and rescuers. Working through this timeline is surprisingly moving.
- [“Relief Society and Revolution”](#): This short story highlights the work of Relief Society sisters who made great sacrifices to care for others during the Mexican Revolution. I’m guessing this resource doesn’t actually go along with this lesson?

I. Productive Sunday Schooling

“Pure religion” The Gospel is something we DO, not just talk about (Young’s sermon).

One of the most inspiring parts of this story is how enthusiastically the saints responded to Young's call to help the Saints.

Brigham Young's words have such powerful life application!

"I will now give this people the subject and the text of the Elders who may speak to-day and during the conference. It is this. On the 5th day of October, 1856, many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. The text will be, 'to get them here.' I want the brethren who may speak to understand that their text is the people on the plains. And the subject matter for this community is to send for them and bring them in before winter set in.

"That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people. This is the salvation I am now seeking for. To save our brethren that would be apt to perish, or suffer extremely, if we do not send them assistance.

"I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 112 or 15 wagons. I do not want to send oxen. I want good horse and mules. They are in this Territory, and we must have them. Also 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teams. This is dividing my texts into heads. First, 40 good young men who know how to drive teams, to take charge of the teams that are now managed by men, women and children who know nothing about driving them. Second, 60 or 65 good spans of mules, or horses, with harness, whipple trees, neckyokes, stretchers, lead chains, &c. And thirdly, 24 thousand pounds of flour, which we have on hand. . . .

"I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. Go and bring in those people now on the plains. And attend strictly to those things which we call temporal, or temporal duties. Otherwise, your faith will be in vain. The preaching you have heard will be in vain and you, and you will sink to Hell, unless you attend to the things we tell you."

(Brigham Young's address reported in the *Deseret News*, 15 October 1856, as quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*[Glendale, Ca.: The Arthur H. Clark, Co., 1960], 120-21.)

- a. Questions to discuss
 - i. How can we benefit from our suffering and hardships?
 - ii. How can we separate out those benefits from the idea that those hardships were "meant to" happen?
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Full episode overview

Full episode:

- 1) Overview of how we talk about the handcart companies in the Church
- 2) The handcart travels in context (how many of the pioneers came by handcart, when, why etc)
- 3) an overview of the stories of the Martin and Willie Handcart companies
- 4) The Sweetwater River rescue
- 5) Discussion of Francis Webster's testimony about his experiences