

Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 216)

LESSON 42: 3 NEPHI 27-30; 4 NEPHI

“This Is My Gospel”

Hook	These chapters include an account of the happiest, most righteous, productive years in all of Book of Mormon history, the model utopian society that endured almost two hundred years after Jesus’ appearance. Unfortunately, we only read about that time period (which surpasses the time covered by Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, and 3 Nephi!) for eighteen brief verses. Why don’t we have more about this ideal period? How much could we learn from such a successful society? How can we apply the details we do have?
Goal	Class members should internalize the lessons from the ideal society described in 4 Nephi, as well as take the opportunity to ask ourselves, What are the desires of our hearts?
Overview	27: Jesus teaches the twelve about the name of the Church, the gospel, and speaks of judgment 28:1-12 Jesus asks the twelve what they desire 28:13-40 Mormon writes about the Three Nephites 29: Mormon’s admonitions 30: Mormon quotes Jesus’ plea for the Gentiles to return to him
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons from the best of times in the Book of Mormon. What led to its success? (All references to 4 Nephi) (really is a shame we don’t have more details) • 1:2 all converted, no contentions and disputations (see Episode 14/Lesson 37 for a distinction between “contention” and “disagreement”) • 1:3 Had all things in common. Temporal equality, or at least ample opportunity, leads to spiritual abundance. Discuss the potential if all of us could cooperate and look out for the welfare of all, see that we are all in the same boat. (contrast 3 Ne. 6:14) • 1:12. Follow commandments, fasted and prayed, met often to pray and hear word of the lord • 1:13 Again, no contention • 1:15. The key. • Note the consequences/blessings: Miracles, prosperity, etc. • Three Nephites (close reading of 3 Nephi 28, talk about who I think they are, discuss their role in the BoM/early church history? Church culture) • Fun thought exercise: How would you respond to the question in 3 Nephi 28:1, “What is it that ye desire of me, after that I am gone to the Father?” • We can learn a great deal from this narrative. Are our goals focused on our own comfort or serving others even with difficulty and sorrow involved (well-being, which we need to protect, and comfort are different) • “Gospel” and “Church” (close reading/discussion of 3 Nephi 27). And why is the name such a big deal? Really.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sobering end times admonitions in 3 Nephi 29-30
Other Comments/ Discussion Starters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to the complex issues relating to 3 Ne. 28/D&C 7/John 21 • 27:13-15. “Lifted up” is very Johannine, especially see John 12:32 (as well as 3:14). Interestingly, “Gospel” does not appear at all in John. • 27:5 Also, “take upon the name of Christ” doesn’t show up that clearly in the NT. • 4 Ne. 1:31, problematic concerning the Jews; 2 Ne. 10:3 is as bad as it gets • 1:38 Importance of what we teach our children
Concluding Points	Return to idea of Zion society and desires, connect the two