

## UPWARD THOUGHT

SEARCH



*Explaining the prophecies and the scriptures to all who desire to hear them. (Mosiah 27:35-36)*

# Pondering my principles

By Rob • June 23, 2018

**I**ve spent some time compiling some thoughts about my place in the world. I

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am sure my thoughts will move from this snapshot in time. This is personal, but I hope

that in sharing it you are inspired to take some time and ponder *your* place in the world, and write down and then live the principles that come to you.

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I have a higher purpose in life, one that transcends the daily. My mission in life is to 1) discover further light and truth, 2) assimilate it into my life, and 3) disseminate it to others inasmuch as they desire and are capable of receiving it. To do this, I 1) believe there is something greater than what I know/have/am, 2) seek and cherish experiences that reveal limitations to my understanding/capability, and 3) discover better and/or new principles that order more/deeper chaos than previously

possible. My mission in life will require me to advance further into the darkness than those around me, so I do not expect anyone but God to be my companion or my support. Leaning on those around me requires them to step into chaos that exceeds their capabilities, and will always result in their retreat from me and their cutting themselves off from the light I could deliver if I handled the burden alone and distributed truth in packets small and organized enough for them to handle. I am a coherent person. My goals align with and derive from my values. My daily actions cohere with my goals and my values. I do not act contrary to my values, and I do not spend my resources in ways that detract from my goals. I distinguish the symptoms from the disease. Problems manifest at the action level, but they are solved at the

goal and values level. I change my actions not by deviating from my goals and values, but by changing them.

I am a king. I put all things under my feet by maintaining my center no matter what happens. I overcome all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me. He has already conquered all things, and all it takes to do the same is to submit fully to him. I don't have to understand his ways to submit to him. I trust God and truly believe that as long as I love him and obey him, everything in my life happens only because he wills it to. I bless the lives of others by imparting of my resources to them, including my praise and affection. I am successful, meaning I produce more than I need to survive. I am not exceptional--anyone can do what I do if they

want to--but few do. I give more to the world than I take. I am responsible for all the good that I can do. I know that if I do not do the best I can, the world will be worse for it. I am a light shining in the darkness. Darkness does not comprehend the light, so I do not expect anyone to notice. I view mankind from a higher level. Those who spend time with me see the glory of God in me because they recognize what transcends this world in me. I emit light for the sake of bringing light into the world, not for the sake of recognition or pleasure. I emit light when I refuse to allow anything to cause me to act, think, or feel contrary to my character as a son of God. I emit light when I prefer helping those around me over any and all other objectives. My life is a masterpiece. I hone my mind, my body, my spirit every day. Every day I take time to

explicitly think about my life and the world. I  
pray, I read, I listen, I think, I write, I exercise.

I am a warrior. I am audacious and ambitious. I  
never give up. I stand up to anyone and anything  
that contradicts my values yet I am strong  
enough to be persuaded to change my mind on  
anything. I always speak the truth, big or small,  
no matter what the consequences. I  
courageously charge daily into the battle of the  
soul, willingly giving myself for the transcendent  
good. I am never alarmed by danger, never  
affected by craving, happy in adversity, and calm  
in the midst of storm. I set outcomes based  
goals, but I execute them and measure my  
success only by my input, not outcomes. I don't  
care what happens, I care what I do about what  
happens--how I react. The things I can affect, I

act on. The things I cannot affect, I do not worry about. I have zero anxiety. I never complain. I take full responsibility for every aspect of my life, including those things I cannot control. If I don't like something, I change it. If I can't change it, I accept it and do not allow it to bother me. I do not allow others to disrespect me. I respectfully and graciously establish boundaries, and I exit situations where people choose not to interact with me as I deserve. I never get emotional during discussions. I stay calm. Truth is my power, not volume or emotion. Nothing brings the world into a better state than to state the truth. I stand for what I believe, no matter what. I don't care what other people think of me. I do what I think is right, and I don't change that based on what other people think. I am open minded and I can be persuaded, but I

will not yield to emotion, peer pressure, or any other inferior reasoning. I am self-sufficient. I do not rely on others. I accept full responsibility for all I can do in my life, but I have no expectations that are not fully within my control. I realize that I am truly alone, and I don't need anyone for support. Expectations of others yields only sadness and temptation to act outside of my center. Any emotional reliance I have on others is merely a convenience, not a need, and it can be removed at any time without causing any distress to me whatsoever. God is my rock, and he only is worthy of that role.

I am a magician. I see the ideal in everyone I meet by treating them as if they were already that way. I inspire others to improve by helping them believe they are capable of more. I do this

in regular everyday contacts and in intentional, larger efforts. I patiently help people see things as they really are, with kindness whenever possible, for their benefit and never to make myself feel better. I walk the fine line between imagining the world as I would like it to be and interacting with it the way it really is. Every connection I have is a chance to learn and a chance to share what I have learned and become. I actively seek out truth and wisdom from others. I learn something new every day. I know that learning requires making mistakes. Whether I make the mistake or someone else does, the only way to expose the limits of a principle is to identify situations where it does not work. Without reflection, mistakes are suffering devoid of meaning. My suffering is unavoidable, but I will extract maximal value

from it through living and learning intentionally and extracting and refining principles. I will never make the same mistake twice. Truth is discovered, not created. I listen to every idea everyone shares with me that has value to them, and I evaluate it according to my experiences and test everything for myself. How much time and effort I spend in discovering and reconciling my life to truth is what determines how much of it I accumulate in life. This is both a measure of quantity and quality, because since truth is progressive, accumulation of it is not just about acquiring new truth, but about replacing shallower/weaker truths with deeper/stronger truths. I see everything I think I know as a temporary useful heuristic that will one day be exposed as limited or wrong, and replaced with something better. I lean hard on what I have

learned, not as granite bedrock, but as a wearing tool, like a chisel; I expect that one day it will break, but until then I use it with the intent of wearing it down.

I am a lover. I am spontaneous. I am playful. I am funny. I am able to create a bubble in the chaos and create fun experiences for my wife, children, and friends. I am able to bring humor and light-heartedness into any heavy situation, and create a buffer to chaos in my strength of character. I routinely pause the work of life to enjoy time with and have fun with those I love. I can completely set aside any and all work to enjoy complete peace of mind at anytime and in any place. I am able to work hard and also put down work to play hard because my value comes from who I am, not what I do. I am happy, and this

happiness radiates from me into the lives of all those I encounter. I do not get down. Negative feelings come through discovery of obstacles precluding our goals. Every goal I set is both free from expectation (by focusing on input not outcome) and also constrained because people are always my main goal, not the goal itself. No situation, no person, no event can ever move me off of my center. I am happy, I have joy, I am fulfilled, no matter what happens. No matter what happens, I am full of gratitude for all the good I have received. All things are truly done in the wisdom of an all-knowing, all-loving Father. In him I trust, and from him comes my strength and my joy.

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