

STRUCK BY LIGHTNING!

Rodney doesn't remember much about that day in 1993. But he knows it was the power of the priesthood that kept him alive.

The high-voltage lightning charge detonated like a cannon and lit up the sky. Kevin Gallacher, who was riding his horse behind his brother-in-law, Rodney Cox, jumped at the sound. Rodney, too, had straightened in his saddle. But when both Rodney and his horse collapsed on the trail, Kevin knew that Rodney hadn't just been startled. He'd been hit by lightning. [Rodney's feet were close to his horse's neck. The horse struggled and succumbed within a few seconds.]

Kevin jumped off his horse and ran to where Rodney lay face down and motionless on the path. Just a few feet away was Rodney's hat, with a charred hole the size of a cantaloupe in it.

Kevin's wife, Janine, and Debra Britton (both Rodney's sisters) had been riding with the men as well. They, too had seen Rodney fall to the ground, but the spectacular noise had spooked their horses. As the two women wrestled with their nervous mounts, Kevin immediately placed his hands on Rodney's head, blessing him that his spirit would enter his body again.

Debra was able to calm her horse, and she joined Kevin at her brother's side. Several minutes passed without his breathing. "It seemed like hours because he remained so lifeless," she remembers now. There was a strong smell of burned flesh, and they both felt certain that he had sustained serious injuries.

"Rodney, squeeze my hand," Debra

pleaded. Nothing.

"Can you wiggle your fingers?" she asked next. Still nothing.

BLANKETS FROM THE LORD

The family had planned this Saturday morning ride as a nostalgic, relaxing activity. Riding horses had always been a favorite family pastime. In fact, the family had a tradition of participating together in the annual Castle Valley Pageant. They had all returned to the area near their childhood home (Orangeville and Castle Dale, Utah) to continue that tradition. The pageant's closing performance was that night, August 7, and then the families would return to their homes the next day.

The storm had come up suddenly, and within minutes the sky had darkened. Rain had turned to hail, and the group had hunched over, plodding forward and waiting for the storm to pass by. Then the lightning had struck.

Fortunately the hail had stopped after Rodney was hit, but the chilling rain continued. The family was miles from any medical assistance. With Rodney lying in the trail, they prayed for help and guidance.

Suddenly, the rain stopped. The sun shone brightly. "It was like the Lord had blown away the clouds and let the sun shine on us because we had no blankets to keep warm," says Kevin.

Sitting on the ground, Kevin rolled Rodney over on his back and gently cradled him on his lap. It was like lifting a dead weight. Again Kevin put his hands on his brother-in-law's head.

"I blessed him that he would be able to breathe," Kevin recalls. "I expressed my feeling that it was not his time to die; that his family was not yet in a position to continue without his leadership. I expressed my hope that his newborn son, Carson, would see his father's good example as he grew to manhood, and I expressed my belief that he yet had a great work to do." Closing the blessing in the name of Jesus Christ, Kevin looked up at Debra and Janine.

EXACT IN PRAYER

After the prayer, the three felt strongly that things would be all right. Janine left to get help. Heading toward the pageant site, she fought panic and fear, praying almost constantly for faith and strength.

Janine rode the mile and a half back up to the Pageant site. She pushed her horse as fast as she dared. She found Loren Morse, one of the sound technicians for the Pageant (and a hobby ham radio operator). He was able to dispatch an SOS message to a ham radio operator in Vernal, Utah, who then sent the message on to Price. The Emery County ambulance, stationed thirty miles from Price (but seven miles from the site of the lightning strike), was notified and sent out.

Back on the trail, Rodney struggled--and took a small gasp of air. Kevin and Debra were thrilled as his breath

sputtered out and his body quivered. He was breathing, and he was alive! There was no doubt in their minds that it was a miracle.

The pair continued to pray, asking Heavenly Father to calm the horses and temper the elements and keep Rodney warm and breathing. As they waited, Kevin reflected back to when his home teachers, Gary White and his son, Lance, had visited a month earlier [at the Gallacher home near Denver, Colorado]. Their lesson had focused on prayer.

Brother White had expressed how important it is to be exact in prayer. He had testified that the Lord wants us to be specific when we ask for the blessings we need. Gazing down at his brother-in-law, Kevin knew how much Rodney's family needed him to be able to speak and function. The Holy Ghost touched his heart and the Spirit fed his thoughts as he proceeded to give Rodney another blessing.

Kevin blessed Rodney's specific organs--his heart, lungs, stomach, liver, bones, muscles, and nerves. He blessed Rodney's brain that he would be able to walk, talk, see, feel, touch, hear, communicate, and understand.

"As I gave the blessing, I felt overwhelmed," Kevin says. "I was shaking. I felt that Heavenly Father would allow his healing power to be poured out on Rodney in spite of all my weaknesses. It was truly a testimony of the power of the Holy Ghost, the priesthood, and our Heavenly Father. As I closed the blessing, a peaceful, calm feeling came over me, and I knew Rodney would live and function normally."

Just before Kevin heard the sirens of rescue vehicles, Rodney opened his eyes. "Rodney, we love you," Debra whispered. "I love you."

"I love you," he said.

Medics finally arrived. Enroute to the hospital thirty miles away, the medical technician asked Kevin if he had given Rodney and CPR or resuscitation. Kevin admitted he had no advanced first-aid knowledge. His only response had been to administer a priesthood blessing. "I believe that blessing saved this young man's life," replied the technician, who was also a Latter-day Saint.

"IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!"

Rodney's wife, Gayleen, had been notified of his accident, and she drove to the sheriff's office with her children. While her two daughters cried for their father, Gayleen felt a deep feeling of peace. "It was odd--I'm usually a very panicky person," she admits. "I'm sure I was able to remain calm because of the many prayers offered on our behalf."

Doctors at the hospital initially thought that Rodney would require emergency transportation to the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City or to another larger hospital. However, after the hospital emergency room doctor completed several tests, he approached the family, asking if any of them had given Rodney CPR. Another doctor came out of the examining room to repeat the same questions. After receiving a negative answer, he threw his hands up into the air. "It's unbelievable," he exclaimed. "His heart never skipped a beat. It's amazing!"

Careful examination showed that Rodney had sustained some injury. The lightning had burned a scar from the crown of Rodney's head down to the back of his neck. At that point, the lightning charge split, and burn marks circled his neck as if he were wearing a necklace. The two burn lines zigzagged down his body. One exited his body in a deep gash two inches below his navel; the other line exited near his right knee.

The garments Rodney wore that day show a hole the size of a grapefruit on the left side over his heart, but there is no corresponding hole in his outer T-shirt--and no mark on his body!

Diagnostic tests at the hospital revealed that injuries other than the burns were very minor. The lightning had melted his hair, and one eardrum had burst from the loud clap of thunder accompanying the lightning strike. The lining of his stomach and part of his liver were burned, but most of these injuries healed within a short time. The doctors reassured Rodney's family that he would recover completely.

Although his injuries were not as serious as first believed, Rodney passed in and out of consciousness for a couple of days. However, he was released after only three days in the hospital.

Two weeks after the accident, Rodney awoke to find that his left eye was dry and he couldn't blink it. Then he noticed that the whole side of his face was numb. He was tested, and the nerves in his face were still alive, but he had to have medication to relieve the pressure from the nerves. The medication was effective, and within a couple of days the feeling started to come back into his face.

Recuperating at home, with his wife and three children at his side, Rodney

noticed that sounds were magnified by his damaged eardrum. At a family reunion, he asked his father for a priesthood blessing. From his wheelchair, Gary Cox, who has multiple sclerosis, laid his hands upon his son's head. Within a few days, Rodney's ear afflictions were gone. At his next checkup, the doctor was surprised at how quickly his ear had healed.

The only lingering sign [that Rodney has passed through this ordeal] is that the bottoms of his feet are occasionally numb.

Three weeks and two days after the lightning strike, Rodney returned to work at the coal mine where he is employed. His co-workers teased him about his new hairstyle.

But there was nothing funny about Rodney's recovery. Looking at his hat, Rodney knew it was a miracle that the lightning did not kill him. "My spiritual understanding has been increased immensely through this experience, and I think of it every day. I know that Kevin was able, through the priesthood, to call upon the powers of heaven to bless me and my family."

[The original article, written by Carolyn Campbell and Lady Watterson, was published in the February, 1995, issue of The Ensign. It was corrected and edited 21 July 1995 by Della Cox, Rodney's mother, with the help of Montell and Kathryn Seely. The final draft was approved by Rodney himself. Note: corrections and additions are marked with underlining.]

History of Rodney Cox; his account of the Lightning Strike which took place on August 7th, 1993, Castle Dale, Utah; Emery County.

(This recording taken off the Laptop)

On August 28, 2015, 1:00 pm. this story was recorded at Kathryn Seeley's home, around the kitchen table. Shirley Begay was invited to help with the recording. Rodney asked Kathryn to write his story. He approached her in Church and said it was time to tell his story.

(This recording taken from Olympus recorder)

S: Maybe starting out with the day. What as the day, the year and...

R: What was the year?

K: It was '93.

R: It would have been the last weekend of the Pageant.

K: August 7, 1993.

R: Is it? Was it August then?

K: Hmhm

R: That's always been end of July, first of August.

K: Hmhm. Montell had made his journal entries. That's what he put in the Pageant book.

R: Hm

K: You have a Pageant book don't ya?

R: Hmhm

K: He's got a little paragraph in there.

R: Uh huh.

K: And ah, he's got the date. August 7th, 1993.

R: That was a Saturday.

K: Yeah

R: It was the last day?

K: Hmhm

R: And... yeah

K: We'll make a note of the questions we want to ask you, but, we won't interrupt your thought. So that you don't get to say that you were thinking of something. We'll ask the questions later.

R: I do that anyway, but.

K: Uh huh

R: And those, and just off the record.

R: I kinda wanted to get that out of the way, but, it's just a, so you know ah, as far as the rest of the family, I'm not sure how they'll

K: Hmhm

R: But, I don't know, I mean I think that it be alright. I'm not talking nothing

K: Yeah

R: But, contention and things are...

K: Yeah

R: There ah..

K: Devil inspired and he likes to get his foot in the door.

K: Devil inspired

S: In our families that where the Devil strikes. Yeah, very same in our families.

K: So was it turned back on?

S: Just, It's starting right now, and this is starting right now.

K: So how did you happen to be up there?

R: Okay we ah.... actually the last weekend of the pageant, I was ah... actually I was ah.. I wasn't in the pageant that, that weekend, because I was judging the rodeo down in Castle Dale. And ah... and so, of course, the family come up, and Debra and Jeanine and Kevin and they all wanted to go for a ride, so we just ah.. decided to go up and ride down the Hogback area, you know.... ah... and ah.. ride back to town. It was, It was a good day. There was no storms or anything. But as the morning progressed as we went up and got ready to ride you know, of course, you know, I mean it was just a little ride. For some reason we had prayer before we rode up there. I can't remember who suggested that, but ah, ah... anyways, we began to ride you could see to the south there was, there was one of those ah... it wasn't a dark cloud, big storm, it was one of those... ah....rain clouds or whatever that ah..... just probably, you know, several miles long You could see it was just going to pass over us, and there was sun all the way around, 433ah.... but as we begin to ride and ah..... and ah.... ... the ah.... actually the last thing I remember was it starting to hail and ah... it began to hail for, and they said it hailed for, you know, five or ten minutes, ah... before the lightening actually struck. So, I , my memory, you know, five or ten minutes before I was actually struck, you know, that's when I don't remember anything past then. Other than ah... well and then ah... you know riding along, of course, I was on a horse that I was breaking for Debra. And ah... and she'd named it Mad Martigan. And, and, there was ah... there was kinda ah, it was probably a good thing it killed the horse. Or, I'd probably ended up in Buckhorn or somewhere.... Laugh.... But ah... anyway ah... The ah... the next thing I remember is ah... just ah... kinda flashing lights and ah... just blurry. It was just like blurry just like a dream or somethin, just lights flashing, but that was just on the way to the hospital and ah.. I don't really remember, just vaguely I kinda remember stuff like that. And then, when I got to the hospital, then I can remember, you know, my wife and stuff, comin in, and ah... I just askin her what had happened. And ah... you know she was kinda surprised that I know. She didn't know what I knew. And then she was wonderin if she was, if I'd, you know what I would remember when, you know, being struck right in the back of the head. But Ah... but ah... so anyways, she told me I'd been struck with lightening and ah ... I didn't believe her at first. I thought she was joking with me and she says "No really!" And ah... I, ah... as I started to get kinda agitated because I thought she was jokin with me, you know. I didn't know where I was and ah... but then, you know, I could tell that she was, you know, the more serious she got that, that's what had happened. And ah... like I said lightening hit me in the back of the head and tracked down my body. In two separate tracks. Ah... one around my neck, down the back of my neck and then around my neck then just zigzagged down my chest and stomach and one... one bolt exited ah... right below my navel. Um... come out through my zipper It actually blew a hole, blew the teeth right out of the zipper. The zipper still zipped up and it's, you know, blew out through my zipper. And the other track continued down my right leg, exited inside my

right leg where the D-ring would be on the, on the saddle. And ah... but that's the path it took, took through me. Course at the hospital... ah... Gayleen could probably tell you more of what went on at the hospital, but I do remember the Doctor comin and you know they was preparing to life flight me. You know they, lightening travels through your body, course through your blood. So, they knew my insides had to be ah...ah... burned as well. They, course they done an EKG and all the tests and everything just kept comin back positive. The doctor come in and One other interestin thing was ah, you know, I was never given CPR. And ah... the other, Man, I don't think they, anybody ever really knew ... laugh... knew how to ... how to... how to do it. Ah... it's ah, you know, they just never had that training or just .. or whatever ah... but ah for whatever reasons, but anyway, that's ah The doctor come in and ah... my wife tells me that he wanted to know, did anybody administer CPR? And he said "No". And he asked several times. And ah... finally the ah ... ah... the EMT that was there, and I can't remember his name, I should. Ah... my wife would have that information, but, ah... finally he said, "No one gave CPR. All he had was a priesthood blessing." And the doctor just said, "Well, It's amazing". He said everything in the EKG, everything in his, his, his hearts never even skipped a beat. And so, ah... from that time on, you know, I continued to recover quite quickly. I think I was only in the hospital for a day. This happened Saturday and I believe I returned home Monday morning. And ah... and actually I returned to work that, that week also. Which was probably, probably I shouldn't have done. There was like a, a, for quite awhile it was like your body was, my body was, like if I jumped down off something I almost just go clear to the ground. It couldn't, weak and it just took a lot out of me and ah... anyway, it worked out alright and ah... the only thing that I have was the, that they found was the inside of the lining to my stomach had been burned. And ah, ah... I believe it was my ah my right ear drum had been ruptured. And, so, I had an appointment to go to a doctor to get that checked out and in the meantime my father and his brother Calvin give me another blessing. Ah... it's right before I went up there and as I got up there and the doctor examined me and everything and everything checked out. He could just vaguely see a small hole in my ear drum and ah... and everything had healed It was just a, just amazing. The ah... the way my body had healed. And ah... of course that goes back to ah... the blessing that I received while, while up there.

Now I can relate all this to you, as it has been related to me. Ah... of course ah.. when I was first struck with lightening... I was out in front of everybody just a little bit. And ah... like, you know, 15 or 20 feet. And ah... cough, first off, after the loud initial noise, you know, Kevin said that I straightened up, stood up in the stir-ups, stiffened up. And they'd actually thought that somebody had shot at us or somethin. And then, they realized it was, you know, lightening, then was I stiffened up and I, of course the horse

just tipped over and ah... and we both, you know, hit the ground. Ah... my head landed probably just, it was just inches from a quite a large rock. And in that area up there, you know, there is a few rocks, to find a, you know, to actually be not hurt by the fall itself was, was kind of amazing. And then, I was, as I was stiffened up in the stir-ups, I think that's, as the horse fell, that's what threw me further of the horse. You know, as he fell, so the horse didn't land on me or anything. Ah... but then, not knowing what to do, that, and at that point ah.... it seems like there was divine intervention from that point on. We was right next to the, to the, it's not a ledge or a cliff, but it's quite a steep, you know, it's quite a steep ah incline right there right off into the... I can't remember what that wash is called. Ah... but anyway, the horses were right, we went up and we could see their tracks, it was right on the edge of that, close to going over. Ah... of course, Kevin's horse was the only one, it was borrowed from a farmer down in Bicknell and they'd hunted on it and shot on it and things. It was the only one that remained calm. Of course, Debra and Jeanine's horses were the ones that was throwin a fit. And ah, but as they ah, as Kevin come over to me and rolled me over there with my head on his lap, and there, like I said they didn't do CPR. The only thing he could think of was, was to give me a blessing. And they said, as soon as he began, the horses come over and hung their heads over their shoulders right there and remained there till the remainder of the time. Like I say, it was a like there was divine intervention and from that time on. And as, as it was, he did bless me. You know, not knowin what to do, he gave me a blessing and ah, you know, that's how I can relate it to home teaching, because the previous month ah, Kevin said his home teachers had been there to their home. And, and the topic was, that they discussed was "Being Specific in Blessings". And as he blessed me, you know, I don't know how he knew, of course, you know, he's a college graduate then, he's educated. But he blessed every organ of my body. Ah... ah.. and you know, to be able to speak, my faculties that way, just, just, very thorough and ah... so, you know, I actually, actually looking back on it, I think that things was being prepared for that event even then. You know, I can't help but think that. Like Kevin and Janine said that they had come and they, they went to the Temple coming to Salt Lake. Even though when they got here they went to the Temple and stuff and, like Kevin's says, when he begun his blessing, he didn't feel he was worthy to give such a blessing. Not that he had, or had any major problems, but that's just the type of experience when you're faced with something like that, you know, you could start questioning your faith and are you worthy of things. But, anyway, as ah.... I can't remember the exact.... while on that train of thought, if I could just look at this (Rodney reading his paper)..... and as, as is that's another thing that's a, that's good, Kevin actually, actually sit down and September 29, 1993. That would have been the day I went to the life flight, yeah, but for him to sit in the hospital and actually, immediately write things that was a, was a good thing that he, like he say's.... I'm sitting here at Castlevew Hospital here in Price, Utah about 3 pm. And we have been here ever since this morning. As I reflect on the

last three days and in the events which lead up to all of us being here in the hospital. My heart is full and my life has been affected forever. Like he said, he begins to talk about him and his wife going to the Temple and as he does it was a welcome experience to be in the company of to be put in perspective of at least, a little bit, of our roles here on the earth. And so, that's what got me thinkin, you know, that tah... ah... he... I He was even being prepared. And.... It's just interesting how.... and, and it's just interesting how, that's what I say there's so many different levels that you can talk about this . That's why it's kinda hard to talk about it now, because as you grow spiritually and things, the insides change and you see different things, then our ah, our ah... it's like a parable. You know, it's ah, as you, as the spirit directs you, you know, you learn different things. And ah, ah..... but anyway, that ah, I gotta get more about why we was there ah..... Long silence..... While then, as I talked a little bit about, as you talked about not feelin, you know, worthy. Like he says, "I opened the blessing by first asking Heavenly Father me of my imperfections and sins. But, notwithstanding my weaknesses, that he would please bless, help Rodney and that whatever needed to happen this day, would happen. Ah.... I blessed him that his spirit would enter his body again. I repeated it several times and I closed in the name of Jesus Christ. And then, when he was done, he looked up and saw Jeanine and Debra crying and praying that I'd be okay. Debra was getting excited and vocal and Jeanine was shouting for me to wake up.....ah..... (turning paper) He continued with some things that he had said in the blessing. And after he'd given me a blessing, then he looked at Jeanine and said it's okay to go get help. And ah... of course Jeanine, you know, living in Denver, hadn't been here for years. She rode back to the highway and then once she got to the highway she didn't know which way to go. Would it be closer to the Pageant site or be closer to town. Of course, it was closer to the Pageant site. That's where that little road turns off, you know, that's the road that goes down over there, but, ah... at that time at the Pageant site there was nobody up there. That's when she was prompted to ride to the pageant site.

As she was got there, of course, more and more, lighting director for the pageant ah... I think he and his son was it there. And to hear his story, it was just by chance, so to say, that he was there. Ah...ah... and ah... I don't really remember the detail what took him to the Pageant site that day, but he wasn't actually suppose to be there. But he was there, and of course, he had a two-way radio and he actually radioed ah... what do you call it ... people that are into radio's back at that time - CB's and the two way radios and but he got hold of someone in Vernal. And they're the ones that called Emery County Sheriff's Dept. And that's how the ambulance was dispatched. As she rode up there and ah... anyway, yeah. So it was, ah... it was a good 30 minutes or so at least before the ambulance got there. And, and as Kevin talks about tah, as they was sittin there, and it was cool, it was kinda overcast at that time. It was still sprinklin a little bit, I think. And then, I was thinkin it was probably gettin cold and you know, they didn't want me

to go into shock and stuff. And, as they said, they said another prayer, they said it was like the clouds just parted and it just got warm right there. And ah... as I read thru this I really believe that's exactly how he put it but was, like I say it was just divine intervention all the way around through there. And for me, you know, of course, I was out... but through Kevin, Jeanine and Debra lived through it, it probably made a bigger... ah.... impact on them, you know, then it did me.

Ah.... and ah..... silence..... reading his paper note And like he said, ah... as Jeanine left for help, said, "It was at this time that Rodney took his first breath". Said it was very wheezy, and it seemed as if he was struggling to breath. He said, Debra had continued to pray out loud asking Heavenly Father to temper the elements and calm the horses. Ah.....silence.... however the rain was still falling, and ah.... all he says is "as they continued to pray and Debra continued to talk to me, and they was saying silent prayers. The sun came out, it warmed our bodies, it was the Lord had blown away the clouds and let the sun shine on us, because we had no blankets to keep us warm. Ah... then it was this time that I ah..... I kinda started to come to and move around a little bit ... um... I coughed up a little bit. And after he'd given me the initial blessing, and told Jeanine to go get help, then, then is when he says, "as we lay there, we did not know the physical conditions Rodney was in and that's when his mind reflected back to Brother White and his Son as they came and ... ah ... ah... and they said their lesson that day was on prayer and make mention on drawing on the powers of heaven. Brother White expressed how important it is to be specific in prayer, but anyway, that's, that's a, so ah, that's when he give me the second blessing of all the organs of my body and everything and of that nature. Ah.....ah... he says ah... "The Holy Ghost touched my heart again. I proceeded to give Rodney another blessing. The Spirit fed my thoughts as I blessed Rodney's internal organs by name. His heart, lungs, stomach and liver. I blessed his bones, muscles, and nerves. I blessed his brain that it would he would be able to walk, talk, see with his eyes, feel, touch, smell, hear and communicate and understand, as I..... (Rodney tapping on table with his fingers with some emotion) As I gave the blessing I felt overwhelmed, I was shaking. It was truly a testimony of the more tapping on the table and silence and the power of the Holy Ghost, the Priesthood and our Heavenly Father. As I closed the blessing a peaceful, calm feeling came over me and I knew Rodney would live and function normally. Rodney rolled over again to spit up and looked up at Debra and their eyes met. I heard Debra say, "Rodney, I love you, Rodney, I sure ?????". I love you too Debra. What a glorious feeling.

But anyway, that's when we ah ... the ambulance finally came and I was lifted up and hauled to the hospital. On the way over the medical technician asked me if we had any CPR or resuscitation. I asked the technician if he was LDS, he said yes. I said the only thing we did was give him a priesthood blessing. The medical technician said that the

blessing must have been what saved him. And, he said, that it was in his opinion that as soon as we got him stabilized in Price, we should air lift him to the University burn unit.

Ah..... Comments, he makes some more personal comments and things and ah.... Since this incidence a change in the person's life must still come by natural means. Just because you've witnessed a wonderful miracle such as this doesn't mean that all of you're really bad habits will disappear. You still have to pray for strength, ask for help and overcome through repentance and faith.

And that Home Teachers have an effect on the lives of those they serve and more than they realize they can and do make a difference and that sometimes they may never know what effect they might have on down the road. Anyway, that's not just Home Teachers. That's all of us, you know, that's just life. As we look at the gospel and do those things and share our testimonies. You know, I always.... If I might just preach a little right now, but ah without... you know, Elder Ballard, I love Elder Ballard and some missionary man, but, but tah.... ah... he ah... you know, when he tells us that we should pray for ah... to know who we should be of service to and not to just rake their lawn or..... but, to share your testimony and your love for the gospel; being of service to people, you know, and as we do those things, you know, it has a far reaching effect. You never know whose lives are touched in the things you say and do.

But ah.... Then he just closes with his testimony. But anyways, I think, you know, continue to be there and ah... things seem to work out all right. That's kinda what I got for right now. Do you have any questions or anything?

K: The date on that paper has puzzled me. When you got to the hospital were you in for some kind of check up then, or, has he missed the day of the date, because we know the accident happened on the seventh of August.

R: Well, that right, right, right, right. Ah... type written, journal entry September 29, type written.

K: Oh

R: So, he'd sat down and wrote it and then on this day he type written this all out.

K: Ohhh

R: Yeah, okay, my mistake.

K: So, he was in the hospital when you were in there on your initial visit then?

R: Yeah, August 8th, that's the day.

K: Ohhh

R: August 8th. It was a Sunday. August 8th was a Sunday. And so, yeah August 7th. Yeah you're right on the day.

K: Yeah, I'd made that out to be so.

R: Hmm hm. Saturday, August 7th is that right there.

K: Hmm hm.

S: You know, you said that even though you've witnessed something like that it doesn't change you, but, I think it really does. Has this, have you noticed any changes in your life? Maybe, just the way you think about people or your reaction with others from that experience you had?

R: Well, you know, of course, it changes ya. But ah, you know, and it's things like this, you know, probably the last time I'd sit down and talked about this was ah... it's kinda hard, but sittin down and talkin about this now, you know, and reflecting upon it. You know, it still changes ya. Ah... the initial, like I say, the initial experience, ah, you know, just your appreciation for life and knowing that it can be taken at any time. Just that simple fact there would changes the way you look at things. But, if you don't reflect upon that, you'll lose that, you know, you can, you know, it's ah, that's kinda why, you know, we've been taught, you know, ah.. the Lord convinced people showin them miracles and then things all the time. You know, when people say well I wanna see something. But, when the Holy Ghost teaches you something, you know, I think that makes it more of a permanent mark on ya. It helps you to remember better as an experience like this. The Holy Ghost was there. You know, and ah, and, and, you know that, like you say, to talk to each one, like to talk to Janine and to know her thoughts as she rode by herself, not knowing where she was. And, and, and, guided by the Spirit. There's things that helped change your life and ah... it just gives a deeper meaning to it. And the more we reflect on it, the more, you know, the more understanding we have of things that helped, you know, it's just one of those things you continue to learn from. When your, its like all experiences, you know, help us to, it's just like ahsilence Yeah, you're right, you know, it does make a change on ya in the way you do things ah. It's just to what degree is, is ah, is what we do with it is to what degree it changes us.

K: Well, you've kept growing and changing since then. Your perspective now is slightly different than it was right after it happened.

R: True

S: I didn't quite get the name of your horse.

R: Mad Martigan. Another comical thing is ah, is ah, I was asking Gayleen if she come in and ah kept repeating myself and ah, because they'd come in and tell me something and I'd forget. But I'd ask them, somebody'd come in and see me and in a little while, now who was that? And ah, I still, the nurse come in and I was doin somethin and I was askin Gayleen, I said, what happened to Martigan? And ah, she said, "Well, he's still up there". And, I said, I can't remember what I said, I said, "You just left him up there?", or something. She said, "Yeah, he's dead. We just left him there." Well, that nurse that was in there thought we was talkin about a person. She didn't know we was talkin about a horse Laugh..... so, ... laugh.... She said, "You just left him up there?" laugh... and Gayleen, can give you a little more insight on that story. It was kinda. It was kinda comical. But ah, anyway sure.

K: Do you have any memory of coming conscious and having Debra there telling you that she loves you and you loved her back? Or, was that just almost automatic?

R: I just have no, like ya say, I basically, ten minutes or so before I woke up in the hospital I, other than I can kinda remember that the red flashing lights and stuff, you know, a little bit.

K: Hm. Do you remember what Doctor attended you?

R: You know, I don't. Gayleen would probably remember that.

K: It'd be fun to remember the name of the nurse that was shocked to find out.. laugh.. Yeah, that's why I think it would be good to interview them too. Janine, do you know, I suppose Janine had returned to the group long before the ambulance arrived.

R: Ah....

K: Cuz you were only two miles away from the Pageant site?

R: Let's see ah.... you know, I can't re....., you know that's another thing that tah my kids were ah....

K: Little.

R: Yeah, Carson was just a baby then. That's how I remember how long ago it was because he was just a baby. And ah...

K: So, then Courtney hadn't been born.

R: Cameron?

K: Oh, Cameron, yeah. I get those names mixed up.

R: No, Cameron hadn't been born yet. And ah...

K: And she's your youngest.

R: Hm Hm. But, like when ah when Dad got the information, all they knew is, you know, that I'd been hit with lightening and he was in the wheelchair and he was just, he was not knowing what to do and he would, you know, and... anyway, the events that happened down town was kinda, and I can't remember who give Gayleen and the kids a ride up or to the hospital. I can't remember what a, you know, Gayleen would have more detail. I'd hate to say anything because I

K: Hm hm.

R: I might not be quite accurate. Ah...

K: But, your Dad, what was his reaction?

R: Well, and again Gayleen and Mom could probably give you, but he was, I just remember him, said he'd run the ramp in his wheelchair and getting in the car and, you know, and ah.... and ah.... I can't remember if one of the kids was with him or I just can't remember. I just need something to, or I can find out, or they can fill me in there.

K: Hmm Hm. Yeah, they'll be able to add to this. Let me look at what else. So, when you said, ah... Kevin was being prepared and by his temple visit, then later you clarified that by saying, it just kinda put everything into perspective about the plan of life and our purpose of life, did it also... does he mention anything about it? Reaffirming his feeling that he was worthy to give you a blessing because he'd been to the temple? He was worthy to go to the temple so he was

R: That's what I say, it's not that he had any major problems or anything, but that just helps you to understand the nature of this experience.

K: Hm hm.

R: You know, I mean if, if Even, you know, me today, was in that, put myself in his shoes today, you know, would I feel

K: Hm hm,

R: You know,

K: Yeah, ready to ...

R: Even though I would proceed forward and do it. You know, you would have those feelings of inadequacy and you know, blessing somebody that their spirit to re-enter their body again. That's just not something you'd mention in every blessing. You know,

ah... I think that's why it had such a big impact upon them. That ah, like I say, they didn't talk about it for a long time.

K: So, Kevin was prepared. How was Rodney being prepared?

R: Well, you know, I'd have the sledge hammer effect several times in my life... laugh... laugh ...

K: Meaning?

R: I've had to have a knock on the head a time or two before ... laugh.... I ah, you just don't know, you know you just

K: So ah, the whole experience may have changed you, well, um.... This is a personal question, but, I'm thinking maybe you weren't as dedicated as you might have been and attending church, were you before that time? And, it made some difference afterward or ah I don't want to put words in your mouth. I'm just trying to, trying to know how you were prepared and ah and what it did for ya.

S: I, I just interject a little bit. When you came to our sacrament meeting, I just had a sense that you were very sensitive to the spirit. Have you always been that way, along with Kathryn's question?

R: Ah.... funny you should say that. Some I'd just share an experience when I was probably three or four years old. You know, you don't remember too much about when you're that age. But, this is one of those things that I remember, bout the only thing I remember about being that age. Of course, my Grandfather, Grandfather smoked. Become a change smoker. Us kids used to just love to sit on his lap light his cigarettes, you know. And ah... anyway, he'd ah, him or Cliff, whoever it was, was up to their place and ah, they'd found a cigarette butt and that was still burnin. And ah, here I was, just that age, and I'd been around him smokin an stuff for quite a bit, in fact, it could happen, take a puff of it, you know, three or four year old and, of course, Debra and Phillips daughter knew, right away grabbed me and marched me into Mom, you know, ..laugh.... you know what we found Rodney doing?

K: Laugh...

R: Of course, anyway, ah, Mom said she looked out on the, I can remember this, out on her porch, I was sittin out on the porch with legs dangling over the edge with my head in my hands ah... then I wondered - What's my Heavenly Father is going to do with me now. You know, ah....

K: You already knew then, it was wrong then!

R: Yeah.

K: Oh my goodness.

R: And, so, anyway I would say, probably yeah, you know, but... you know, It's the experience like this that probably helps do that and it continues to do that. Ah.... ah... you know, what's, that's ah... I probably say yeah. That, because of that one experience. Not anything else really. Just at an early age, you know, I'd like to say I just knew.

K: You mentioned Cliff, whose Cliff?

R: Cliff Jewkes

K: Oh. He was a good friend of your Dad's?

R: Yeah. And, I don't know if he was there at that time or not, I don't know. It seems like I heard he was.

K: So, this is not just people, not Mom or Debra, telling you what happened, but you remember it.

R: Hm hm.

K: You remember that?

R: Hm hm.

K: So, you didn't do that again?

R: Laugh! Well, not till later in life, but

K: Laugh

R: Laugh... and... and, you know, there was a time, you know, in my life that I was

K: ????

R: For quite awhile and ah, you know, so

K: The Spirit has worked on ya, a lot, to bring you to where you are today.

R: It has. As it does all of us.

K: Ah huh.

R: And it's just, it's just recognizing that and what we do with it that matters.

K: You know, your Mom has told me so much about her Dad, and her fond feelings for him and all. But, I never thought of him before as a smoker.

R: Hmhm.

K: And, I was the same way about Carl Seeley. I'd heard such good stories about him all the time, and to think that they had that bad habit, and it was getting in their way of progression, both of them. But, I just remember Montell saying to me once, that he asked his Mom, "Don't tell me these negative stories about my Dad. Don't talk about those. Just tell me the good things about my Dad."

R: Hmmhm.

K: We have to remember them in a whole different light than

R: MmmHm

K: Than some of those bad habits that they had that

R: Well, you know, and I think that it's a... it's not good to dwell on the past, you know. I mean, learn, learn from mistakes, and learn from others and move on.

K: Ah huh.

R: You know, ah, you'll be able to see good in everyone. And ah, and of course, nobody wants to remember the bad or anything. You know, that's not for us to worry about.

K: Yeah.

R: Because, when we ponder on the bad that brings us down, and when we ponder on the good that lifts us up. And ah...

K: I'm sure we all have good qualities and....

R: Sure! You know, ah... for the most part people of that generation were probably the most hard working, honest people that's ever been. And, and, of course, there's always been those that take advantage and, you know, everything, but, but generally, you know, people, even though, they had bad habits and what or had problems. They was all good hard workin, honest people. Ah... for the most part. And ah, you know, ah... I just feel like you see less and less of that with each generation. Just my own personal ... laugh....

K: Laugh... we all have thoughts, don't we? laugh.... The world has gone to the dogs....

R: Laugh....

K: They said that back in the 12th century.

R: Yeah, yeah! But, anyway, it's ah ...

S: Where are you today, as far as your feelings towards God and your family and your children and maybe, what would you want them to know, that you know? The things that you know now, what would you want to share with them?

R: silence..... Well, course my family is the most important thing there is to me. Ah... I'll have to get back with you on that one.

K: Make yourself a note Rodney. That would be an important thing to add.

R: You know, it's just like ah..... you know, I always ah more so within the last couple of months, I just praying for ah, for ah... to be able to share my testimony of the gospel with my children. You know, as I done that, and then it come time to, to bless Cameron's baby all my children's was there, you know, and I was able to do that. And so, you know, there again, it's, it's prayin for things, then it's what we do with it and recognize as an opportunity to do that. In just sharing with them that how important the Savior is in our lives. And ah.... ah... and all that he does for us. There's ah one thing in the recent past that has helped me more than anything; is Elder Bednar speaking of Grace. Says, when he reads in the scriptures the word Grace, he always ah... put's in the word, substitutes the words, enabling power. And like he explains, not to take away from mercy or anything else, but, through His Grace , through his enabling power, you know, we have to do our part also. We have to, you know, and he'll give us that, he'll do that for us. It's a, it's just like, we, I just want to end on a side note, we was readin in the scriptures the other day and when it talks about a, you know, you should pray, pray to not be tempted above what you can bear. You know, and as we know, Satan, can't tempt us above what we can bear. So, we got onto the discussion of, my wife was mentioned, you know, why, why do we have to pray for it, if we can't be tempted above what we can bear? We still have to do our part. You know, you can't, you know, you can't, we still have to keep the commandments. We still have to be obedient, and pray that we won't be tempted above that which we can bear. Because, that's like ah experiences like this that help us look at a different level, you know, we're all, at our age, are now a stronger people, able to bear more than we would of 20 years ago. Had I had things happen to me, you know, twenty years ago, you know, I was just a weaker person, I was, my faith wasn't as strong. And this experience has built, strengthened my faith, along with many other experiences. And ah, just by, just remembering the Savior in our lives, that's what I would like my children to know, to remember, that's it's only through him, it's the only way. It's the only way.

K: So, you're finished with that thought now?

R: As far as I know... laugh...

K: You said the horse fell over on its side, how did it happen that your leg wasn't under, under the horse?

R: Well, well I think being stiffened straight up in the saddle, in the stirrups, while the lightning struck, I stiffened straight up and stood up in the stirrups; and as he tipped over the momentum, the momentum kinda just threw me ...

K: Clear of him.

R: Clear of him.

K: Ohh... Montell's father had the same kind of an accident. The horse went over on its side. But, as it scrambled to get up, it stepped on his head.

R: HMMM.

K: Crushed the bones in his head.

R: And, of course, the horse, you know, he fell, it didn't move, he just hit first, then didn't move.

K: He wasn't gonna scramble.

R: No, no.

K: He just struggled right there.

R: Hmhm.

K: So that was ...

R: And, I'm just assuming that, you know, I wasn't, it makes sense, you know.

K: Hmhm. Well, then you were thrown clear!

R: Yeah, like Kevin says, you know, he seen me stiffen up, straight up in the saddle. And, then as the horse tipped over just, you know, I mean, It's not like it threw me five feet from him. I mean I was just barely thrown clear of, you know.

K: Well that's significant that you actually stood up in the stirrups. I don't think I would have understood that.

R: Hmhm.

S: So, as that lightning went through you, as it exited out, did it also, did it hit the horse as well?

R: No, I don't believe so. It just threw me and then into the horse. Everywhere there was a, like for instance, everywhere there was ah... in the saddle, everywhere there was copper rivets and things in the saddle; there was burn holes in the saddle blanket. So, of course, through the D ring, which would of, you know, that'd been attached right to the horse. And, that's where it come out of me and, yeah that, there was just, fars I know was there was just the one bolt that hit me and then through me and then into the horse.

K: So, do you still have physical scars around your neck and where it came out?

R: Shaking of the head, no.

K: You don't have anything around your neck there?

R: Pictures.

K: And, it had come with nap of your hair?

R: Yeah, yeah.

K: But, that's...

R: That's how they tell exit wounds from entry wounds; is your exit wounds are where you have the worst burns. I ah where it came out right below my navel it was just like you took a cigar or something and just held it there; made a burn, and then it was second and third degree burns inside of my right knee. No scar there, nothing like that.

K: Wow

S: Hm.

K: Interesting. ????. No cowlick or anything like that? I got a cowlick.

R: No, I just went and took care of it..... laugh..... (Rodney had taken a break earlier)

K: Good.

S: So you were healed. Every part of you was healed.

R: Hmhm.

S: Just like he prayed.

R: Hmhm. Yeah.

K: So, that, that was in the second blessing that he gave you?

R: Yeah

K: After Janine had gone

R: Hmhm. Okay, mind if I use that restroom?

Coming back from the restroom –

R: What was that question I was suppose to write down?

K: Laugh... Your testimony. Wasn't OH!

S: Um, it was just ...

K: Yeah.

R: Wasn't that basically the same thing.

S: Basically the same thing, yeah.

K: Just to have your testimony there that ...

R: Wasn't it something I want my children to remember?

K: Hmhm.

S: The things that you know. I just love reading the scriptures and they say, "I know".

K: Hmhm. Or, when they say, "Verily, verily". We know that one is important.

R: But, you know, it's ah, I think what's changed in my testimony is, is ah ... my testimony of the Savior, because, you know, I can, I can ah... it never fails when you see one of the Apostles, or the first Presidency, when they speak of the atonement, it never fails; most every time they get emotional. And I, and I, I got to thinkin bout that and I. I ah, I'm not quite there yet. For whatever reason, and I'm thinkin, you know, I can sit down, and pull up video's of, of Joseph Smith, and as he, as he rides to Carthage Jail and leaves his wife. And, and I can't help but get emotional. But, and I don't know if it's because we have so much, where we have so much of that, it's more real to us. But, that same emotion should be attached to when you think of the Savior and what he's done for us.

K: Hmhm

R: Because he done so much more for us than Joseph Smith did. And, and, so I, lately, so that's probably the one thing that I've pondered about more lately than anything.

And it's helped me, helped me to more have a closer relationship with the Savior. Is, is trying to get that, you know, have that, I mean and he helped me, he helps us so much. Joseph Smith done what he done so we have what we have that's it the Savior that helps us each and every day. And, knowing what he done for us, ah ... and there some people that , you know, that have that, like I say, I don't, I don't think I'm quite there yet. But, I think its things like this that help us to get there. And ah, and that was just kinda, but I've often wondered why, why is that so difficult to do.

K: Hmhm

S: I think everything in the world is here to distract us.

R: It is.

S: For specifically that.

R: But, yet with all the distractions I can, say I can sit down and watch Joseph Smith and I get emotional.

K: Hmhm

R: But, I can watch a video of the Savior in Gethsemane and that don't seem to have that same emotional effect, you know what I mean. But, it should! But it does, I know it does more now than, than it did. And I think that's where we're striving. You know, that's why it's, it's ah, ah just our personal testimony of the Savior, and ah, and ah, and as we more fully realize that, as people more fully realize that, you know that's, that's just

K: Well, preparing yourself to share that, you know, in the video...

R: Hmhm.

K: It, It's hard to do because it..... you feel like, "Oh, I haven't written it down", or, " I hadn't thought about that thoroughly", and you can think about it more.

So, when you said your stomach lining was burned and the right ear drum was burst, there was a small hole in the eardrum. Had you gone back for some kind of re-evaluation, after healing?

R: Ah...

K: Did they have you come back for check-ups? Or, did you feel like you wanted to go back and explore whatever might be left over that needed to be dealt with?

R: What was the deal there?

K: I felt like, you knew that you had gone back and

R: Well, ah...

K: Had things evaluated

R: I know that it had burst my ear drum

K: And, do you still have any problem with that?

R: My wife say's I do.

K: She'd rather speak to you and your left side, so that you'll hear?

R: Laugh.... She says it's both sides! ...Laugh....

K: Uh Oh...laugh...

R: Ah, of course, you know, in mining and for 35 years, my hearing probably not what it should, but is it related to that, I don't think, I don't think so. I don't think for some time, you know, the hearing tests that I have had, they've all been okay.

K: And you haven't had anything that would indicate that your

R: ???? one side

K: That your stomach is not functioning right because it the lining had burned.

R: No.

K: Hm. Interesting. Very Interesting. Well! It's been great! Great! Great!

K: Turning to Shirley, Do you have anymore questions today, Shirley?

S: I just need the names of all the people that were there that day, the names of the people that were there with you that that day.

K: Just the four.

R: There was Janine and Debra and Kevin.

S: K

R: And, there's just, ah there's a song that I was, a hymn I was trying to think of that ah,anyway I'll find it.

K: Okay, so you shared the hymn and your testimony?

R: Yeah, when I shared my testimony I, that was the hymn that we sang for in sacrament that day. And it was, the Savior see's your troubled heart, ah... what's the name of that hymn? Pead for him, pleads for you above....

K: Hmmm. Yeah, so many of them do have those wonderful thoughts

R: But, I'll find what it is

K: And, this was just very recently then that you?

R: Last month.

K: Like August, August fast Sunday?

R: Hmhm.

K: Hmm. Blessing the baby..... Hm..... Let's see ... Let's ???? Kathryn began to sing, "Soothes my troubled heart, he lives all blessings to impart", is that the one?

R: Yeah, what one?

K: I know that my Redeemer Lives?

L: I got a green book over here. Oh boy, I should have more often.

K: Okay, Shirley, where's that hymn? Is it #136, or is it in the old hymn book?

S: Laugh

K: It's here because there's I Believe in Christ. Yeah, it's 136! Laugh...

R: Great. Ah, yeah.

K: What did ya find?

R: Yeah, it's just ah, you know, he lives. You know, he lives to wipe away our tears, he lives to bless in time of need, he lives to plead for me above and that was one thing that ah, you know, I kinda got a different perspective on that. I've always thought of, you know, what is it, what's your thought about to, pleads for us above?

K: If our, I think a mediator with the Father. He has taken care of our sins and pains, and.... The Catholics believe that they can pray to Mary and that she will be their intermediary.

R: Hmhm. I just kinda thought that, it does mean all that, but I just thought, you know, when ah, I did shiver when I did share with my family, you know, whenever you have any quiet time, or some haven't done so like I told them. You know, ridin your horse up

in the mountains by yourself when it's all quiet, and just anytime when we have quiet time, you know, and thinkin about our eternal perspective, you know, can we hear the Savior pleading for us, pleading for us to come back.

K: So, that was along with that talk, "Waiting for the Prodigal". I loved that talk!

R: Yeah, so, and, and it just

K: Hmhm

R: Although he does plead our case and our cause, but he's pleading for us to come back also.

K: He has his arms out stretched for us to

R: Yeah, you know

K: Come unto me.

R: Yeah

K: You're right.

R: Like I say, I was able to, when I shared my testimony, I just touched on a few, that's how I know that our Savior lives! Because he see's my troubled heart. He's wiped away my tears.

K: Hmhm

R: He's done all those things. I know that he lives because of that. An
d ah...

K: Hm

R: And, and, so, anyway, that's ah, and just off the record again.

History of Rodney Cox; his account of the Lightening Strike which took place on August 7th, 1993, Castle Dale, Utah; Emery County.

(This recording taken off the Laptop)

On August 28, 2015, 1:00 pm. this story was recorded at Kathryn Seeley's home, around the kitchen table. Shirley Begay was invited to help with the recording. Rodney asked Kathryn to write his story. He approached her in Church and said it was time to tell his story.

(This recording taken from Olympus recorder)

K: So how did you happen to be up there?

R: Okay we ah.... actually the last weekend of the pageant, I was ah... actually I was ah.. I wasn't in the pageant that, that weekend, because I was judging the rodeo down in Castle Dale. And ah... and so, of course, the family come up, Debra and Jeanine and Kevin and they all wanted to go for a ride, so we just ah.. decided to go up and ride down the Hogback area you know.... ah... and ride back to town. It was a good day.

(This recording was taken off of the Laptop – recorded over another conversation)

R: Father and his brother, Calvin, gave me another blessing and ah, it was right before I went up there and as I got up there,

(This part of the recording was off the laptop right after/over the sentence above)

I was just ah, actually I was ah, wasn't in the pageant that weekend, because I was judging the rodeo in Castle Dale. And ah, so, of course, the family come up and ??? and Carolyn. They all wanted to go for a ride. So we just ah, we decided to go up an ride down the Hogback area, you know. And ah, ride back to town. It was a good day, a good day. There was no storms or anything, but as the morning progressed, as we went up, and ah, got ready to ride. You know, of course, you know, it was just a little ride for some reason we had prayer before we left up there. I can't remember who suggested that, but ah, um..... anyways we continued to ride you could see to the south there was, there was one of those....ah... It wasn't a dark cloud, big storm, it was one of those... ah....rain clouds or whatever but ah..... just probably, you know, several miles long You could see it was just going to pass over us, there was sun all the way around, ah.... but as we begin to ride ah..... we ah....

(This recording #2 taken off the Laptop)

R: What was the question I was suppose to write down?

K: Your testimony.

R: Testimony – What I want my children to remember.

R: But you know, it's a... I think what's changed in my testimony is ...is ah... my testimony of the Savior. Because you know, I can ah... I can.... It never fails when you can see one of the apostles, or the first Presidency, when they speak of the atonement (the laptop recording stopped here and started right up with the next sentence of the last sentence just given)

There up in the stir-ups. They actually thought someone had shot at us. And then they realized it was lightening when I stiffened up and the horse tipped over and we both hit the ground. My head landed probably just... I'd landed, probably, just, it was just inches from ah quite a large rock. And ah, you know that area up there, you know, there was few rocks that's... you find....you know.... to actually not be hurt by the fall itself... its... its ah.... kinda amazing. And then, and then I was, as I was stiffened up in the stirrups; I think that's what when the horse fell, that's what threw me off the horse when he fell. So the horse didn't land on me. Ah... but then, them not knowing what to do and at that point ah.. it seemed like there was divine intervention from that point on.