



Increasing Our Compassionate Service by Following the Savior

Whosoever will save his life shall lose it,” the Savior taught, “but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it” (Luke 9:24).

Of this admonition President Thomas S. Monson said: “I believe the Savior is telling us that unless we lose ourselves in service to others, there is little purpose to our own lives. Those who live only for themselves eventually shrivel up and figuratively lose their lives, while those who lose themselves in service to others grow and flourish—and in effect save their lives.”¹

It can be difficult to find the necessary time and energy to help our family, neighbors, ward or branch members, community, and even strangers. When do we help and how, especially when each of us has a finite amount of time? How do we serve when our circumstances limit our abilities?

Our Exemplar is, of course, the Savior Jesus Christ, who has invited us to follow Him (see Matthew 4:19). Although we do not share His divine calling, we can share in His ministry. Describing that ministry, the

Apostle Peter said that Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38).

Jesus healed the sick and ministered to the afflicted (see Matthew 9:20–22; Mark 8:22–25).

Perhaps we will not perform the same mighty miracles, but we can comfort and minister to the needs of those who are dying, ill, or mourning.

The Savior miraculously fed those who had no food (see Matthew 14:15–21). We can give generous fast offerings, serve in Church welfare food-production projects, and contribute to community efforts to feed the needy.

Jesus was aware of and ministered to the individual (see Luke 8:45–48). As we seek to follow His example, the Spirit will open our eyes to see the suffering, the lonely, the estranged. And we can be guided to help meet their needs.

Jesus spent time with others, even when He hadn’t planned to (see Luke 24:29) and even when He was dealing with His own concerns

2001

- A new career workshop is introduced at employment resource centers. Self-employment workshop materials are introduced a year later.
- September 5: Following the completion of the renovation of Welfare Square, a rededication ceremony is held.



2003

- January 25: The Provident Living website is launched, providentliving.org.
- A major proposal is approved to increase the number of bishops’ storehouses throughout the world.
- The Church begins four major humanitarian initiatives: neonatal resuscitation training, clean water, wheelchair distribution, and vision treatment.

(see Matthew 14). We are counseled to give service in a wise and orderly way and not to “run faster than [we have] strength” (Mosiah 4:27). But sometimes our greatest opportunities to serve and bless come when it is least convenient. In the Savior’s parable, the good Samaritan interrupted his journey, then and there, to minister to the stricken man’s needs (see Luke 10:30–37).

No one was beneath the Savior’s notice or too low for Him to reach out to (see Matthew 9:9–13). As the Savior did, so can we love and lift others, teaching them a better way and inviting them to join us in the abundant life the Savior offers.

Heavenly Father knows our unique abilities, circumstances, and desires, and He knows how we can use them to bless others. As we draw closer to Him and seek His direction, He will help us know whom, where, and how to serve.

Visit the Service section of LDS.org for ideas about serving in the Church, in your community, in missionary capacities, and in humanitarian service.

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 85.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).



Far left: Brother Chiroque, a Young Men president in Chulucanas, Peru, works with Alex, a member of the teachers quorum, to build crutches for an injured man in their branch.

Fast offerings, like those being collected by these deacons, are vital to helping the needy.

The Strength of Many

The Law of the Fast

The Lord established the law of the fast to bless His people and provide a way to care for those in need. He instructed the Saints “to impart of your substance unto the poor, . . . and [it] shall be laid before the bishop . . . to administer to the poor and needy” (D&C 42:31, 34). Fast offerings are a primary resource for the Lord’s storehouse. Church members are encouraged to give an offering at least equal to the value of the two meals not eaten while fasting. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) asked members to give “much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it.”¹

When we understand and live the law of the fast, our love and compassion for the less fortunate increase. Fasting, accompanied by prayer, is a form of true worship. When we obey the law of the fast,

2009

- June: A new adoption website is launched, ItsAboutLove.org.³



2010

- April: A new employment website is launched, LDSjobs.org, currently available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.
- Food production is added to humanitarian initiatives.

NOTES

1. See “Humanitarian Activities Worldwide,” providentliving.org/content/display/0,11666,4600-1-2323-1,00.html.
2. See C. Ross Clement, “LDS Family Services” (unpublished history prepared for LDS Family Services, May 10, 2000).
3. See Kimberly Bowen, “LDS Family Services Launches New Web Site,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2009, 78.