

Worldwide Leadership Training Highlights Path to Real Growth

By Heather Whittle Wrigley

Church News and Events

Church leaders explained the significance of “real growth” and how to achieve it during the February 11, 2012, Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Presidency of the Seventy, and Church auxiliary presidencies participated in the instruction to Church leaders around the world.

“In Church terms, *growth* could be defined as ‘new members.’ . . . *Real growth*, however, is defined as ‘growth in the number of active members,” President Uchtdorf explained.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles added, “Growth occurs when personal, lifelong conversion to the gospel results in increased faithfulness in each individual and family.”

That increased faithfulness includes things that can’t be easily measured, such as daily prayer, scripture study, family home evening, love at home, and personal experiences with the Atonement, President Uchtdorf said.

“Too often, we complicate the beauty and simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ with endless lists of meticulous expectations,” he said. “However, when we focus on the ‘why’ of the gospel, much of the confusion fades away.”

Much of the broadcast focused on key doctrines and principles, which provide answers to “why” questions.

“The proper ‘why’ questions will lead us to the proper ‘who,’ ‘what,’ ‘when,’ ‘where,’ ‘why,’ and ‘how,’ decisions,” President Uchtdorf said.

Marriage and Family in the Plan

“The Church is made up of families,” President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said. “Wards and stakes are incidental. When we talk of families, then we see the real growth in the Church.”

He stated that every husband and father should be an officer in the priesthood in his home, presiding over his family in righteousness. Similarly, he said, priesthood leaders should lead worthily—though the offices within the priesthood vary, every worthy priesthood holder has just as much priesthood as the next (see D&C 1:20).

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stressed that husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, must build a relationship of love, repentance, and prayer to successfully strengthen and protect the family, which “is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129).

“Three times in sacred scripture the warning is made that the whole earth would be utterly wasted at the Lord’s return if certain conditions were not in place,” he said. “In each instance that warning relates to the condition of the human family without the sealing ordinances of the temple. Without these ordinances of exaltation, the glory of God would not be realized.”

Achieving that end goal—eternal life and exaltation for all of God’s children—requires that real growth occur in our homes, in wards and branches, and throughout the Church.



Application of the Gospel

Real growth and conversion come from applying the gospel to daily life. In a question-and-answer discussion, Elder L. Tom Perry and Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that the ultimate application of the gospel is making and keeping temple covenants. Obedience to covenants, Elder Christofferson said, can change the natural man to a Saint over time.

Reaching out to others is another important aspect of gospel application. Members are responsible individually and as a Church to reach out to rescue those in temporal and spiritual need, leaders said.

We should not hesitate to join hands with other faiths and service-oriented organizations to care for the poor and the needy, Elder Christofferson said. Priesthood leaders should lead out in these efforts, but members and missionaries should support that role as well.

A panel discussion emphasized focusing on ministering to families, strengthening Melchizedek Priesthood holders, and helping to build the faith and testimonies of the youth. Elder Ballard and Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles participated, along with Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy; Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles speaks during a panel discussion held as part of the Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting in February 2012.

During February's Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said, "The first thing we must do is understand. The second is to put our understanding into action. . . . There is little good in hearing the word of God if we do not translate what we hear into our lives."

He invited Church leaders to do three things following the leadership broadcast and throughout their service in their callings to get the most out of instruction by Church leaders:

1. Individually and as councils, prayerfully consider the instruction you have received and find the "why" of your service and ministry.
2. Following pondering and discussion, determine a few specific actions you will commit to implement. Actions should be tailored to the circumstances and needs of each organization, ward, stake, family, or individual.
3. Once you have made these commitments, follow up on them within the scope of your responsibilities and callings at each of your council meetings.

president; and Rosemary M. Wixom, Primary general president.

Elder Rasband said that every leader needs to be involved in bringing members back to full activity, and Elder Andersen emphasized that the youth need to be more involved in reactivating and strengthening other youth.

Achieving Real Growth

Real growth comes as we apply gospel principles in our daily lives, President Uchtdorf emphasized.

“As you consider these topics, ask yourself about the ‘why’ of your service and ministry and the resulting ‘therefore, what’ in your responsibilities as individuals and as councils,” he said.

Learn More

Individuals can watch, listen to, print, and download material from the broadcast in dozens of languages by going to lds.org/study/ other-addresses and clicking on **Worldwide Leadership Training**. ■

Call for Articles

The *Liahona* is interested in reading about your Christmas traditions:

- How does your family celebrate the season?
- What traditions are common in your culture?
- What traditions have you created to draw yourself and your family closer to the Savior?
- What memorable Christmas experiences—particularly those relating to traditions—can you share with us?

Please send your memories and ideas to the *Liahona* by June 1, 2012, at liahona@ldschurch.org. ■

BibleVideos.LDS.org is Gift to the World

During the 2011 First Presidency Christmas Devotional, Church leaders presented The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos website, a “gift” to the world.

BibleVideos.lds.org is a repository for original short videos that depict scenes from Christ’s life, ranging from the angel foretelling Christ’s birth to the Savior’s Resurrection.

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, announced the site during the devotional.

“Like the scriptures which these short films follow faithfully they may seem to you quiet,” he said. “Your faith and the Holy Ghost will create the emotion these world-changing events deserve.”

Material for the videos is being provided from footage shot at the Church’s new LDS Motion Picture Studio South Campus in Goshen, Utah, where filming for the New Testament Scripture Library Project began in August 2011.

The project will yield more than 100 vignettes portraying the life of Christ, taken directly from the text of the King James Version of the Bible.

The website has a mobile-friendly design and is available in English (BibleVideos.lds.org), Spanish (videodelabiblia.org), and Portuguese (videosdabiblia.org). A free iPad app is also available, offering a new way to experience Bible stories through sight, sound, and touch. ■



Eventually, nearly 100 videos depicting New Testament scenes of Christ’s life will be available on The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos website.