



## “Offer Up Thy Sacraments upon My Holy Day”

*Keeping the Sabbath day holy and  
worthily partaking of the sacrament bring  
us increased spiritual strength.*

### **From the Life of George Albert Smith**

As a child, George Albert Smith learned the importance of honoring the Sabbath day. Often on Sundays a group of neighborhood boys would come to his house after Sunday School to invite him to play ball. “I was like the boys,” he said. “I thought it would be lots of fun to play ball and to play other games. But I had a wonderful mother. She did not say, ‘You cannot do it,’ but she did say: ‘Son, you will be happier if you do not do that. . . .’ I want to tell you I am grateful for that kind of training in the home.”<sup>1</sup> The impact of his mother’s teachings can be seen in President Smith’s frequently reminding the Saints that keeping the Sabbath day holy brings great blessings.

As a General Authority, George Albert Smith had the opportunity to attend Sunday services of the Church in numerous locations. As he observed the Saints worshipping together on the Sabbath, he was pleased with their reverent attitude toward the sacrament: “I feel that a comprehension of the sacredness of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is important to the members of the Church. . . . I rejoice when I find our brethren and sisters coming to the sanctuary and partaking of these emblems . . . worthily.”<sup>2</sup> [See suggestion 1 on page 177.]

## Teachings of George Albert Smith

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### **God's commandment that we keep the Sabbath day holy is not a burden but a blessing.**

[The Lord] has taught us that we must observe the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. One day of the seven he has set apart as his day, and in consideration of all his blessings bestowed upon us on the other days it would appear to me that we ought to find joy in doing the things that he asks us to do on his holy day, and I believe that unless we do we will find no happiness. . . . He wants us to be happy and has told us how we may earn that happiness.<sup>3</sup>

We should think of the purpose of the [Lord's] day and partake of the influence of worship. What would it accomplish for the world if all the children of our Heavenly Father—and we are all his children—would respect his desire that the Sabbath should be a day of worship. There is no way of estimating what a beneficial change might be wrought, not only in our own nation, but in all nations of the world if we honored the Sabbath Day and kept it holy.<sup>4</sup>

The Sabbath has become the play-day . . . —the day set apart by thousands to violate the commandment that God gave long, long ago, and I am persuaded that much of the sorrow and distress that is afflicting and will continue to afflict mankind is traceable to the fact that they have ignored his admonition to keep the Sabbath day holy.<sup>5</sup> [See suggestion 2 on page 177.]

One of the first sermons that were preached in this [the Salt Lake] valley was by President Brigham Young, and he warned the people to honor the Sabbath day and to keep it holy, and no matter how difficult their circumstances they were not to go out and do manual labor on the Sabbath day. . . . The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has encouraged its people to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy because it is pleasing to our Heavenly Father that we do so.<sup>6</sup>

Let us teach these boys and girls [of the Church] as they grow up to do the things that the Lord would like to have them do on the Sabbath day, and it will be surprising the influence they can have in the communities that they live in. Unless the world repents of its

carelessness and indifference, unless we the Latter-Day Saints, in many cases, repent of our attitude of indifference toward the holy day of our Heavenly Father, there will not come to us all the joy and happiness we desire to enjoy here, and it will not be with us in eternity.<sup>7</sup>

Some people appear to think that if they have attended religious meetings or performed some portion of the service required of them on Sunday, they are then at liberty to pursue pleasures and engage in activities incompatible with the spirit of the Sabbath and still continue to enjoy the favor of our Father. I say to you that if the members of the Church, knowing better, persist in desecrating the Sabbath day in the pursuit of worldly pleasures, they will lose their faith; and the Spirit of our Heavenly Father will withdraw from them.<sup>8</sup>

It is not an insignificant thing to violate the Sabbath day. I want to say that you lose every time you violate the Sabbath day, you lose more than you can gain, no matter what you may think you are going to gain.<sup>9</sup>

To forget that it [the Sabbath day] is the Lord's day, as some of us appear to do, is ungrateful. He has set apart one day in seven, not to make it a burden, but to bring joy into our lives and cause that our homes may be the gathering place of the family, that parents and children may assemble around the family hearth increasing our love for one another. . . .

Honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy, Latter-day Saints, and it will bring to you great joy and our Heavenly Father will bestow upon you the blessings that result from obedience to his advice and counsel.<sup>10</sup>

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**Attending church is an important part of  
keeping the Sabbath day holy.**

If we do what our Heavenly Father would have us do we will go to his holy house upon the Sabbath day and there partake of the sacrament in remembrance of the sacrifice that was made for us by the Redeemer of mankind.<sup>11</sup>

This [the Sabbath day] is the Lord's holy day; this is the day that he has set apart in which we are to worship him, and in this latter day he has given an additional commandment that we shall go to the house of prayer and fasting upon his holy day, and there acknowledge our faults and bear our testimonies in the presence of one another [see D&C 59:9–12]. . . .

In this marvelous age when people can sit comfortably at home and hear the music of the world and listen to public addresses, and sermons, they will remain at their own fireside and perhaps feel that they are receiving all that they could receive were they to go to the place appointed for religious services.

The Latter-day Saints need not be deceived in this matter. It is not only the word that we hear that is profitable, but it is the influence that pervades our houses of worship that comes from our Heavenly Father that is essential. We may have a radio receiving set in our home, but we will not benefit by it spiritually, as much as if we go to the house of the Lord upon his holy day, where we are permitted to partake of the Sacrament and where we pray and invoke the blessings of our Heavenly Father and receive [a] witness of the truth calculated to save mankind.<sup>12</sup> [See suggestion 3 on page 177.]

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**It is a sacred privilege to partake of the sacrament  
on the Sabbath day.**

I think perhaps most of us realize what a gift has come to us on those occasions when we are permitted to assemble in peace and in quiet, to meet together and partake of the emblems of the broken body and the shed blood of the Master. It should be, and I presume [it] is, in the minds of every one of us a most sacred and solemn occasion to realize that we are renewing our covenants with him who gave his life that we might be resurrected and exalted. When we partake of these emblems, I am sure we all realize that the sacrament, established by him before he passed away, is to be to us an uplift and inspiration and a blessing throughout eternity.<sup>13</sup>

The sacrament is of great importance. The Lord Himself ordained that we partake of these emblems. There are many people who believe it is necessary to be baptized, and to have other ordinances of



*“The sacrament, established by [the Master] before he passed away, is to be to us an uplift and inspiration and a blessing throughout eternity.”*

the Gospel performed in their behalf, and yet they become indifferent and careless regarding the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. It was regarded of such importance by our Father in Heaven that, through His beloved Son, and the apostles and prophets, as recorded in the scriptures, the Saints were admonished to partake of it regularly. Three of the evangelists [Gospel writers] refer to it [see Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20], and we find that the scripture, in many places, teaches the importance of it, as it was taught by the Lord Himself when He dwelt in the flesh. Our Father in Heaven does not give us commandments or advice that are not of importance. He teaches us for our uplifting, for our growth and development, and if we will follow His counsel it will prepare us to go back into His presence. . . . Each Sabbath day we are expected to meet together and partake of the emblems of the body and blood of our risen Redeemer. . . .

We also find reference to this in the 18th chapter of Third Nephi, where the Savior is instructing the people on this [the American]

continent, just as He had taught His disciples in the old world to observe the sacrament. It reads as follows:

“And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, He said unto the disciples, behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread, and bless it, and give it unto the people of my Church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.

“And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread, and blessed it, and given it unto you.”

. . . The next verse reads as follows:

“And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shown unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father, that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.” [3 Nephi 18:5–7.]

. . . In addition to that, we find that in our own day the Lord has given us revelation upon that subject. In section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord gives unto us instructions upon the matter. In that revelation, beginning with the 75th verse, He says:

“It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus;

“And the elder or priest shall administer it; and after this manner shall he administer it—he shall kneel, with the church . . . and call upon the Father in solemn prayer, saying—”

Note the beautiful prayer that follows . . . :

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask Thee, in the name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto Thee, O God, the eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of Thy Son, and always remember Him and keep His commandments which He has given them, that they may always have His Spirit to be with them. Amen.” [D&C 20:75–77.]

The prayer and the blessing upon the water is somewhat similar [see D&C 20:78–79].

How sacred, how profoundly sacred, are the thoughts expressed in the sacrament prayer. I admonish you, my brethren, that when we officiate in administering the sacrament, we repeat . . . the exact words given by revelation, and that we do so with the Spirit of the Lord. When we repeat these prayers, we should feel the sentiments expressed by the words that we speak.<sup>14</sup>

I fear sometimes that as the sacrament is administered in some of our meetings there is not the solemn atmosphere that there should be. It is such a sacred privilege. . . . Those who [partake] of the sacrament should have in their minds the obligation that is indicated in the prayer.<sup>15</sup> [See suggestion 4 on page 177.]

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**Worthily partaking of the sacrament renews  
our spiritual strength.**

We partake of physical food—that is, we partake of bread and water etc., to nourish the physical body. It is just as necessary that we partake of the emblems of the body and blood of our risen Lord to increase our spiritual strength. It is observed that men and women who go from year to year without partaking of the Lord’s Supper, gradually lose the Spirit of our Heavenly Father; they forfeit its companionship where they have had opportunity to participate in that blessing, but have failed to take advantage of it. . . .

I have turned to a passage of scripture in the 11th chapter of First Corinthians, beginning with the 23rd verse, which reads as follows:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread:

“And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till He come.

“Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.” [1 Corinthians 11:23–30.]

. . . I desire to call your attention to the fact that there is danger if we do it [partake of the sacrament] unworthily. Before partaking of this sacrament, our hearts should be pure; our hands should be clean; we should be divested of all enmity toward our associates; we should be at peace with our fellow men; and we should have in our hearts a desire to do the will of our Father and to keep all of His commandments. If we do this, partaking of the sacrament will be a blessing to us and will renew our spiritual strength. . . .

. . . We should consider seriously the covenants we make with our Father. Let us pay strict attention to those covenants, and let us see to it that we eat and drink worthily, for the blessings of our souls and for the increase of our spiritual strength. These blessings are for you, my brethren and sisters, who are of the household of faith. Let us appreciate them, and live worthy of them, that by our lives we may exemplify our belief. Let none of us be under condemnation by partaking of the sacrament unworthily, thereby being deprived of the companionship of the Spirit of our Father.<sup>16</sup>

We should partake of it [the sacrament] in humility, with preparation of clean hands and pure hearts, and with a desire to be acceptable to our Father; then we will receive it worthily, and rejoice in the blessing that comes to us.<sup>17</sup>

May the Lord bless us; may His Spirit continue to be poured out upon us. May we love each other, as our Father commanded that we should do. If we can partake of the sacrament worthily, we can love each other, even as our Father has ordained; remembering that He has said unto us: “If ye are not one, ye are not mine.” [D&C 38:27.]<sup>18</sup> [See suggestion 5 on page 177.]



## Suggestions for Study and Teaching

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Consider these ideas as you study the chapter or as you prepare to teach. For additional help, see pages v–vii.

1. Read the last paragraph on page 169. If the President of the Church were to attend your sacrament meeting, what do you think his impressions would be? What can you do personally to show greater reverence for the Lord and the sacrament?
2. Ponder President Smith’s words in the second and third paragraphs on page 170. How would society in general benefit if more people honored the Sabbath day? What are some appropriate ways to help our families and others see Sabbath-day observance as a blessing rather than a burden?
3. What are some of the benefits of worshipping together on Sunday that we don’t receive by simply studying the gospel in our homes? (See page 172 for some examples; see also D&C 59:9–12.)
4. As you read the section that begins on page 172, ponder what you can do to make the ordinance of the sacrament a more meaningful part of your life. What are some effective ways to help children prepare for the sacrament and treat it with reverence?
5. As you read the last four paragraphs of teachings (page 176), look for what President Smith says qualifies us to worthily partake of the sacrament. Why do you think worthily partaking of the sacrament increases our spiritual strength?

*Related Scriptures:* Exodus 20:8–11; Isaiah 58:13–14; Matthew 18:20; 3 Nephi 18:1–12; 20:8–9; Moroni 6:5–6

*Teaching help:* “A skilled teacher doesn’t think, ‘What shall I do in class today?’ but asks, ‘What will my students do in class today?’; not, ‘What will I teach today?’ but rather, ‘How will I help my students discover what they need to know?’” (Virginia H. Pearce, in *Teaching, No Greater Call*, 61).

## Notes

1. In Conference Report, Oct. 1948, 188.
2. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 34–35.
3. In Conference Report, Oct. 1937, 50.
4. “A Faith Founded upon Truth,” *Deseret News*, June 17, 1944, Church section, 4.
5. In Conference Report, Oct. 1935, 120.
6. In Conference Report, Apr. 1948, 13–14.
7. “Tribute to Richard Ballantyne,” *Instructor*, Nov. 1946, 505.
8. “Faith—and Life,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1949, 252.
9. In Conference Report, Oct. 1948, 188.
10. In Conference Report, Oct. 1932, 23.
11. In Conference Report, Oct. 1932, 23.
12. In *Deseret News*, Jan. 31, 1925, section 3, page 4.
13. “The Sacredness of the Sacrament,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1946, 206.
14. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 35–37.
15. “The Sacredness of the Sacrament,” 206.
16. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 34–35, 37.
17. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 36.
18. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 37.