

# FINDING POWER IN

*These members testify that scriptures have the power to change lives.*

Prophets and apostles have assured us that as we face the trials of mortality, we can find strength, comfort, and peace in the gospel of Jesus Christ. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said, “I testify as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . that the gospel is true, and that it offers the answers to all personal and collective challenges the children of God have on this earth today.”<sup>1</sup>

Our individual circumstances may vary, but we can each turn to a divine source of power—the scriptures. Below, Church members share their testimonies of the power they have felt by “feasting upon the word of Christ” (2 Nephi 31:20).

## Overcoming Weakness

Since he was a child, Wayne Hales of Florida, USA, has had a learning disability. In seminary he read the assigned scriptures, and he managed to read the Book of Mormon before his mission.

When his mission president asked him to read 10

pages of scripture every day, he obeyed—but struggled.

“Despite my efforts to read, I never really enjoyed the scriptures,” he says. “A few months after I returned from the mission field, I married and started working and going to school. With my busy schedule, I stopped reading the scriptures regularly. I knew I should be reading them more, but I rationalized that I had read them already and had a good understanding of them.”

About 10 years later, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) encouraged Church members to read the scriptures daily.<sup>2</sup>

“I decided that I would read the scriptures every day from that day on,” Wayne says. “At least, I thought, it would be a good way to practice my reading.”

Wayne began by reading a chapter a day, and as he progressed, he would often read more. Within a few years, he had read the entire standard works of the Church. Later, when he heard the counsel of President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) to read the Book of Mormon regularly,<sup>3</sup> he redoubled his efforts.

## KEY POINTS

Scripture reading can give us power by helping us:

- Invite the Spirit into our personal lives and our homes.
- Find feelings of reassurance during hardship.
- Recognize the Lord’s hand in our lives.

# THE SCRIPTURES

and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, which <sup>c</sup>witnesses of the <sup>d</sup>Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive.

19 And now my beloved brethren, after ye have come to this strait and narrow, I would ask if all is <sup>b</sup>done unto you, that ye may come thus far of Christ him, <sup>d</sup>relying on the merits of him

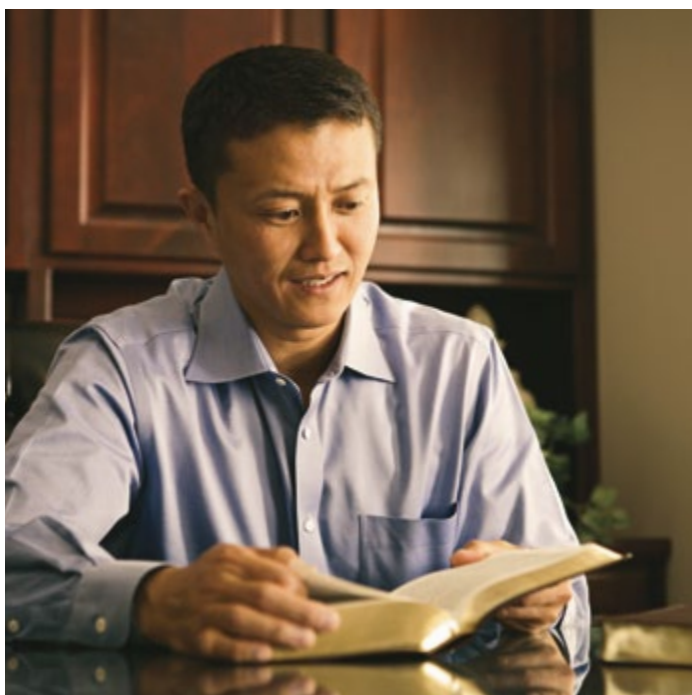
20 Wherefore, I would exhort you to press forward with the word of Christ, having the witness of <sup>b</sup>hope, and a <sup>c</sup>clear conscience of all men. Wherefore, I would exhort you to press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and <sup>d</sup>endure to the end, behold, thus shall ye have the Father: Ye shall have



## THE POWER OF SCRIPTURE

"I suggest that you memorize scriptures that touch your heart and fill your soul with understanding. When scriptures are used as the Lord has caused them to be recorded, they have intrinsic power that is not communicated when paraphrased. Sometimes when there is a significant need in my life, I review mentally scriptures that have given me strength. There is great solace, direction, and power that flow from the scriptures, especially the words of the Lord."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "He Lives," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 87-88.



“I had come to love the ‘keystone of our religion,’”<sup>4</sup> he says, “and I had learned to appreciate the other books of scripture too, particularly the Old Testament. So I decided to read the Old Testament each day in addition to the Book of Mormon.”

Wayne says he was also inspired by the challenge given by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) in 2005 to read the entire Book of Mormon by the end of the year.<sup>5</sup>

“I was reading in Helaman at the time, but I started over, and I enjoyed being able to read along with my ward and my family,” he says. “As we did, we received the ‘added measure of the Spirit’<sup>6</sup> the prophet had promised us.”

Wayne says his commitment to scripture study has brought many blessings—including improved reading skills. “With every reading,” he says, “I get a little better.”

### Conquering Contention

Nancy del Plain of Washington, USA, was also inspired by prophetic counsel to read the Book of Mormon.

“Many years ago, my husband and I struggled to put an end to the bickering and complaining among our young children,” says Nancy. “All of our efforts to prevent contention were failing.”

Nancy says that when she listened to the words of President Benson in his memorable talk “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” she knew she had found her answer.

Quoting President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First

Counselor in the First Presidency, President Benson said: “I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will grow. The spirit of contention will depart. . . . Faith, hope, and charity—the pure love of Christ—will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their wake peace, joy, and happiness.”<sup>7</sup>

“I wanted—and our family needed—those promised blessings,” Nancy says. “I immediately began thinking of how we could begin reading scriptures as a family.” Nancy discussed her ideas with her husband, and they decided that dinnertime was their best option because it was the only time everyone was home regularly.

“The first time we tried, it was *not* a success,” Nancy says. “As soon as the prayer was over, the kids just wanted to eat. And for a while, things didn’t seem to improve—the children continued to be uncooperative.”

But the family persisted, and over time they began to have more meaningful experiences. Nancy says, “The most exciting part was that dinner conversations began to contain gospel-related questions and discussions. By the end of the year, the children not only were willing participants, but also were eager to bring friends home for dinner. Once, when a friend of one of the children was visiting, I heard a hurried whisper in the hall saying, ‘In our family, we kneel for family prayer before dinner, and then we read from the scriptures. You can kneel next to me.’

“Certainly, all was not rosy and perfect from then on, but as the quality of our scripture reading improved, so did the quality of our relationships. There was a decrease in contention in our home. When the family faced a challenge, we were united in working out solutions. I also noticed that our children had more confidence. The promises of increased love, harmony, and respect were fulfilled.”

### Trusting in the Lord

For JoLyn Brown, of Utah, USA, a love of the scriptures began with a small, green piece of paper she received in

Primary. On it was written a simple scripture: Proverbs 3:5. JoLyn displayed the paper on a bulletin board in her bedroom. She enjoyed reading the scripture and the verse that followed: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

“I can still remember lying in bed at night and looking up at that scripture reference,” she says. “I eventually memorized the scripture, and over the years I have added others to my collection of quotes.”

JoLyn says memorizing scripture passages has been a powerful tool in working through a longtime battle with depression and anxiety. She says, “When I begin to feel overwhelmed, the Holy Ghost brings the sweet words of the scriptures to my mind. There have been many times when I have turned to Heavenly Father for reassurance. I am learning to trust His greater understanding, and I have been led along a path perfect for me.

“How grateful I am for my Primary teacher who gave me that small piece of paper that led me to what is now my favorite scripture. She opened the scriptures to me and planted a few poignant words in my heart. I am grateful for the simple, beautiful truths of the scriptures.”

### Seeing Tender Mercies

Stephanie Andersen, a mother of two in Utah, USA, was feeling discouraged. She longed to have more children but struggled with infertility and other health problems, and she felt stretched thin by her many responsibilities.

“I wanted life to go according to my own will and lacked the ability to see what the Lord had in store for me,” she explains. “I felt alone, angry, and frustrated. I had forgotten how to

see the tender mercies of the Lord in my life.”

She says she was inspired by the words of Nephi in the Book of Mormon: “But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance” (1 Nephi 1:20).

“I knew that to move forward, I needed to find strength, courage, and faith in the Savior,” Stephanie says. She made a goal to diligently study the Book of Mormon throughout that year, hoping it would help her better recognize tender mercies in her life.

“As the months passed,” Stephanie says, “I often wrote in my journal, recording my thoughts and any inspiration I received while reading the scriptures. Soon I began to recognize the Lord’s hand in my life each day. I realized that although I still had trials, my life was *full* of blessings. Each day I found a scripture that uplifted and taught me, and the promptings of the Spirit helped me understand how I could apply the scriptures in my life.

“Studying the scriptures helped me change from feeling downtrodden and weary to feeling hopeful, joyful, and grateful. I have learned that to truly know and understand the Savior, we must read the Book of Mormon, for its pages are filled with messages of Him.” ■

#### NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Christlike Attributes—the Wind beneath Our Wings,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 101.
2. See Spencer W. Kimball, “How Rare a Possession—the Scriptures!” *Ensign*, Sept. 1976, 2–5.
3. See Ezra Taft Benson, “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4–7.
4. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Book of Mormon,” 4.
5. See Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 6.
6. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Testimony,” 6.
7. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Book of Mormon,” 7.



### ADDED REVELATION

“Because they expound the doctrine of Christ, the scriptures are accompanied by the Holy Spirit, whose role it is to bear witness of the Father and the Son (see 3 Nephi 11:32). . . . Study the scriptures carefully, deliberately. Ponder and pray over them. Scriptures are revelation, and they will bring added revelation.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Blessing of Scripture,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 35.

