





By President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015)

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

A Witness of the Savior

JESUS CHRIST

During his 54 years as a General Authority and his 45 years as an Apostle, a special witness “of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23), President Packer humbly bore testimony. Shortly before his death on July 3, 2015, President Packer requested that the following excerpts from his ministry be shared in the Ensign. In the spirit of the Christmas season, they highlight his witness of and love for the Savior Jesus Christ.

I Love the Lord

“I love Christmas. There is a spirit at Christmastime. It descends upon the world—not just to members of the Church but across the world—a testimony and a witness that Jesus is the Christ. . . . As a servant of the Lord, as one of the Twelve, I know that Jesus is the Christ. . . .

“I love the Lord. I love His work. I love The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and bear witness of Him who is our Master and our Friend.”¹

Of Him I Am a Witness

“There are some things just too sacred to discuss. . . .

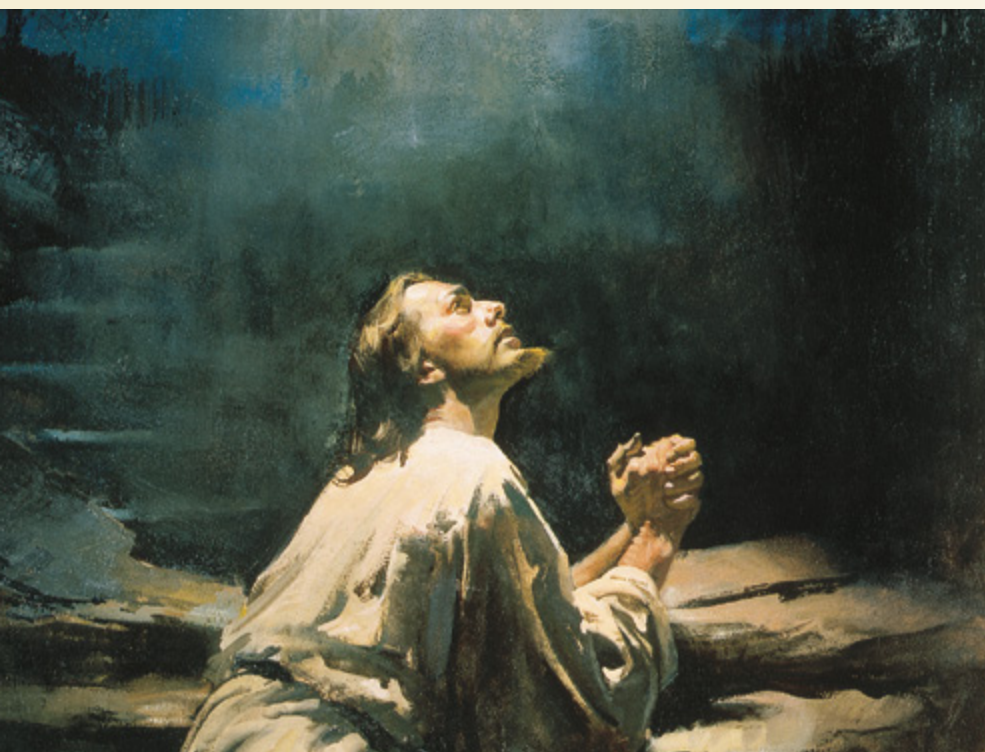
“It is not that they are secret, but they are sacred; not to be discussed, but to be

harbored and to be protected and regarded with the deepest of reverence.

“I have come to know what the prophet Alma meant:

“‘. . . It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

“‘And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full’ (Alma 12:9–10). . . .



“Now, I wonder with you why one such as I should be called to the holy apostleship. There are so many qualifications that I lack. There is so much in my effort to serve that is wanting. As I have pondered on it, I have come to only one single thing, one qualification in which there may be cause, and that is, I have *that* witness.

“I declare to you that I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that He lives. He was born in the meridian of time. He taught His gospel, was tried, was crucified. He rose on the third day. He was the first fruits of the resurrection. He has a body of flesh and bone. Of this I bear testimony. Of Him I am a witness.”²

He Accepted the Penalty

“Before the Crucifixion and afterward, many men have willingly given their lives in selfless acts of heroism. But none faced what Christ endured. Upon Him was the burden of all human transgression, all human guilt. And hanging in the balance was the Atonement. Through His willing act, mercy and justice could be reconciled, eternal law sustained, and that mediation achieved without which mortal man could not be redeemed.

“He by choice accepted the penalty in behalf of all mankind for the sum total of all wickedness and depravity; for brutality, immorality, perversion, and corruption; for

addiction; for the killings and torture and terror—for all of it that ever had been or all that ever would be enacted upon this earth. In so choosing He faced the awesome power of the evil one, who was not confined to flesh nor subject to mortal pain. That was Gethsemane!

“How the Atonement was wrought we do not know. No mortal watched as evil turned away and hid in shame before the Light of that pure being. All wickedness could not quench that Light. When what was done was done, the ransom had been paid. Both death

and hell forsook their claim on all who would repent. Men at last were free. Then every soul who ever lived could choose to touch that Light and be redeemed.

“By this infinite sacrifice, ‘through [this] Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel’ (Articles of Faith 1:3).”³

The Master Teacher

“In the course of my efforts to teach His gospel, I have come to know Him, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father. I stand in reverence before Him with deep regard for what He taught, and with deep regard for how He taught. It is not untoward for any of us to aspire to teach as He taught. It is not untoward for any of us to aspire to be like Him. He was not just a teacher; He was the master teacher.”⁴

The Truth Most Worth Knowing

“As mortals, we may not, indeed cannot, understand fully *how* the Savior fulfilled His atoning sacrifice. But for now the *how* is not as important as the *why* of His suffering. Why did He do it for you, for me, for all of humanity? He did it for the love of God the Father and all mankind. ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends’ (John 15:13).

“In Gethsemane, Christ went apart from His Apostles to pray. Whatever transpired is beyond our power to know! But we do know that He completed the Atonement. He was willing to take upon Himself the mistakes, the sins and guilt, the doubts and fears of all the world. He suffered for us so that we would not have to suffer. Many mortals have suffered torment and died a painful, terrible death. But His agony surpassed them all. . . .

“His suffering was different than all other suffering before or since because He took upon Himself all of the penalties that [could ever be] imposed on the human family. Imagine that! He had no debt to pay. He had committed no wrong.

There has been only One in all the annals of human history who was entirely sinless, qualified to answer for the sins and transgressions of all mankind and survive the pain that accompanied paying for them.

Nevertheless, an accumulation of all of the guilt, the grief and sorrow, the pain and humiliation, all of the mental, emotional, and physical torments known to man—He experienced them all. There has been only One in all the annals of human history who was entirely sinless, qualified to answer for the sins and transgressions of all mankind and survive the pain that accompanied paying for them.

“He presented His life and in essence said, ‘It is I that taketh upon me the sins of the world’ (Mosiah 26:23). He was crucified; He died. They could not take His life from Him. He consented to die. . . .

“If you have stumbled or even been lost for a time, if you feel that the adversary now holds you captive, you can move forward with faith and not wander to and fro in the world any longer. There are those who stand ready to

guide you back to peace and security. Even the grace of God, as promised in the scriptures, comes ‘after all we can do’ (2 Nephi 25:23). The possibility of this, to me, is the truth most worth knowing.

“I promise that the brilliant morning of forgiveness can come. Then ‘the peace of God, which passeth all understanding’ (Philippians 4:7) comes into your life once again, something like a sunrise, and you and He ‘will remember [your] sin no more’ (Jeremiah 31:34). How will you know? You will know! (See Mosiah 4:1–3.)”⁵

My Witness

“After all the years that I have lived and taught and served, after the millions of miles I have traveled around the world, with all that I have experienced, there is one great truth that I would share. That is my witness of the Savior Jesus Christ.

“Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon recorded the following after a sacred experience:

“‘And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

“‘For we saw him’ (D&C 76:22–23).

“Their words are my words.”⁶

“How privileged I have been throughout my life to be able to bear my special witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. I testify in all humility, but with absolute certainty, that He is the Only Begotten of the Father. This is His Church; He presides over it and directs this work. He is our Redeemer. I know He lives, and I know Him. Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”⁷ ■

NOTES

1. “Our Witness of the Lord,” General Authority training, Dec. 5, 1974.
2. “The Spirit Beareth Record,” *Ensign*, June 1971, 87, 88.
3. “Who Is Jesus Christ?” *Ensign*, Mar. 2008, 15.
4. *Mine Errand from the Lord: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Boyd K. Packer* (2008), 337.
5. “The Savior’s Selfless and Sacred Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2015, 39–40; see also “Truths Most Worth Knowing,” Church Educational System Devotional, Nov. 6, 2011.
6. “The Witness,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 97.
7. President Packer wrote this concluding testimony prior to his passing.