



**President
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LANDING SAFELY IN TURBULENCE

Not long ago my wife, Harriet, and I were at an airport watching magnificent airplanes land. It was a windy day, and fierce gusts of wind whipped against the approaching aircraft, causing each one to swerve and shudder during the approach.

As we observed this struggle between nature and machine, my mind went back to my own flight training and the principles I learned there—and later taught to other pilots in training.

“Don’t fight the controls during turbulence,” I used to tell them. “Stay cool; don’t overreact. Keep your eyes focused on the centerline of the runway. If you deviate from your desired approach path, make prompt but measured corrections. Trust the potential of your airplane. Ride the turbulence out.”

Experienced pilots understand that they can’t always control the things that happen around them. They can’t just turn off the turbulence. They can’t make the rain or snow vanish. They can’t cause the wind to stop blowing or change its direction.

But they also understand that it’s a mistake to fear turbulence or strong winds—and especially to be paralyzed by them. The way to land safely when conditions are less

than ideal is to stay on the correct track and glide path as perfectly as possible.

As I watched one airplane after another make its final approach and recalled the principles learned from my years as a pilot, I wondered if there wasn’t a lesson in this for our daily lives.

We can’t always control the storms that life puts in our path. Sometimes things simply don’t go our way. We may feel shaken and blown about by the turbulence of disappointment, doubt, fear, sadness, or stress.

During those times, it is easy to get caught up in everything that is going wrong and to make our troubles the center of our thoughts. The temptation is to focus on the trials we are facing instead of on the Savior and our testimony of truth.

But that is not the best way to navigate through our challenges in life.

Just as an experienced pilot keeps his focus not on the storm but on the center of the runway and the correct touchdown point, so too should we keep our focus on the center of our faith—our Savior, His gospel, and the plan of our Heavenly Father—and on our ultimate goal—to return safely to our heavenly destination. We should trust God



and make staying on the track of discipleship the focus of our efforts. We should keep our eyes, heart, and mind focused on living the way we know we should.

Showing our faith and trust in Heavenly Father by joyfully keeping His commandments will bring us happiness and glory. And if we stay

on the path, we will get through any turbulence—no matter how strong it may appear—and return safely to our heavenly home.

Whether the skies around us are clear or filled with threatening clouds, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, knowing that

if we do so, everything else we need will eventually be provided (see Matthew 6:33).

What an important life lesson!

The more we obsess about our difficulties, our struggles, our doubts, and our fears, the more difficult things can become. But the more we focus on our final heavenly destination and on the joys of following the disciple's path—loving God, serving our neighbor—the more likely we are to successfully navigate through times of trouble and turbulence.

Dear friends, no matter how violently the winds of our mortal existence howl around us, the gospel of Jesus Christ will always offer the best path to a safe landing in our Heavenly Father's kingdom. ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

President Uchtdorf counsels us to “trust God and make staying on the track of discipleship the focus of our efforts.” Consider asking those you teach how they have stayed focused “on our final heavenly destination and on the joys of following the disciple’s path” at times when they have faced trials. You might invite them to think of ways that they can focus on their testimony and on Christ in difficult moments and to prayerfully decide how to implement one or more of those ideas in their lives.



A Foundation for My Testimony

By Jennifer Weaver

When I was 16, a friend showed up at our home with the missionaries. Within a month of the first discussion, all my questions were answered in clarity. I felt the Holy Ghost testify of the truthfulness of the messages about the Restoration. It was unlike anything I had ever felt, and I knew all of it was true.

However, I experienced more rejection and opposition than ever before. I felt alone, tired, and confused. If I was doing the right thing, why was I encountering so much adversity? I couldn't understand how my trials were for my good. The missionaries taught me to fast and pray, even in the middle of a school day. When things became unbearable

I'd pour out my heart and immediately feel the comfort of the Spirit.

The week of my baptism was full of trials. My boss threatened to fire me if I didn't skip my baptism to fill in for someone, I ended up in the hospital with kidney stones, and my parents asked me to leave our home. With so many things out of my control, the only thing I could do was turn to the Lord.

Every one of those trials *did* turn out to be for my benefit. They helped me learn about the doctrines of the gospel, which provided me a foundation for my testimony.

The author lives in Idaho, USA.

CHILDREN

He Will Guide Us Home

When we follow the example of Jesus Christ, it's like following a straight path that leads to Him! We can be safe and happy, just like the plane that lands safely on the runway. Guide the airplane through the maze back to the runway!



DETAIL FROM DISCOVERING GOD, BY JULIE ROGERS; ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE KROPP