

The Purpose of Relief Society

Prayerfully study this material and seek for inspiration to know what to share. How will understanding the purpose of Relief Society prepare daughters of God for the blessings of eternal life?



The purpose of Relief Society is to “prepare women for the blessings of eternal life,” says Linda K. Burton, Relief Society General President.¹ It is through faith, family, and relief that we engage in our “vital part in the work.”²

Relief Society “is a temporal and spiritual work,” says Carole M. Stephens, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency. “That is what the women did in the Savior’s day, and that is what we continue to do.”³

As we look to the Samaritan woman at the well, who left her water pot and ran to tell others that Jesus was a prophet (see John 4:6–42), or to Phebe, who joyfully served others throughout her life (see Romans 16:1–2), we see examples of women in the

Savior’s day who took an active part in coming unto Christ. It is He who opens our way to eternal life (see John 3:16).

As we look to our pioneer sisters in Nauvoo, Illinois, who gathered in Sarah Kimball’s home in 1842 to form their own organization, we see God’s plan for bringing Relief Society into being and in line with the priesthood. After Eliza R. Snow wrote a constitution, the Prophet Joseph Smith reviewed it. He realized that the Church was not fully organized until the women were organized. He said that the Lord accepted their offering but that there was something better. “I will organize the women under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood,” he said.⁴

“The Relief Society was not

just another group of women trying to do good in the world. It was different. It was ‘something better’ because it was organized under priesthood authority. Its organization was a necessary step in the unfolding of God’s work on earth.”⁵

Additional Scriptures and Information

Doctrine and Covenants 25:2–3, 10; 88:73; reliefsociety.lds.org

NOTES

1. Linda K. Burton, in Sarah Jane Weaver, “Relief Society Celebrates Birthday and More March 17,” *Church News*, Mar. 13, 2015, news.lds.org.
2. Linda K. Burton, in Weaver, “Relief Society Celebrates Birthday.”
3. Carole M. Stephens, in Weaver, “Relief Society Celebrates Birthday.”
4. Joseph Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 11–12.
5. *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 16.



Consider This

How does
Relief
Society help
women fulfill
Heavenly
Father’s
divine role
for them and
lead them to
eternal life?