

THE Promise OF THE Sacrament

*How can we more fully enjoy the blessing of always
having the Lord's Spirit with us?*

As we come to the ordinance of the sacrament prayerfully prepared, remembering the Savior and being willing to take upon us His name and keep His commandments, we have the promise that we will “always have his Spirit to be with [us]” (D&C 20:77; see also 3 Nephi 18:11).

Having His Spirit with us allows us to be comforted, healed, and taught—examples of blessings bestowed “according to the multitude of [the Lord's] tender mercies” (1 Nephi 8:8; see also Psalm 51:1; 69:16; 1 Nephi 1:20; Ether 6:12).

How can we more fully enjoy this magnificent blessing of the sacrament—always having His Spirit with us? The following experiences of Church members suggest that as we devotedly remember the Savior, partake of the sacrament with a broken heart and contrite spirit, and truly hunger for the blessings of the sacrament, we can experience an abundance of the Lord's Spirit in our lives.



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Remembering His Sacrifice

One Sunday as Tony Ort of Utah, USA, sang the sacrament hymn “We’ll Sing All Hail to Jesus’ Name” (*Hymns*, no. 182), these words particularly touched his heart:

*The bread and water represent
His sacrifice for sin;
Ye Saints, partake and testify
Ye do remember him.*

“As I sang that verse on that Sabbath morning,” he recalls, “I committed that on this day while the sacrament was being blessed and passed, I would more thoughtfully and reverently remember the sacrifice of my Savior.”

This experience sparked further reflection. “I asked myself, ‘How should I remember?’” Recognizing that “Jesus lived His life with absolute unselfishness, putting my needs and the needs of all humankind as His first priority,” Brother Ort felt led to ask, “How can I deny Him my love and devotion, as the Israelites of His day did, and as so many continue to do, by simply failing to remember Him?”

We must do Him the simple honor of remembering His life and ministry. We can do it as we say our daily prayers.”

Brother Ort points to the sacrament prayers as a sure guide for how to remember and honor the Savior, concluding, “We are asked only to identify ourselves with Him, which we do as Christians; to keep Him in our thoughts; and to be obedient and keep His commandments. Perhaps this can be best accomplished by following the admonition to love God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves (see Matthew 22:37–39).”

As Brother Ort’s experience demonstrates, the sacrament inspires gratitude for the Savior and a desire to remember Him. When we focus on the Savior in this way, the Spirit fills our hearts with love and turns our thoughts and actions outward to others.

Focusing our minds during the sacrament is not always easy, however. Parents with young children, for example, may give up on the possibility of having a spiritual



CONSCIENTIOUS PREPARATION

“The ordinance of the sacrament is a holy and repeated invitation to repent sincerely and to be renewed spiritually. . . . As we prepare conscientiously and participate in this holy ordinance with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then the promise is that we may *always* have the Spirit of the Lord to be with us. And by the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost as our constant companion, we can *always* retain a remission of our sins.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Always Retain a Remission of Your Sins,” *Ensign*, May 2016, 61–62.

experience during the sacrament, hoping to simply get through without disrupting the reverence of the meeting. Sister Carolina Almánzar de Flete, from the Dominican Republic, finds joy in reflecting on the Savior’s example of letting the little children come to Him (see Mark 10:14) as she watches her ten-year-old son renew his covenants and her one-year-old begin to learn to sit still.

“I come with a desire to have mindful moments where I remember the Savior and try to provide that experience for my children,” she says. “I take the bread in hopes of leading by example as my Savior did and drink the water remembering the promises made to my children as children of the covenant. And I remember His promises to me when doctors said I would have no children.”

Bringing a Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit

Margarida Demarchi of Manitoba, Canada, likens her need for spiritual light to the Jaredites’ need for physical light as they prepared to cross the “great deep” to the promised land (see Ether 2:25; 3:1–6). Sister Demarchi finds her light in sacrament meeting.

“The sacrament prayers have the promise that we will have the Spirit to be with us, and the Spirit provides the light we need to make our life’s journey. But was I getting the light I needed from the sacrament? And if not, how could I get it? What could be the stones that I, like the brother of Jared, should bring with me to sacrament meeting? The Lord said that He wants from us a broken heart and a contrite spirit. So it would not be enough to come to the sacrament; I would need to

bring my own stones—my broken heart and contrite spirit.”

What does it mean to bring the Lord a broken heart and a contrite spirit? Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has explained that a broken heart is a repentant heart and that a contrite spirit is an obedient spirit.¹

Sister Demarchi states, “I learned that when I approach the sacrament seeking for the Lord as the brother of Jared did, and bring my stones of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, I leave the sacrament meeting with light.”

Hungering for the Blessings of the Sacrament

When he was a soldier, Nathan Loomis of South Carolina, USA, was stationed in a remote area where there were no other Latter-day Saints. He was given special permission to administer the sacrament for himself. Because the soldiers lived in tents and their location changed from week to week, it was a challenge to find someplace private enough to prepare and partake of the sacrament.

“What I had taken quite lightly for so many years became something to be treasured,” Brother Loomis says. As his appreciation and longing for the sacrament grew, so did his testimony and the blessings of the Spirit in his life.

“I love the cleansing, sanctifying feel of the sacrament. I know that when I take it seriously and approach it with an attitude of repentance and a desire for change, the Lord listens to me. He has protected me spiritually and physically.”



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HEALING SPIRITUAL WOUNDS

“I am a witness that there is a spirit attending the administration of the sacrament that warms the soul from head to foot; you feel the wounds of the spirit being healed, and the load is lifted.”

Elder Melvin J. Ballard (1873–1939) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Sacrament and Spiritual Growth,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2015, 50.

Benjamin Platt of Wyoming, USA, was also given permission to hold his own sacrament meeting when he was a soldier assigned to an isolated area. Missing the familiar feeling of brotherhood and belonging he had known among his fellow Latter-day Saints, Brother Platt began to feel a spiritual hunger.

“My sacrament meeting was a tremendous blessing, and I felt the comfort of the Spirit. But I was still lonely. One Sunday when I knelt to bless the bread, I felt the Spirit whisper, ‘You are not alone.’ It became suddenly clear to me that the ordinance I was participating in was tying me to every member attending church that day and to every sacrament prayer offered. As my family sat in sacrament meeting thousands of miles away, they were participating in the same ordinance that I was. We were asking together for the blessings of the sacrament and making covenants in return.”

Taught by and filled with the Spirit, Brother Platt was “also reminded of the angels that are constantly surrounding and protecting us. The Savior taught, ‘My Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up’ (D&C 84:88).”

An Abundance of His Spirit

Ramona Demery, from Utah, expresses through her poem “My Savior” the abundance of the Spirit that the Lord offers us:

*He is bread,
Filling the void in my innermost being,
Easing the emptiness of that other hunger.
He is water,
Flowing softly into my soul,
Quenching the thirst that lies deep within.
He is love,
Giving me His love to share with others,
Offering me the incomparable gift of His Spirit.
He is light,
Filling my mind with understanding,
Lighting my path into eternity.*

In the sacredness of our own sacramental hours, “may we more fully realize the special blessing of . . . the sacrament”² so that we too might enjoy and rejoice in always having the Lord’s Spirit to be with us. ■

NOTES

1. See D. Todd Christofferson, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 12.
2. L. Tom Perry, “As Now We Take the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 42.