

# Restoring Faith in the Family

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*Stable families provide the fabric that holds society together, benefiting all mankind.*



With knowledge of the “great plan of happiness,”<sup>1</sup> we have the opportunity and also the responsibility to help restore faith in the family.

In many ways our commission is comparable to those who work in the field of medicine and scientific research. Using established laws, they determine how suffering can be alleviated and the quality of life improved.

In the realm of religious belief, men and women of faith, using proven principles,<sup>2</sup> can help to heal a grieving heart, restoring hope and assurance to the troubled mind.

The scientist’s success has been achieved by complying with what are

often referred to as natural laws. The great scientists of the past and present did not create the laws associated with these naturally occurring processes; they discovered them.

In a letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul poses a thought-provoking question concerning the source of man’s intellectual capacity: “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?”<sup>3</sup>

Through logic and learning, knowledge is increased and understanding enhanced. Using this process, theories and laws are identified and accepted as authentic.

One thing that becomes clear to the enlightened mind is that there are laws that keep life and living things in balance. Discovering the laws of physics and complying with them brings progress, enabling man to rise to higher levels of attainment than would otherwise be possible.

I believe that this premise also applies to ethical standards and moral values. It is, therefore, our responsibility to safeguard the home as a center of learning where these virtues can be instilled in an atmosphere of love and through the power of example.<sup>4</sup>

President Thomas S. Monson has taught, “Youth need fewer critics and more models.”<sup>5</sup>

Reflecting on my own life, I realize how I gained an appreciation for the core values that are necessary for the development of a sound character. Where did I learn loyalty, integrity, and dependability? I learned these qualities in the home from the example of my parents. How did I gain an appreciation for the value of selfless service? I did so by observing and enjoying my mother’s devotion to her family. Where did I learn honor and respect for daughters of God? I learned from the example of my father.

It was in the home that I learned principles of provident living and the dignity of work. I can still visualize my mother spending numerous nights at home, using a foot treadle sewing machine to stitch shoes for a local shoe factory. This was not to enable her to purchase anything for herself but to help to provide financial support so that my brother and I could attend college. She later expressed how this act of service was a source of satisfaction for her.

My father was a wise, industrious man. He taught me how to cut timber using a handsaw, how to replace or attach a plug to a power cord of a domestic appliance, and many other practical skills.

All of these lessons carried a common theme: never be satisfied with anything less than your best efforts.

I developed the ability to make important decisions by talking with my parents and learning from their counsel. Add to the aforementioned accountability, consideration for others, and encouragement to pursue educational opportunities, and the list would still be incomplete.

I was introduced to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ in my teenage years by Pamela, who later became my wife. She has helped make of my life a soaring symphony from a simple melody.<sup>6</sup>

I have enjoyed 67 years of happiness in marriage and family life—



**A family in Korea pauses outside the meetinghouse where they came to watch conference.**

21 as a son in the home of my parents and 46 as a husband, culminating in the joy of being a father and grandfather. What more could one hope for? Simply stated, that these same opportunities would be enjoyed by everyone.

Returning to the teachings of Paul recorded in Corinthians, we find these words:

“Even so the things of God knoweth no man [except he has] the Spirit of God. . . .

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of . . . God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”<sup>7</sup>

Scientists gain their knowledge mainly through research, conducting experiments, and the application of intellect.

Disciples of Christ receive their witness by studying His words,

observing His works, putting gospel principles into practice, and receiving the spirit of inspiration.<sup>8</sup>

“There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”<sup>9</sup>

Although spiritual truths may appear less tangible, to the humble heart their impact is undeniable. It is important to understand that natural laws were not determined on the basis of popularity. They were established and rest on the rock of reality.

There are also moral verities that did not originate with man.<sup>10</sup> They are central to a divine plan which, when discovered and applied, brings great happiness and hope on our mortal journey.<sup>11</sup>

For example, I believe, as stated in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”<sup>12</sup> and defined in divine revelation, that marriage and family are

ordained of God. The scriptures declare, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”<sup>13</sup>

Wise men have provided a legacy of learning from the past. We must hand down to future generations a foundation of faith in the family, as defined by Deity.<sup>14</sup>

We should never forget that freedom and happiness in all aspects of life come by understanding and living in harmony with eternal gospel principles. They provide a sure foundation upon which to build a productive and happy life.<sup>15</sup>

Following the pattern prescribed through the plan of the Father has enabled me to experience what it means to live “after the manner of happiness”<sup>16</sup> and “with joy . . . draw water out of the wells of salvation.”<sup>17</sup>

The Savior taught, “I am come that

they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”<sup>18</sup>

Our outlook or attitude can sometimes restrict our ability to enjoy life’s greatest opportunities.

The question could be asked, “What of those who have not experienced a positive family environment?”

Stable families provide the fabric that holds society together, benefiting all mankind, even those who may feel they live in less-favorable circumstances.

For those who faithfully live<sup>19</sup> and patiently pray for such sociality,<sup>20</sup> I share the simple, soothing words of Helen Steiner Rice:

*When God makes a promise,  
It remains forever true,  
For everything God promises  
He unalterably will do.  
When you’re disillusioned  
And every hope is blighted  
Recall the promises of God  
And your faith will be relighted.*<sup>21</sup>

It is my prayer that we can stand together, with courage and conviction, as guardians of the God-given gift of family. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. Alma 42:8; see also Alma 24:14.
2. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Principle,” 200.
3. 1 Corinthians 2:11.
4. See Proverbs 22:6.
5. “Anxiously Engaged,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 57.
6. See D&C 128:19.
7. 1 Corinthians 2:11, 14.
8. See John 7:16–17; Jacob 4:8.
9. Job 32:8.
10. See D&C 130:20–21.
11. Like a compass, principles provide points of reference on life’s journey.
12. See *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
13. Genesis 2:24.
14. See D&C 49:15–17.
15. See D&C 68:25–28.
16. 2 Nephi 5:27.
17. 2 Nephi 22:3.
18. John 10:10.
19. See D&C 82:10.
20. See D&C 130:2.
21. From *Expressions of Comfort* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour Publishing, 2007), 187–88. Used by permission.