



By Elder Claudio D. Zivic  
Of the Seventy

# Let's Not Take the Wrong Way

*I pray that we will not lose sight of the way so that we may always be connected with the heavens.*

A little boy was practicing the piano, and a salesman, upon seeing him through the window, asked, "Is your mother home?"

To which the child replied, "And . . . what do you think?"

Our five dear children play the piano, thanks to the motivation of my wife! When the teacher arrived at our home, our son Adrián would run and hide in order to skip his lesson. But one day something marvelous occurred! He began to love music so much that he continued practicing on his own.

If we could reach that point in the process of our conversion, it would be marvelous. It would be wonderful to have a desire deep in our hearts to keep the commandments without anyone constantly reminding us and to have a firm conviction that if we follow the right path, we will have the blessings promised in the scriptures.

Several years ago I went to Arches National Park with my wife; our daughter, Evelin; and a family friend. One of the most famous arches there is called Delicate Arch. We decided to walk about 1.5 miles (2 km), climbing the mountain in order to reach the arch.

We started off on our pathway with great enthusiasm, but after walking a short stretch, the others needed to rest. Because of my desire to get there, I decided to continue on alone. Without paying attention to the path I ought to take, I followed a man in front of me who seemed to be moving forward with great surety. The pathway became more and more difficult, and I had to jump from one rock to another.

Because of the difficulty, I was sure the women in my group would never make it. Suddenly I saw Delicate Arch, but to my great surprise, I saw that it was in an area inaccessible to me.

With great frustration, I decided to go back. I waited impatiently until we met up again. My immediate question was "Did you reach Delicate Arch?" They happily told me that they had. They explained that they had followed the signs showing the way, and with care and effort, they had reached their destination.

Unfortunately, I had taken the wrong way. What a great lesson I learned that day!

How often do we make a mistake about the right way, letting ourselves be led along by the trends of the world? We need to continually ask ourselves if we are being doers of the words of Jesus Christ.

A marvelous teaching is found in the book of John:

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more





can ye, except ye abide in me.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:4–5).

Using this analogy, we can see the very close, transcendent relationship we have with Jesus Christ and the importance He places on each one of us. He is the root and the trunk that conducts the living water to us, the sap that will allow us to be nourished so that we can produce much fruit. Jesus Christ taught us in such a way that as branches—or beings dependent upon Him—we would never underestimate the value of His teachings.

There are some mistakes that may be serious, and if we do not correct them in time, they can permanently lead us off the right path. If we repent and accept correction, these

experiences will allow us to humble ourselves, change our actions, and once again draw closer to our Heavenly Father.

I want to give an example of this concept by making reference to one of the most dramatic moments that the Prophet Joseph Smith experienced. Through this experience, the Savior has given us invaluable teachings regarding principles that we ought to keep in mind throughout our lives. It happened when Martin Harris lost the 116 translated pages of the first part of the Book of Mormon.

After repenting for not following God's counsel, the Prophet received the revelation that is found in section 3 of the Doctrine and Covenants (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 69–71). From what is written in verses 1 to 10, I wish to highlight three principles that we should always remember:

1. The works and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated.
2. We must not fear man more than God.
3. There is a need of constant repentance.

In verse 13, the Lord teaches us four actions that we should never do:

1. Set at naught the counsels of God.
2. Break the most sacred promises made before God.
3. Depend upon our own judgment.
4. Boast in our own wisdom.

I pray that we will not lose sight of the way so that we may always be connected with the heavens, so that the currents of the world do not sweep us away.

If any one of you reaches the point of abandoning the Lord's way—at any point along that way—with great

remorse you will feel the bitterness of having set at naught the counsels of God, of having broken the most sacred promises made before God, of having trusted in your own judgment, or of having boasted in your own wisdom.

If this is the case, I exhort you to repent and come back to the right way.

One time a grandchild called his grandfather to wish him a happy birthday. He asked him how old he was. He said that he had reached 70 years. His grandson thought for a moment and then asked, "Grandpa, did you start all the way back at 1?"

During childhood and youth, people think they will never become old; the idea of death never takes root—that is for very, very old people—and reaching that point is still an eternity away. As time goes on, months and seasons go by until the wrinkles begin to appear, energy is reduced, the need for doctor visits becomes more frequent, and so on.

The day will come in which we shall again meet up with our Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ. I plead that on that sacred and sublime occasion we can recognize Him because of the knowledge we have of Him and because of having followed His teachings. He will show us the marks in His hands and feet, and we will join together in a lasting embrace, weeping for joy at having followed His way.

I testify to the four ends of the earth that Jesus Christ lives. He exhorts us, "Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the words of that God who made you" (D&C 43:23). May we have the capacity to grasp, give heed to, comprehend, and correctly interpret the message of "that God who made [us]" so as not to stray from His way, I plead in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



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Of the Seventy

## What Are You Thinking?

*I plead with you to practice asking this question, with tender regard for another's experience: "What are you thinking?"*

**F**orty-one years ago I climbed into the driver's seat of an 18-wheel semitruck with my beautiful wife, Jan, and our infant son, Scotty. We were taking a heavy load of construction materials across several states.

In those days there were no seatbelt restrictions or infant car seats. My wife held our precious son in her arms. Her comment "We sure are high off the ground" should have given me a clue about her feelings of apprehension.

As we made our descent over historic Donner Pass, a steep section of highway, the cab of the semi suddenly and unexpectedly filled with thick smoke. It was difficult to see, and we could hardly breathe.

With a heavy rig, brakes alone are not enough to rapidly decrease speed. Using the engine brakes and gearing down, I frantically attempted to stop.

Just as I was pulling to the side of the road, but before we had come to a full stop, my wife opened the door of the cab and jumped out with our baby in her arms. I watched helplessly as they tumbled in the dirt.

As soon as I had the semi stopped, I bolted from the smoking cab. With

adrenaline pumping, I ran through the rocks and weeds and held them in my arms. Jan's forearms and elbows were battered and bleeding, but thankfully she and our son were both breathing. I just held them close as the dust settled there on the side of the highway.

As my heartbeat normalized and I caught my breath, I blurted out, "What in the world were you thinking? Do you know how dangerous that was? You could have been killed!"

She looked back at me, with tears running down her smoke-smudged cheeks, and said something that pierced my heart and still rings in my ears: "I was just trying to save our son."

I realized in that moment she thought the engine was on fire, fearing the truck would explode and we would die. I, however, knew it was an electrical failure—hazardous but not fatal. I looked at my precious wife, softly rubbing the head of our infant son, and wondered what kind of woman would do something so courageous.

This situation could have been as emotionally hazardous as our literal engine failure. Gratefully, after enduring the silent treatment for a