
Don't Leave for Tomorrow What You Can Do Today

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Now is the time to perform our God-given duties concerning the family.



On September 23, 1995, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles introduced to the Church and the world a document called “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” I quote from the paragraph which reads, “Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.”¹ We live in a day and age in which this counsel is indeed very important. Many parents argue they don’t have time for their families. The fast-paced lifestyle of modern-day life

and excessive amounts of work are curbing parents’ attention from what is most important: to give time, to give of oneself to one’s family.

The Lord taught us that every man has the responsibility to provide for his family,² but that does not mean solely to store up the house with food and other items which are needed or desired. We must also have time to provide our family with teachings. What should we teach?

Our Father has taught us that parents are obligated to teach the gospel to their children.³ The prophet Lehi understood well his responsibility to teach his children. Nephi declared that he had been taught “in all the learning of [his] father.”⁴

The Lord instructed us how to take care of our families when He told us through His prophets in the proclamation to the world, “Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law-abiding citizens wherever they live.”⁵

We know God has taught us for centuries how to protect and take



care of our families. We also know and can see that the adversary has been attacking the family. Now is the time to use all those teachings. Now is the time to perform our God-given duties concerning the family.

President James E. Faust gave us three key things we can do to protect and strengthen our families:

1. Family prayer. Parents must teach their children that they are God's children and therefore need to pray to Him daily.
2. Family home evening. As President Faust taught us, family home evening is for all of us no matter what stage of life we are in. We must have Monday nights free of all other activities that might keep us from gathering as a family.
3. Personal and family scripture study. We need to help our children strengthen their faith and testimony through this basic habit.⁶

As we follow President Faust's wise counsel, we will be protecting family members against Satan's attacks as well as strengthening their faith and testimony in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the family proclamation we also learn that "by divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners."⁷

It is in the home that the family learns and applies gospel principles. Great love is necessary in order to teach and guide a family. Loving fathers and mothers will teach their children to worship God in their home. When a worshipping spirit permeates the home, that spirit is extended into the life of each family

member. This will prepare them to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to be able to return to God's presence and stay together as a family for all eternity.

The family proclamation helps us understand much of the love the Savior referred to when He told us we must "love one another."⁸ He gave us the supreme example of love when He declared, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."⁹ He later atoned for all our sins and finally gave His life for all of us.

We can lay down our lives for those we love not by physically dying for them but rather by living for them—giving of our time; always being present in their lives; serving them; being courteous, affectionate, and showing true love for those of our family and to all men—as the Savior taught.

We don't know what could happen to us tomorrow, and that is why today is the time to start showing your love through small acts such as a hug and an "I love you" to your spouse and children and those around you.

I recently read a text which expresses the urgency of not leaving for tomorrow what you can do today. In July of this year Brazil witnessed the most devastating aircraft accident in its history. There were 199 people killed, including passengers, airline workers, crew members, and others who were at the site when the accident happened. The text I mentioned was said to have been posted on the airline communication board by the husband of one of the flight attendants who died in the accident. It is entitled "Tomorrow Never Comes" and is based upon a poem by Norma Cornett Marek.

*If I knew this would be the last time
I would watch you sleep,
I would hug you tighter. I would
plead with the Lord to protect you.
If I knew this would be the last time*



*I saw you walk out the door,
I would hug and kiss you and call
you back to hug and kiss you one
more time.
If I knew this would be the last time
I would hear your voice in
prayer,
I would record every gesture, every
look, every smile, every one of
your words,
So that I could listen to it later, day
after day.
If I knew this would be the last time,
I would spend an extra minute or
two to tell you, "I love you," instead
of assuming you already knew it.
If I knew this would be our last
time, our last moment,
I would be by your side, spending
the day with you instead of
thinking,
"Well, I'm sure other opportunities
will come, so I can let this day
go by."
Of course there will be a day to
revise things,
And we would have a second
chance to do things right.
Oh, of course there will be another
day for us to say, "I love you."
And certainly there will be another
chance to tell each other, "Can I*

*help with anything?"
But in my case, there isn't one!
I don't have you here with me, and
today is the last day we have—
our farewell.
Therefore I would like to say how
much I love you,
And I hope you never forget it.
Tomorrow is not promised to
anyone, young or old.
Today might be your last chance to
hold tight to the hand of the one
you love and show all you feel.
If you are waiting for tomorrow,
why not do it today?
Because if tomorrow never comes,
you certainly will regret for the
rest of your life
Not having spent some extra time
for a smile, a conversation, a
hug, a kiss,
Because you were too busy to give
that person what ended up being
their last wish.
Then hug tight today the one you
love, your friends, your family,
and whisper in their ears how
much you love them and want
them close to you.
Use your time to say,
"I'm sorry,"
"Please,"*

*"Forgive me,"
"Thank you,"
Or even,
"That was nothing,"
"It's all right,"
Because if tomorrow never comes,
you will not have to regret today.
The past doesn't come back, and the
future might not come!¹⁰*

Let us express our love to our spouse and children and our brothers and sisters today. I know God lives. I know Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. I know that Joseph Smith is a prophet of the Lord and that Gordon B. Hinckley is God's living prophet on this earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. See D&C 75:28.
3. See D&C 68:25.
4. 1 Nephi 1:1.
5. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
6. See "Challenges Facing the Family," *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 10, 2004, 2-3.
7. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
8. John 13:34.
9. John 15:13.
10. See www.heartwhispers.net; printed with permission.