

Attempting the Impossible

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Of the Seventy

Eternal life is to live with our Father and with our families forevermore. Should not this promise be the greatest incentive to do the best within our reach?



When the twelve disciples were called in the Americas, the Lord Jesus Christ commanded them: “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”¹ The Savior had recently finalized His successful, selfless, and transcendental mission on earth. This allowed Him to declare with authority that He and His Father, our Father, are the models to be followed by each one of us.

From a purely human point of view, at first this seems to be an impossible task. However, it begins to appear possible upon understanding

that in order to achieve it, we are not alone. The most marvelous and powerful helps for which a human being may seek are always available. First is the generous and loving hand of the Eternal Father, who desires that we return to His presence forever. As our Father, He is always willing and desirous to forgive our errors and weaknesses and the sins we commit, subject only to total and sincere repentance. And as a complement to that—and as the maximum manifestation of His immense love for each one of His children—He provides us with the consequences of the singular work wrought by the Savior, namely the Atonement, brought about by an obedient Son always willing to do the Father’s will in benefit to each one of us.

The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith the following: “And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God.”² This divine promise is possible to achieve. Eternal life is to live with our Father and with our families forevermore.³ Should not this promise be the greatest incentive to do the best within our reach and give the best of ourselves in pursuit of what has been promised to us?

At the dawning of the Restoration, when this marvelous work was about to appear among the children of men, the Lord said, “Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.”⁴ With all our heart, with all our might, with all our mind, and with all our strength—that is to say, with all our being.

President David O. McKay said that the rich rewards come only to the strenuous strugglers.⁵ These rewards will be for those who nurture faith in Jesus Christ and comply with His will to work, sacrifice, and give all they have received to strengthen and build the kingdom of God.

The fulfillment of the divine promise to have eternal life, to achieve perfection, and to be happy forevermore in the family unit is subject to the sincere demonstration of our faith in Jesus Christ, obedience to the commandments, perseverance, and diligence throughout our lives.

The Lord does not expect that we do what we cannot achieve. The command to become perfect, as He is, encourages us to achieve the best of ourselves, to discover and develop the talents and attributes with which we are blessed by a loving Eternal Father, who invites us to realize our potential as children of God. He knows us; He knows of our capacities and our limitations. The invitation and challenge to become perfect, to achieve eternal life is for all mankind.

Immediately after teaching that “it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength,” King Benjamin indicated that “it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize.”⁶ God will not require more than the best we can give because that would not be just, but neither can He accept less than that because that would not be just either. Therefore, let us always



give the best we can in the service of God and our fellowmen. Let us serve in our families and in our callings in the Church in the best manner possible. Let us do the best we can and each day be a little better.

Salvation and eternal life would not be possible if it were not for the Atonement, brought about by our Savior, to whom we owe everything. But in order for these supreme blessings to be effective in our lives, we should first do our part, “for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.”⁷⁷ Let us with faith, enthusiasm, dedication, responsibility, and love do all that is within our reach, and we will be doing all that is possible to achieve the impossible—that is, to achieve what for the human mind is

impossible but with the divine intervention of our loving Father and the infinite sacrifice brought about by our Savior becomes the greatest gift, the most glorious of realities, to live forever with God and with our families.

I pray that each one of us will remember and permanently renew, by partaking worthily of the sacrament, the commitment we made with our Heavenly Father the moment we entered the waters of baptism and when we received each one of the ordinances of the restored gospel. I pray that we will do the best we can in our roles as spouses, parents, children, brothers and sisters; in our callings; in sharing the gospel; in rescuing those who have drifted; in working for the salvation of our

ancestors; in our work; and in our daily lives.

I pray that our lives allow us to declare, as the Apostle Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”⁸

As we do so, we will be fulfilling the requirements defined by our Father in Heaven to bless us more than ever before, in this life as much as in life in the eternities. He yearns to give us all that He has, even make us participants of His greatest gift, which is eternal life.

Even when, from a purely human perspective, perfection can appear an impossible challenge to achieve, I testify that our Father and our Savior have made known to us that it is possible to achieve the impossible. Yes, it is possible to achieve eternal life. Yes, it is possible to be happy now and forever.

The author of the perfect plan that contains these glorious promises is our Father in Heaven, and He lives. His Son, Jesus Christ, took upon Himself the weight of our sins and the injustices that are committed in the world to the end that we can be free from the consequences. I know our Lord Jesus Christ lives. The gospel and the priesthood have been restored to the earth for the last time, through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Today we have the enormous blessing of apostles and prophets called by God to direct us on the road to return to our Father. President Thomas S. Monson has been called to lead this great work in these days. He is a prophet of God. Of that I testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. 3 Nephi 12:48.
2. D&C 14:7.
3. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Eternal Life,” scriptures.lds.org.
4. D&C 4:2.
5. See *The Teachings of David O. McKay*, comp. Mary Jane Woodger (2004), 300.
6. Mosiah 4:27.
7. 2 Nephi 25:23.
8. 2 Timothy 4:7.