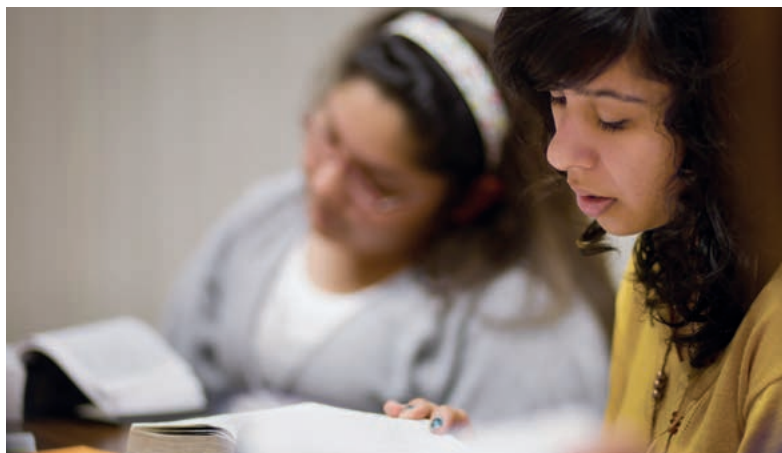


Defending Religious Freedom

Letter-day Saints should be involved “in a constructive way in the vital contest for religious freedom,” said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at a religious freedom conference in Texas, USA, in September 2016. “Literally everyone—from kindergarten children through the ranks of professionals and mothers and fathers and friends and neighbors—can and should understand what religious freedom is and why it is important.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also spoke in defense of religious freedom at a patriotic service in Utah, USA, in June. “Recently,” he said, “it has become popular to argue that the freedom of religion is really only the right to worship rather than the right to freely exercise your faith in your daily life.” He encouraged people of faith to stand up for religious freedom by becoming informed, speaking up, and getting involved in cultural, civic, and political organizations and events.

Church leaders have repeatedly addressed the subject of religious freedom, delivering speeches and participating in conferences in Australia, Brazil, Mexico, and the United Kingdom and at various locations in the USA. Find their talks and learn about religious freedom and what you can do to protect it by visiting religiousfreedom.lds.org. Some of the content there is specific to the United States, but the principles can be adapted in other countries. ■



Doctrinal Mastery

In today's world of instant internet information, youth are no longer isolated from people who attack the Church. But a new initiative called Doctrinal Mastery is helping seminary students develop a deeper understanding of gospel doctrine and increase their faith in Jesus Christ.

Students are also learning how to respond to difficult questions and issues by acting in faith, examining concepts and questions with an eternal perspective, and seeking further understanding through divinely appointed sources.

In an address to Seminaries and Institutes personnel, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said of Doctrinal Mastery: “This initiative is inspired and timely. It will have a wonderful influence on our young people.”

The major aims of Doctrinal Mastery are to help students:

1. Acquire spiritual knowledge.
2. Master the doctrine of the gospel and the scripture passages in which that doctrine is taught.

Building on what was previously accomplished through Scripture Mastery, this in-depth effort is enabling students to strengthen their conversion and commitment as disciples of Jesus Christ, find protection against the influences of the adversary, and bless the lives of others.

Doctrinal Mastery resources can be found at lds.org/si/seminary/manuals. ■