

VISITING TEACHING MESSAGE

Prayerfully study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life. For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.

Self-Reliance

Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide for the spiritual and temporal well-being of ourselves and of our families.¹

As we learn and apply the principles of self-reliance in our homes and communities, we have opportunities to care for the poor and needy and to help others become self-reliant so they can endure times of adversity.

We have the privilege and duty to use our agency to become self-reliant spiritually and temporally. Speaking of spiritual self-reliance and our dependence on Heavenly Father, Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “We become converted and spiritually self-reliant as we prayerfully live our covenants—through worthily partaking of the sacrament, being worthy of a temple recommend, and sacrificing to serve others.”²

Elder Hales counseled us to become self-reliant temporally, “which includes getting a postsecondary education or vocational training, learning to work, and living within our means. By avoiding debt and saving money now, we are prepared for full-time Church service in the years to come.



The purpose of both temporal and spiritual self-reliance is to get ourselves on higher ground so that we can lift others in need.”³

From the Scriptures

Matthew 25:1–13; 1 Timothy 5:8; Alma 34:27–28; Doctrine and Covenants 44:6; 58:26–29; 88:118

NOTES

1. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 6.1.1.
2. Robert D. Hales, “Coming to Ourselves: The Sacrament, the Temple, and Sacrifice in Service,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 34.
3. Robert D. Hales, “Coming to Ourselves,” 36.
4. See *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 51.

What Can I Do?

1. How am I helping the sisters I watch over find solutions to their temporal and spiritual needs?
2. Am I increasing my spiritual self-reliance through preparing for the sacrament and sacrificing to serve?

Faith, Family, Relief



From Our History

After the Latter-day Saints had gathered in the Salt Lake Valley, which was an isolated desert, President Brigham Young wanted them to flourish and establish permanent homes. This meant the Saints needed to learn skills that would allow them to become self-sufficient. In this effort, President Young had great trust in the capacities, talents, faithfulness, and willingness of the women, and he encouraged them in specific temporal duties. While the specific duties of Relief Society sisters are often different today, the principles remain constant:

1. Learn to love work and avoid idleness.
2. Acquire a spirit of self-sacrifice.
3. Accept personal responsibility for spiritual strength, health, education, employment, finances, food, and other life-sustaining necessities.
4. Pray for faith and courage to meet challenges.
5. Strengthen others who need assistance.⁴