

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • SEPTEMBER 2018

Liahona



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Serving at the Prophet's
Side, pp. 12, 18**

What Does It Mean That This
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“SOME OF SATAN’S MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPONS ARE DISTRACTION, DECEPTION, AND SPIRITUAL DESENSITIZATION. . . . TOGETHER THEY CONSTITUTE **THE GREAT CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME.**”

ELDER KEVIN W. PEARSON

From “Do Not Leave the Savior,” page 44.



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ON THE COVER

A Majestic Monument, by Jolynn Forman. President Brigham Young (1801–77) was once quoted as saying that the three eastern towers of the Salt Lake Temple represent the First Presidency and the Melchizedek Priesthood (as reported by William Ward, in “Who Designed the Temple?” *Deseret Weekly*, Apr. 23, 1892, 578). Get to know two of the “towers” in today’s First Presidency, President Dallin H. Oaks and President Henry B. Eyring, on pages 12 and 18.

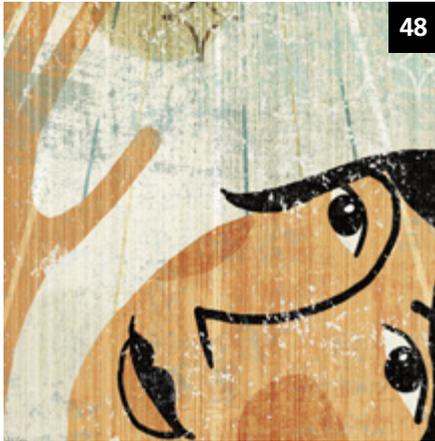
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International magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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PORTRAITS OF FAITH

Libuletswe lost his sight when he was 21. He relearned many things, but he never learned Braille. He wanted to read the scriptures, so he prayed to God for help.

CODY BELL, PHOTOGRAPHER

Libuletswe Gofrey Mokgatle

Gauteng, South Africa

During a home teaching visit, I told the sister we visited, “I cannot read the scriptures because I cannot see. I want to go to a school where I can learn how to read and write Braille.”

Her brother worked at a school for the blind. He helped me apply. I studied Braille every day. I even woke up at night to practice reading Braille. It took me only four months to be able to read it.

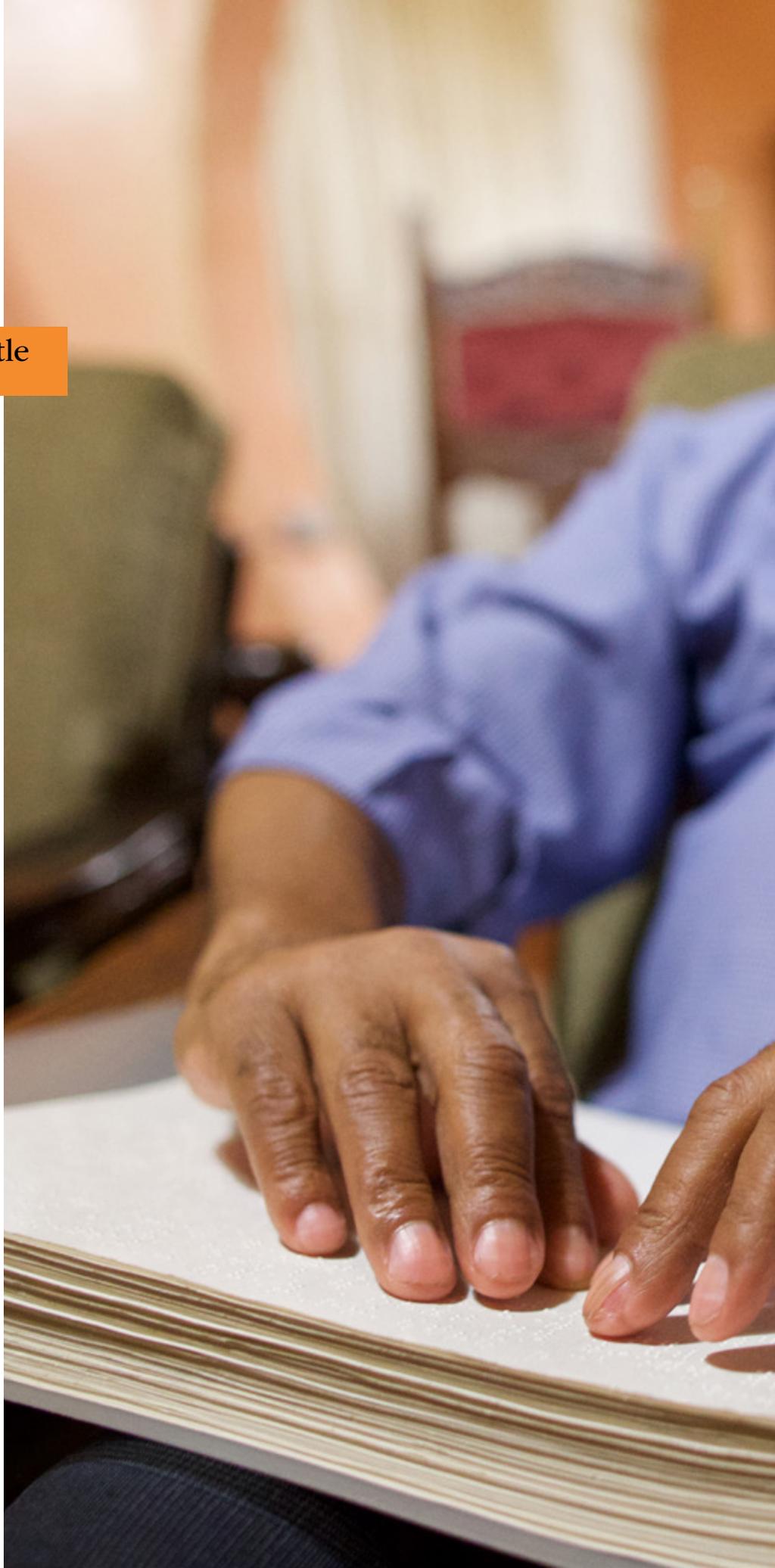
I finished school and told my branch president that I could now read Braille. He gave me a box with a manual for the priesthood and all the scriptures in Braille. I never knew that the Church had those things. It was then that I started really understanding and enjoying the gospel.

I know that the scriptures are true. I learn from them every time I read them. There is always something that I gain from them.

FIND MORE

Learn about the Church’s disability resources at lds.org/go/9184.

You can find more Portraits of Faith at lds.org/go/18.





Ministering Principles

COUNSEL ABOUT THEIR NEEDS

You don't have to do this alone. Counseling together can provide the help you need to help others.

God has invited you to minister to an individual or family in your ward or branch according to their needs. How do you find out what those needs are? The principle of counseling, which has been such a focus in the Church, is key.

After discussing what we might consider counseling about, we will explore:

1. Counseling with Heavenly Father.
2. Counseling with the assigned individual and family.
3. Counseling with our companion.
4. And counseling with others assigned to the same individual or family.

Counseling with our leaders is also essential. A future Ministering Principles article in the *Liahona* will explore counseling with leaders as well as the role of ministering interviews in that process.

What We Counsel about

Understanding needs is essential to ministering to one another. But what forms can those needs take, and is there something more than needs that we should find out?

Needs can come in many forms. Those we serve may face challenges that are emotional, financial, physical, educational, and more. Some needs are higher priority than others. Some we will be equipped to help with; others may require us to enlist help ourselves. In our efforts to help meet temporal needs, don't forget that our call to minister includes helping others progress along the covenant path, preparing for and receiving the priesthood ordinances essential for exaltation.

In addition to counseling about an individual's or family's needs, we should seek to learn their strengths. What don't they need help with? What abilities and gifts do they have that could bless others? How are they uniquely suited to help build the kingdom of God? An individual's strengths may be as important to understand as his or her needs.

7 Counseling with Heavenly Father

One of the central tenets of our faith is that Heavenly Father speaks to His children (see Articles of Faith 1:9). When we receive a new assignment to minister to someone, we should counsel with Heavenly Father in prayer, seeking insight and understanding into their needs and strengths. That process of counseling through prayer should continue throughout our ministering assignment.



“**M**inistering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.

2 Counseling with Individuals and Families

How and when we approach the individuals and families we are called to serve may vary depending on the circumstances, but counseling directly with the individual or family is essential for building relationships and understanding their needs, including how they want to be helped. Some questions may need to wait until a meaningful relationship has developed. While there's no one right way to do that, consider the following:

- Find out how and when they prefer to be contacted.
- Learn about their interests and backgrounds.
- Come with suggestions for how you could help, and ask for their suggestions.

As we build trust, consider discussing individual or family needs. Ask questions as prompted by the Holy Ghost.¹ For example:

- What are the challenges they face?
- What are their family or individual goals? For example, do they want to be better at holding regular family home evening or be more self-reliant?
- How can we help them with their goals and challenges?
- What gospel ordinances are coming up in their lives? How can we help them prepare?

Remember to offer specific help, such as, “Which night can we bring a meal to you this week?” A vague offer, like, “Let us know if there's anything we can do,” is not very helpful.



3 Counseling with Our Companion

Because you and your companion may not always be together when you interact with the individual or family, it is important to coordinate and counsel together as you seek inspiration as a companionship. Here are some questions to consider:

- How and how often will you communicate with each other as a companionship?
- How can you each use your individual strengths to minister to family or individual needs?
- What things have you learned, what experiences have you had, and what promptings have you received since the last time you spoke about the individual or family?

4 Counseling with Others Assigned

It may be good from time to time to speak with others who are assigned to minister to the same individual or family that you do.

Communicate to Solve Challenges

Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong of the Seventy applies an account from Mark 2 to our day to illustrate how counseling together made it possible for four people to figure out how to allow a man with palsy to be in the presence of Jesus.

“It might happen like this,” said Elder Wong. “Four people were fulfilling an assignment from their bishop to visit, at his home, a man who was sick with palsy. . . . In the most recent ward council, after counseling together about the needs in the ward, the bishop had given out ‘rescuing’ assignments. These four were assigned to help this man. . . .

“[When they arrived at the building where Jesus was,] the room was too crowded. They could not get in through the door. I am sure they tried everything they could think of, but they just could not get through. . . . They counseled together on what to do next—how they could bring the man unto Jesus Christ for healing. . . . They came up with a plan—not an easy one, but they acted on it.

“ . . . ‘They uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay’ (Mark 2:4). . . .

“ . . . ‘When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee’ (Mark 2:5).”²



Building relationships is also an important part of counseling together. See the Ministering Principles article “Building Meaningful Relationships” in the August 2018 issue on page 6.

Invitation to Act

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles urged, “Counsel together, use all resources available, seek the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, ask the Lord for His confirmation, and then roll up your sleeves and go to work.

“I give you a promise: if you will follow this pattern, you will receive specific guidance as to the *who, what, when, and where* of providing in the Lord’s way.”³ ■

NOTES

1. See *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 183.
2. Chi Hong (Sam) Wong, “Rescue in Unity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 14–15.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 55.

I THINK I'LL BE MYSELF

By Jutta Baum Busche

This series highlights the lives of devoted women and their messages, excerpted from the book *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women* (2017). It is available, along with seven bonus chapters, in the Gospel Library app and online at churchhistorianspress.org/at-the-pulpit.

I remember well the adjustments we had to make when we went to live in Utah. My first call in our ward was to serve as a Relief Society teacher. I watched the other teachers very closely and was deeply impressed with their striving for perfection in their teaching. Even their hairdos and immaculate dress showed their striving for perfection. I admired how fluent and articulate they were in the English language. How could I, with my poor English, compete with them and be their teacher? I was eager to learn and was so glad to hear that there was a stake preparation class for Relief Society teachers.

When I attended the training meeting for the first time, I was full of high hopes. I was not prepared for the question I was asked about what kind of centerpiece I would use when I gave my lesson. How incompetent I felt! I had no idea what a centerpiece was or what its purpose in the presentation of a lesson could be. Negative feelings about myself began to undermine my confidence. . . .

I continued to feel inferior as I watched the sisters in my ward and

saw them planting gardens and canning the produce. They exercised daily by jogging. They sewed and bargain-shopped. . . . They took dinners to new mothers and the sick in their neighborhoods. They took care of an aged parent, sometimes two. . . . They were faithful in doing temple work, and they worried about catching up on their journals.

Intimidated by examples of perfection all around me, I increased my efforts to be like my sisters, and I felt disappointed in myself and even guilty when I didn't run every morning, bake all my own bread, sew my own clothes, or go to the university. I felt that I needed to be like the women among whom I was living, and I felt that I was a failure because I was not able to adapt myself easily to their lifestyles.

I could have benefited at this time from the story of a six-year-old who, when asked by a relative, "What do you want to be?" replied, "I think I'll just be myself. I have tried to be like someone else. I have failed each time!" Like this child, after repeated failure to be someone else, I finally learned that



ABOUT SISTER BUSCHE

Jutta Baum (b. 1935) grew up in Dortmund, Germany. She married Enzo Busche in 1955, and the two were baptized on January 19, 1958, in a Dortmund public swimming pool.

In October 1977, they attended a conference in Berlin so that Enzo, a Church regional representative, could translate for President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985). At the end of the conference, President Kimball spoke privately with Enzo and called him to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy—a full-time position that would require the Busches to move.

Their first assignment was in Munich, Germany, where Enzo led the mission for two years; then they moved to Utah in 1980. They traveled a great deal, visiting Church members all over the world, and Jutta spoke at regional conferences with her husband.

With the dedication of the Frankfurt Germany Temple in 1987, they became its president and matron. Sister Busche had never been a temple worker, so President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) advised her at a training seminar, "The most important thing is to have love and love and love." She took his counsel to heart. She asked temple workers to make it their top priority to help patrons feel God's Spirit.

This message is an excerpt of an address Sister Busche gave at Brigham Young University's Women's Conference in 1989.

I should be myself. That is often not easy, however, because our desires to fit in, to compete and impress, or even simply to be approved of lead us to imitate others and devalue our own backgrounds, our own talents, and our own burdens and challenges. . . . I had to learn to overcome my anxious feeling that if I didn't conform, I simply did not measure up.

. . . When I tried to copy my wonderful sisters as I taught my class with

a special centerpiece and other teaching techniques that were unfamiliar to me, I failed because the Spirit still talks to me in German, not in English. But when I got on my knees to ask for help, I learned to depend on the Spirit to guide me, secure in the knowledge that I am a daughter of God. I had to learn and *believe* that I did not need to compete with others to be loved and accepted by my Heavenly Father. . . .

. . . Our efforts should not be to *perform* nor to *conform* but to be *transformed* by the Spirit. . . .

Many pressures bind us to the world. Being honest in heart frees us to discover God's will for our lives. . . .

. . . Although we might be absorbed in meeting our daily challenges and opportunities for growth, we cannot afford to live one day or one minute without being aware of the power within us. ■





By Elder David A. Bednar
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

PRESIDENT DALLIN H. OAKS: Following the Lord's Ways

When President Oaks knows what the Lord wants him to do—he does it.

After being called to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in April of 1984, Elder Dallin H. Oaks reflected deeply on his new role and the inevitable changes that would occur in his life.

This was not the first time Elder Oaks had been asked to leave his personal and professional “nets” (see Matthew 4:18–20). In 1970 he resigned his faculty position at the University of Chicago Law School in response to the invitation from Church leaders to become the president of Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, USA. He thoroughly enjoyed teaching, conducting research, and interacting with law students in Chicago. Yet he responded in faith to the request to serve as the eighth president of BYU.

Elder Oaks faced a similar situation in 1984 following his call to the Twelve, as he again left a position and work that he loved as a supreme court justice in the state of Utah. However, this change was different.

In 1970, Elder Oaks reasonably might have thought he would return to his legal career following his service at BYU, which in fact he eventually did. But the call in 1984 was distinctive—a

consecrated commitment of his whole soul and entire life to the Lord. The eternal importance and worldwide scope of his new responsibilities truly were overwhelming.

Elder Oaks described his innermost thoughts about this important transition:

“During this period of introspection, contemplating the way I would spend the rest of my life, I asked myself what kind of an apostle I would be. Would I be a lawyer who had been called to be

an apostle, or would I be an apostle who used to be a lawyer? I concluded that the answer to this question depended upon whether I would try to shape my calling to my own personal qualifications and





experience, or whether I would undertake the painful process of trying to shape myself to my calling.

“Would I try to perform my calling in the world’s ways, or would I try to determine and follow the Lord’s ways?”

“I made up my mind that I would try to change myself to fit my calling, that I would try to measure up to the qualifications and spiritual stature of an apostle. That is a challenge for a lifetime.”¹

The Lord’s divine grace, the experiences of life, a supportive family, and the personal qualities and discipline developed through diligent

The oldest of three children, Dallin (far left) was only seven years old when his father passed away. Growing up, he took violin lessons for a few months but helped his widowed mother for many years.

study and learning, hard work, and loving service have enabled President Oaks to “follow the Lord’s ways” and truly become a valiant Apostle who used to be an attorney.

Many spiritual gifts are evident in the life and ministry of President Dallin H. Oaks.

Faith in the Savior

President Oaks is blessed with the spiritual gift to know by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (see D&C 46:13–14). He teaches the doctrine of the Savior with clarity and testifies of Him with conviction. The Lord is his light in every aspect of his life.

When Dallin H. Oaks knows what the Lord wants him to do—he does it.

Through his teachings over many years, President Oaks has helped Church members to understand more fully the purpose and importance of the Father’s plan of salvation, the Savior’s Atonement, priesthood authority and keys, the sacred ordinance of the sacrament, the process of not merely “doing” but “becoming,” the distinctions in our lives among good, better, and best, and numerous other gospel principles. His simple and orderly approach to gospel learning has strengthened the faith of Latter-day Saints around the world.



Integrity

President Oaks is a man of integrity. His beliefs and behavior are grounded in gospel principles, and he lives what he believes. Expediency is never an option for him because he is determined to do what is right, even if a course of action does not advance his personal reputation or viewpoint. There are no shortcuts in his life—do things right or not at all.

His integrity is reflected in his willingness to tackle challenging issues and assignments. And he does so in a masterful way—the Lord’s way. He has taught forthrightly about topics such as defending the traditional family, addressing threats to religious liberty, protecting children from the selfish sins of adults, and decrying the evils of pornography.

Meekness

The personal and professional accomplishments of President Oaks are exceptional by any standard. Yet President Oaks exhibits meekness and a spiritual receptivity to learning both from the Holy Ghost and from

President Oaks and his late wife, June, have four girls and two boys (the youngest was born after the photo above was taken).

Dallin Oaks worked as a radio announcer and transmitter engineer and met June while announcing high school basketball games as a college freshman. They were married in 1952.



people with widely diverse backgrounds and experiences.

In one of our quorum meetings, Elder Oaks expressed a strong opinion about a course of action that he believed should be pursued. The reasons he articulated were convincing, and his knowledge about the issue was extensive. His arguments in favor of the action were compelling.

As we counseled together, a member of the Twelve with considerably less seniority expressed agreement with the basic course of action but registered a reservation about the

proposed timing. Elder Oaks could have countered the concern with a response such as “I believe I have more experience with this matter than you do.” But he did not. With no hint of defensiveness or indignation, Elder Oaks asked his quorum member, “Would you please help me understand your reservation about the timing?”

After listening intently to his apostolic associate, Elder Oaks pondered for a moment and then said, “The point you have made is important. I had not considered fully the timing

implications of this action in the way you have, and I am persuaded that the proposal should be reworked based on what we have learned in this discussion.”

Elder Oaks listened to and learned from his fellow quorum member and then walked in the meekness of the Lord’s Spirit (see D&C 19:23) to accomplish the desired outcome. For Dallin H. Oaks, the issue is never about what he wants; it is always about what the Lord wants and about following His ways.

Discernment

President Oaks also is blessed with the spiritual gift of discernment and the ability to recognize the long-term consequences

of proposals, decisions, and actions. This capacity is manifested in a question he often asks himself and others: “Where will it lead?”² A person simply cannot talk or counsel in council with President Oaks and not recognize immediately how this ability has benefited countless individuals and families and the entire Church during his lifetime of service to the Lord.

On a summer night in 1970, President Oaks had a frightening encounter with an armed robber on Chicago’s South Side as he returned to his parked car. His wife, June, was waiting for him in the vehicle.

“Give me your money,” the young mugger demanded.

“I don’t have any,” Brother Oaks replied, showing him his empty wallet.

“Give me your car keys,” he ordered. The keys were locked in the car with Sister Oaks. “Tell her to open the car,” the robber insisted. Brother Oaks said no.

The robber threatened, “Do it, or I’ll kill you.” Brother Oaks said firmly, “I won’t do it.” While the robber repeated his demands and threats, Brother Oaks saw an opportunity to wrestle the gun away from the young man. As President Oaks described in a 1992 general conference message, “Just as I was about to make my move, I had a unique experience. I did not see anything or hear anything, but I *knew* something. I knew what would happen if I grabbed that gun. We would struggle, and I would turn the gun into that young man’s chest. It would fire, and he would die. I also understood that I must not have the blood of



1932: Born in Provo, Utah, USA

1949: Joined the Utah National Guard one year before the Korean War

1952: Married June Dixon in the Salt Lake Temple

1954: Graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in accounting

1957: Graduated from the University of Chicago Law School

1957–58: Served as clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren

1958–61: Practiced law in Chicago, Illinois, USA

1961–70: Taught law at the University of Chicago Law School

1971–80: Served as president of Brigham Young University

1980–84: Served as a justice in the Utah Supreme Court

1984: Called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

1998: June Dixon Oaks, mother of their six children, passed away

2000: Married Kristen McMains in the Salt Lake Temple

2002–04: Served as Area President in the Philippines

2018: Called as First Counselor in the First Presidency



that young man on my conscience for the rest of my life.”³

This miraculous manifestation of the gift of discernment enabled President Oaks to resolve the confrontation and ultimately saved his own life and the life of the young robber.

More recently, in a meeting of the Missionary Executive Council, which Elder Oaks chaired at the time, we counseled together about a proposal related to the missionaries serving in a particular area of the world. After all council members had expressed their views on the matter, Elder Oaks asked several questions and summarized what had been learned. He then stated, “I do not feel we are yet settled on this matter. We should wait upon the Lord and not make a final decision now.”

Events a few months later dramatically highlighted the inspiration that attended that decision to wait. The council, acting under the inspired leadership of Elder Oaks, had been blessed to make the right decision, at the right time, and in the Lord’s way to protect the missionaries and prosper the work.

Sense of Humor and Kindness

President Oaks has a delightful sense of humor. For example, at the conclusion of a luncheon attended by all members of the Twelve, one of the Brethren suggested that staying awake during the afternoon would be difficult after enjoying such a delicious meal. President Oaks smiled broadly and replied, “Only if you cannot find a good place to go to sleep.”

He often playfully pokes fun at himself and his baldness. But he also can be a strong defender of those who have little hair on their heads. He frequently declares, “The noble and great always come out on top.”

His warmth and quick wit are endearing, and he is unfailingly considerate and kind. People often comment after being with President Oaks that they loved how he made them feel comfortable because of his sense of humor, the sincerity of his love, and his caring demeanor.

Influence of Righteous Women

With all the accomplishments and accolades associated with his remarkable life, President Oaks is the first to acknowledge the profound influence of three righteous women in his life: Stella Harris Oaks, June Dixon Oaks, and Kristen McMain Oaks.

Dallin Oaks was seven years old when his father, Lloyd E. Oaks, a medical doctor, died of tuberculosis at the age of only 37. He was buried on the 11th anniversary of his marriage to President Oaks’s mother, Stella Harris Oaks. She remained single for the rest of her life and raised their three children.

“I was blessed with an extraordinary mother,” President



Oaks recalls. “She surely was one of the many noble women who have lived in the latter days.”⁴

As a freshman at BYU, President Oaks met June Dixon. They married in 1952 and were blessed to become the parents of six children. “I did not perform at a consistently high level until June came into my life,” President Oaks said. “I owe so much of my accomplishment to her.”⁵ On July 21, 1998, June passed away from cancer.

June and Dallin had talked about the future of their family before she passed away. They agreed that remarrying would be a blessing to him and their family. On August 25, 2000, Elder Oaks married Kristen M. McMain.

Kristen Oaks describes her life with President Oaks with one simple sentence: “We are united in the work of the Lord, and it has showered us with countless blessings.” She creates family gatherings as often as possible because it brings so much joy to the entire family. June is always a part of the conversation.

As President Oaks teaches and testifies about the truths contained in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” he knows firsthand the importance of being a husband and father. He has learned essential lessons about the responsibilities husbands and wives share



Known for making people feel cared for, President Oaks has traveled throughout the world to minister and to share the gospel.

Left: He and his current wife, Kristen, spoke about making family connections at the 2018 RootsTech family history conference.

“to love and care for each other and for their children”—and that “in these sacred responsibilities, [husbands and] fathers and [wives and] mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.”⁶ Consistently and to the best of his ability, President Oaks has lived his family life following the Lord’s ways.

The Dedication of a Lifetime

On April 6, 2018, President Russell M. Nelson was sustained as President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with President

Dallin H. Oaks as the First Counselor in the First Presidency and President Henry B. Eyring as Second Counselor.

President Oaks comes to his new assignment in the presiding quorum of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the “tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime”⁷—a life devoted to the Savior and His restored Church. President Oaks’s personal discipleship, powerful teachings, and the consistency of his righteous example will influence positively people throughout the world and assist them in following the Lord’s ways. ■

NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way* (1991), 7.
2. See Dallin H. Oaks, “Where Will It Lead?” (Brigham Young University devotional, Nov. 9, 2004), speeches.byu.edu.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Bible Stories and Personal Protection,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 1992, 39–40.
4. Don L. Searle, “Elder Dallin H. Oaks: ‘It Begins by Following the Other Apostles,’” *Ensign*, June 1984, 14.
5. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Student Body and the President” (Brigham Young University devotional, Sept. 9, 1975), 6, speeches.byu.edu.
6. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May, 2017, 145.
7. See Dallin H. Oaks, “The Dedication of a Lifetime” (Church Educational System fireside for young adults, May 1, 2005), 2, broadcasts.lds.org.



By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING: Towering Intellect, Childlike Humility

The multifaceted aspects of President Henry B. Eyring's life and character are as pure as they are sometimes paradoxical.

One of President Henry B. Eyring's sons said recently, "My dad can be described in two words: pure motives." Surely everyone who has ever met this new Second Counselor to President Russell M. Nelson, watched him interact with others, or heard him give a sermon would agree. Indeed, it would seem that the wonderfully varied dimensions of Hal Eyring's life (as he has always been known to family and friends) are one long manifestation of a singularly pure virtue, one consistent demonstration of a single "pure motive": to be in both word and deed precisely what God wants His children to be.

President Eyring's method for pursuing that goal is as clear and uncomplicated as the task itself—and no less challenging! From his childhood now through to his 80s, Hal has undertaken these efforts to be right before God by seeking earnestly for—and being willing never to act without—the guidance of the Holy Ghost, a heavenly companion he will reference in almost every conversation he has, every administrative decision he makes, or every public declaration he utters. To

enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost is Henry B. Eyring's overarching means to a celestial end. It is a manifestation of his truly childlike humility. It is evidence of his singular spiritual purity.

Ironically, it is the many paradoxes of his life that make the purity of it even more striking. Born to and named for a Nobel-contending chemist, Hal tried his hand at physics and chemistry but chose business for his academic career, a topic about as far from the Eyring tradition as one could get.

With access along the way to significant





wealth, he and his wife, Kathleen, have chosen their entire married life to live modestly and frugally—on occasion almost painfully so (at least as their children laughingly report). Professionally educated at one of the United States' premier universities, tenured as a full professor at another, and visiting fellow at a third, one could not get higher on the educational ladder than Hal had climbed at a relatively young age, yet he left that academic significance and professional security to preside over a virtually unknown two-year college (unknown at least to any and all of his

Left: Growing up in New Jersey, USA, young Henry (seated next to his mother) gained a testimony, even though there were few Church members to meet with. At age 13, he and his family moved to Utah because his father took a position at the University of Utah. Henry played basketball for East High School in Salt Lake City.

Harvard, Stanford, and MIT associates), a school he had never visited—Ricks College—in a city whose location he could not have pointed out to anyone—Rexburg, Idaho, USA.

The purity and paradox go on. Bright beyond the usual examples of that intellectual quality, President Eyring is not willing to depend on his own talent or mental acumen to make any decision on matters that have spiritual consequence. Bold in the fullest measure of that word when needed and strong beyond the customary definition of strength, he simply will not, as President M. Russell

Ballard (and President

Eyring's own children) have noted, "be rushed into making a decision hastily or choosing a course of action without care. He would never act in any way that would put the Church or anyone else he was responsible for at risk."¹

One concluding example of the purity and paradox lying at the very center of Henry B. Eyring's soul might sum up this remarkable man's integrity:

Once President Eyring had a need to provide the sacrament to a group not able to join in the regular setting of a ward sacrament meeting. Before he pursued that kind gesture,



1933: Born in Princeton, New Jersey, USA

1955: Graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in physics

1959, 1963: Received master of business administration and doctor of business administration degrees from Harvard University

1962: Married Kathleen Johnson in the Logan Utah Temple

1962–71: Taught at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University in California, USA

1971–77: Served as president of Ricks College

1980–85: Served as Church Commissioner of Education

1985: Called as First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

1992: Called to the First Quorum of the Seventy

1992–2005: Served as Church Commissioner of Education

1995: Called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

2007: Called as Second Counselor in the First Presidency

2008: Called as First Counselor in the First Presidency

2018: Called as Second Counselor in the First Presidency

he placed a series of rather urgent calls to the bishop of his ward to seek permission to do so. Of course, the bishop willingly and lovingly granted the request.

I cite this particular incident for a purpose. Surely the lesson is obvious to everyone. This is a member of the First Presidency of the Church asking. This is an ordained Apostle, one holding all the priesthood keys any human being can hold on this earth. This is one who could and does give direction to every other ward and stake priesthood leader in the Church, including the bishop of his own ward in Bountiful, Utah, USA. This is one who can overlay his keys on those of any local leader and as a presiding officer of the Church is often required to do so. But with the purity of heart that characterizes everything he does and the paradox not everyone would be so prepared to demonstrate, this is President Henry B. Eyring scrupulously following the protocol outlined for every lay member of the Church everywhere in the world, humbly presenting his petition before the Lord's anointed and more than willing to take the counsel and abide by the decision of his local leader.

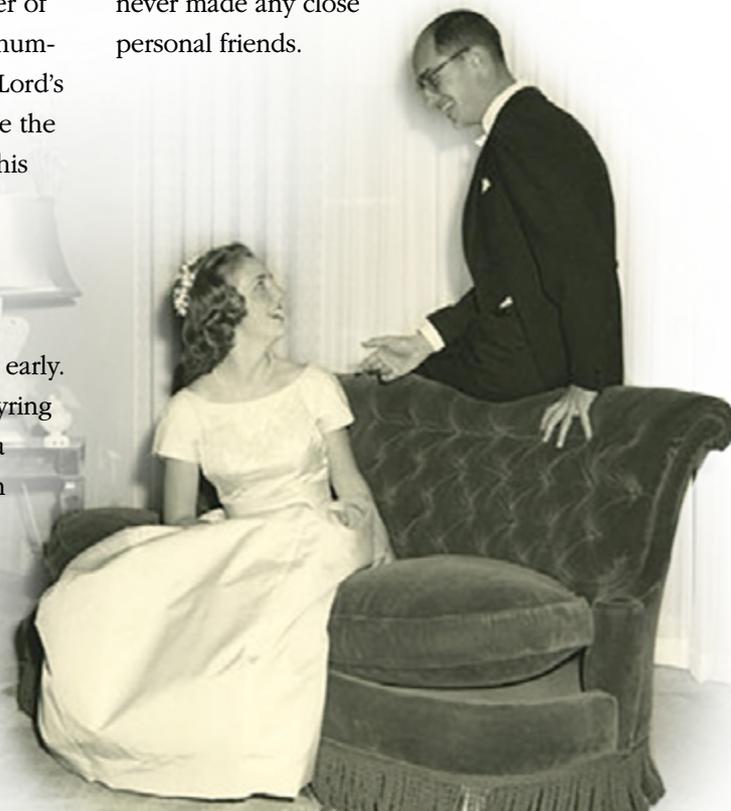
The Roots of His Faith

This rich spirituality and transparent purity of President Eyring's faith began early. Born to Henry and Mildred Bennion Eyring on May 31, 1933, while Henry Sr. was a world-renowned professor at Princeton University, Hal was raised in a region in which there were so few Church members that the Eyrings held Sabbath meetings in their home.

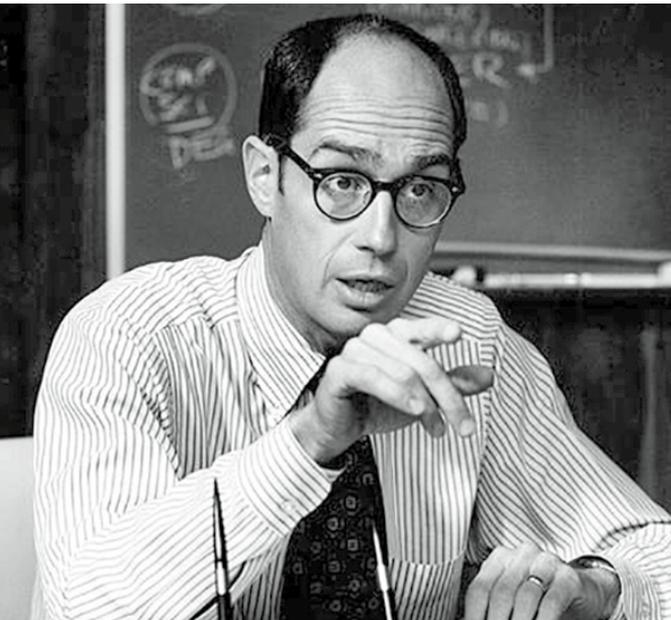
President Eyring would later joke that he and his younger brother, Harden, constituted the whole Primary of the branch, and their older brother, Ted, filled out the entire Young Men program. Their mother, Mildred, was the pianist and music leader, though how she did both he doesn't quite remember.

Not being able to worship with a large ward didn't prevent Hal from beginning to gain a testimony. "I learned then," he recalled, "that the Church is not a building; the Church isn't even a lot of people. I felt close to Heavenly Father and knew [even then] that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is His church; it didn't matter that our little branch met in our dining room."

When Hal was 13, his father took a significant position at the University of Utah. The younger Henry attended early-morning seminary and took some enjoyment in playing on his high school's basketball team, but by his own admission never made any close personal friends.



While feeling sorry for himself one day, he received an impression that would change his life. He felt it was a warning from God: “Someday, when you know who you really are, you will be sorry you didn’t use your time better.” He responded to that prompting by reading the Book of Mormon several times as a teenager. He also felt guided by President David O. McKay’s book *Gospel Ideals*, which, among other things, taught him how to properly treat women, a devotion he would show all of his life to his beloved wife, Kathleen.



Left: President Eyring was on the faculty at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University before being asked to serve as the president of Ricks College (now Brigham Young University–Idaho).

Above: President Eyring and his wife, Kathy, were blessed with four sons and two daughters.

District presidency, a Church calling Hal had while he was pursuing his graduate work at Harvard University following his undergraduate studies at the University of Utah. As a doctoral student in the summer of 1960, Hal represented the district presidency at a single-adult devotional held at the Cathedral of the Pines in southwest New Hampshire, USA, a natural outdoor amphitheater of note in the region. At the event he saw a young woman in a red and white dress and was impressed by the pure goodness she radiated. He thought, “That’s the best person I’ve ever seen. If I could be with her for the rest of my life, I could be every good thing I ever wanted to be.”

The young woman was Kathleen Johnson from Palo Alto, California, USA, who hadn’t intended to be in New England that summer but, at the insistence of her friend, had attended summer school with her at Harvard. Following that outdoor devotional, Hal arranged to meet Kathy at church one Sunday and was happy to hear she enjoyed playing tennis. Hal had been playing tennis several



A Dream Come True

Since early childhood, Hal’s deepest dreams were to be married and form a family. He thought about his future children so often that he’d already given them the collective nickname “The Redheads,” imagining them with red hair like his mother’s.

This dream finally moved toward fruition during his service as a counselor in the Boston



times a week with a college friend and was a good natural athlete, so he assumed a game of tennis would be an ideal first date and a way for him to make a terrific impression. What Kathleen didn't tell him was that she had been the captain of her high school tennis team! "She cleaned me out," Hal still grumbles about the match. This was the first of his future wife's remarkable examples of living humbly and then helping her husband to do so.

A New Path

Following their marriage and Hal's eventual appointment to the faculty of the business school at Stanford University, late one night in December 1970, just a few months before Hal was released as the bishop of the student ward in Palo Alto, Kathy asked a question seemingly out of the blue. As Hal climbed into bed after a demanding day, she leaned over and asked, "Are you sure you're doing what you ought to be doing with your career?"

Her question caught him by surprise. Everything in their life seemed perfect. The

Called an Apostle in 1995 (above), President Eyring has served as a counselor to three Presidents of the Church: Gordon B. Hinckley (right), Thomas S. Monson, and now Russell M. Nelson.

Right: President Eyring waves from his place as grand marshal in the 2012 Days of '47 parade in Salt Lake City, Utah.



future seemed bright and clear, even down to the Eyring dream home that Hal had recently outlined in his journal. It would include such niceties as "a room for projects, large enough and rough enough to work on and store a kayak," along with "at least five electrical outlets by the kitchen table" and "a shed or bathhouse retreat for writing."

"What do you mean?" Hal asked his wife.

"Couldn't you do studies for Neal Maxwell?" she suggested, referring to the Church's new Commissioner of Education. At this, Hal was

truly dumbfounded. He had only met Neal A. Maxwell once, and he knew that Kathleen had never met him at all. He tried to describe to her why such a career shift would not be a good fit for him, yet she insisted he at least pray over the matter. This he did immediately, dropping to kneel by the bed and offering a short prayer. When no answer came, Hal felt the matter decided and soon went to sleep.

The following morning, however, Hal received two distinct spiritual impressions that would forever alter the course of his career and his life. He captured both in his journal. First,

“Don’t use your human judgment to eliminate opportunities presented to you: pray about them all with an open mind.” And second, “Do the tasks you are assigned in the Church and your profession as well as you can; they are preparation.”

The first impression came as something of a rebuke that Hal would forever thereafter live by. After having previously rejected three different job offers without praying over them, into his mind came the words, “Don’t you ever make that mistake again. You don’t know which end is up in your career.”

With this spiritual direction fresh in his mind, Hal was



prepared when less than three weeks later, Commissioner Maxwell called to schedule a meeting with him in Salt Lake City. Brother Maxwell got right to the point. “I’d like to ask you to be the president of Ricks College,” he said. Hal replied that he would have to pray about it. He did and the terse answer he received was, “It’s my school.” The rest, as they say, is history. His service in the Church since then has been as exemplary as it has been conspicuous, moving on to serve as Deputy Commissioner of Education and then Commissioner (twice), followed by calls to the Presiding Bishopric, the Quorum of the Seventy, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and as a counselor to three Presidents of the Church.

But in a very real sense to Hal, no calling in the Church was more important for him than another: “The pressures at every stage of life can tempt us to reject or neglect calls to serve the Savior,” President Eyring has taught. “Some of those calls may seem unimportant, but *my* life, and my family, was changed for the better by my accepting a call to teach a deacons quorum. I felt the love of those deacons for the Savior and His love for them.”²

One concluding paradox: I can think of almost no one I know who would be more adverse to conflict and repulsed by violence than my friend Henry B. Eyring. Yet he graduated as the top ROTC cadet in his class at the University

of Utah and served his country with distinction in the United States Air Force. If one had to go to war—and we most certainly are in one that began in the councils of heaven—you would want, first of all, to be led by someone who hated the very thought of war. But if (spiritual) war it was to be, then you would plead for that leader to think clearly,



even brilliantly, to measure every tactical and strategic option against revealed doctrine, and to live for and seek the confirmation of the Holy Ghost in every decision that he made. Such a singular defense of the sacred in a battle against anything unhallowed or profane demonstrates perhaps the ultimate purity of Henry B. Eyring’s sometimes seemingly paradoxical life. I would be proud to serve on his flight crew, aboard his battleship, or in his foxhole. ■

President Eyring’s biography, *I Will Lead You Along: The Life of Henry B. Eyring*, by Robert I. Eaton and Henry J. Eyring, was invaluable in preparing this article. Some of President Eyring’s firsthand observations and biographical background come from this source.

NOTES

1. Personal correspondence, Apr. 25, 2018.
2. Henry B. Eyring, “To My Grandchildren,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 69.



By Elder J. Devn Cornish
General Authority Seventy

The True Church

“For the Perfecting of the Saints”

By now you have had the opportunity to read the first several chapters of volume 1 of the new four-volume narrative history of the Church, *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*. It is wonderful to see how the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, told in its context as experienced by those who lived it, builds our faith and renews our hope. We feel privileged to bring that history forth in a way that can be understood and appreciated across the world and throughout the Church.

The impressions one gets from reading the history of the Church depend largely on what one expects to find in that history. We read the Lord’s own statement that this Church is “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (D&C 1:30). So it may seem reasonable to expect that the history of the true Church portray unerring leaders successfully implementing a sequence of revealed directions progressing to a perfect organization that is widely welcomed and embraced. But that is neither what the scriptures describe nor what our history represents, because the perfecting of the Church as an organization was not the Lord’s primary purpose.

What Is the Purpose of the Church?

Nowhere in our scriptures, our doctrine, or the teachings of latter-day apostles and prophets is it taught that the

purpose of the Lord is to perfect or to save the Church. Rather, the purpose of the Church is “for the perfecting of the saints . . . till we all come in the unity of the faith . . . unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12–13). The Lord’s primary purpose is to perfect His Saints. The Church serves to support that objective.

Thus, we will be thrilled by what we find in our history if we expect it to demonstrate how the process of the Restoration not only established the Lord’s true Church on earth but also provided the experiences by which its leaders and members could grow toward perfection as they learned from their triumphs and their mistakes. Their experiences can increase our faith in God and Christ and help us see how our participation in this same divinely directed process can change and bless us. In other words, the history of the Church gives us hope that we too can ultimately be “perfected in [Christ]” (Moroni 10:32).

What Does It Mean That This Is the True Church?

If the leaders and members of the past were able to establish Christ’s Church even though their efforts were sometimes imperfect, and if they sometimes made mistakes, then what does it mean to say that this is the true Church? It means that we may have complete confidence in the validity of the restored priesthood authority, the

saving ordinances, the revealed doctrine, the scriptures, and the united quorums of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency. It means that we may know that the Savior Himself directs the Church and that the Holy Ghost will bear witness to all sincere seekers of the truth of these things. It means that by striving to keep the covenants associated with the ordinances, and continually repenting, even imperfect but sincere people like you and me will live in celestial glory with God and Christ and our families forever, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

We feel privileged to present this narrative history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and we encourage you to continue reading the remainder of the series as each volume comes out. It is faithful to the records and the facts available. We are confident that an honest reading of this history will increase our faith in Heavenly Father's love and in the power of Christ's Atonement, will strengthen our witness of the

divine direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith and of the Restoration, and can give us hope that we too will receive all the blessings They have promised to the faithful. ■

Elder Cornish was serving as Assistant Executive Director of the Church History Department at the time this article was prepared.

Chapter 7 of *Saints* appears in the following article. The entire first volume is available in 14 languages in print from store.lds.org and free of charge in the Gospel Library app and online at saints.lds.org. It is also available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese on popular e-book and audio book platforms.

To learn more about inspiring events in Church history, join the worldwide devotional, a Face to Face event with Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on September 9, 2018. Visit YSAface2face.lds.org for details and to submit questions in advance.







Chapter 7

Fellow Servants

This is chapter 7 of the new four-volume narrative history of the Church titled Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days. The book is available in 14 languages in print, in the Church History section of the Gospel Library app, and at saints.lds.org. The preceding chapters were published in previous issues and are available in 47 languages in the Gospel Library app and at saints.lds.org.

The spring of 1829 was cold and wet well into May. While farmers around Harmony stayed indoors, putting off their spring planting until the weather improved, Joseph and Oliver translated as much of the record as they could.¹

They had come to an account of what happened among the Nephites and Lamanites when Jesus died in Jerusalem. It told of massive earthquakes and storms that devastated the people and altered the shape of the land. Some cities sank into the ground, while others caught fire and burned. Lightning split the sky for hours and the sun disappeared, shrouding the survivors in thick darkness. For three days people cried out, mourning for their dead.²

Finally, the voice of Jesus Christ pierced the gloom. “Will ye not now return unto me,” He asked, “and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?”³ He lifted the darkness, and the people repented. Soon, many of them gathered to a temple in a place called Bountiful, where they spoke of the incredible changes to the land.⁴

While the people talked with one another, they saw the Son of God descend out of heaven. “I am Jesus Christ,” He said, “whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.”⁵ He stayed among them for a time, taught His gospel, and commanded them to be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins.

“Whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved,” He declared. “They are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God.”⁶ Before ascending to heaven, He gave righteous men authority to baptize those who believed in Him.⁷

As they translated, Joseph and Oliver were struck by these teachings. Like his brother Alvin, Joseph had never been baptized, and he wanted to know more about the ordinance and the authority necessary to perform it.⁸

On May 15, 1829, the rains cleared and Joseph and Oliver walked into the woods near the Susquehanna River. Kneeling, they asked God about baptism and the remission of sins. As they prayed, the voice of the Redeemer spoke peace to them, and an angel appeared in a cloud of light. He introduced himself as John the Baptist and placed his hands on their heads. Joy filled their hearts as God’s love surrounded them.

“Upon you my fellow servants,” John declared, “in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.”⁹

The angel’s voice was mild, but it seemed to pierce Joseph and Oliver to the core.¹⁰ He explained that the Aaronic Priesthood authorized them to perform baptisms, and he commanded them to baptize each other after he departed. He also said they would receive additional priesthood power later, which would give them authority to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost on each other and on those they baptized.

After John the Baptist left, Joseph and Oliver walked to the river and waded in. Joseph baptized Oliver first, and as soon as he came out of the water, Oliver began to prophesy about things that would soon happen. Oliver then baptized Joseph, who rose from the river prophesying about the rise of Christ’s Church, which the Lord had promised to establish among them.¹¹

Following John the Baptist’s instructions, they returned to the woods and ordained each other to the Aaronic

Priesthood. In their study of the Bible, as well as their translation of the ancient record, Joseph and Oliver had often read about the authority to act in God’s name. Now they carried that authority themselves.

After their baptism, Joseph and Oliver found that scriptures that once seemed dense and mysterious suddenly became clearer. Truth and understanding flooded their minds.¹²

Back in New York, Oliver’s friend David Whitmer was eager to learn more about Joseph’s work. Though David lived in Fayette, about 30 miles (48 km) from Manchester, he and Oliver had become friends while Oliver was teaching school and living with the Smiths. They often talked about the gold plates, and when Oliver moved to Harmony, he promised to write David about the translation.

Letters started arriving a short time later. Oliver wrote that Joseph knew details about his life that no one could have known except by revelation from God. He described the Lord’s words to Joseph and the translation of the record. In one letter, Oliver shared a few lines of the translation, testifying of its truthfulness.

Another letter informed David that it was God’s will for him to bring his team and wagon to Harmony to help

Joseph, Emma, and Oliver move to the Whitmer home in Fayette, where they would finish the translation.¹³ People in Harmony had become less welcoming to the Smiths. Some men had even threatened to attack them, and had it not been for the influence of Emma’s family, they might have been seriously hurt.¹⁴

David shared Oliver’s letters with his parents and siblings, who agreed to welcome Joseph, Emma, and Oliver into their home. The Whitmers were descendants of German-speaking settlers in the area and had a reputation for hard work and piety. Their farm was close enough to



Joseph and Oliver had often read about the authority to act in God’s name. Now they carried that authority themselves.





the Smith home for a visit but far enough away to keep thieves from disturbing them.¹⁵

David wanted to go to Harmony immediately, but his father reminded him that he had two days of heavy work to do before he could leave. It was planting season, and David needed to plow 20 acres and enrich the soil with plaster of paris to help their wheat grow. His father said he ought to pray first to learn if it was absolutely necessary to leave now.

David took his father's advice, and as he prayed,

he felt the Spirit tell him to finish his work at home before going to Harmony.

The next morning, David walked out to the fields and saw rows of dark furrows in ground that had been unplowed the evening before. Exploring the fields further, he saw that about six acres had been plowed overnight, and the plow was waiting for him in the last furrow, ready for him to finish the job.

David's father was astonished when he learned what had happened. "There must be an overruling hand in this," he said, "and I think you had better go down to Pennsylvania as soon as your plaster of paris is sown."

David worked hard to plow the remaining fields and prepare the soil for a successful planting. When he finished, he hitched his wagon to a strong team of horses and set out for Harmony earlier than expected.¹⁶

Once Joseph, Emma, and Oliver moved to Fayette, David's mother had her hands full. Mary Whitmer and her husband, Peter, already had eight

children between the ages of 15 and 30, and the few who did not still live at home resided nearby. Tending to their needs filled Mary's days with work, and the three house-guests added more labor. Mary had faith in Joseph's calling and did not complain, but she was getting tired.¹⁷

The heat in Fayette that summer was sweltering. As Mary washed clothes and prepared meals, Joseph dictated the translation in an upstairs room. Oliver usually wrote for him, but occasionally Emma or one of the Whitmers took a turn with the pen.¹⁸ Sometimes, when Joseph and Oliver tired

of the strain of translating, they would walk out to a nearby pond and skip stones across the surface of the water.

Mary had little time to relax herself, and the added work and the strain placed on her were hard to bear.

One day, while she was out by the barn where the cows were milked, she saw a gray-haired man with a knapsack slung across his shoulder. His sudden appearance frightened her, but as he approached, he spoke to her in a kind voice that set her at ease.

“My name is Moroni,” he said. “You have become pretty tired with all the extra work you have to do.” He swung the knapsack off his shoulder, and Mary watched as he started to untie it.¹⁹

“You have been very faithful and diligent in your labors,” he continued. “It is proper, therefore, that you should receive a witness that your faith may be strengthened.”²⁰

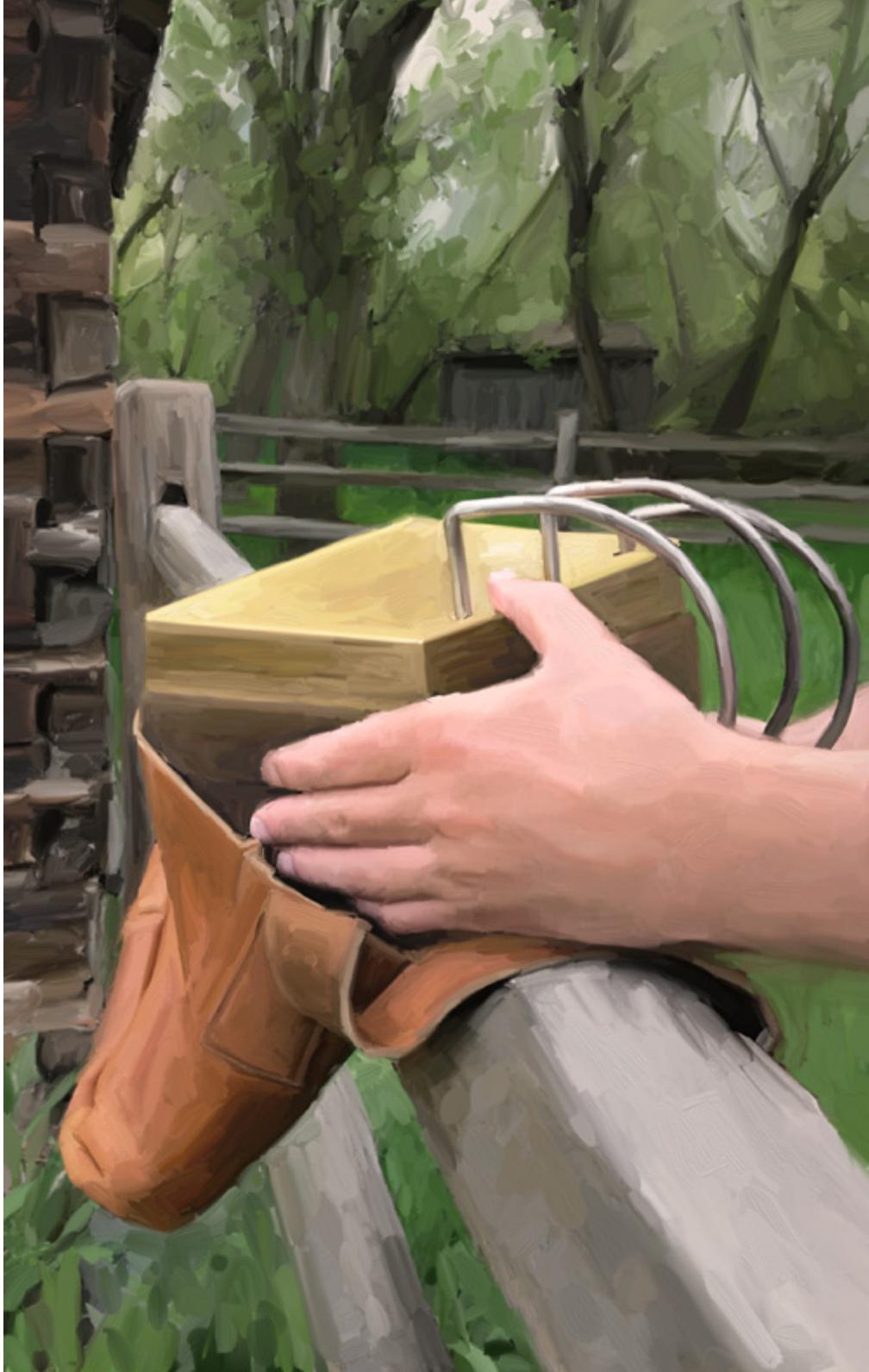
Moroni opened his knapsack and removed the gold plates. He held them in front of her and turned their pages so she could see the writings on them. After he turned the last page, he urged her to be patient and faithful as she carried the extra burden a little longer. He promised she would be blessed for it.²¹

The old man vanished a moment later, leaving Mary alone. She still had work to do, but that no longer troubled her.²²

At the Whitmer farm, Joseph translated rapidly, but some days were challenging. His mind would wander to other matters, and he could not focus on spiritual things.²³ The Whitmers' small house was always busy and full of

distractions. Moving there had meant giving up the relative privacy he and Emma had enjoyed in Harmony.

One morning, as he was getting ready to translate, Joseph became upset with Emma. Later, when he joined Oliver and David in the upstairs room where they worked, he could not translate a syllable.



“Tis enough! ’Tis enough!” Martin cried. “Mine eyes have beheld! Mine eyes have beheld!”³²

Joseph and the Three Witnesses returned to the Whitmer house later that afternoon. Mary Whitmer was chatting with Joseph’s parents when Joseph rushed into the room. “Father! Mother!” he said. “You do not know how happy I am!”

He flung himself down beside his mother. “The Lord has caused the plates to be shown to three more besides me,” he said. “They know for themselves that I do not go about to deceive the people.”

He felt as if a burden had been lifted off his shoulders. “They will now have to bear a part,” he said. “I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world.”

Martin came into the room next, almost bursting with joy. “I have now seen an angel from heaven!” he cried. “I bless God in the sincerity of my soul that he has condescended to make me—even me—a witness of the greatness of His work!”³³

A few days later, the Whitmers joined the Smith family at their farm in Manchester. Knowing the Lord had

promised to establish His words “in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good,” Joseph went into the woods with his father, Hyrum, and Samuel, as well as four of David Whitmer’s brothers—Christian, Jacob, Peter Jr., and John—and their brother-in-law Hiram Page.³⁴

The eight men gathered at a spot where the Smith family often went to pray privately. With the Lord’s permission, Joseph uncovered the plates and showed them to the group. They did not see an angel as the Three Witnesses had, but Joseph let them hold the record in their hands, turn its pages, and inspect its ancient writing. Handling the plates affirmed their faith that Joseph’s testimony about the angel and the ancient record was true.³⁵

Now that the translation was over and he had witnesses to support his miraculous testimony, Joseph no longer needed the plates. After the men left the woods and went back to the house, the angel appeared and Joseph returned the sacred record to his care.³⁶ ■

A complete list of works cited is available in English at saints.lds.org.

The word *Topic* in the notes indicates additional information online at saints.lds.org.

Joseph let the Eight Witnesses hold the record in their hands, turn its pages, and inspect its ancient writing.

NOTES

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- 2. 3 Nephi 8; Oliver Cowdery to William W. Phelps, Sept. 7, 1834, *LDS Messenger and Advocate*, Oct. 1834, 1:15–16; see also Kowallis, “In the Thirty and Fourth Year,” 136–90.
- 3. 3 Nephi 9:13.
- 4. 3 Nephi 10:9; 11:1.
- 5. 3 Nephi 11:10; 15:21–24; see also John 10:16.
- 6. 3 Nephi 11:33.
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- 11. Joseph Smith History, 1838–56, volume A-1, 17–18, in *JSP*, H1:292–94 (draft 2); “Articles of the Church of Christ,” June 1829, in *JSP*, D1:371.
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- 14. Joseph Smith History, 1838–56, volume A-1, 18, in *JSP*, H1:296 (draft 2).



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16. Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–45, book 8, [8]; Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith, Interview with David Whitmer, Sept. 7–8, 1878, [10], in Joseph F. Smith to John Taylor and Council of the Twelve, Sept. 17, 1878, draft, Joseph F. Smith, Papers, Church History Library; Cook, *David Whitmer Interviews*, 26–27.
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19. Skousen, "Another Account of Mary Whitmer's Viewing of the Golden Plates," 40; [Andrew Jenson], "Eight Witnesses," *Historical Record*, Oct. 1888, 621.
20. Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith, Interview with David Whitmer, Sept. 7–8, 1878, [10], in Joseph F. Smith to John Taylor and Council of the Twelve, Sept. 17, 1878, draft, Joseph F. Smith, Papers, Church History Library.
21. Skousen, "Another Account of Mary Whitmer's Viewing of the Golden Plates," 40; [Andrew Jenson], "Eight Witnesses," *Historical Record*, Oct. 1888, 621.
22. [Andrew Jenson], "Eight Witnesses," *Historical Record*, Oct. 1888, 621; Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith, Interview with David Whitmer, Sept. 7–8, 1878, [10], in Joseph F. Smith to John Taylor and Council of the Twelve, Sept. 17, 1878, draft, Joseph F. Smith, Papers, Church History Library; Stevenson, Journal, Dec. 23, 1877.
23. Whitmer, *Address to All Believers in Christ*, 30.
24. "Letter from Elder W. H. Kelley," *Saints' Herald*, Mar. 1, 1882, 68; see also Bushman, *Rough Stone Rolling*, 77.
25. Joseph Smith History, 1838–56, volume A-1, 34, in *JSP*, H1:352–54 (draft 2). **Topics:** Book of Mormon Translation; Gold Plates
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32. Joseph Smith History, 1838–56, volume A-1, 25, in *JSP*, H1:320 (draft 2).
33. Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1844–45, book 8, [11]; book 9, [1].
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35. "Testimony of Eight Witnesses," in Book of Mormon, 1830 edition, [590]. **Topic:** Witnesses of the Book of Mormon
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MY CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

April 2018 General Conference



PRIESTHOOD VS. PRIESTHOOD HOLDERS

“The Melchizedek

Priesthood is not a status or a label. It is a divine power held in trust to use for the benefit of God’s work for His children. We should always remember that men who hold the priesthood are *not* ‘the priesthood.’ It is not appropriate to refer to ‘the priesthood and the women.’ We should refer to ‘the *holders* of the priesthood and the women.’ ”

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Powers of the Priesthood,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 65.

Diving Deeper

MINISTERING

In general conference many of our leaders talked about ministering. As you study the most recent messages, see if you can identify ministering traits. Here are a few talks to get you started:

- Henry B. Eyring, “His Spirit to Be with You,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 86–89.
- Henry B. Eyring, “Inspired Ministering,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 61–64.
- Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be With and Strengthen Them,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 101–3.
- Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 104–7.

A PROPHET

DOES NOT
STAND BETWEEN
YOU AND THE

SAVIOR.

RATHER, HE
stands beside you

AND
points the way

TO THE
SAVIOR.

Elder Neil L. Andersen
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
“The Prophet of God,”
Ensign or *Liahona*, May 2018, 27.

Answers to Questions

CAN I REALLY PUT MY SINS BEHIND ME AND BE FORGIVEN?

“[The Savior] laid down His life and took it up again.

“He did this for all who believe in Him.

“He did this for all who do not believe in Him.

“He did this even for those who mock, revile, and curse His name. . . .

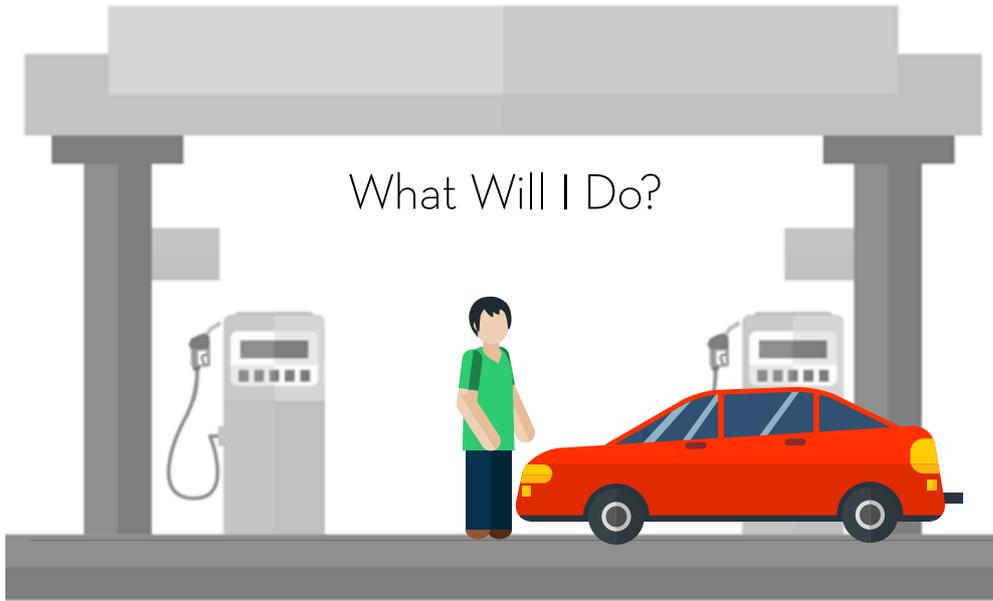
“Because of Jesus Christ, we will rise from the despair of death. . . .

“Because of Jesus Christ, our sins can not only be erased; they can be forgotten.”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Behold the Man!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 108, 109.

What questions did you have that were answered by something you heard at conference? Share your experience on our Facebook page: facebook.com/liahona.

DETAIL FROM WHERE HAVE THEY TAKEN HIM BY J. KIRK RICHARDS; IMAGE OF EARTH FROM GETTY IMAGES



What Will I Do?

TRYING THE PROPHET'S TEACHINGS

I was touched by President Nelson's message in conference that God wants to speak with me and tell me what He wants me to do. Today I thought I would try that out. I prayed that I could be of help to someone today. After lunch I needed to fill my car up with gas. I had the thought that I needed to buy someone gas. Somewhat skeptically, I thought, "We'll see." I began pumping my gas. A minivan pulled up next to me, and a lady got out with her son. She got her purse out and fumbled through it.

I was finishing pumping when I heard her say somewhat timidly, "Excuse me." I turned to see a worried look on her face.

I told her I was supposed to buy someone gas today. "Is that someone you?" Surprised, she began to tear up. "Someone's watching out for you today," I said. I walked around the pump and inserted my credit card. Then I got in my car and drove away with the absolute assurance that someone is up there watching out for me too. Thank God for a prophet!"

—Jonathan Benson, story shared on the *Liahona* Facebook page.

Have an experience you would like to share? Submit your story at liahona.lds.org, or share it on our Facebook page.

Ponder This . . .

WHAT WOULD I DO IF I KNEW I HAD ONE MORE DAY TO LIVE?

See Elder Taylor G. Godoy of the Seventy, "One More Day," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 34–36.

Share your thoughts on the *Liahona* Facebook page, or record your thoughts in your journal!

Conference Numbers!

103,221

**MISSIONARIES
CURRENTLY SERVING:**

67,049 full-time
36,172 Church-service



new temples were announced to be built in Salta, Argentina; Bengaluru, India; Managua, Nicaragua; Cagayan de Oro, Philippines; Utah, USA; Virginia, USA; and a city yet to be determined in Russia. See map above.





THE POWER OF FAITH AND Family Stories

We are more resilient in the face of trials when we are familiar with the challenges our own ancestors faced.

By Adam C. Olson
Church Magazines

Rosalene Pacini has always felt a special connection with her great-great-grandmother, Elizabeth Xavier Tait, because of the faith-filled stories Rosalene grew up with. The stories of Elizabeth's trust in the Lord as she traveled from Bombay to Liverpool to Zion, as well as her endurance through heart-wrenching trials, captured Rosalene's imagination as a young girl.

Those stories also played a role in preparing Rosalene to develop and rely on the same kind of faith when she faced similar challenges in her own life.

LEAVING HOME, LOSING FAMILY

Elizabeth, 1850s, Bombay, India

Elizabeth Xavier was a well-educated young woman who enjoyed a life of ease as part of a wealthy, noble family in India. But life took a challenging turn in 1850 when she married William Tait, a regimental drill master in the British navy who had been baptized by Elder Parley P. Pratt in Scotland.

Elizabeth's family deeply disapproved of her baptism. The stress of strained relationships was followed by the tragedy of losing her first son to cholera. Then, eight months pregnant but yearning to be with the Saints and become an eternal family, Elizabeth sent William and their second son off to prepare a home for their family in Zion.

After the baby was born, Elizabeth's family begged her to forsake her husband and her religion and stay with them. But fixed in her determination to follow the Savior, she left her family and homeland forever, sailing for Liverpool, England.



Rosalene, 2003, Colorado, USA

Rosalene grew up as the youngest child in a large family in Enterprise, a small community in Southern Utah, USA. She had many opportunities to witness the power of faith in Jesus Christ during her years at home and on her mission. After marrying in the temple, Rosalene embarked on a testimony-stretching journey of her own when her husband started a career that would take her farther and farther from home.

After moving to the state of Colorado, Rosalene watched from afar as her mother battled cancer until passing away a few years later.

"I could have been happy to live in my hometown next to my parents my entire life," she says. "It broke my heart when I had to grow up and move away. Losing my mom was life-shattering. Even now, not a single day goes by that I don't miss her.

"I have to believe that there were days when Elizabeth missed her home desperately. But she believed in Jesus Christ and allowed His power to work in her life. That was enough to carry her through. The same power has helped me as I rely on my Heavenly Father for strength, whether or not my earthly family is close by."



THE STING OF DEATH

Elizabeth, 1856, Liverpool, England

On the long journey by sea from India to England, Elizabeth's infant daughter became seriously ill. She died and was buried in Liverpool. Elizabeth later said that losing her baby was so painful that she didn't know if she could continue. Heartbroken and alone, but encouraged by Elder Franklin D. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who was serving as president of the European Mission, Elizabeth sailed for Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Rosalene, 2006, New York, USA

Shortly after the Pacinis moved their growing family to New York, Rosalene went into preterm labor. The doctors considered surgery to deliver the baby because his heart rate kept dropping. But when his heartbeat normalized, the family went home relieved.

At a follow-up appointment a few days later, the doctor couldn't find a heartbeat. Their baby boy was delivered a few hours later—stillborn.

"Losing my baby was heart-wrenching," Rosalene says. "I have never felt as empty as I did after they took his little body from my arms."

The family flew to Utah to bury him next to Rosalene's mother. For weeks after, Rosalene couldn't bear to leave and move on with life.

"I think I understand a little how Elizabeth wondered if she could go on," Rosalene says. "But she did. We may all find ourselves in that place at some point in our lives. But we can't stop. We move forward by relying on our Savior more than we did before, and eventually we recognize the miracles that have surrounded us all along."



EVER ONWARD, BY JOSEPH BRICKEY

THE WINTERS OF LIFE

Elizabeth, 1856, Iowa, USA

After crossing an ocean, Elizabeth found herself in a completely new culture. She traveled by train to Iowa, USA, the end of the westbound railway at the time. Arriving in July 1856, Elizabeth joined the Willie handcart company.

The suffering of the Willie and Martin handcart companies is well chronicled. The companies left late in the season and got caught in an early winter in the Rocky Mountains. Freezing and low on food, more than 200 died.

Among the rescue party sent by President Brigham Young was Elizabeth's husband, William. The couple was reunited in deep snow and freezing wind.

After recovering in Salt Lake City, the couple ended their journey in Cedar City, only a few miles from where Rosalene's began.

Rosalene, 2007, Hong Kong, China

Like Elizabeth generations before, Rosalene soon found herself crossing an ocean to settle in an unfamiliar culture when her husband took a position in Hong Kong.

"Some people thrive on change and adventure, but it was almost too much for me," Rosalene says.

She again found strength in her Savior and in God's plan for her. With the support of her family and dear sisters in her ward, Rosalene came to love and treasure her new surroundings and experiences.



OTHERS HAVE PASSED THIS WAY BEFORE

As we strive to follow Jesus Christ, we all travel through trials—our own plains and oceans to cross and harsh winters to face. But others have passed this way before. We can find hope and strength in their stories of trust in the Savior.

Rosalene recognizes she's likely only in the middle of her journey, but having seen the full scope of Elizabeth's story, she can't help but consider the end of her own.

"Maybe I have some attributes like Elizabeth, maybe I don't. But I hope that when my children see my life, they will see similarities—that we were both faithful to the end and that we allowed our trials to shape us to be more like our Savior."

Recognizing the strength she has gained from those who have passed along before, Rosalene is passing those stories on to her children.

"Knowing their stories, we know they did hard things," Rosalene says. "And we know the reason and the motivation. Now it is my turn to carry that tradition of faith in Jesus Christ and dedication to His gospel, and pass it on to my own children." ■

The stories of their ancestors have helped strengthen the faith of Rosalene Pacini and her family.

FAMILY STORIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

Studies show that children become more resilient to the challenges of life when they are familiar with the stories of challenges their own ancestors faced.¹

In the Book of Mormon, Helaman also recognized the power of connecting his children to family stories that had been passed down through writing and retelling. He told his sons:

"Behold, I have given unto you the names of our first parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I have done that when you remember your names ye may remember them; and when ye remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know how that it is said, and also written, that they were good.

"Therefore, my sons, I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them" (Helaman 5:6–7).

NOTE

1. See Robyn Fivush, "Collective Stories in Families Teach Us About Ourselves," *Psychology Today*, Feb. 2, 2017, psychologytoday.com/blog/the-stories-our-lives/201702.



LAYING DOWN THE LIFE I HAD PLANNED

When I was six or seven years old, I knew I wanted to be an oceanographer. I focused on my goal, worked hard, and got into a good college. I took several courses in zoology and loved it. But as I got further into my studies, I became fascinated with the human body, particularly on the cellular level. I decided to become a pathologist.

I soon met my future husband, and we decided to get married. Having a family was always part of my plan, but while I knew I could be a great doctor and a great mother, I felt that I couldn't be great at both at the same time. Because family is essential to the Lord's plan of salvation, I decided to become a mother first. I figured that once my kids got into school, I could go back to school myself.

When my youngest child entered kindergarten, I began the application process for a PhD program in nutritional studies at the University of Texas in Austin. Just before submitting my application, I found out I was unexpectedly pregnant with my seventh child. I was in my 40s, and by the time this child entered school, I would be nearly 50.

"A little late to start a new career that takes extensive schooling," I thought.



While I knew I could be a great doctor and a great mother, I felt that I could not be great at both at the same time.

All at once I saw my life's career dreams crumble around me. As I began to despair, a scripture came to my mind and my heart: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). I had always considered this scripture to mean one person dying for another, but now it means so much more.

I realized that the greatest love

I could show was to lay down the life I had planned for myself and give my time and energy to raising my children. I felt that for me, this was what the Lord would have me do. Yes, I could have helped a lot of people as a doctor, but I also know that the greatest eternal impact I can have is in the lives of my own children. ■

Jeannette Cox, Texas, USA



JET LAG AND THE WORD OF WISDOM

Several times a year, my work requires that I travel from Taiwan to San Francisco, California, USA, for training. The problem with traveling between these two places is the 15-hour time difference. Jet lag made me want to sleep during the day, and it kept me awake all night.

Colleagues from all over the world attend these trainings. They told me they coped with jet lag by drinking coffee to keep them awake and drinking red wine to help them sleep.

Some colleagues offered me these drinks, but I politely told them I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and had promised the Lord I would not drink wine or coffee. Some teased me and said those commandments made my life harder. At times, it felt like I was being mocked by the people in the great

and spacious building in Lehi's dream (see 1 Nephi 8:26–27).

Over time, however, keeping the Word of Wisdom began to feel like a tedious burden. During one sleepless night, I realized my faith was weakening. Thankfully, my wife sent me a message that day encouraging me to keep my faith, rely on God, and keep His commandments regardless of the circumstances. With her encouragement, I started to pray for help and began to look at things differently.

On one trip, I noticed a colleague had two cups of coffee. I asked him about the second cup.

“One cup is not strong enough to keep me alert anymore,” he replied.

I was surprised to notice the same was true for those who drank wine. They needed to drink more to sleep. Sometimes, they even overslept because they drank too much.

Watching my colleagues become more dependent on alcohol and coffee made me realize how important it is to keep the commandments. If I had chosen to disobey the Word of Wisdom, I could have been in the same boat.

My jet lag has not completely gone away, but the situation has improved. One morning, I woke up after a good night's sleep and saw the sunrise. As the sunbeams shone through the window, I realized that with Heavenly Father's help, I can handle any trial, no matter how big or small. I just need to continue to obey, keep my faith strong, and endure to the end. ■

Andrew Lee, New Taipei City, Taiwan

Keeping the Word of Wisdom began to feel like a tedious burden until I noticed a colleague had to have two cups of coffee to stay alert.



AFTER HURRICANE MARIA

My family and I moved to the island of Dominica in the Caribbean in August 2016. We immediately fell in love with the island's beauty, culture, and people. We attended the local branch and learned much from the members there.

On Monday, September 18, 2017, a Category 5 hurricane, Maria, hit our small island. My husband and I watched as homes and vehicles were thrown down the street by the powerful storm. The fury of Hurricane Maria passed directly over the island, and the destruction was devastating. The day after the storm, we walked through the streets and found that the lush and vibrant rainforest of Dominica now looked like a wasteland.

That same morning, we walked to our fellow branch members' homes. Only two homes were unscathed and

livable. Six of the eight member families who lived on the northern side of the island lost everything. Eighty percent of the homes and buildings on Dominica were declared uninhabitable. Despite this tragedy, many families still smiled. When we asked how they were doing, they responded, "We are blessed to be alive."

Because our family heeded the prophet's counsel to be self-reliant, we had food storage. We were able to feed many neighbors, missionaries, and members of our branch. At each meal, we fed an average of 20 people. As we used our food storage to serve and care for those around us, our own burdens felt lighter.

This experience reminded me of Alma and his people, whose "burdens . . . were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that

they could bear up their burdens with ease" (Mosiah 24:15).

Even though we still lived without running water, electricity, and day-to-day comforts, we were strengthened to overcome and to lift others. In the months since Hurricane Maria, I have realized that while it is important to be temporally prepared, we need to be spiritually prepared as well. As we obey and build our testimonies on faith in Jesus Christ, we will have a solid foundation that will not fail when the winds and tempests of life blow around us. ■

Brianne Anderson, Virginia, USA

In September 2017, a Category 5 hurricane hit the island of Dominica. My husband and I watched as homes and vehicles were thrown down the street by the powerful storm.



“AM I YOUR CHILD?”

Even though I had been to church only a few times, my home teacher faithfully visited me. One night he called and asked if I would share some thoughts about eternal families in the next Gospel Principles class.

“Yes, I’d love to,” I said.

I didn’t think much of it until the next morning. That’s when I realized I had agreed to talk about eternal families to a group of people who probably already knew all about it. I didn’t have a clue what I could say to them.

Over the years, I had made choices that separated me from the gospel. How was I supposed to share my thoughts about something I wasn’t sure I even believed? I felt confused. Then the words to the hymn “I Am a Child of God” (*Hymns*, no. 301) came to my mind. I had not heard those words in years, but I knew them by

heart. Then it struck me: I needed to ask God if I actually was His child.

At that time, I was rearranging the furniture in my bedroom, so with my bed askew in the middle of the room, I kneeled next to it and waited for the words to come. What could I possibly say to God? I wasn’t sure He even existed. In that moment, my heart’s deepest desire brought these simple words to my lips: “God, are You really there? And if You are there, am I Your child?”

The answer came immediately. It was as if He had been waiting for me to ask. I felt God say, “Yes, Camille, I am here, and you are my child.”

When I opened my eyes, I was still in my disheveled bedroom. Everything around me was in disarray, but I felt like my life had been put in perfect order. I knew that I was a child of

God, and that was all that mattered.

In class on Sunday, I simply told my story of how I came to know for myself that *I* am a child of God. “If I am His child,” I said, “then so is everyone else.”

It took another three and a half years for me to make all the positive changes I needed to make, but my life has never been the same. Since that day, I have never doubted who I am. I know that Heavenly Father is always there. He loves me because I am His child. ■

Camille Nelson, Utah, USA





**By Elder
Kevin W. Pearson**
Of the Seventy

Do Not Leave the Savior

**We live in
tumultuous times.
But the question
is not how the
Church will fare;
rather, how will
you and I fare?**

Several years ago, I met a friend for lunch. We hadn't seen each other for many years. During my high school and early college days, he had been one of my closest friends. He was one of the strongest and most committed young men I knew.

We attended seminary together, played sports together, attended the university together, prepared for missions together, and left for missions a few months apart. After our missions, he married a talented and wonderful woman from my stake.

As the years passed, our lives took different courses. We moved to different cities and eventually lost touch with one another. I still remember how stunned I was to hear that he and his wife had left the Church. Of all those I knew in my youth, he was the last one I would ever have thought would leave the Church.

At lunch we reminisced over the friendship that had meant so much to both of us. We laughed again at some of the crazy experiences of our earlier days. We talked about our families and tried to close the gap of time.

Finally, I asked the obvious question: "Tim, what happened? You were so deeply converted and committed! Why did you leave the Church? What caused you to walk away from your temple covenants? Have you also left the Savior? We promised one another that we would be true and faithful to the end of our lives!"

"Kevin," he replied, "I simply see things differently now. My view of the Church and its teachings has changed. I don't hate the Church—I just don't need it anymore."

As we concluded our visit, I expressed my love and gratitude for a friendship I still value. Then, with deep feeling, I expressed my testimony: “Tim, I know these things are true. And you know they’re true too. You have always known. You’ve simply lost the clarity you once had. But you can regain the light and understanding of the Holy Ghost you once had. Please come back.”

We embraced as we said goodbye, and he whispered, “I admire your conviction and passion. But how can you be so sure?”

As I walked away, I reflected deeply on the choices we had made and on their impact on our lives and on the lives of our children and grandchildren.

My young friends, please don’t let what happened to my friend Tim happen to you. Are you as steadfast, immovable, and converted as you think you are? When you encounter the inevitable and necessary challenges of life, where will you turn for peace and understanding? When your life gets dark and dreary, will you still instinctively and consistently think to pray?¹

As criticism of the Church, its history, its leaders, and its teachings increases, where will you stand? As the beliefs and practices of an ever-darkening world collide with the principles of the restored gospel, what will you do?

“Will Ye Also Go Away?”

Some of Satan’s most effective weapons are distraction, deception, and spiritual desensitization. Each erodes faith, obscures vision, and skews perspective. Together they constitute the great challenge of our time. Satan uses them not simply to undermine Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, Church doctrine, and Church leaders but also to attack the Savior and the Father’s plan. It has always been so.

When the inevitable fury of temptations and tribulations approach Category 5 spiritual storm conditions, will you still trust God and cling to truth? The penetrating question of the Savior unto the Twelve is still in force today:



“Will ye also go away?”

“Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

“And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:67–69).

I am reminded of a powerful statement by President Heber C. Kimball (1801–68), First Counselor in the First Presidency. The Saints had safely arrived in the Salt Lake Valley and were quite pleased with themselves. Having overcome and endured so much, they were a bit prideful and overconfident. President Kimball stated:

“Let me say to you, that many of you will see the time when you will have all the trouble, trial and persecution that you can stand, and plenty of opportunities to show that you are true to God and his work. . . . To meet the difficulties that are coming, it will be necessary for you to have a knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. . . . If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not till you obtain it. If you do not you will not stand.

“. . . The time will come when no man nor woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to be guided by the light within himself. If you do not have it, how can you stand?”²

We live in tumultuous times. But the question is not how the Church will fare; rather, how will you and I fare? “The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing.”³ Whether you and I progress with it is the only unknown.



How to Survive Spiritually

I suggest six essential things each of us must do to survive spiritually.

1 Love and obey God first. Loving and obeying God necessarily precedes loving and serving others. Sequence is important. Nephi taught, “For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding; for he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding” (2 Nephi 31:3). Heavenly Father loves us and is always willing to give us understanding. We must, however, put Him first in our lives.

2 Hold personal prayer. Prayer is essential. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The best way to obtain truth and wisdom is not to ask it from books [he might have added “blogs”], but to go to God in prayer, and obtain divine teaching.”⁴ You will never be unworthy to pray! If you want more answers, ask more questions. Constantly seek for and pray for the influence of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 10:5). This is the light the Father sends that brings understanding.

3 “Seek learning even by study and also by faith” (D&C 109:7). Learning is a divine duty. Agents seek learning; objects wait to be acted upon. Great leaders are great learners. The Church needs great leaders—women and men seeking greater light and knowledge, deeper understanding and conversion (see D&C 93:36). This requires commitment and dedication. You cannot find deep truths scrolling a wiki or searching the blogosphere. Remember, faith is kindled by hearing the testimony of those who have faith, not by hearing the doubts of those who have lost it.

4 Search the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon—every day! The Book of Mormon was expressly written to protect and preserve us as we navigate the conditions of our day. Regarding its power, Nephi testified of the rod of iron, “And I said unto them that it was the word of God; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction” (1 Nephi 15:24). If you start to feel confused and lost, start again on page one, and immerse yourself in the Book of Mormon.



5 Focus on the big picture. You are part of the greatest movement on earth: the gathering of Israel and preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. You have an important role to play! You came to earth committed to being valiant in your testimony of the Savior. That is your divine identity. Focus on the big picture: Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness. It is the lens of truth. It is the context for all questions, issues, and concerns. “For the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be” (Jacob 4:13).



6 Above all else, trust in Jesus Christ. He is still “the light and the life of the world” (3 Nephi 11:11; see also John 8:12). When you are encompassed and overwhelmed by doubt, difficulty, and temptation, trust Him. When life isn’t what you expected and those you trusted disappoint and betray you, continue to trust in Him completely. May you respond as Nephi of old in equally distressing times: “Nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted. . . . O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever” (2 Nephi 4:19, 34).



Whatever you do, do not leave the Savior! Because of His Atonement, we are agents, free to act and not to be acted upon. Each of us will stand before Almighty God and account for the light and truth we have chosen.

I promise you that if you will follow these principles and cling to truth, your faith will never fail. May God bless you to always choose to look through the lens of truth by the power of the Holy Ghost. ■

From a devotional address, “The Lens of Truth,” delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho, on March 7, 2017.

NOTES

1. See “Did You Think to Pray?” *Hymns*, no. 140.
2. In Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (1945), 449–50.
3. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:540.
4. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:425.



After years of struggling to accept myself, I finally experienced a miracle that helped me understand my eternal worth.

Discovering My Divinity

By Daiane Korth da Silva

Ever since I was a child, I have struggled with my weight and accepting myself. In the beginning, the nicknames I received because of my weight seemed harmless, but with time, I started to believe that the negative things that were said about my appearance also meant negative things about my personality.

As a teenager, I started to realize that, although I liked my physical characteristics, my body type didn't fit with worldly expectations. And I liked my quiet personality, but it wasn't what people expected from me either—teachers wanted me to speak up in class, boys liked the more talkative girls, and I was told frequently that I needed to be more outgoing than I actually was. Little by little, my self-worth started to languish.

My young adult years found me depressed, uncomfortable in my body, and questioning why the Lord couldn't have made me at least a little pretty and more interesting. I tried more diets than I should have, and ironically, the more I tried to lose weight, the more weight I

gained. Being a single, introverted, and overweight young adult didn't seem very promising.

I felt defeated and decided that I was the way I was, even if I never lost the weight I wanted to or became more extroverted. Although I stopped hating myself so much, I was still far from seeing myself as a beautiful, worthwhile daughter of God. I simply gave up on trying to find my worth.

A Light I Needed

One day a miracle happened while I was reading a talk by Sister Mary G. Cook, wife of Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, from the September 2016 worldwide devotional for young adults titled "Find Joy in Everyday Life." I read: "When we came to this earth, we brought with us our divine nature as children of God. Our individual worth came from heaven." I felt as if my mind was finally opened to a light that I so deeply needed but thought I would never get. I realized that, before, I had felt as if it were wrong to like

myself because I didn't fit the worldly stereotype of what a beautiful, worthwhile woman should be. Now I was ready to admit that I love my introverted and geeky personality, messy curly hair, brown eyes, potato-like nose, big smile, and even my overweight body that still does just what I need it to do. I became grateful for being God's creation. I finally understood that He doesn't create mistakes.

After so many years of emotional and physical struggles and suffering, I finally learned a truth that for many may be obvious: my individual worth has nothing to do with this world! It came from heaven. It has always been with me, even if I was blind to it. It's not decided by media, by my peers, or by anybody but Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and They see me as valuable enough that the Savior died for me.

A Foundation in Christ

Learning from the Spirit about my value in God's eyes has changed me in so many ways. I fell in love with life again. I feel more gratitude for my countless blessings. I feel a huge desire to try harder to do what's right and believe more in myself and in my dreams. It made me want to be more kind and patient with people around me and brought me closer to the Savior.

The voices of the world keep calling and judging, but now I have a strong knowledge of my worth that I never want to forget. That

knowledge brought me peace and joy that I want to share with everyone I meet. Through that devotional talk, I learned that even my self-worth and self-confidence need to have a firm foundation in Christ so "that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon [me], it shall have no power over [me] to drag [me] down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the

rock upon which [I am] built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall" (Helaman 5:12).

I'm grateful for the Lord and the eternal worth He sees in all of us. I'm grateful for inspired women like Sister Cook who strive to live the gospel and share its wisdom. I'm grateful for this life, for the miracle of our bodies and minds, and for the divinity within each of us. ■

The author lives in New York, USA.





ARE YOU A *Safety- Pin Friend?*

By Marissa Widdison

Church Magazines

When Abel went missing, the Lord asked his brother Cain where he was. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” responded Cain.

In other words, Cain basically said, “How should I know? Watching out for him isn’t my job.”

Jesus Christ, in contrast, teaches us a much different message about caring for others. He said that we should treat other people the way we want to be treated, which includes helping each other, caring for each other, and watching out for each other (see Luke 6:31).

There are people all around you who are struggling with something. You may be struggling with hard times yourself. Whatever the case may be, you can make a difference by choosing to follow Jesus Christ.

SAFETY-PIN FRIENDS

One group of friends found an unusual way to reach out to each other. They came from different family situations and backgrounds, but they all cared about each other and wanted to strengthen their friendship.

One of their friends was having a particularly hard time at home. She told them she sometimes wished she could disappear but kept her feelings hidden behind a smile because she was worried that others would judge her.

Her friends wanted her to know that she was safe with them and that the world was a better place because she was in it. So they came up with a plan: they would wear safety pins. Each of them wore a safety pin on their clothes each day to remind her, and each other, that they were committed to creating a safe, secure, trustworthy friendship—and that they wanted each other to stick around.

Years later, this young woman still remembers her safety-pin friends and is grateful for the security she felt knowing that they cared about her.

What do you do to show your friends that you’re there for them?

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

No, you don't have to wear a safety pin to support your friends. But you can ask yourself what you can do to watch out for your friends, strengthen those who might be struggling, and be a safe friend for whoever needs your help.

“We, of all people, should be better at loving people instead of judging them. We, of all people, should be more inclusive,” Elder Dale G.

“We, of all people, should be better at loving people instead of judging them. We, of all people, should be more inclusive.”

Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said. “‘Have compassion, making a difference’ (Jude 1:22)—that’s what we should do.”¹

So what can *you* do to help those around you? Below are some ideas that might get your creative juices flowing.

- Pray and ask God for help. This seems simple, but it can be a powerful tool. God knows your

friends perfectly. He knows you perfectly and can help you be a compassionate friend.

- Keep your eye out for signs that your friends might be struggling.
- Find small, personal ways to serve. As Sister Linda K. Burton, former Relief Society General President, once said, “First observe, then serve.”² What do you notice about your friends? What are their likes and dislikes? What do they need? Then you can help someone in a unique, personal way.
- Remember that being a loving, supportive friend does *not* mean you are responsible for the actions of others. You are also not responsible for their happiness.
- Come up with something fun you can do with your friends, like wearing safety pins, to remind each other to be supportive. Some youth made goofy socks and committed to be “seekers of courage, kindness, and service” (which in English creates an acronym for *socks*). Another group checked in with each other using colors representing how they were feeling. If someone was feeling too “purple” one day, for example, the other friends knew that person needed extra love.

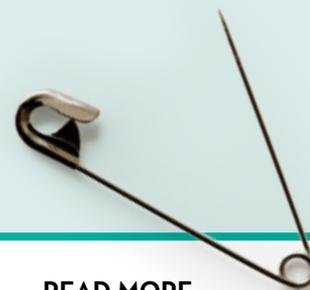
- Don’t limit your friends! Jesus befriended people that the rest of the world despised. When you reach out to include others—especially those who are having trouble making friends—you are following His example.

Life can be tough sometimes. But you are strong, and you are powerful. Your kindness and thoughtfulness can change someone’s life. Your friends need you! Seek the Lord’s guidance, and He will support you through your trials and help you make the world a better place. ■

The author is a member of the Church’s suicide-prevention committee.

NOTES

1. Interview with Elder Renlund on Jan. 23, 2018.
2. Linda K. Burton, “First Observe, Then Serve,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 78.



READ MORE

Read “Ambassadors of Hope” in this issue to find out how one group of youth in Utah brought an extra dose of hope to their high school.

AMBASSADORS OF HOPE: **Working Together to Prevent Suicide**



YOU CAN STRENGTHEN YOUR FRIENDS
BY SPREADING THE LIGHT AND HOPE
OF JESUS CHRIST.



By Maryssa Dennis
Church Magazines

In the diplomatic world, ambassadors represent their country to another group of people. But *you* can be an ambassador without even needing a passport! In a world that sometimes seems very dark, you can be an ambassador of hope and light. Just ask Jackson L. (left, in brown pants), from Utah, USA, who is a member of his school's HOPE Squad—a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Through an organization called Hope4Utah, he has learned to recognize warning signs, be a friend, and bring hope to his school.

We Need YOU

“Being on the HOPE Squad has really opened my eyes,” Jackson says. “There are classmates, friends, and family members who are struggling.”

Jackson has learned that while he is not responsible for the decisions his friends make, there are things he can do to help them get through a crisis. Studies show that 7 out of 10 teens who are depressed or thinking about suicide will tell a friend before talking to an adult.¹ That means that you are in a powerful position to help your friends.

As Sister Carol F. McConkie, former First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency, has said: “We have a covenant responsibility to look out for one another, to link arms one with another and walk this path together. In other words, put down the phone and look and see who needs your help.”²

You don’t need to be part of a formal organization to make a difference at school or with your friends. Here are tips that can work anytime, anywhere.



What to Do

To be an ambassador of hope, try to **recognize, reach out,** and **report.**

1. **RECOGNIZE** the warning signs that someone needs help.³

Look out for those who are:

- Feeling depressed or hopeless.
- Acting recklessly.
- Withdrawing from friends and activities.
- Giving away valued possessions.
- Dealing with stressful situations like loss, major life changes, bullying, etc.
- Changing sleeping, eating, or hygiene habits.
- Talking about or making plans for suicide—saying things like, “I wish I’d never been born” or “Everyone would be better off without me.”

2. **REACH OUT.** Being an ambassador is all about connecting. Find a time when you and your friend can talk openly. You might worry that bringing up self-harm or suicide will make things worse, but that’s a myth. When you have the courage to speak up, you actually give the person a lifeline and let them know you care.

“Don’t be afraid to ask a friend if they are struggling,” says Dr. Greg Hudnall, a suicide prevention expert and founder of Hope4Utah. “Be direct, but don’t lecture or judge.” He recommends using an “I” message, which comes across as caring and concerned instead of lecturing. For example: “I noticed in class today that you



“For those who are struggling with a sense of their own self-worth, or even struggling to find a purpose to live, I want to personally give my reassurance that you are beloved of God. . . . He knows your identity. He knows your struggles. And our Savior is there to support you. You can feel that power in your life as you seek the Holy Ghost. . . . I would counsel you to reach out and be willing to talk to those that you trust, because in talking about these things, you are in essence sharing your burden with someone that you love and someone who loves you. It’s a process of healing.”

Sister Carol F. McConkie, former First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

were struggling. I am wondering if you’re OK. Are you thinking of hurting yourself?”

Pray for the Spirit to help you know what to say. If your friends are struggling with suicidal thoughts or other serious challenges like depression or anxiety, don’t just tell them to snap out of it! Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “The way we talk to someone who is healthy and maybe just going through a blue spell is different than we would talk to someone with mental illness.” He recommends saying something like, “You’re not alone. We’re here with you. We will help you through this.”

And remember to really listen instead of planning what you’re going to say next. As Elder

Renlund put it, “Having people talk and explain how they feel, and encouraging them talking, is probably more important than giving advice.”⁴

3. **REPORT.** When you find out that a friend is struggling, you might be tempted to keep these worries to yourself. Your friend might even ask you not to tell anyone. But ambassadors speak up! Offer to go with them to talk to a trusted adult, like a parent, school counselor, or church leader. Refer them to your national suicide help line or crisis text line. If they are threatening to hurt themselves or others, take them to a hospital or call emergency services, and stay with them until they get professional help. If they are



IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING

Don’t give up! You are important and loved. The world is a better place because you are here, and *your life is worth saving*. Talk to a trusted adult for help—a parent, doctor, school counselor, or Church leader. If you are in crisis, call your national suicide help line (look under “Resources”). Jesus Christ can help you find light and hope when all you feel is darkness and despair.

RESOURCES

- befrienders.org
- suicide.org/international-suicide-hotlines.html
- iasp.info
- suicide.lds.org

not in immediate danger, look for ongoing ways to include and support them. “Create opportunities for them to be part of something,” Dr. Hudnall says. “Try inviting them to do something active with you, like running, riding bikes, or swimming.” Physical activities are good because movement can help improve mood.

Don't Underestimate Your Power

Imagine for a minute how different the world would be if every person had a supportive friend. We can't save the whole world, but we can be a friend to those who need one.

Sister McConkie urged us to be “willing to widen your circle of friends” and “accept others, even though they may be different than you.” She pointed out that befriending someone may make the difference between them moving forward with hope or doing something destructive, like suicide. “Be the difference,” she encouraged. “You have that much capacity for good.”

By reaching out, you are following the example of the ultimate source of hope: Jesus Christ.

“Our HOPE Squad adviser tells us that we are ‘ambassadors of hope,’” Jackson says. “I love that, because we are not only ambassadors of hope but also ambassadors of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, He is our hope.”

When we show Christlike love for others, we can help them find hope and healing.

“I know that if Jesus Christ were here on earth, He would be reaching out to others just as we are,” Jackson says. “It brings me comfort to know that I am doing as He would do.” ■



“If we try to just get through the next day, and then the next day, and then the next day, . . . the Lord will help us with that. There’s this particular verse that Isaiah gives that is remarkable. He says, ‘When ye are weary he’—the Savior—‘waketh morning by morning’ [2 Nephi 7:4]. He’s there every day. . . . So if the best you can do is to get up out of bed in the morning, just know that He is there with you. . . . Count it as a win, and then go on. If that’s the best that can happen that day, keep trying.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

ARE YOU A SAFETY-PIN FRIEND?

Read the previous article to see if this describes you!

NOTES

1. See “What Are Hope Squads?” Hope4Utah, hope4utah.com/hope-squad.
2. Interview with Sister McConkie on Jan. 19, 2018.
3. See “The Warning Signs of Suicide,” Befrienders Worldwide, befrienders.org/warning-signs, and “Suicide: What to Do When Someone Is Suicidal,” Mayo Clinic, mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/suicide/in-depth/suicide/art-20044707.
4. Interview with Elder Renlund on Jan. 23, 2018.

LOST IN THE FORBIDDEN

By Sarah Keenan

I was in the middle of the Forbidden City in Beijing, China. Only minutes before, I had been surrounded by friends and teachers, but I was suddenly completely and utterly alone.

I immediately understood the danger I was in. A solitary 15-year-old American stood out like a sore thumb in the bustling palace museum. I had come to China with other high school classmates on a school-sponsored trip, and our teachers and guides had warned us numerous times about the possible dangers of touring a foreign country if we were not careful.

I walked around the area, pushing through crowds of tourists—Chinese and foreigner alike—and stood on my tiptoes trying to look for the matching red and white shirts that each member of our group wore. But I saw nothing. Somehow, my group had slipped away without me and I had no idea what direction they had gone in. I sat down



I had felt the Spirit before, but I had never felt anything specific—certainly not directions on where to go.

and watched the entrances and exits. Ten minutes passed, then 30, then 45. No one from my group appeared.

Someone grabbed my hand. I looked up to see a short woman with slightly crazed eyes and long fingernails. She pulled at my hand. “Follow me,” she said in broken English. “Pretty girl, follow me.”

I felt a sinking feeling in my stomach. “Get back,” I yelled, pulling my hand back. Before she could grab it again, I raced through an exit and entered another section of the city.

I ran for a while until I was even more lost than before. I sat on a nearby step, away from the groups of people, and started to cry. I knew a few words of Chinese but certainly not enough to get directions back to our hotel, somewhere on the other side of the sprawling city of Beijing. And at this point, I was not even sure where an exit was.

Amid tears, I started to pray. I admitted that I had been foolish to wander from the group, even for a moment, and I pleaded with Heavenly Father to help me find a way back to my group.

I stood up and walked back in the general direction I had come from. I did not receive any immediate revelation—and I was unsure of what that revelation

would sound or feel like even if I *did* receive it. I had felt the Spirit before, a warm feeling after serving someone or hearing a talk in church, but I had never felt anything specific, certainly not directions on where to go. I started walking forward uncertainly, continuing the prayer in my heart.

I finally reached a fork in the road. I started to go right when I heard a voice whisper, “Stay.”

The voice was so soft that I almost disregarded it completely as one of my own thoughts. But it contained a sureness that I certainly didn’t feel at the moment. “Sit on that bench,” the voice said. I looked up and saw a bench in the middle of the fork. I went over and sat down. Only three minutes later, a familiar white and red shirt appeared in the crowd and waved toward me. It was our tour guide for the day.

I jumped up from the bench I was sitting on. I was so happy I almost hugged the woman.

“We have been looking for you for an hour!” she said. “Where were you?”

As she led me back to my group, I explained to her where I had been, starting with my separation from the group and ending with my decision to sit down instead of going right at the fork in the road.

“You’re very lucky,” she said. “If you had gone right at that turn, it would have taken you in the opposite direction from the rest of the group. The city is so big, I would never have been able to find you.”

I left China a few weeks later, managing to not get lost again during the trip, but I have thought back many times to the moment when I heard the voice of the Spirit whisper to me. It was not the kind of prompting I had received before, but it is what the Lord knew I needed in order to avoid going down a wrong path. I also recognized how easy it would have been to ignore it if I had not been listening.

Since that day, I have heard the Spirit many times in many different ways, warning me of both physical and spiritual danger. Sometimes I have seen the consequences of following or disobeying that voice like I did that first day in the Forbidden City. More often, I haven’t been able to see the results. But I have learned that when I humble myself and am willing to listen, the Lord will help me recognize the Spirit’s promptings and He will guide me back to where I need to be. With Him, I am never alone. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



REVELATION to the Prophet Joseph Smith—and to You

By Ryan Carr
Church Magazines

Think of all the amazing things that Joseph Smith accomplished: translating the Book of Mormon, organizing the Church, receiving the priesthood, building temples, teaching the restored gospel, sending out missionaries. And it's all the more amazing that he did those things at such a young age.

How did he know how to do those things? Fortunately, he didn't have to guess—he was guided by revelation. Through these revelations, many of which are now contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord taught him doctrine, guided him in organizing the Church, and answered important questions. Here are just a few examples.

Questions Answered by Revelation

- Who has authority to baptize? On May 15, 1829, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery prayed about baptism. John the Baptist appeared and gave them the Aaronic Priesthood and commanded them to baptize one another. (See D&C 13.)
- Is it OK to use tobacco? Chewing and smoking tobacco were common practices in Joseph Smith's day. In 1833 he prayed

for guidance on the topic and received the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom, which states that “tobacco is not for the body” (see D&C 89).

- Why do we do temple work for the dead? Under the Prophet Joseph Smith's leadership, Church members built the Kirtland Temple and then the Nauvoo Temple, where they could perform baptisms and other temple ordinances. Doctrine and Covenants 128 explains that “we without them [the dead] cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect” (verse 18).

You too can have the Lord guide your life and answer your questions through personal revelation. Sometimes those answers will come from the scriptures or from inspiration you feel in your heart and mind. And sometimes you move ahead in faith, not knowing exactly how things will turn out but trying your best to be obedient.

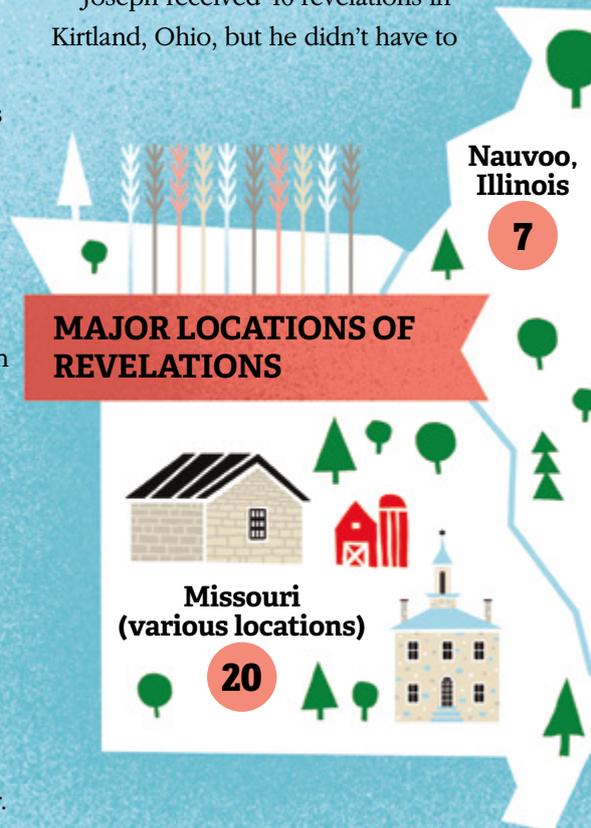
It usually takes time to find the inspiration and guidance you need. Like the Prophet Joseph, you can learn the Lord's will “line upon line, precept upon precept” (D&C 98:12). As the Prophet did, begin with prayer.

Ask Heavenly Father for inspiration from the Holy Ghost. Search the scriptures and teachings of modern prophets. Make your decision and then ask if it's right (see D&C 9).

Learning over Time

Take a look at this map, and you'll see where Joseph Smith was when he received these revelations from the Lord. The revelations came when and where Joseph Smith needed them, according to the Lord's will.

Joseph received 46 revelations in Kirtland, Ohio, but he didn't have to



The Doctrine and Covenants shows how revelation guided the Prophet Joseph Smith and gives a pattern for how inspiration can guide your life.

stay there to continue being guided by the Lord. He also received revelations in Pennsylvania, New York, Missouri, and Illinois.

These revelations came over a period of many years. Wouldn't it have been nice if the Lord had revealed everything Joseph Smith needed to know about the priesthood, for instance, in one revelation? Instead, the Lord gave the Prophet revelations about the priesthood in 1829, 1830,

1832, 1835, 1841, and so on (see, for example, D&C 13; 20; 84; 107; 124).

Your gospel knowledge will grow over time too. As you learn the gospel with the help of the Holy Ghost—through the scriptures, general conference, Church meetings, seminary, and so on—your understanding will grow over time, just as Joseph Smith's did. ■



● Number of Doctrine and Covenants revelations Joseph Smith received at a particular location



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT A YOUNG AGE

“[Joseph Smith] was 14 at the First Vision and 17 at the first visit from the angel Moroni. He was 21 when he received the golden plates and just 23 when he finished translating the Book of Mormon (in less than 60 working days). Over half of the revelations in our Doctrine and Covenants were given through the Prophet while he was 25 or younger.”

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Joseph, the Man and the Prophet,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 71.



Your
agency
is worth
fighting
for.

The Battle for Your Agency

By David Dickson
Church Magazines

Keeping God's commandments brings freedom. To somebody who hasn't gained a testimony of that truth, such a statement might sound confusing. After all, if one of your neighbors walked up and handed you a list of things you had to do (or could not do), that might feel like *less* personal freedom.

However, keeping God's commandments really does make you free—free from the negative consequences of sin and free to enjoy the blessings that come from righteousness.

Breaking God's commandments, however, leads to captivity. One way to think of captivity is a loss of agency. It's hard to make many choices for your life if you're in captivity.

We know from the scriptures that Satan "sought to destroy the agency of man" (Moses 4:3) in the premortal life. We also know that he didn't win that war and that *you* were on the winning side!

The tricky part is that Satan is still trying to rob you of your agency. But have no fear. You can win this war too.

LIVING IN CAPTIVITY

In the Book of Mormon, Jesus taught, "Ye must watch and pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him" (3 Nephi 18:15).

Becoming captive to the devil sounds terrifying! Yet when you do imagine such a fate, do you tend to think mostly in terms of final judgment? There's actually a more immediate type of this captivity. And it's often quite subtle.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "People can become enslaved or put themselves in bondage not only to harmful, addictive substances but also to harmful, addictive philosophies that detract from righteous living" ("Lamentations of Jeremiah: Beware of Bondage," Oct. 2013 general conference).

Becoming enslaved to addictive substances like harmful drugs or nicotine is easy to understand. But what about becoming enslaved in a habit of lying? With only a single lie, it's easy to become caught in a trap of your own making.

What about becoming enslaved to a quick temper or a habit of gossiping?

Or how about simply *not doing* the daily acts of righteousness (prayer, scripture study, etc.) that God asks of us? Does that also result in a loss of agency?

Yes, it does. Here's one way to think of it. What happens to athletes or musicians if they completely stop practicing? Answer: they soon lose the ability to play at their best. While that might not seem like a loss of agency, it truly is. The athlete or musician who fails to work at their skill will no longer be able to make as many choices with how to use that skill. By decreasing their abilities, they can now do less than they did before. Their options become reduced.

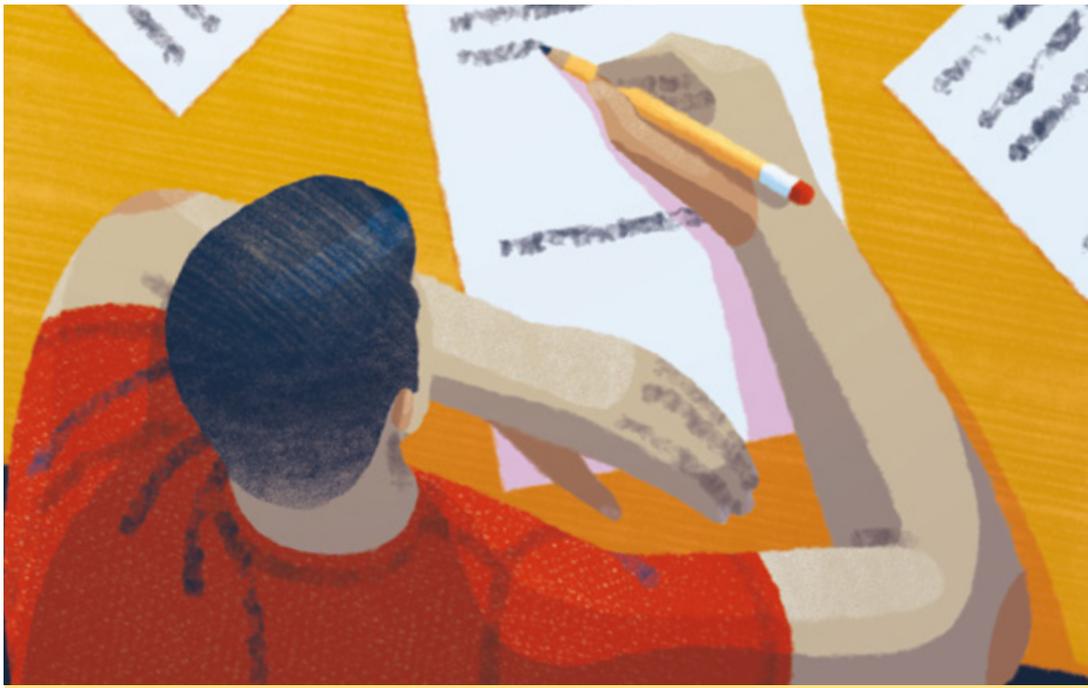
In a similar way, you truly can't be your best self without the companionship of the Holy Ghost. You need His help every single day. It's one of the greatest gifts you can hope to receive in this life, and daily righteous living is how you obtain that gift.

FINDING TRUE FREEDOM

The Apostle Paul taught, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1). In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin taught, "And under this head ye are made free, and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free. There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ" (Mosiah 5:8).

True freedom comes from following Christ. So choose to be free! ■

OUR SPACE



THE RIGHT WRONG ANSWER

WHEN I ENROLLED in a philosophy class in high school, my dad was a little concerned. In philosophy, everything is questioned, including the existence of God. My teacher taught us things that go against religion and deny God's existence.

One philosophy test asked, "Why have we come to the earth?" The answer I was supposed to give was so that we could become self-actualized and take our place in the circle of life. I didn't write that answer because it's not what I believe.

Instead, I wrote, "We have come to the earth to be tested and to return to live with our Father in Heaven for eternity with our families."

.....
"To be true to ourselves means being an example of righteous living in all situations and circumstances."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), "Stand True and Faithful," *Ensign*, May 1996, 92.

Afterward, the teacher called me up and asked me if I knew the correct answer to the question. I told him I did but that I wasn't going to write something I knew was untrue.

He asked me if I was religious and which church I belonged to. I told him I was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He told me that he had never known any religious student who was courageous enough to stand up for his beliefs and write such an answer.

"I did not give you full credit because your answer wasn't the correct one," he said. "But I gave you points for having the courage to write what you believe."

I was happy because I had answered according to my convictions and according to the gospel truths I know and am trying to live. ■

Benjamin M., Chile

How can I stand for truth?

1. Decide now how you will respond when your faith is questioned (see 1 Peter 3:15).
2. Pray for the courage to act and to know what to say (see Deuteronomy 31:6; D&C 100:5–7).
3. Study the scriptures and the words of modern prophets to strengthen your faith (see D&C 88:118).
4. Bear your testimony frequently, at home and at church, to practice sharing what you believe (see D&C 58:6).

LIGHT OF THE TEMPLE

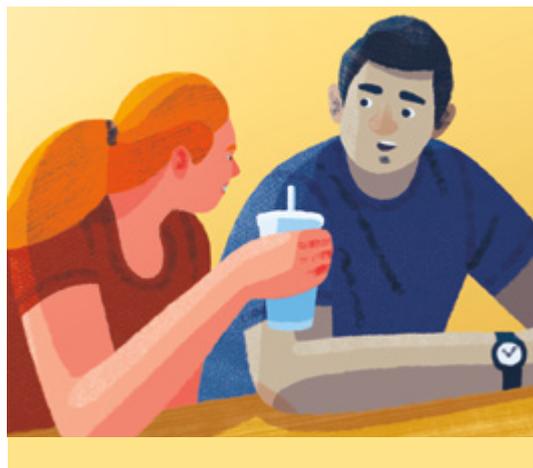
A FEW SUMMERS AGO, my ward's young men went mountain biking. I was a little nervous because it was my first time. My friend Jacob was an experienced biker, so I planned to stay close to him.

After a quick break at the top, we started back down the mountain. I was slower than the rest of the group and fell behind, especially after I fell a couple times on sharp turns. Jacob stopped to help me each time I fell, and we tried to catch up to the group.

As the sun set, it was obvious that we were lost. It had been more than half an hour since we had seen our group, and it was getting so dark that we could barely see the trail. I prayed, asking Heavenly Father for help and courage to keep going. Then Jacob and I decided to continue riding in a particular direction. As we rounded a corner, we saw the most brilliant and welcome sight—the Draper Utah Temple! The light reflecting off the temple illuminated our path, and we were able to safely make it back to our leaders and friends.

Every time I see the temple, I'm reminded of the peace and help available to us there. Each time I feel lost in the darkness of the world, I can look to the temple for the light I need. ■

Joel G., Utah, USA



MAKING A NEW FRIEND

I WAS SITTING at a lunch table with my friends when I noticed a new boy—Michael. He decided to sit with a group of older boys, who started to make fun of him. I later learned that Michael has autism.

I asked Michael if he wanted to sit by me and my friends. He declined, probably out of fear of people making fun of him again.

The next day, I introduced him to my friends. I could tell he was glad I didn't give up on him. He had a lot to talk about. He was awesome!

Each day, I could tell Michael was becoming a happier person. He started looking forward to lunch with his friends. Sitting with Michael at lunch soon created a meaningful friendship. It not only helped Michael, but it also helped me.

The feeling from serving others is one of the most wonderful feelings in the world. ■

Laura P., Illinois, USA



LIFE CAN BE FILLED WITH
**FAITH, JOY,
HAPPINESS,
HOPE, and
LOVE**



WHEN WE EXERCISE THE
SMALLEST AMOUNT OF
REAL FAITH IN CHRIST.

President M. Russell Ballard,
Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,
"Precious Gifts from God," April 2018 general conference

Prophets: A Sign of God's Love

By Elder Ulisses Soares
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I want to testify to you that President Russell M. Nelson is the prophet of God on earth. I have never seen anyone more kind and loving than he is. Though I felt so inadequate for this sacred call to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, his words and the tender look in his eyes as he extended this responsibility made me feel embraced by the Savior's love.

Isn't it a blessing to have prophets, seers, and revelators on earth in these days in which we live, who seek to know the will of the Lord and follow it? It is comforting to know that we are not alone in the world, despite the challenges we face in life. Having prophets is a sign of God's love for His children. They make known the promises and the true nature of God and of Jesus Christ to Their people.

From the bottom of my heart, I testify that the prophets speak by the power of the Holy Spirit. They testify

of Christ and His divine mission on earth. They represent the mind and heart of the Lord and are called to represent Him and teach us what we must do to return to live in the presence of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. We are blessed as we exercise our faith and follow their teachings. By following them, our lives are happier and less complicated, our difficulties and problems are easier to bear, and we create a spiritual armor around us that will protect us from the attacks of the enemy in our day.

I solemnly testify that Jesus Christ is risen, He lives, and He directs His Church on earth through His prophets, seers, and revelators. I testify that He is the Savior and Redeemer of the world and that through Him we can be saved and exalted in the presence of our dear God. I love Him; I adore Him. I want to follow Him and do His will and become more like Him. ■

From an April 2018 general conference address.



Born in **São Paulo, Brazil**, on October 2, 1958.

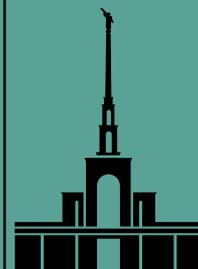
His family joined the Church when he was 6.

Served a full-time mission in the **Brazil Rio de Janeiro Mission.**



Attended the **São Paulo Pontifical Catholic University** (bachelor's degree in accounting and economics, master's in business administration).

Married Rosana Fernandes in the **São Paulo Brazil Temple** in October 1982. They have 3 children and 3 grandchildren.



Besides his native Portuguese, he speaks English, French, and Spanish.

Sustained as an Apostle on March 31, 2018.



Coconuts and Sharing

Malo e lelei!

I'm Lui, and I shine my light by sharing what I have with others.

A Big Island and a Big Family

I live on a big island in Tonga. I have six sisters and four brothers, and I live close to the Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple.

1



3

Sharing Our Food

My father grows crops, so we have plenty to eat. But many widows (women whose husbands have died) and other families don't have their own crops. So we take them some of ours.



2

A Science Lover

Our beautiful island has many plants and animals. I'm in class four at the Ocean of Light Primary School, and science is my favorite subject.



4



Helping with Husks

The widows we visit use coconut husks to make fires to cook their food. When we take food to them, I remind my parents to take coconut husks too. I like to help to get the fire going!



Why I Help Others

Heavenly Father blesses me when I help others—not with money but with wisdom and knowledge. I love to help and share what I have with others.



HOW CAN YOU SHINE?

- Take food to someone who needs it.
- Give food to a community food bank.
- Give clothing to a homeless shelter.

SEND US A STAR!

Jesus asked us to “let your light so shine before men” (Matthew 5:16). How do you let your light shine? Email us a photo of your star with your story, photo, and parent’s permission at liahona@ldschurch.org.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL RAMIREZ



An Answered Prayer

By Megan Armknecht

Based on a true story

Grace was an 11-year-old girl living in Holland during World War II. Her father had been taken away as a prisoner of war.

After Dad was taken away, Mom took care of Grace, her two brothers, and two of their cousins. There were many mouths to feed and not enough food to go around. Their family only got a small amount of flour, vegetables, and potatoes.

One day the doorbell rang. Grace followed Mom to see who it was. When Mom opened the door, there on the doorstep stood a young Nazi officer. Grace's heart started beating faster, and she held her breath. What did he want?

"How many people live in this house?" he asked gruffly.

"It's myself, my three children, and my two nephews," said Mom.

"You have no husband here?" the officer asked.

"No," Mom answered. "He was taken away."

The officer looked around the house. "Do you have a radio? We don't want you listening to programs from our enemies in England and America."

Mom got the radio and gave it to the officer.

"This is a big house," he said, glancing around again. "Too big for just the few people who live here. You will

have to leave by tomorrow. We are going to take over this house." He turned sharply and marched away.

Grace couldn't believe what she had heard. She watched Mom's eyes widen in shock. Then Mom closed the door and went straight to the back of the house.

Grace followed slowly behind, her heart racing. Could the soldier really come back and take their house, just like he'd taken their radio? What would they do? Where would they go? How would Dad know where to find them again?

Grace stopped outside Mom's door and peeked inside. Mom was on her knees, praying. Grace quietly went back to the sitting room until Mom came back.

"Oh, Mom, what will we do?" Grace asked.

Mom sighed. "All we can do is pray and trust in the Lord that He will protect us."

The young Nazi officer didn't come back the next day or the next. He never came back! Grace and her family were able to keep their house.

Grace knew that God was helping her family. Even though the war was not over, He was still watching over them.

To be continued . . . ■

The author lives in New Jersey, USA.





“The Savior said, ‘I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you’ [John 14:18]. This is His promise to you. I know this promise is real. I know that He lives.”

By Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 21.



By Elder
Joaquin E. Costa
Of the Seventy

SAFETY from the STORM



“Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil” (Proverbs 1:33).

I grew up in Argentina. I was not a member of the Church when I was young. But my family kept a Bible on our shelf. It was large and had beautiful pictures. We didn’t read it together very often. But I loved to look through its pages and see the pictures and stories.

My favorite was the story of Noah. I loved seeing Noah, the flood, and the animals. I liked how the ark kept Noah and his family safe from the storm.

Later I was baptized into the Church, got married, and had my own family. One night in family home evening, my wife, Renee, talked about how Noah’s ark and our

home were alike in many ways. Each provided safety from the scary storms of the world.

I learned something about Noah. He received the priesthood when he was only 10 years old. As he grew, he saw all the wickedness in the world. But he stayed worthy. He built the ark to save his family. Heavenly Father helped them be safe.

Sometimes we see scary things happening in our world. But we can find safety from the storm. We can prepare like Noah did. We can choose to obey God. We can make our homes a spiritual safe place.

If we have faith in Heavenly Father, we don’t have to be afraid. Because of Him, we can feel peace, no matter what storms come our way. ■

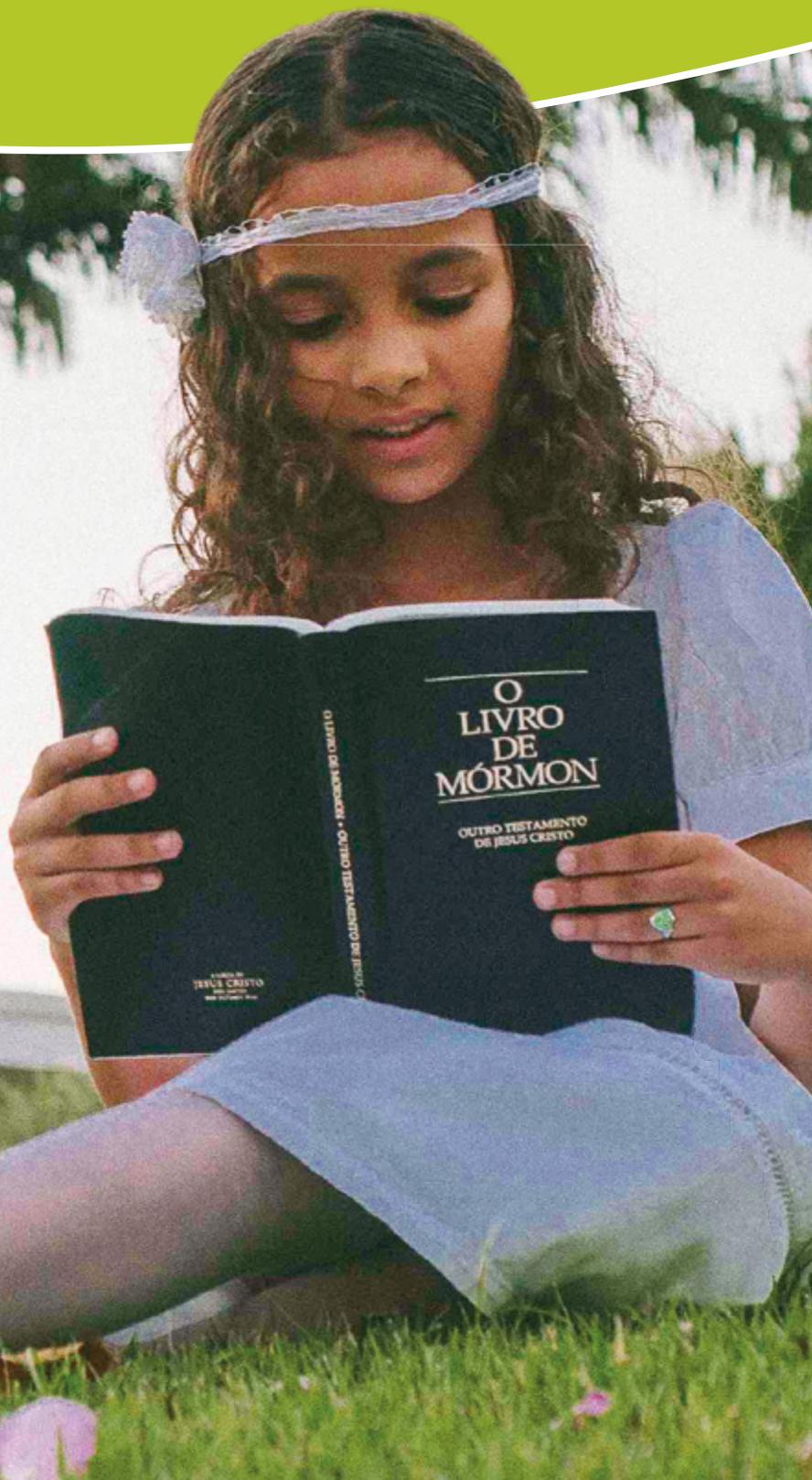
Book of Mormon Reading Club

JOIN IN BY READING THE BOOK OF MORMON!

You can read on your own, with your family, or with a friend. Then send us a photo of you reading the Book of Mormon and tell us about something you've learned or your favorite story from the Book of Mormon. Submit it through liahona.lds.org (click "Submit an Article").

This month's scripture: **Mosiah 2:17**

~~~~~  
"When ye are in the service of  
your fellow beings ye are only in  
the service of your God."





I love the Book of Mormon because it is a true book. It is scripture from God, and I believe it.

**Joel S. (right), age 8, Maharashtra, India**



Primary children in this ward in **Ile-de-France, France**, were challenged to read the Book of Mormon each day. They got a certificate for reaching their goal!



I like the story of Lehi's vision because it makes me happy. It teaches me to make good choices so I can get to the tree of life. The tree of life is a symbol for life with Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and all the people I love.

**Sadie S., age 9, Lusaka, Zambia**



We love the Book of Mormon

because we learn about the gospel and especially Jesus Christ. We are so thankful to God for the Book of Mormon because we learn that Jesus Christ is our Savior, and that has helped so much in life.

**Allfie and Anna B., ages 6 and 8, Maharashtra, India**



I finished the children's version of the Book of Mormon before my baptism. At the end of the book, my mummy asked me to pray about the Book of Mormon. I had already felt when I was reading that the words were true.

**Sean I., age 7, Somerset, England**



The Book of Mormon is my favorite book. I love the example of Nephi.

He's my superhero in the Book of Mormon. He is very obedient to God's commandments. I want to be like him.

**Jhetro F., age 10, Iloilo, Philippines**



ILLUSTRATION BY MERCE TOUS

# Backstage Prayers



By Emily B., age 12, Utah, USA

One of my favorite hobbies is Irish dance. I try hard to practice my choreography at home so I am ready to perform. I practice very thoroughly, but when I am backstage about to perform, I commonly get the backstage jitters. At every competition, my mom and I find a quiet place to say a prayer. Sometimes it's behind a curtain or in a room off to the side. I know that it doesn't matter to Heavenly Father where we are, just that we have faith in Him.

At my last performance, my mom wasn't with me to say a prayer. She was waiting in the audience. I got really nervous but decided that it didn't matter if she was with me or not. I stepped away from my friends and said a prayer. I asked for safety as I danced and that I could do my best. I did very well that day, and I remember the feeling of peace that I felt as I walked on stage.

We can always trust in Heavenly Father. No matter where we are or when it is, He always listens. ■



Christian B., age 7, North Holland, Netherlands

Earlier this year my reading and writing buddy came to class feeling blue. She had made some mistakes on her math work. She said, “I’m useless.”

I was worried about my friend, so I told her all about Jesus and how He loves us. I told her how that means we are not useless! Then I sang “I Am a Child of God” to her. She loved it and asked me where I learned these things. I explained that my family goes to church every

week and that I learn a lot about Jesus in Primary.

That night she told her mom about our conversation. She asked her mom if they could come to church with my family. Her mom said yes!

My friend sat next to me in sacrament meeting that very Sunday! Now she joins me at church almost every week. She and her parents are learning more and more about the gospel of Jesus Christ from the missionaries and other families in our ward.

I feel very happy that I was able to follow the Savior’s example and comfort a sad friend. Whether or not her family decides to get baptized, the best part is that now she knows that God and Jesus love her, no matter what! ■

# No Matter What!



# Elijah and the Widow

By Kim Webb Reid



A prophet named Elijah warned the people that there would be a famine. It would not rain, and plants wouldn't grow. During the famine, Elijah drank water from a creek. God sent birds to bring him food. But then the creek dried up. God told Elijah to find a woman in town, and she would feed him.

Elijah found the woman gathering sticks for a fire. Elijah asked her for something to eat. The woman said she only had a little flour and oil left to feed herself and her son.



The prophet promised that if she shared her food with him, she would not run out. The widow had faith in the prophet Elijah and shared her food.

Each day, there was enough food for them to eat. It was a miracle! Then the widow's son got sick and died, but Elijah brought him back to life. The woman was blessed for listening to the prophet.





I am blessed when I listen to the prophet. ■

*From 1 Kings 17.*

# I Can Tell the Truth



ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT



**By Elder Mark E. Petersen (1900–84)**  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

## LED BY LIVING PROPHETS

*God always speaks to the people through living prophets.*

*Editors' note: In July 1972, Joseph Fielding Smith, 10th President of the Church, passed away. President Harold B. Lee was sustained in the October 1972 general conference as the new Church President. This excerpt comes from Elder Mark E. Petersen's talk in that conference.*

A new prophet of God . . . is one in a line of inspired men divinely called to minister now and to bring a new revelation from heaven to every man, woman, and child who will hear.

The appointment of [a] new prophet is of momentous import to every person who believes in God, and particularly to every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

Always when the Lord has had a people on the earth whom He has recognized as His own, He has led them by living prophets to whom He has given guidance from heaven. . . .

A similar line of inspired men now has been established in modern times. This was accomplished as a result of



the Restoration of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through His latter-day seer, Joseph Smith . . .

Contrary to the general belief, the Lord is a God of communication, a God of revelation. He is a God of light and intelligence, of knowledge and information. He does not deal in darkness, neither does He save anyone in ignorance. His entire plan of salvation rests upon communication with an enlightened people.

Who can worship intelligently if kept in ignorance?

Who can have a meaningful faith without a knowledge of God?

And whence shall this knowledge come if not from the Deity Himself? . . .

Human beings are slow to learn the ways of the Lord, and particularly are they dilatory in accepting the fact that although He is willing to communicate with them, His method of doing so is through inspired living men whom He designates as prophets.

It is a pattern with Him. It is His method of procedure, and He has not changed it. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and so are His methods. . . .

We solemnly testify that communication between heaven and earth has been reestablished in our day. We declare that God is not isolated from the world.

He is not dead. He lives.

He is not blind. He sees.

He is not deaf. He hears.

He is not dumb. He speaks, eloquently, to his living prophets and through them to the world at large.

In this manner God is speaking to you today. ■

*From "Another Prophet Now Has Come!" Ensign, Jan. 1973, 116–18. Punctuation standardized.*



**BE OF GOOD CHEER:  
IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID,  
BY LOZANO MORENO**

*When evening came, Jesus stood alone on the land and saw the ship carrying His disciples in the midst of the sea. The wind was contrary to them, and they toiled as they rowed. Jesus came to them by walking upon the sea. When they saw him, they were afraid.*

*"And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.*

*"And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed."*

*(See Mark 6:47-51.)*



YOUNG ADULTS

**SIX SUGGESTIONS FOR SURVIVING SPIRITUALLY**

*The penetrating question of the Savior unto the Twelve is still in force today: "Will ye also go away?"*

44

YOUTH  
**WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT SUICIDE**

50, 52

THEME FOR YOUTH LESSONS

**COMMANDMENTS: HOW THEY MAKE US FREE**

60

