

SEMINARY: Where We Make CONNECTIONS

In so many ways, seminary is where things come together.

By David A. Edwards
Church Magazines

Do you sometimes feel isolated as you try to understand your life, your trials, and the scriptures? If so, then one way to escape this feeling is to make connections. One of the best places to do this is in seminary. Here are some of the connections you can make there.

Connect with Other People

Seminary is a great reminder that you're not alone. And it's a great place to connect with others in a safe and supportive environment.

Whether you're meeting every day in a classroom or doing home or online study, seminary connects you with other youth as well as a caring teacher. These are people you can be your best self with. You can explore the scriptures, ask questions, look for answers, share thoughts and feelings and experiences. You can laugh, cry, and sing together—and possibly even eat together (ask your teacher; if the answer's no, never mind).

Connect with the Scriptures

Though the scriptures may have been written long ago and far away, seminary helps you reach through space and time to really connect with them. It helps you understand the similarities and differences between the world of yesterday and the world of today. And it helps you see the consistency of God's message to His people and the world.

In this way, seminary can help you see how God can speak to you through the scriptures and the Spirit to give you customized guidance. It also helps turn the scriptures into a lifelong friend—a constant source of comfort, advice, and help.

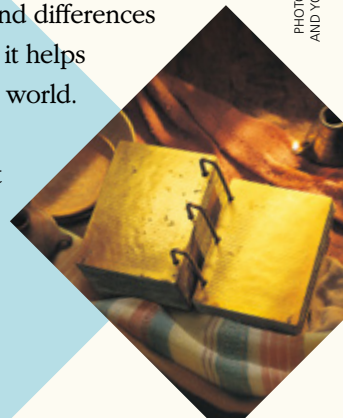


PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS OF TEENS IN CLASSROOM, SCRIPTURE MARKING, AND YOUNG MAN PRAYING BY MASON COBERLY



Connect the Scriptures with Each Other

What does Alma have to do with Matthew? Does Isaiah have anything in common with the Doctrine and Covenants? Seminary helps you see the threads that bind all of the gospel teachings together throughout the scriptures. Once you start making these connections, the scriptures become both useful and exciting, as well as friendly and familiar. This will spark your interest in making more of these connections between scriptures. And seminary is right there to help you do it.



Connect Your Present and Your Future

Present-You may have heard of *Future-You*, but it would be nice if they could get better acquainted. Through seminary you can get a better idea of who this *Future-You* person is. For instance, you may see how *Future-Missionary-You* uses the scriptures to teach people the gospel, resolve their concerns, and help them change their lives. Or you may get a glimpse of how *Future-Parent-You* plants a love of the scriptures in the hearts of children. Or you may begin to understand how focusing on scriptural truths can help *Future-Church-Service-You* to serve, teach, and inspire others. And of course, you'll see how *Future-You* experiences personal joy, peace, and inspiration from a habit of daily scripture study.



Connect with Your True Self

Your true self is the part of you that knows what kind of being you are, where you come from, and who your Heavenly Parents are. Your true self also knows what your true potential is, what kind of power you already possess, and the vast power you can gain access to if you make the right choices.

As you master the doctrines in the scriptures through seminary and feel the Holy Spirit confirm the truth of them to your heart, you deepen this knowledge. You'll also feel the Spirit's promptings to act—to repent, serve, pray, learn, and do everything in your power to connect with the true, best self your Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know you can be.

Connect with Heavenly Father

You strengthen your connection to Heavenly Father as you pray to Him, learn of Him and the Savior, and live as They want you to live. In seminary you learn how Heavenly Father speaks to you through the scriptures and the Holy Ghost, which comes to you when you earnestly study the scriptures. Seminary also gives you frequent opportunities to pray, ponder, bear testimony, and make many other connections to Heavenly Father.

See how these youth made connections.

Every time I am in seminary, I know Heavenly Father loves me and cares for me! Attending seminary has blessed me with a clearer understanding of who I am and why I am here. The principles and doctrines I have learned in seminary have helped me make righteous decisions. I am more resolved now to serve a full-time mission and excited to share the gospel with others.

Marlou T., age 20, Sorsogon, Philippines

Marlou

Growing up, I was never very active in the Church. I didn't have a firm testimony. But as I attended seminary every day, I learned that you can pray and get comfort and answers. I was able to relate to scripture stories. I don't think I had ever even read a chapter on my own before seminary.

I learned the basic principles of the gospel because I enrolled in seminary. I could always find peace in seminary. I cannot express enough that seminary is guided by the Lord.

Brynn W., age 17, Idaho, USA

Brynn

Through my years in seminary, I've learned a lot about where I came from, why I'm here, and what I should do. Seminary taught me how to ask questions and find answers. Before, it was hard for me to apply scriptures to myself. But in every lesson, we made parallels with our lives, so I not only learned scripture stories but also realized that my life is part of that story and that prophets have left directions for me. Because of that, it's easier for me to search for the right way and make right decisions.

Anastasia V., age 18, Moscow, Russia

Anastasia

My love for the standard works increases greatly in every year of seminary. This love helped me feel a greater desire to fulfill what Heavenly Father wants us to do. He helped me to feel a sincere love for my neighbor. I had the opportunity to share the gospel with each person around me. Through seminary, a program inspired by God, I was able to get out of the difficulties presented to me by the world. Heavenly Father helped me know what kind of daughter He wants me to be, what things I should focus on, and how I should act.

Mirian (center)

Mirian C., age 18, Guatemala, Guatemala

The past few years, I have struggled with clinical depression and anxiety. Last year was a record low for me. My testimony was slipping, and seminary was the only thing barely pulling me through. I met a few girls who quickly became my best friends. The scriptures began to resonate with me. And our teacher taught in such a way that the New Testament stories of Jesus Christ from so long ago became relevant to our teenage lives. I grew to know my Savior and my Heavenly Father. Slowly my testimony not only was restored but also became stronger and more immovable. My battle with my mental health has never left me, but because of seminary, the hope that was once lost is now abundant. I have a testimony of Jesus Christ; I know He lives, He loves us, and He can bear our burdens if we come to Him. Without seminary I would not have received that blessing.

Jalee

Jalee D., age 16, Colorado, USA

Before my first year in seminary, I didn't understand why we have to study the scriptures. I thought they had only boring stories. But thanks to seminary, I learned that each story contains a valuable lesson and that I can apply in my life right now. I have the desire to continue learning in the scriptures.



Oscar

Oscar B., age 15, Limón, Costa Rica

I was baptized in May 2016. My first year of seminary started later that year. I was skeptical at first, and I wasn't ready to get up early, but I was prompted to go. I was still a little unsure about recognizing the voice of the Spirit, but being in seminary has helped me recognize that voice. Through the Spirit, I'm able to know the scriptures are true. I know that the Spirit prompts me to highlight scriptures with meaning and that there's always a reason. The scriptures guide me when I'm lost, and they teach me. Whenever I'm having a bad day, I can open them up and make my day better. ■

Shelby

Shelby L., age 16, Montana, USA

