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PREPARING TO MEET GOD

Sunday School has an important role to play in helping all of us prepare to meet God. Are you making it a priority?

In the Book of Mormon, Amulek preaches a powerful sermon about the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Alma 34). Among the beautiful verses in this chapter, one verse that stands out for me is when Amulek states, “For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God” (Alma 34:32).

Believing that the purpose of this life is “to prepare to meet God,” we might ask ourselves these questions: What am I doing each day, each week, and each month to prepare for that wonderful reunion with our Heavenly Father? How will I choose to spend the precious time allotted to me?

How Will We Prepare?

There are many ways we could spend our time preparing to meet God. On a week-to-week basis, I believe we can agree that the most important hour of the week is the time spent partaking of the sacrament, renewing our covenants with Heavenly Father, reflecting on the love we feel from Him and the hope

we can all have as a result of the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ.

I also believe that the hour we spend in our Sunday School classes could have a greater effect on our preparation than we realize. But to take advantage of that opportunity, we may need to examine how we approach Sunday School.

The purpose of Sunday School is to “strengthen individuals’ and families’ faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through teaching, learning, and fellowshiping.”¹ These essential elements of conversion are vital in our efforts to prepare to meet God. We are thrilled that teachers across the Church are working to improve their ability to teach using *Teaching in the Savior’s Way* and teacher council meetings.

But improved teaching alone is not enough. It must be matched by our efforts to learn in the Savior’s way. He said we are to learn “by study and also by faith” (D&C 109:7). Faith is a principle of action. We must *do* if we want to *know* (see John 7:17).

Our Sunday School classes can encourage this kind of teaching and learning when they are safe places to share the experiences we had and the inspiration we felt during the week while learning and applying the scriptures in preparation for class. As we “teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom . . . all may be edified of all” (D&C 88:77, 122).

Call the Sabbath a Delight

Recently the First Presidency invited each of us to “call the sabbath a delight” (Isaiah 58:13) in our lives. The three-hour Sunday block experience helps us accomplish that goal.

In that spirit, let me ask another question: Why do we sometimes choose not to fully embrace the opportunity Sunday School offers?

In recent years, I have witnessed a lot of different Sunday School “alternatives” during Sunday School time, including visiting in the halls, ward leaders conducting interviews, stake leaders training their ward



counterparts, and youth leaders addressing program concerns.

With so many demands on their time, I understand why leaders may use Sunday School time to do other things. But what a blessing it is for all involved when ward leaders set aside an hour to participate in gospel discussions with the members of their flock!

I'm confident you have experienced other examples of "Sunday School neglect." For one reason or another, many of us have felt at times that we don't get as much out of Sunday School classes as we would like. I have learned that the richness of my Sunday School experience is determined as much by my preparation and participation as that of my teacher. Brother Tad R. Callister, Sunday School General President, has written, "Every

time we study the scriptures, come to class a little better prepared, participate in class discussions, ask questions, and record sacred impressions, we are becoming more like God, thus increasing our capacity to experience the joy He feels."²

Prepare for and Protect the Sunday School Hour

I invite you to do your best to prepare for and protect the Sunday School hour. Each ward and branch member, including our leaders, should have the sweet blessing of preparing to meet God during this important hour each week. ■

NOTES

1. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 12.1
2. Tad R. Callister, "The Joy of Learning," *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2016, 14.



Learn more about *Teaching in the Savior's Way* and teacher council meetings at teaching.lds.org.