

Liahona



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“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: “And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. “Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”

Matthew 6:28–30



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Family Home Evening Ideas

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are two ideas.



“Jesus Was Baptized,” page 74: Consider starting your family home evening by singing “When Jesus Christ Was Baptized” (see page 73). You could read the biblical account of Jesus’s baptism together and invite family members who have been baptized to share what they felt and learned when they were baptized and confirmed. As you read together and share testimonies, help your children understand the covenants associated with baptism. You may want to use the scripture questions provided in this article as you teach your children about baptismal covenants.

“True Love,” page 80: At some point during the week, ask a family member to look for simple acts of kindness that happen each day. During family home evening, ask that family member to share what he or she observed throughout the week. As Elder Wirthlin says in his message, “Love is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the pathway of discipleship.” Consider making a simple drawing that shows a path divided into many small segments. Explain that for every act of kindness they perform—whether great or small—family members can color in a segment of the path. As your family strives to show love to others, you will move along the path of discipleship.

IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at languages.lds.org.

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**By President
Henry B. Eyring**

First Counselor
in the First Presidency

TESTIMONY AND Conversion

There is a difference between receiving a testimony of truth and being truly converted. For instance, the great Apostle Peter bore his witness to the Savior that he knew that Jesus was the Son of God.

“[Jesus] saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?”

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:15–17).

And yet later, in His injunction to Peter, the Lord gave him and us a guide to become truly converted and to extend that conversion for a lifetime. Jesus said it this way: “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32).

Jesus taught Peter that there was still a great change that must go beyond having a testimony to being able to think, feel, and act as truly converted disciples of Jesus Christ. That is the mighty change we all seek. Once we obtain it, we need that change to continue until the end of our mortal probation (see Alma 5:13–14).

We know from our own experience and from observing others that having a few great moments of spiritual power will not be enough. Peter denied he knew the Savior even after he had received a witness by the Spirit that Jesus was the Christ. The Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon had direct testimony given to them that

the Book of Mormon was the word of God, and yet later they faltered in their ability to sustain Joseph Smith as the Prophet of the Lord’s Church.

We need a change in our hearts, as described in the book of Alma: “And they did all declare unto the people the selfsame thing—that their hearts had been changed; that they had no more desire to do evil” (Alma 19:33; see also Mosiah 5:2).

The Lord taught us that when we are truly converted to His gospel, our hearts will be turned from selfish

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles used the “parable of the pickle” to teach that conversion is an ongoing process rather than a one-time event: “Line upon line and precept upon precept, gradually and almost imperceptibly, our motives, our thoughts, our words, and our deeds become aligned with the will of God” (“Ye Must Be Born Again,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 19). Consider reviewing the parable of the pickle with those you teach. What can each of us do to move forward steadily in the gradual process of conversion that President Eyring and Elder Bednar both discuss?

concerns and turned toward service to lift others as they move upward to eternal life. To obtain that conversion, we can pray and work in faith to become the new creature made possible by the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

We can start by praying for the faith to repent of selfishness and for the gift of caring for others more than ourselves. We can pray for the power to lay aside pride and envy.

Prayer will be the key as well for receiving the gift of a love for the word of God and for the love of Christ (see Moroni 7:47–48). The two come together. As we read, ponder, and pray over the word of God, we will come to love it. The Lord puts it in our hearts. As we feel that love, we will begin to love the Lord more and more. With that will come the love for others that we need in order to strengthen those whom God puts in our path.

For instance, we can pray to recognize those the Lord would have His missionaries teach. Full-time



We need a change in our hearts like the one experienced by the people of Lamoni in Alma chapter 19.

missionaries can pray in faith to know by the Spirit what to teach and testify. They can pray in faith that the Lord will let them feel His love for everyone they meet. The missionaries will not bring everyone they meet to the waters of baptism and to the gift of the Holy Ghost. But they can have the Holy Ghost as a companion. Through their service and with the help of the Holy Ghost, missionaries will then, in time, be changed in their hearts.

That change will be renewed again and again as they and we unselfishly continue over a lifetime to act in faith

to strengthen others with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Conversion will not be a single event or something that will last for just one season of life but will be a continuing process. Life can become brighter until the perfect day, when we will see the Savior and find that we have become like Him. The Lord described the journey this way: “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24).

I promise you that it is possible for each of us. ■

My Change of Heart

By Dante Bairado

When I first learned about the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, I felt the Spirit testify of its truthfulness. Through prayer, my testimony became even more certain, and I decided to be baptized.

Soon after my baptism, people in my ward began asking me how I felt about serving a mission. To be honest, I didn't know exactly what to say. The idea of leaving my family and school to serve a mission seemed absurd.

Then one day I started thinking about my conversion. I remembered the missionaries who had taught me, who

had patiently answered my questions and helped me understand the gospel. I realized that without their help, I never would have discovered the true Church. As soon as I made that realization, the desire to serve blossomed in my heart. I could feel the Spirit telling me that I should serve a full-time mission.

I know that missionary work is the work of our Heavenly Father and that we can help bring souls to the wonderful knowledge of the restored gospel.

The author lives in Fortaleza, Brazil.

CHILDREN

Let Your Testimony Burn Bright

Gaining a testimony is like building a fire. Just as we have to add wood to keep a fire burning, we must pray, repent, serve others, study the scriptures, and keep the commandments to help our testimonies grow.

To learn more about how to build your testimony, read each of the scriptures listed below. Color the part of the flame that matches each scripture you read. The more scriptures you read, the brighter the fire—and your testimony!

- A. Mosiah 2:17
- B. Alma 5:46
- C. Alma 32:27
- D. 3 Nephi 15:10
- E. John 5:39



Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and roles of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.



Faith, Family, Relief

The Attributes of Jesus Christ: Without Sin

This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring attributes of the Savior.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was the only one capable of making an atonement for mankind. “Jesus Christ, the Lamb without blemish, willingly laid Himself on the altar of sacrifice and paid the price for our sins,” said President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency.¹ Understanding that Jesus Christ was without sin can help us increase our faith in Him and strive to keep His commandments, repent, and become pure.

“Jesus was . . . a being of flesh and spirit, but He yielded not to temptation (see Mosiah 15:5),” said Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “We can turn to Him . . . because He understands. He understands the struggle, and He also understands how to win the struggle. . . . The power of His Atonement can erase the effects of sin



in us. When we repent, His atoning grace justifies and cleanses us (see 3 Nephi 27:16–20). It is as if we had not succumbed, as if we had not yielded to temptation. As we endeavor day by day and week by week to follow the path of Christ, our spirit asserts its preeminence, the battle within subsides, and temptations cease to trouble.”²

Additional Scriptures

Matthew 5:48; John 8:7; Hebrews 4:15; 2 Nephi 2:5–6

From the Scriptures

The Savior paid the price of our sins through His divine Sonship, His sinless life, His suffering and the shedding of His blood in the Garden of Gethsemane, His death on the cross and His Resurrection from the grave. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can become clean again as we repent of our sins.

King Benjamin taught his people of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and then asked if they believed his words. “They all cried with one voice, saying: . . . the Spirit . . . has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually. . . .

“And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things” (Mosiah 5:1–2, 5).

We too can have a “mighty change” like the people of King Benjamin, who “had no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2).

Consider This

How does being pure differ from being perfect?

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “You Can Do It Now!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 56.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “That They May Be One in Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2002, 71.

OCTOBER 2014 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

As you review the October 2014 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.

DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHTS



Follow the Golden Rule

“Followers of Christ should be examples of civility. We should love all people, be good listeners, and show concern for their sincere beliefs. Though we may disagree, we should not be disagreeable. Our stands and communications on controversial topics should not be contentious. We should be wise in explaining and pursuing our positions and in exercising

our influence. In doing so, we ask that others not be offended by our sincere religious beliefs and the free exercise of our religion. We encourage all of us to practice the Savior’s Golden Rule: ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them’ (Matthew 7:12).”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Loving Others and Living with Differences,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 27.

PROPHETIC PROMISE



Revelation

“Revelation continues in the Church: the prophet receiving it for the Church; the president for his stake, his mission, or his quorum; the bishop for his ward; the father [and mother for their] family; the individual for himself.”¹

“I bear you my witness that is true. . . .

“God pours out revelation, through the Holy Ghost, on His children. He speaks to His prophet on the earth, who today is Thomas S. Monson. I witness that he holds and exercises all the keys of the priesthood on earth.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Continuing Revelation,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 73.

NOTE

1. Boyd K. Packer, “We Believe All That God Has Revealed,” *Ensign*, May 1974, 95.



GO AND DO

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggested two ways youth can “gain

a personal witness of the Prophet Joseph Smith”:

“First, find scriptures in the Book of Mormon that you feel and know are

absolutely true. Then share them with family and friends . . . , acknowledging that Joseph was an instrument in God’s hands. Next, read the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Pearl of Great Price. . . . Consider recording the testimony of Joseph Smith in your own voice, listening to it regularly, and sharing it with friends.”

From “Joseph Smith,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 30.

Come and See



Why do Latter-day Saints want to share the gospel?

“Devoted disciples of Jesus Christ always have been and always will be valiant missionaries,” Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said. “A missionary is a follower of Christ who testifies of Him as the Redeemer and proclaims the truths of His gospel.

“The Church of Jesus Christ always has been and always will be a missionary church. . . .

“ . . . Sharing with other people

things that are most meaningful to us or have helped us is not unusual at all.

“This same pattern is especially evident in matters of great spiritual importance and consequence.”

What can we do when people express interest in the gospel and in the Church? Elder Bednar said we can follow the Savior’s example by inviting them to “come and see” (John 1:39).

From “Come and See,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 107, 109.

Answers for You

Each conference, prophets and leaders give inspired answers to questions Church members may have. You can use your November 2014 issue or visit conference.lds.org to find answers to these questions:

- How can we better understand the significance of the sacrament? See Cheryl A. Esplin, “The Sacrament—a Renewal for the Soul,” 12.
- What is the relationship between agency, justice, mercy, repentance, and the Savior’s Atonement? See D. Todd Christofferson, “Free Forever, to Act for Themselves,” 16.
- Why is the home the ideal forum for teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ? See Tad R. Callister, “Parents: The Prime Gospel Teachers of Their Children,” 32.
- How do parents work together to build an eternal family? See L. Tom Perry, “Finding Lasting Peace and Building Eternal Families,” 43.

To read, watch, or listen to general conference addresses, visit conference.lds.org.

PATRIARCHAL BLESSINGS: INSPIRED GUIDANCE FOR YOUR LIFE

In the Church there are two kinds of patriarchs: (1) fathers and (2) men who are ordained to the office of patriarch in the Melchizedek Priesthood. Fathers who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood can give blessings to their family members, but these blessings are not recorded by the Church, although they may be recorded by the family. On the other hand, blessings given to worthy Church members by an ordained patriarch are recorded by the Church; these blessings are called “patriarchal blessings.”

Patriarchs give blessings according to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Your patriarchal blessing may contain

warnings and promises, and it may reveal what the Lord expects of you and what your potential is. The promised blessings will be fulfilled in the Lord’s time—subject to your faithfulness. Only by following the counsel in the blessing will you receive the promised blessings. Some of the blessings may even occur in the next life. Your patriarchal blessing will not give complete details of your life. If it does not mention a full-time mission or temple marriage, for example, that does not mean that you won’t have that opportunity.

Your patriarchal blessing will also declare your lineage in the house of

Israel—you could be from the tribe of Ephraim, Judah, Manasseh, or one of the other tribes.¹ This lineage is important because of the Abrahamic covenant, which includes the Lord’s promise to Abraham that through his posterity “shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel” (Abraham 2:11). All Church members belong to the house of Israel, either by literal descent or by spiritual adoption. As such, we have a role to play in carrying the gospel to the world.

To receive a patriarchal blessing, speak with your bishop or branch president, who can give you a recommend to receive one. You can enhance the experience of receiving a blessing if you fast and pray beforehand. Close family members may be present when you receive your patriarchal blessing.

After receiving your blessing, a printed copy of it will be sent to you. Keep it confidential; its counsel and promises are personal to you and should not be shared casually with others. Study it often; it will provide guidance, comfort, and protection. ■

NOTE

1. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Israel,” scriptures.lds.org to learn about the twelve tribes of Israel.

A PRICELESS PERSONAL TREASURE

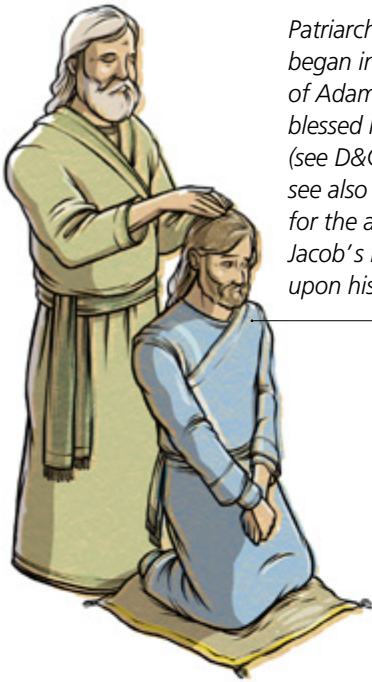


“The same Lord who provided a Liahona for Lehi provides for you and for me today a rare and valuable gift to give direction to our lives, to mark

the hazards to our safety, and to chart the way, even safe passage—not to a

promised land, but to our heavenly home. The gift to which I refer is known as your patriarchal blessing. Every worthy member of the Church is entitled to receive such a precious and priceless personal treasure.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 65.



Patriarchal blessings began in the days of Adam, when he blessed his posterity (see D&C 107:53; see also Genesis 49 for the account of Jacob's blessing upon his posterity).



Talk with your bishop or branch president to determine if you are ready to receive a patriarchal blessing.



After you receive a patriarchal blessing, study it often and try to follow its counsel. It can bring comfort and help strengthen your faith.

The office of patriarch, called "evangelist" in the New Testament, was restored in the latter days. Joseph Smith Sr. was the Church's first patriarch.



All patriarchal blessings are stored at Church headquarters. If you lose your copy, you can request another through LDS.org.

GRATEFUL FOR TEMPLE COVENANTS

By Cari Florence

How could anything alleviate my sorrow when my unborn son was dying?

When I was just 14 weeks pregnant with our third child, doctors informed us that the baby would miscarry due to complications with his lungs. That news was devastating: I felt heartbroken, terrified, and uncertain of the future. That evening, my husband and I went to the temple with heavy hearts and eyes full of tears. We needed answers, guidance, and strength, and we knew that in the serenity of the temple we could draw close to the Lord. We were astonished at the peace we felt in the celestial room. I knew that even if this baby was not supposed to stay on earth, all would be made right.

Later, on my knees I poured out my soul to Heavenly Father. I told Him I understood that our son wasn't supposed to linger but that I desired some specific blessings, if possible. I also promised that if my desires weren't granted, I would not lose faith. I asked that this child might stay with me longer—that he might live, even just a short while, until all our family could hold him. The doctors

had said that if by some miracle our baby went full term, he would be born purple, but I prayed that he would be born pink so that our other little boys wouldn't be afraid to hold their brother. I asked the Lord to let us remember our eternal bond after the baby, whom we decided to name Brycen, was gone.

As the weeks went on, doctors professed shock at baby Brycen's progression but warned of his certain passing after birth. I felt indescribable heartache, knowing that we would lose him, yet I was also ecstatic that he was still growing. Carrying this son who would not live was a continuous burden; I felt pain whenever others asked about our baby's gender or due date and I had to pretend that everything was normal. We bought a monitor so we could check his heartbeat daily, always anxious to hear that precious sound. My grief was severe. The Savior's Atonement gained new meaning for me: I finally understood from experience that Jesus Christ not only suffered for my sins but also felt every

sadness, every pain. As my Savior, He truly carried the weight with me so I would never be alone.



COMFORT FOR PARENTS

“Joseph Smith taught the doctrine that the infant child that was laid

away in death would come up in the resurrection as a child; and, pointing to the mother of a lifeless child, he said to her: ‘You will have the joy, the pleasure, and satisfaction of nurturing this child, after its resurrection, until it reaches the full stature of its spirit.’ There is restitution, there is growth, there is development, after the resurrection from death. I love this truth. It speaks volumes of happiness, of joy and gratitude to my soul.”

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918),
*Teachings of Presidents of the Church:
Joseph F. Smith (1998)*, 132.



Brycen lived only 72 minutes, just long enough for each of us to hold and love him. It was the only time we were all together as a family on this earth, but it was everything we had dreamed.

At 37 weeks I checked into the hospital, knowing I was officially starting the time clock on Brycen’s life. It was both terrifying and beautiful. The doctors reported that he might live anywhere from 10 minutes to several days. Despite my fears, I felt the Lord’s reassurance. Brycen Cade Florence was born on January 27, 2012. I sobbed the moment he was born—pink, so handsome, so perfect.

Our boys rushed into the room to see and hold their brother; we brought a photographer to capture the moment. Brycen lived only 72 minutes, literally just long enough for each of us to hold and love him. It was the only time we were all together as a family on this earth, but it was everything we had dreamed.

The boys couldn’t get enough of their brother, kissing him, singing him songs, and begging to hold him. He even remained long enough to receive a blessing from his father, something my husband had hoped and prayed for.

As a family we have a testimony that “the divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave” and that temple ordinances and covenants allow “families to be united eternally” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129). To us, having an eternal family is *everything*. The most beautiful part of the gospel is that death will never separate us; we will continue our journeys together.

Through this trial, I have come to know that God is in the details. He cares about us individually. While trials and difficulties will come, God can make them easier to bear. I am now more grateful than ever for my temple sealing to my husband and that our children were born in the covenant. Because of God’s beautiful plan for our families, including the Savior’s infinite sacrifice, we can be together again. I often wonder how I would have withstood this difficult trial without knowing that eternal truth. I am beyond grateful for the testimony I have gained because of Brycen’s short life—God has opened my eyes and heart more fully to His blessings. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.



By Elder J. Devn Cornish
Of the Seventy





THE GATE CALLED BAPTISM

I pray that each of us may obtain a fuller understanding of our need for baptism, of the gateway it provides us to the lifelong process of conversion, and of the merciful atoning love of our Savior.

Glen (not his real name) had led a life marked by chaos and conflict. As a teen he had become involved in gangs, crime, and violence. When he met the missionaries, he felt that the things they believed were too good to be true. But in time he came to know that they were indeed true and that they were of greater worth than anything else he had ever known.

After putting his life in order, and with sincere repentance and gospel living, Glen entered the waters of baptism. He had found a new life filled with light and peace and joy. He was clean before the Lord.

Nephi said:

“Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; for, for this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.

“And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate” (2 Nephi 31:17–18).

These verses clearly teach that baptism, a holy sign of a covenant between God and His children, is required

for our salvation (see also Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 2 Nephi 9:23–24). Indeed, so important and indispensable is this ordinance that Jesus Himself was baptized “to fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15).

It is difficult to misunderstand Nephi’s explanation of this point: “And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water!” (2 Nephi 31:5).

When we are baptized, we witness to the Father that we are willing to enter into a covenant “to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life” (Mosiah 18:8–9).

We renew this covenant every Sunday as we partake of the sacrament. The words of the covenant, as stated in the sacrament prayers, invite Heavenly Father’s children to witness “that they are willing to take upon them the name



of [his] Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them” (D&C 20:77).

An Introductory Ordinance

Besides witnessing our willingness to obey God, baptism allows us to enter into the kingdom of God, which is the Church of Jesus Christ on earth. The Guide to the Scriptures tells us, “Baptism by immersion in water by one having authority is the introductory ordinance of the gospel and is necessary to become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”¹

The Savior clearly defined the purpose of baptism when he told Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

Authorized baptism is required for us to dwell in the presence of the Father and the Son, but I rejoice that baptism has another fundamental purpose. Baptism is not just the gate through which we enter the Lord’s Church and subsequently the celestial kingdom; it is also the gateway to the precious, indispensable, and ongoing process of becoming “perfect in Christ” (Moroni 10:32, 33) that each of us needs and wants. This process, as described in the fourth article of faith, begins with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, followed by repentance, then “baptism by immersion for the remission of sins,” and subsequently the reception of the Holy Ghost.

In simple terms, we may call this ongoing process *conversion*. Jesus referred to it in His

initial comment to Nicodemus. As the Master Teacher, He addressed Nicodemus’s underlying question about what he must do to be saved, saying, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Being born again requires more than baptism, explained Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The spiritual rebirth described in [the scriptures] typically does not occur quickly or all at once; it is an ongoing process—not a single event. . . .

“We *begin* the process of being born again through exercising faith in Christ, repenting of our sins, and being baptized by immersion for the remission of sins by one having priesthood authority.” But other “essential steps in the process of being born again” include “total immersion in and saturation with the Savior’s gospel.”²

Being “born again” is another name for conversion. It is having “a broken heart and a contrite spirit,” which the Savior described as the only offering He will accept (see 3 Nephi 9:19–20). Surely, none of us will be able to “see” the kingdom of God until we have “experienced this mighty change in [our] hearts” (Alma 5:14; see also Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:26).

This process, which leads to a remission of our sins, begins with faith sufficient to repent and to be baptized. Mormon explained this point when he taught, “And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins” (Moroni 8:25).

Like many members of the Church, I did not have the dramatic conversion experience that Glen and others have had. I was “born of goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1; see also Enos 1:1) and was baptized at age eight. How can such a person experience the same conversion as those who join the Church at a later age?

A Gate to Lasting Conversion

This is one of the most wonderful things that each of us can come to understand about the gate called baptism. Baptism is not the destination, not even when accompanied by the essential element of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism is the gate to the ongoing, life-long process of true and enduring conversion.

As with any new member, the process begins with a sincere desire in faith to do the will of the Father by being baptized. It continues with a searching inventory of all our past sins and an unreserved effort to cease them, confess them, make restitution where possible, and never return to them. After baptism, we receive the right to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, contingent upon our always remembering the Savior in all we think, do, and are. And thus we are made clean (see 2 Nephi 31:17).

But what if we commit another sin after being baptized? Is all lost? Mercifully, our Father has made provision for our human frailties. We can once again pursue the process of faith and hope in Christ and sincere repentance. But this time and in subsequent times, the ordinance of baptism is not necessary, as a rule. The Lord has instead provided the ordinance of the sacrament. It gives us the

weekly opportunity to examine ourselves (see 1 Corinthians 11:28) and to symbolically place our sins on the Lord’s altar as we sincerely repent, again seek His forgiveness, and then go forward in a newness of life.

This is the process King Benjamin spoke of when he talked about “[putting] off the natural man and [becoming] a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord” (Mosiah 3:19). It is the unburdening and literally the exalting process to which Paul referred when he spoke of being “buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. . . .

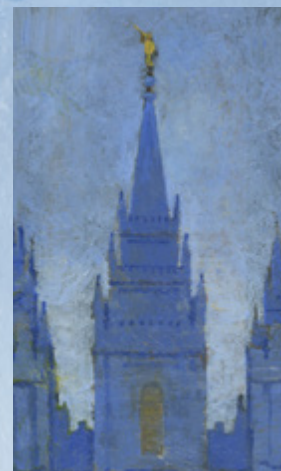
“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:4, 6).

This is the ongoing and cumulative process that allows us to rejoice with the angels in the mercy and merits of Christ (see Alma 5:26). It includes the spiritual growth available as we receive the ordinances and keep the associated covenants offered in priesthood ordinations and in the temple.

I pray that each of us may obtain a fuller understanding of our need for baptism, of the gateway it provides us to the lifelong process of conversion, and of the merciful atoning love of our Savior, who stands “at the door” (Revelation 3:20) and bids us enter and dwell with Him and the Father forever. ■

NOTES

1. Guide to the Scriptures, “Baptism, Baptize,” scriptures.lds.org.
2. David A. Bednar, “Ye Must Be Born Again,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 21; emphasis added.





One New Temple, THREE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The lives of these three families were changed by visiting the Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple open house.

By Don L. Searle

Senior missionary, Central America Area, 2012–14

The Beginning of a New Life

In the summer of 2011, the Wundram family was ready to move from Guatemala to the United States so that Carlos Wundram, a doctor, could pursue advanced studies.

“When we were ready to go,” he recalls, “something stopped me.” His wife, Adriana, experienced the same feelings, so together they prayed and received a confirmation in their hearts that they should not go.

They canceled their plans—and were left wondering what God had in mind for them. Four months later they would find out.

Carlos had been a member of the Church since he was 14 but had dropped out of activity around the time he began his university studies at age 21.

Adriana, although not a member herself, had long wanted to marry a Latter-day Saint. A good friend of hers, a Church member, had married a returned missionary who was tender, loving, and attentive. Adriana wanted a husband like that.

When they first started going out, Adriana and Carlos did not talk of his religion, but he demonstrated many of the qualities of her friend’s husband. He did not act superior to her. After they got married and had children, she appreciated that he bathed the babies and changed diapers!

As their three children began to grow up, “we began to think that we should get closer to God,” Carlos says. They did not find what they were looking for in the Christian church they attended for a time, but the feelings that they needed to get nearer to God persisted.

After canceling their plans to move to the United States, the Wundrams decided to make some improvements to their home, including buying new windows. They immediately liked the man who came to do the installation, José Mena. One day a discussion with him touched on religion. He said he was a member of The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Carlos replied that he was also but had not attended for some time.

The next time Brother Mena came to work on the windows, he brought a Book of Mormon and a copy of the *Liahona* for each family member. Reading the magazine, Carlos began to experience familiar spiritual feelings. Then Brother Mena invited them to attend the Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple open house.

When they entered the temple, the Wundram children began to ask, “Dad, what can we do to be members of this Church?” As they left, their youngest son, Rodrigo, age 10, lingered behind and, with the help of his mother, filled out a card requesting a visit from the missionaries.

The family met with the missionaries. “I did not want to pressure my family to be baptized,” Carlos says. “But they really felt the Spirit for themselves.”

Adriana and the children were baptized in December 2011, a few days before the dedication of the Quetzaltenango Temple. “The great blessing that God gave me is that I baptized them,” Carlos says. Just over one year later, the family was sealed in the temple, a joyous occasion for all of them.





The Opportunity to Be Sealed

When Ana Victoria Hernández, who was not a member of the Church, married Belbin Calderón, he was a member but wasn't attending because he worked on Sundays. Belbin says a strong feeling brought him back. He recalls, "I gave up my job because I wanted to go back to church." After he became active again, his wife noticed that he was becoming more humble, and there was more unity in their home.

Belbin hoped his wife might gain an interest in the gospel, but he never tried to push her. One Sunday while dusting the bookcase, Ana Victoria discovered one of Belbin's books about the history of the Church. Curious, she began to read. The stories of the sacrifices of the pioneers touched her deeply.

A few weeks later, the October 2011 *Liahona* came, a special issue about the Book of Mormon. Again out of curiosity, Ana Victoria began to read the Book of Mormon. She soon realized it contained not just a history but also the words of prophets. She began to attend sacrament meeting with her husband and children.

Then she and her family visited the Quetzaltenango Temple open house. Ana Victoria was touched when she learned that her family could be sealed for eternity. "That had a great impact on me. I felt the need to be sealed to them," she recalls. She began taking the missionary lessons and was baptized on December 7, 2011. She attended the temple dedication four days later.

Brother and Sister Calderón were sealed in the temple with their children in December 2012. Ana Victoria says she cannot describe her happiness at "knowing I can be with my family forever." Belbin calls the certainty of their sealing "the greatest blessing I could possibly imagine."

The Temple Touched His Spirit

The construction of a temple in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, fulfilled a dream for Mónica Elena Fuentes Álvarez de Méndez. She is the daughter of a pioneer in the Church who instilled in her a love of the gospel and all its blessings. Her mother, Magda Ester Álvarez, was baptized in 1953, six years after Latter-day Saint missionaries first arrived in Guatemala.

Mónica grew up in the Church and eventually married a good man, Enio Méndez, who was not a member. He supported his wife and daughter in Church activities and admired its members, but he showed no interest in being baptized. Nevertheless, Mónica remembers her mother telling her that one day her husband would become a member. "I never lost faith," she says, even though she had no idea what could bring about his conversion.

Her mother enjoyed the blessings of periodic visits to the temple in Guatemala City and was filled with joy in 2006 when a temple was announced for Quetzaltenango. But Magda Álvarez suffered from a terminal illness and passed away in 2008, before the temple in Quetzaltenango could be built.

Mónica and her young adult daughter, Mónica Esther Méndez Fuentes, served together as guides during the open house for the Quetzaltenango Temple. Enio attended the open house with them, and unbeknownst to them, he went back two more times.

Leaving the temple together on the last day of the open house, Mónica and her daughter wondered if Magda Álvarez's prediction about Enio could ever come true.

Enio had always believed it was acceptable for him to be a member of his church and his wife and daughter to be members of theirs so long as they respected each other's beliefs. But his experiences at the temple open house gave him much to think about. "I began to fast, without saying anything to them, and to pray," he recalls. He went into the mountains, where he likes to go to ponder. "I asked the Lord, 'What should I do, then?'" In fact, he already knew what was right, but he needed to resolve doubts.

Enio was baptized in April 2012—a deeply moving occasion for both his wife and his daughter.

The Méndez family was sealed in the Quetzaltenango Temple in October 2013. Sister Méndez expressed their joy at an eternal goal achieved and their hope to be faithful until the end of their lives. ■



SHINING LIKE A JEWEL

At the cornerstone ceremony before the dedication of the Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, promised, "This temple will bring eternal families to this place and country."¹ Among "the sons and daughters of Lehi,"² as President Uchtdorf described them, the temple has become a beacon of hope. He also commented on the beauty of the temple, saying, "It has a glowing shine like a jewel, and it is a jewel for this area."³

THE QUETZALTENANGO GUATEMALA TEMPLE

Announced on December 16, 2006, by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)

Dedicated on December 11, 2011, by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

126,000 visitors attended the open house, held in November 2011

136th temple operating worldwide

Second temple in Guatemala (after the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple, dedicated by President Hinckley in 1984)

Size of temple: 21,085 square feet (1,959 m²)

Temple district: 60,000 members in 15 stakes and 7 districts

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, in Jason Swensen, "Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple: 'This Temple Will Bring Eternal Families to This Place and Country,'" *Church News*, Dec. 11, 2011, ldschurchnews.com.
2. "Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple: Dedicatory Prayer," ldschurchtemples.com/quetzaltenango.
3. "Dedication Held for Quetzaltenango Guatemala Temple," Church Newsroom, Dec. 11, 2011, mormonnewsroom.org.



HOW FAMILY HISTORY CHANGES OUR Hearts and Minds

Researching our family history and providing temple ordinances for our ancestors help us see the vastness but also intimacy of God's plan.

By Amy Harris

Professor of History and Genealogy,
Brigham Young University

For years, every time I attended the temple, I thought of my great-great-grandmother Hannah Mariah Eagles Harris (1817–88), but not because I needed to perform proxy temple work on her behalf.

Mariah (as she preferred to be called) is one of the reasons my family is even in the Church. She was baptized in 1840 in England, was endowed in Nauvoo, Illinois, was sealed to her husband in Winter Quarters, Nebraska, and died in Utah. My thoughts about her while I was in the temple were not about her need to have ordinances performed but about how those ordinances bound her and me together across time and space.

As a child I lived in the same Utah town she had lived in, and eventually I visited Winter Quarters, Nauvoo, and the small English village where she was born. I was struck by the vast distances she had traveled and by the vast differences between her life and mine.

Despite the span of time, space, and circumstance that separates us, however, I feel connected to my great-great-grandmother both through the sealing covenant and by knowing about her life. That connection illuminates the reasons behind family history work specifically and temple worship more generally.



Engaging in family history research teaches us of the vastness and grand scope of God's creation and underscores the individual and merciful reach of Christ's Atonement.

Greater Love through Family History

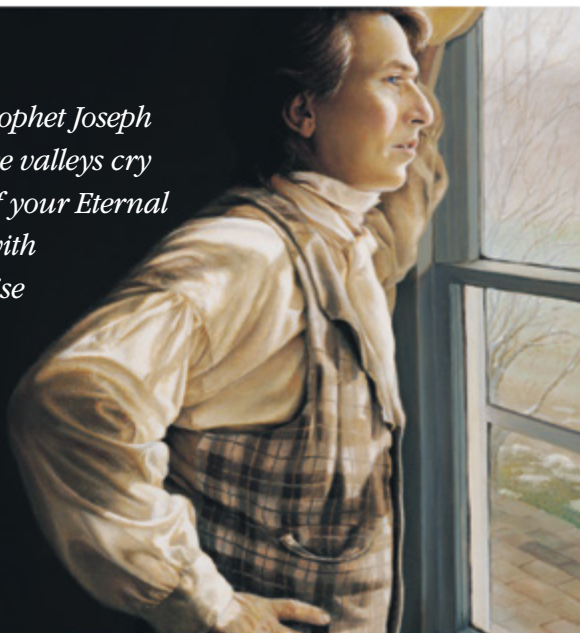
The Lord has taught that though the worlds He has created for His children are “innumerable . . . unto man; . . . all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them” (Moses 1:35). Family history and temple work offer us an opportunity to join in Jesus Christ's work of salvation.¹ Doing so can

help us learn how to love and be merciful to our families, to our neighbors, to everyone we meet, for they are all our brothers and sisters.²

In remembering our own ancestors, we recognize the scope of Heavenly Father's plan and creation. The Lord created a place for us to be tested and to have faith, but because very few people get the chance to receive the fulness of God's covenants while in mortality, the mercy of proxy work reminds us that the Lord loves *all* His children and has provided a way that all may choose to accept the full blessings of the gospel regardless of their circumstances in mortality (see 2 Nephi 26:20–28, 32–33).

In addition, learning about our ancestors' lives can remind us that not everything in life will work easily, that there will be disappointments and inequalities in this fallen

Regarding the doctrine of salvation for the dead, the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote: “Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! And ye rivers, and brooks, and rills, flow down with gladness. Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord; and ye solid rocks weep for joy! And let the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal creations declare his name forever and ever!” (D&C 128:23).



world. But learning about their lives and performing ordinances for them can also remind us that no one is outside the reach of God’s love (see Romans 8:38–39).

My grandmother Mariah was energized by this truth when she first heard it preached. In 1840–41, during the first wave of proxy baptisms done in the Mississippi River and the partially completed Nauvoo Temple, she seized the opportunity to be baptized for her deceased sister, who had died before missionaries arrived in England.³ Though I’ve never met Mariah, I share with her a love of siblings and a knowledge that this love can continue beyond death because of temple ordinances. Sharing in that knowledge with her inspires a love for her as well.

It is not surprising that the Prophet Joseph Smith was nearly overcome with the beautiful and merciful doctrine of salvation for the dead, which he described as the “most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel” (D&C 128:17): “Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! And ye rivers, and brooks, and rills, flow down with gladness. Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord; and ye solid rocks weep for joy! And let

the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal creations declare his name forever and ever!” (D&C 128:23).⁴

Like Mariah, who enthusiastically went to be baptized for her sister, other early Saints were equally joyful. One of those early Saints, Sally Carlisle, wrote: “What a glorious thing it is that we believe and . . . now can be baptized for all our dead friends and save them as far back as we can get any knowledge of them.”⁵

For All—and for the One

As these reflections show, the vastness of family history is tempered by the personal. We learn of not only the scale but also the depth of the Lord’s love, for He cares for the individual. The Lord who sees the falling of the sparrow and seeks after the one lost lamb out of a hundred (see Matthew 10:29; Luke 15:4) does not redeem us en masse, but one by one, just as He administered to the people during His earthly ministry and just as He blessed the people gathered at the temple in Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 17).

Similarly, the Lord taught the early Saints a meticulous standard of record keeping for proxy work done for each

individual (see D&C 128:1–5, 24). Thus, we undertake painstaking work to identify individual ancestors, not just catalogs of names. Through this work we glimpse God’s mercy, His compassion, and the worth of an individual soul.

In addition, learning the stories of our ancestors’ lives helps us learn to love them, no matter their flaws and shortcomings. As we learn how the vicissitudes of mortality shaped our ancestors’ choices, we feel compassion for them. This process should refine our ability to develop the same kind of love for the living, both within our families and for all of God’s children. Feeling more deeply that all people, even the majority who came to earth without an opportunity to receive the covenants and ordinances, are children of heavenly parents helps us appreciate that life is a test of faith and fortitude for everyone who ever lived, “according to the use they made of the light which [God] gives them.”⁶

The refining influence of family history work can increase our own capacity for love. If we grow to love people long since dead, who lived very differently from us, then will we not come to realize how loving and merciful God is toward us? And can we not then love our families and neighbors and be compassionate with their shortcomings?

When others see the only known photograph of my grandmother Mariah, they often comment on how grim or unpleasant she appears to them. I immediately defend her because I know her. I know the person that walked along the River Severn as a young girl and as a mother with small children. I know the person who sailed across an ocean, giving birth to her fourth child during the journey. I know the person who sent a husband to war and lost an infant

child during his absence. I know the person who walked 1,000 miles (1,609 km) to a new home in the western American desert. I know the person who worked and covenanted and farmed and loved. And in knowing her, I get a taste of our heavenly parents’ love for her and for each of their children.

Family History—the Grand Scope and the Merciful Reach

The heart of family history is not about using a computer; it is not about reading old handwriting or making scrupulous notations and citations. Those are tools or functions of family history, but they are not the heart of family history, nor do they grasp the significance of why Latter-day Saints seek after their ancestors. Family history, in its essence, teaches us the grand scope of creation and redemption and simultaneously reminds us of the personal and merciful reach of Christ’s Atonement.

Searching after our ancestors can have a similar effect on our hearts and minds when we realize that all of those people—“numberless as the sand upon the sea shore” (Moses 1:28)—are children of heavenly parents and are loved and known by them. No wonder Joseph described entrance into the celestial kingdom as passing through a gate of “transcendent beauty” (D&C 137:2), for what could be more transcendently beautiful than to be saved with those we know and love, who have, like us, also been redeemed by God’s expansive and personal love? I look forward to meeting with grandmother Mariah at that gate. ■

NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 473.

2. Elder Russell M. Nelson has taught that one function of the spirit of Elijah—a special manifestation of the Holy Ghost—is to “bear witness of the divine nature of the family.” This can mean both the divine nature of our mortal familial relationships and also the divinity and potential of all of God’s children. See Russell M. Nelson, “A New Harvest Time,” *Ensign*, May 1998,

34. See also Richard G. Scott, “The Joy of Redeeming the Dead,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 93.

3. Mariah Harris baptized for sister Edith Eagles, 1841, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Nauvoo Proxy Baptism Records, 1840–1845, Family History Library US/Canada film 485753, item 2, volume A, page 42.

4. For an in-depth discussion of how Smith family deaths influenced Joseph Smith’s search for answers about salvation for the

dead, see Richard E. Turley Jr., “The Latter-day Saint Doctrine of Baptism for the Dead” (BYU family history fireside, Nov. 9, 2001), familyhistory.byu.edu.

5. Sally Carlisle, in Steven Harper, *Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants: A Guided Tour through Modern Revelations* (2008), 470–71.

6. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 405; see also Deuteronomy 8:2; Moroni 7:16; Doctrine and Covenants 76:41–42; 127; 137:7–9; Abraham 3.



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

“My Days” of Temples and Technology

*These are your days to more fully turn
your hearts to your ancestors and bring saving
ordinances to millions within your families.*

Have you ever wondered why you were sent to earth now rather than at a different time in history? What would it have been like to stand by the side of Moses or to be a friend of Mary, the mother of Jesus? How about living in Nauvoo when the Prophet Joseph walked the streets, or joining other teenagers as they pulled and pushed their handcarts a thousand miles to a new home in the Salt Lake Valley?

Sometimes we look at former days or different places and ask, “Why not me? Why am I here in this place, and why now?”





I want to challenge each of you to set a personal goal to help prepare as many names for the temple as baptisms you perform in the temple.

You are not the first to wonder about the time and place of your life. A prophet living in the Americas asked the same questions. His name was Nephi—not the Nephi in the beginning of the Book of Mormon but Nephi the son of Helaman the second and the great-grandson of the prophet Alma the Younger.

In the world in which Nephi lived, money, power, and popularity were more important than what was right. Many of the people openly disregarded the commandments. They lied, took what was not theirs, and ignored the law of chastity. Those who kept the commandments were ridiculed and mistreated (see Helaman 7:4–5, 21; 8:2, 5, 7–8).

“When Nephi saw [these things], his heart was swollen with sorrow . . . and he [exclaimed] in the agony of his soul:

“Oh, that I could have had my days in the days when my father Nephi first came out of the land of Jerusalem, that I could have joyed with him in the promised land; then were his people easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God, and slow to be led to do iniquity; and they were quick to

hearken unto the words of the Lord—

“Yea, if my days could have been in those days, then would my soul have had joy in the righteousness of my brethren” (Helaman 7:6–8).

Nephi was an amazing prophet of God, yet for a moment he wondered why he was living on the earth during *his* time. He knew that the Savior was to come to earth in the not-too-distant future, but for the moment, it appears that the beautiful events just around the corner seemed to elude him.

In only 20 years from the time he spoke, a night would pass without darkness and Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. Within 55 years, the Savior, resurrected and glorified, would descend out of heaven to the Saints in the land Bountiful. Nephi’s son would be there, and the Savior would address him personally and ordain him as one of the twelve disciples selected in the Western Hemisphere. We could suppose that Nephi’s daughters and sons and granddaughters and grandsons were among the 2,500 Saints whom Christ invited one by one to come forward and personally feel the

prints of the nails in His hands and feet. It would not be difficult to believe that Nephi's great-grandchildren were among those little children that the Savior blessed one by one and who were encircled with fire and ministered to by angels. Had Nephi clearly seen the future of his righteous family and friends, surely he would not have wanted to alter the time of his mortality.

Gratefully, Nephi remained righteous, taught the people with courage, worked mighty miracles, and along with the prophet Samuel prophesied of the imminent coming of the Savior. The Lord with His own words promised He would bless Nephi forever (see Helaman 10–11; 16).

Although he had wondered about his time and place, he concluded with very powerful words: “Behold, . . . these are my days” (Helaman 7:9).

My beloved young brothers and sisters, these are your days. You have been chosen to live in the final years preceding the Savior's

return to earth. We do not know the exact day or year of His coming, but we can readily see the signs that precede His coming.¹

One day, just as Nephi came to see his vital place in preparing for the Savior's coming to the Nephites, we will look back and see the glorious blessing that was ours to live in our time as we prepare the world for the Savior's return. Let us see beyond the difficulties and the obstacles confronting us to our important purposes and to the glorious days ahead. Let us each echo Nephi's words: “These are my days.”

With these being your days, what is the Lord asking of you? First, you are to take upon yourself the name of Jesus Christ. Learn of Him and of His love and unspeakable goodness to you and determine that you will always keep His commandments. You are to follow the Savior, love God, and serve those around you. All of us can have the privilege of living our lives as disciples of Christ, being led by His Spirit and lifting those around us.



A Sacred Duty

Some experiences are saved for specific generations. I want to talk about one of your sacred duties that has never quite been the same for any previous generation.

It has been only a few years that temples have become available throughout the world. With the dedication of the Phoenix Arizona Temple on November 16, 2014, we now have 144 operating temples in the world. When I was young, there were 13 temples in the world.

My wife, Sister Kathy Andersen, grew up in the state of Florida, USA. When she was five years old, her parents brought their family to the temple to be sealed together forever. The trip required a six-day, 2,500-mile (4,023 km) drive across the United States to the Salt Lake Temple. Today there are 47 temples that are closer to her Florida home than the Salt Lake Temple.

President Thomas S. Monson has encouraged the youth of the Church to visit the temples often to do baptisms for the dead.

He said: “Now, my young friends who are in your teenage years, always have the temple in your sights. Do nothing which will keep you from entering its doors and partaking of the sacred and eternal blessings there. I commend those of you who already go to the temple regularly to perform baptisms for the dead, arising in the very early hours of the morning so you can participate in such baptisms before school begins. I can think of no better way to start a day.”²

You have responded to the Lord’s prophet, and each year millions on the other side of the veil are given the opportunity to accept their baptism. No generation that has ever lived on this earth has had so great a privilege as you have to enter the doors of the Lord’s house and assist in the salvation of those who have come before.

As you well know, there is a vital *first* step that allows us to accomplish the sacred work of the temple. We are to search out and find those members of our families who came before us.

The Prophet Joseph Smith spoke of this work as a “welding link” connecting families together from one generation to another (D&C 128:18).





In Moroni's first visit to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he instructed Joseph that "the hearts of the children [would] turn to their fathers" (D&C 2:2). The Prophet Joseph later explained that Church members were to become "saviors on Mount Zion. . . . But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion?" he asked. "By building their temples . . . and going forth and receiving all the ordinances . . . in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead, . . . and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers."³

The Prophet Joseph spoke of this work as "a welding link" connecting families together from one generation to another (D&C 128:18). The physical welding link in Joseph's day was created by softening and melting two pieces of metal in a fiery oven, joining them together while they were still malleable, and then letting them cool and harden into an unbreakable chain. The importance of the powerful, spiritual welding that binds us all together forever is stated clearly in the scriptures: "We without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they

without us be made perfect" (D&C 128:18).

In the past this work of finding family names, documenting them, and bringing them to the temple was principally the work of older members of the Church. Why was that? Because it required enormous time and effort. It would often begin with large reels containing microfilmed records. It meant painstaking attention to dates and places, thick historical books with limited availability, and at times remote country cemeteries.

Our ability to find our ancestors online has emerged only in the past few years, with tremendous advancements in the past few months. The months ahead will bring even more availability.

While your generation has become extremely devoted to visiting the temple, in the months and years ahead you will be just as outstanding in finding and bringing names to the temple with you.

I want to challenge each of you to set a personal goal to help prepare as many names for the temple as baptisms you perform in the temple. (To begin the challenge, visit



When we see ourselves in perspective of our family, those who came before us and those who come after us, we realize how we are part of a wonderful link that connects us all together.

templechallenge.lds.org.) There is something powerful in searching out those who need temple ordinances, learning who they are, and then being part of their receiving these sacred ordinances. This is how you become “saviors on Mount Zion” (see Obadiah 1:21 and D&C 103:9). There is a joy and satisfaction that is understood only through spiritual feelings. We are linked to our ancestors forever.

Some of our families have been in the Church for many generations, and much of our direct ancestors’ work in the temple has been done. In 2013, for the first time, I could see my ancestors in a fan chart online, including my great-grandfather Niels Andersen, after whom I was named, and my great-great-grandfather Moroni Stocks, the first family member to be named for a Book of Mormon prophet. I was able to see photos of dozens of my family members online. Do you know what your great-grandparents looked like?

Finding Our Cousins

If your chart is not as complete as mine, your first responsibility is to fill it in as best

you can. More and more information is becoming available each month.

If your chart is as complete as mine, there is still very important work for you to do. This work goes on and on. It will not be complete even when the Savior returns. When our chart appears complete, we help others find those in their lines and we find those closely related to those on our family tree. We call it “finding our cousins.”

How do we find our cousins? In two ways.

First, we go to our chart, and we find those closely related to our great-great-great-grandmothers or grandfathers. For example, I might go up my chart to Grandma Frances Bowen Evans and then look at the families of Grandma Evans’s brothers and sisters. She had five sisters and two brothers. In this way, I can find my cousins.

The second way to find our cousins is to help those around us. We begin with the special booklet *My Family*. If your family is new to family history, fill out the booklet. Or if your tree looks like mine, take the booklet to a new member or someone who hasn’t

been quite as involved in the Church as your family has been and help them search out their family. As you do so, you will help them bring others to the temple. These are your brothers and sisters, but we also like to call them your “cousins.”

We are all brothers and sisters in our Father’s family. Our own families are not randomly thrown together. President Monson has said, “We discover something about ourselves when we learn about our ancestors.”⁴

When we see ourselves in perspective of our family, those who came before us and those who come after us, we realize how we are part of a wonderful link that connects us all together. As we search them out and take their names to the temple, we bring to them something they cannot obtain without us. In doing so, we are connected to them, and the Lord through His Spirit confirms to our soul the eternal importance of what we are doing.

President Monson said, “Those who understand the eternal blessings which come from the temple know that no sacrifice is too great, no price too heavy, no struggle too difficult in order to receive those blessings.”⁵

I add to his words that blessings and power from on high await our family members who have gone before us as they accept the ordinances we perform for them in the holy temples. They have finished their mortality, but they continue to live. We become “saviors on Mount Zion” and are bound together with them forever.

You were born in a time of temples and technology. These are your days to more fully turn your hearts to your fathers.

As you contribute to this sacred work, your knowledge and faith in the Savior will

increase and you will receive a more certain witness that life continues beyond the veil. You will receive protection against the temptations that surround you, and you will prepare yourself and the world you live in for the Second Coming of the Savior.

I know that life continues beyond the veil. I testify that Jesus is the Christ. He is our Savior and Redeemer. He lives. His glorious Atonement allows these ordinances in the temple to last forever. ■

From an address, “Find Our Cousins,” delivered at the Family Discovery Day devotional for youth in conjunction with the RootsTech 2014 Family History Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, on Feb. 8, 2014. To learn more, visit lds.org/go/Andersen215. To watch this year’s addresses on February 14, visit lds.org/discoverfamily.

NOTES

1. See Dallin H. Oaks, “Preparation for the Second Coming,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 7–10.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 93.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 473.
4. Thomas S. Monson, “Constant Truths for Changing Times,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 21.
5. Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple—A Beacon to the World,” 92.

FINDING YOUR COUSINS

Does your family tree appear full? Find more cousins by following these steps: (1) Sign in to FamilySearch.org and click “Family Tree.” Select the “Fan Chart” view. (2) Hover your mouse over a family member’s name on the outer ring of the fan and click the small fan icon, placing that person in the center. (3) Change the view to descendency and then click to show four generations. (4) Look for temple icons that indicate ordinances may be needed for the displayed cousin. If prompted by FamilySearch, check for duplicate names. (5) Work your way around the outer ring of your fan chart and, when finished, move back one generation and repeat the previous steps.

BEFORE OUR Journey's Through



By **Richard M. Romney**
Church Magazines

I never have to worry about where to find my 92-year-old father, Paul Romney, on a Sunday afternoon. He's in his ward in Salt Lake City, Utah, tidying up the chapel. It takes him a little over an hour.

He leans on his walker as he goes up the aisle. Then he leans on the benches as he moves from row to row, picking up stray papers, arranging hymnbooks, and gathering cereal or breadcrumbs that have fallen on the carpet. It is a task he has been doing every Sunday, with few exceptions, since he was ordained a deacon in 1934.

Preparing for Worship

"I do it to show that I love the Lord," he says. "Having a clean chapel helps us to worship Him."

As a deacon, Paul Romney learned that his duties included caring for the temporal needs of the ward. "I figured one way to do that was to tidy up after meetings," he says. "So I just started doing it, and I've been doing it ever since." It has never been an official assignment or calling, although occasionally he has come on Saturdays to

Paul Romney demonstrates his love for the Lord by tidying up the chapel.

For those who endure well, faith deepens with the passage of time.

help others assigned to clean the meetinghouse. Sometimes his children have helped him. Years ago when he was in the bishopric, he encouraged the deacons to join in.

But most of the time he simply waits until the last meeting of the day is finished. Then, without fanfare, he contributes his small part to maintaining a house of order. And he does it faithfully, every Sunday.

My father's example has shown me that no matter our circumstances, we can always find a way to serve. It has taught me about reverence and preparing to worship. And it has helped me to see that there is much we all can learn from those who are ahead of us on their journey through this life.

Changing Roles

I have learned similar lessons from my neighbors down the street. Larry Morgan, 97, and his wife, Elizabeth, 94, have successfully filled various roles in their lives together: husband and wife, father and mother, senior missionary companions in Holland. When Larry was 72, he was called as

a counselor in the bishopric. At that time there were 79 widows in our neighborhood, and by assignment from the bishop, Larry and Elizabeth visited every one of them.

For more than 40 years, on fast Sundays, Larry and Elizabeth's children, and now their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, have gathered in the evening to end their fast. "We wanted our family to enjoy being together, and everyone likes to eat," he says. "We had lots of wheat in storage, so we'd grind our own flour and make waffles. Then we'd eat until everyone was filled." That simple, shared meal has fostered enduring feelings of family togetherness.

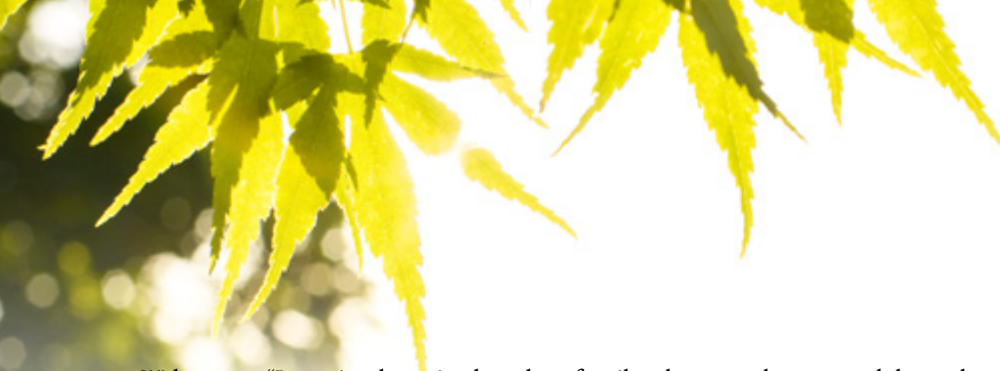
Today, children and grandchildren do the cooking. Elizabeth has dementia but knows the family is near. To each person present, she repeats over and over again, "I love you."

When the meal is finished and everyone is gone, she enjoys listening to Larry read scriptures and Church magazine articles out loud and finds reassurance in just knowing he is there.

About two years ago, Larry fell and damaged his spine. As a result, he can no longer walk. "I don't waste time asking, 'Why



Larry and Elizabeth Morgan show continual commitment to each other.



me?” he says. “I received a priesthood blessing. I was told I will walk again, even though it will not be in this life. Because of the Atonement and the Resurrection, I know that it will happen. I’ve learned that our Father in Heaven is in charge. When we accept His will, then we can count on His help.”

Growing Perspective

I met Merle Christensen for the first time in an assisted living center in Brigham City, Utah. The grandmother of a friend of our

family, she was about to celebrate her 101st birthday. In her room, Merle sat surrounded by souvenir books and photographs. Two photos she shared particularly impressed me.

The first, taken many years ago, was of a group of seminary students, including Merle’s daughters. “They’re on the front row with their teacher, Boyd K. Packer,” Merle says. “He looks really young, but he was a good teacher.” Today he’s the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

When Merle was young, she was stricken with polio. “It wasn’t easy to deal with that as a teenage girl,” she says. “My faith had to grow to keep up. But the Lord helped me then, and He is helping me now.” Those who suffered polio in their youth often struggle with post-polio syndrome as they advance in years, dealing with symptoms like muscle weakness and overall fatigue. Such is the case for Merle.

When she feels tired, she remembers

the scripture in Alma 7:11–12 that tells how the Savior “will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people . . . that he may know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities.” Then, she says, “you trust that the Lord knows what you’re going through. Take it day by day, pray, go to church, and be kind to others. It’s the little things that help you to get through.”

The second photo Merle showed me is in a scrapbook—a picture of three of her five daughters. All of her children were girls, and three were born as



AN INHERITANCE OF HOPE

“Wherever you are on the path to inherit the gift of eternal

life, you have the opportunity to show many people the way to greater happiness. When you choose whether to make or keep a covenant with God, you choose whether you will leave an inheritance of hope to those who might follow your example.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Priceless Heritage of Hope,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 22.

Merle Christensen rejoices in the knowledge that she will be able to see loved ones again.

triplets in 1936, the first triplets born in Brigham City. “Having triplets was rare back then,” Merle says. Medicine wasn’t as advanced, and two of the girls were born with heart problems. Sharon died in 1958 and Diane in 1972. Janice, who had no heart condition, passed away from cancer in 1992.

“I love all of my children, their husbands, my grandchildren, and great-grandchildren,” Merle says. But she misses her husband, DeVere, who’s been gone for 26 years, and she misses her triplets, who would be turning 79 this April.

Again she reads in Alma: “And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people” (Alma 7:12).

“I know that the Savior overcame death,” Merle says. “Because of that, I know that I will see my husband and my triplets and all of my family again.” That conviction, she says, grows stronger every day.

Sister Christensen passed away in September 2014, after this article was written.

Walking Together

Alph and Lucette Passeraub of Lausanne, Switzerland, love to go walking together. One of their favorite strolls is along the shore of Lake Geneva, where the Alps tower over the inland sea. A couple of years ago on such a walk, the Passeraubs spent the evening reminiscing.



Lucette and Alph Passeraub reminisce about their life together in the Church.

“Even as an adolescent, I was searching for the truth,” Alph, 78, said. “I always said to myself, If God exists, He must have a living prophet on the earth. I was preoccupied with that thought all the time.”

As Alph began his post-high school studies, a friend encouraged him to attend a free English class taught by LDS missionaries. After one of the classes, the missionaries invited him to church.

“The first time I attended, the Sunday School lesson was about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as three distinct beings,” Alph recalled. “The teacher said we know much about God thanks to the teachings of a modern-day prophet, Joseph Smith, and that there are living prophets today. I was amazed. They were talking about what had been in my heart for so long.” He soon joined the Church, “and every day since then, I rejoice that there are prophets on the earth.”

Lucette, 80, grew up as a child of World War II. “I had to go to work at 14 and never got to complete my

education,” she says. “But I found that the Church gave me opportunities to keep learning.”

After serving a full-time mission, she started dating Alph. They married in the temple, raised a family, and now look back at their journey that includes Lucette’s 14 years as ward Primary president, Alph’s 32 years on the stake high council, regular trips to the temple, visits with children and grandchildren, and always, always, gratitude for the truth they embraced when they were young.

“We have been blessed to walk side by side,” Lucette says. “And with each step, our faith has grown stronger.”

I learn a lot from these friends who are older than I am. Larry and Elizabeth teach me to play the changing roles of life with dignity and with assistance from the Lord. Merle shows that faith to endure to the end must be built on faith in the Savior today. And the Passeraubs rejoice in the gospel every day. All of those are lessons that will strengthen me before my journey is through. ■

DOCTOR OR ELDER?

When I finished high school, I knew I had to wait at least two years before serving a mission. I decided to start my college education, calculating that I could be done with medical school in about six years if I invested myself fully. I planned to serve a full-time mission afterward.

After completing medical school at age 24, I started a clinical apprenticeship, which furthered my career opportunities. During this time a dilemma unfolded: should I really serve a mission, or should I keep working? My parents, my older brother (who had recently returned from his mission), my bishop, and a counselor in the local mission presidency all exhorted me to serve.

I believed they were right, but it was difficult to delay my promising medical career. I prayed and fasted for inspiration. I also consulted my patriarchal blessing, which recommended that I serve a full-time mission and promised blessings as a result.

One day, as I was taking public transport home from my apprenticeship, I ran into the stake patriarch. We got off at the same stop and, curiously, started walking in the same direction. He recognized me as a member of the Church.

As we walked together, he asked me what I was planning to do with my life. I explained that I was a doctor and was troubled about deciding between my career and a mission. He told me in

a firm voice to serve the Lord by going on a mission, adding that I would be blessed as a result. To me, his response seemed to come from the Lord.

Immediately the following scripture entered my mind: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” (3 Nephi 13:33).

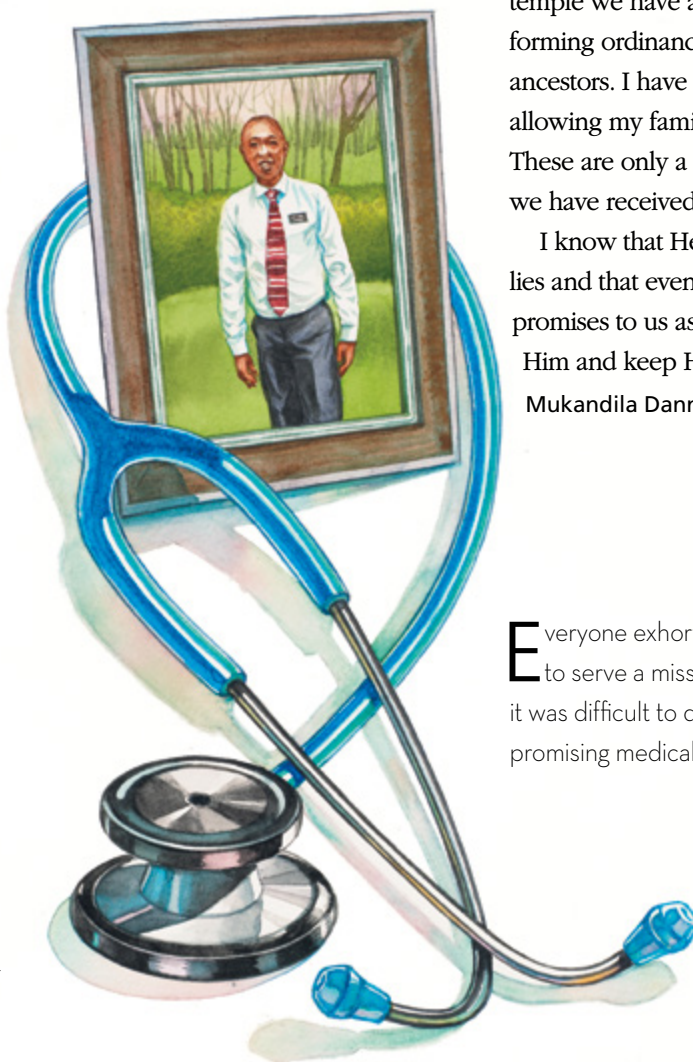
I was certain the Lord had answered me. Without further hesitation, I decided to delay my professional career and serve a full-time mission.

My fellow doctors thought I would forget medical practices after being away for two years. They harassed me, but I held firm to my decision.

Leaving behind my “Dr.” title, I served two years in the Democratic Republic of Congo Kinshasa Mission.

Five years later, I made a list of the major blessings that followed my service. Foremost, I found a wife—a faithful Church member and my crowning joy. We have two children so far. Our family is sealed for eternity. In the temple we have acted as proxies in performing ordinances for our deceased ancestors. I have secure employment, allowing my family to be self-reliant. These are only a few of the blessings we have received from the Lord.

I know that Heavenly Father never lies and that eventually He fulfills all His promises to us as we put our trust in Him and keep His commandments. ■
Mukandila Danny Kalala, Liberia



Everyone exhorted me to serve a mission, but it was difficult to delay my promising medical career.

I CAME TO KNOW THE SAVIOR

In my first year of high school, I made a commitment to read the New Testament from beginning to end. After school and on weekends, I retreated to the upper story of our house and read the Savior's words and of His miracles and life.

Though my young mind often did not understand the language of the Bible, I came to know Jesus Christ. I learned that He is the Son of God and that He was sent to atone for our sins. I learned that He walked with, spoke to, and blessed ordinary, weak people—people like me.

I was sometimes confused while reading complex passages in Paul's epistles and John's writings in the book of Revelation, but I could always feel the truth of their teachings. I found that reading the scriptures helped me through hard days at school and gave me guidance in making important decisions.

Years later, as I prepared for a mission, I found myself questioning my motives for serving. I felt that there was nothing particularly special about my testimony or about me. I wondered if I was preparing for a mission out of obligation to my parents and my leaders, who had worked hard to teach me the gospel. I even thought the Lord might be better off without my service.

One day while I was reading the Book of Mormon, Abinadi's words touched my heart:

“He shall be led, crucified, and slain. . . .

“And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death. . . .

“And now I say unto you, *who shall declare his generation?*” (Mosiah 15:7–8, 10; emphasis added).

I read that last line over and over, wondering if it had been there before. By reading the New Testament, I knew of the Savior's life and of the generation of those who had walked with Him. But those of the Savior's generation cannot visit people today

to teach of His love, His Atonement, and His Church. So how could I justify *not* sharing my testimony of Him?

The Lord wanted me to share the good news of the gospel I had received. I knew the gospel to be true, and I wanted to share the truths I had learned while reading the scriptures.

Soon after this experience I left on my mission. Today I can attribute the desire I had to serve to what I had learned about the Savior as a young student reading the scriptures. ■

Brian Knox, Arizona, USA

As I prepared for a mission, I found myself questioning my motives for serving.





Nieves had readily received the restored gospel, but when we invited her to be baptized, she hesitated.

I'M GRATEFUL FOR YOUR FEET

There was nothing particularly interesting about my feet, so I was a little confused when Nieves, a recent convert in Bolivia, said she was thankful for them.

"I'm so grateful for your feet," she would tell us in the weeks following her baptism.

Nieves had readily received the restored gospel, but when we invited her to be baptized, she hesitated.

She explained that she suffered from a painful skin condition. When her skin touched cold water, it felt as if a thousand needles were piercing her pores. This condition prevented her from doing even ordinary tasks, such as washing vegetables or scrubbing clothing by hand.

We explained that the baptismal font could be heated, and we assured Nieves that she would be baptized in warm water. Her face brightened, and she chose to be baptized on Christmas Day. My companion and I told the branch

president about her skin condition, and he said the font would be heated in time for the afternoon baptism.

When we arrived at the chapel for the baptism, however, the font had just been filled with extremely cold water! The frantic branch president explained that because of a miscommunication, the water would not be ready until much later.

My companion and I knew that Nieves wanted to be baptized that day, and we believed that the Lord desired the same thing. We found an empty room and prayed that He would help Nieves to be baptized.

We felt comforted after the prayer and decided to proceed with the service. Those who spoke before the baptism taught beautifully, but I was suddenly nervous when I heard, "Elder Nelson will now baptize Sister Nieves."

I tried to hide my discomfort as I stepped gingerly into the frigid water. Nieves took my hand and lowered her

foot toward the water. I braced myself for the worst, but Nieves did not shriek or even wince. She stepped calmly down the stairs and smiled up at me.

After the baptismal prayer, she lay back into the cold water. When I lifted her, she emerged grinning. I was filled with gratitude. To me, her baptism was a miracle.

The last time I saw Nieves, she said something that cleared up my confusion about her interest in my feet. She said, "I'm so grateful for your feet, which walked to my door and brought me the truth."

I think of Nieves and her simple faith and gratitude whenever I hear these words of Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah 52:7; see also Mosiah 12:21). ■

Nicholas Nelson, Texas, USA

FOOTPRINTS OF FAITHFULNESS

For some time I had wanted to take pictures of Temple Square in Salt Lake City—including the reflection pool, the fountains, and the sidewalks—covered with freshly fallen snow void of any footprints. To get a picture of fresh snow without footprints, I knew I had to arrive at Temple Square early in the morning following a nighttime snowstorm.

One evening after a forecast of snow overnight, I prepared myself. Because Temple Square groundskeepers start plowing the sidewalks at 5:00 a.m., I set my alarm for 3:00 a.m. and got my gear together.

Driving on unplowed roads the next morning, I arrived at Temple Square at 4:15 a.m. while it was still snowing. Then I proceeded to drive around the square, looking for someplace to park that would give me easy access to take pictures.

On my first pass around Temple Square, I noticed that the walkway to the entrance of the Salt Lake Temple was covered in fresh snow—without any footprints! I knew I was going to get my perfect photo. Excited, I drove around the block again to find a parking spot.

As I proceeded east on North Temple Street, I thought I would find a spot close to the walkway. Before I realized it, however, I had run out of parking spots and was again near the sidewalk to the temple entrance.

As I sat at a red light, I looked to my right at the fresh, undisturbed snow. When I looked to my left toward the Conference Center, I noticed an elderly woman dressed in her Sunday best, her head tilted into the falling snow as she headed toward the temple.

“Oh, no,” I thought. “I’m not going to get my shot!”

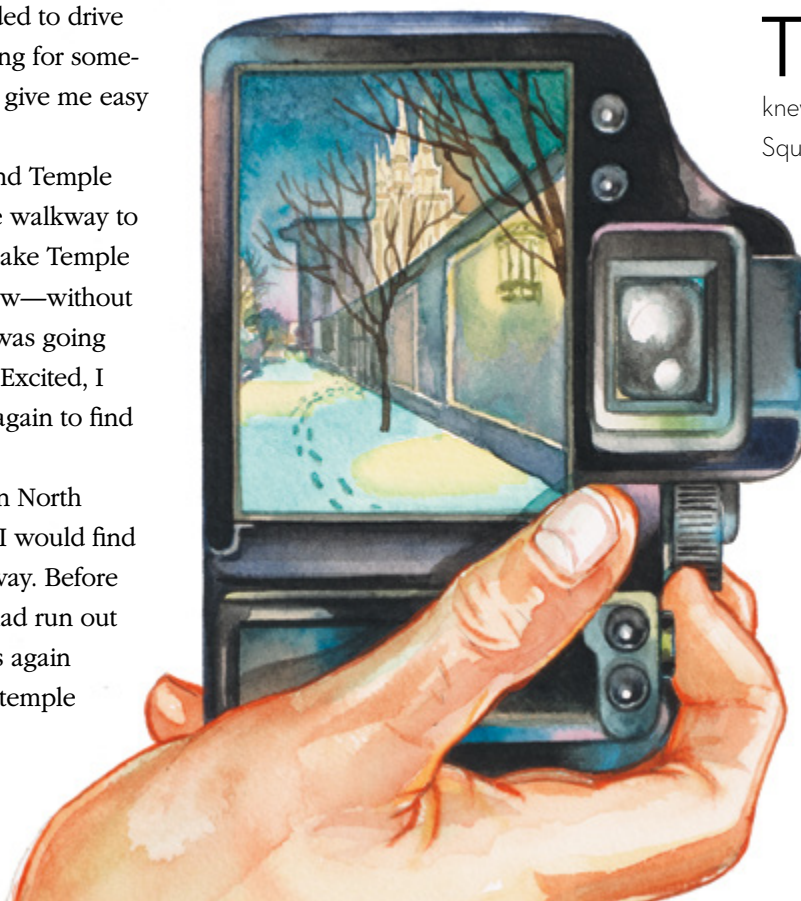
As the woman crossed in front of me, I turned and looked toward the soon-to-be-ruined walkway and saw that another sister had already gone down the walkway and was turning into the temple entrance. Then I looked back to the first sister now walking down the walkway. With

snow clumped around her shoes and ankles, and following the footsteps of the first, she walked slowly but surely down the walkway, through the gates, and into the entrance to the temple.

As I contemplated what I was seeing, I looked at the clock in my car: 4:20 a.m. Sitting in my warm car and looking at the footsteps in the freshly fallen snow, I was humbled by the faithfulness of these two sisters on their way to perform their appointed duties.

I drove around the block again, parked, grabbed my camera, and took a picture of footprints in the snow—a far greater picture than the one I had envisioned. ■

Randolph Shankula, Utah, USA



To get a picture of fresh snow without footprints, I knew I had to arrive at Temple Square early in the morning.

Blessed by the Sabbath Day

By Emmaline R. Wilson

Keeping the Sabbath day holy became a challenge for Annabelle Hyatt when she was hired for an internship with an amusement-park company. Growing up in Texas, USA, Annabelle was taught to worship, rest, and serve others on the Sabbath. But when she moved to Florida to start her internship, she had to work on Sundays.

She explains, “At first I dutifully went to work, just as everyone else did. After a few weeks, I started to notice how sad I was feeling during the week without taking the sacrament or hearing inspiring words that I needed more than ever.”

One day she prayed for help and mustered the courage to talk to her

Keeping the Sabbath day holy is ultimately a matter of obedience, attitude, and choice.

supervisor about her desire to attend church and not work on Sundays. Her supervisor didn’t understand why it was so important to her. But Annabelle persisted. Every time she saw her manager or scheduling supervisor, she mentioned that she needed Sundays off and was willing to work extra hard other days in order to make it happen.

“Eventually, by a miracle it happened!” she says. “My days off work became Saturday and Sunday, which is unheard of for a seasonal intern who was barely a month into the program. The privilege of having the weekends off was normally reserved for those with seniority status.”

She testifies of the blessings: “Being able to bring the light of going to church back into my life, I could see and feel a dramatic difference. When my co-workers asked why I go to church or why it’s so important, I would tell them to come with me. I started bringing some of my co-workers to church. I know without a doubt that the gospel of Jesus Christ is worth standing up for. Sabbath day observance is a



necessity to have the Spirit in your life and become a better person.”

Annabelle, like many young adults, was blessed as she remained committed to keeping the Sabbath day holy. Although it can be a challenge to withstand pressure to work or participate in activities we normally enjoy during the week, keeping the Sabbath day holy is ultimately a matter of obedience, attitude, and choice. Great blessings will come. These three young adults share their testimonies that the Lord helps His children keep His day holy.

The Lord Provided a Way

When Katrin Schulze of Germany went to college far away from home, she was suddenly tested in her resolve to keep the Sabbath day holy. “My parents had taught me and my siblings about the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy,” she said. “For us, that meant no working, shopping, or playing sports on Sunday. I cannot remember any exceptions.

“My college required that I participate in a seminar that always

occupied a full weekend—both Saturday and Sunday. I had a terrible dilemma—unless I participated, I could not graduate; on the other hand, I wanted to keep all the Lord’s commandments. As I studied the situation, I realized this wasn’t a problem I could solve on my own. I pleaded with the Lord and asked Him to show me the way to be obedient *and* complete my studies. I felt peace inside after that prayer.

“As the date of the seminar grew closer, I felt nervous but remained confident that He could prepare a way. One day I stood at the board where the seminar schedules were listed. Most were over the weekend, but there was one section scheduled over three days, not including a Sunday. I realized the Lord was helping me keep the Sabbath day holy. Never before and never again has there been that seminar on any day but Sunday, but the year I needed it so badly, the Lord made it possible for me. I am so grateful the Lord provided a way to help me keep His commandments.”

Prepare to Worship on Sunday

Katherine Wilkinson, from Utah, often stayed out late on Saturday nights. She said of one weekend, “My friends and I had gone to dinner, watched a movie, and stayed up talking well into the morning. It was probably after 2:00 a.m. when I finally went to sleep.

“On Sunday morning, I fumbled in the darkness to turn off my alarm at 7:30 a.m. but since church didn’t begin until 8:30 a.m., my sleepy self reasoned that I could reset my alarm for 8:00 a.m. When I finally got up, I had to rush to get ready on time. A two-minute shower and no breakfast later, I rushed out the door.

“Church seemed long. I could hardly stay awake during the meetings. I watched the clock, counting down the minutes until I would be napping at home. Not until Sunday School began did I realize that, in my rush, I had forgotten both my scriptures and the manual.”

Eventually Katherine decided she wanted to change so that she could enjoy the Sabbath day and keep it



REMEMBERING CHRIST ON THE SABBATH

“Sunday is a day to slow down, pause, and remember. We attend our Church meetings; reflect on our blessings, strengths, and shortcomings; seek forgiveness; partake of the sacrament; and ponder the Savior’s suffering on our behalf. We try not to be distracted by anything that would prevent us from worshipping Him. . . . Any activity we participate in during the Sabbath should be in keeping with the Spirit of

remembering Christ. If anything we are doing on any part of the Sabbath takes us away from remembering the Savior and ministering on the Sabbath as He would minister, then perhaps we should reconsider what we are doing. . . .

“Spend some time today creating a thoughtful plan of things that you will do to really make the Sabbath day a sacred and holy day in your life. Then act on your plan.”

Larry M. Gibson, first counselor in the Young Men general presidency, “I Do Always Remember Him,” *New Era*, Jan. 2014, 36; *Liahona*, Jan. 2014, 56.



holy. “I pondered on my Sabbath day,” she said. “I’d gotten up too late, rushed to church only halfway ready, endured three hours of meetings (without a good attitude), and come back home to sleep. And that was hardly the first time my Sunday had gone that way. I realized I was depriving myself of the full blessings of Sabbath-day worship, especially the sacrament and what it offered me.

“Observing the Sabbath includes more than physically attending Church meetings; it means being there mentally and spiritually. I want to do that. President Spencer W. Kimball

(1895–1985) taught, “The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts, and if one merely lounges about doing nothing on the Sabbath, he is breaking it. To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, sleeping, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day to which he is expected’ (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 96–97). As I’ve begun to change and honor this sacred day, I have felt greater blessings in my life.” ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SABBATH-DAY OBSERVANCE

- Attend church to worship the Lord, renew covenants, and strengthen yourself and others in your ward or branch.
- Make scripture study a priority by “feasting upon the word of Christ” (2 Nephi 31:20).
- Do something for your calling. Even if you’re “just” a backup pianist, you can still practice.
- Minister to the one through home or visiting teaching. If you don’t have an assignment yet, prayerfully select someone who can use your spirit and reach out.
- Spend time communicating with family and doing reverent, wholesome activities together.
- Consider the *why* of what you’re doing: does it help you serve the Lord and do His work? Is it unifying your family or ward?
- Pray for guidance in how you can honor the Lord on His day.

Strong Paddles, Strong Testimonies in French Polynesia

By Mindy Anne Leavitt

Church Magazines

In the middle of the Pacific Ocean lie 118 islands created from underground volcanoes or coral atolls. Filled with palm trees, black pearls, and Tiaré flowers, these islands are home to about 275,000 Tahitians (as inhabitants of French Polynesia are commonly called).

Gerry Huuti, a 29-year-old convert, is one of those people. He relishes the national sport, *va'a*, or outrigger canoeing, which has been an important part of his life since age 16. Five years after he began racing, he met Laydreane—a champion paddler and a member of the Church. Thanks to her example, Gerry was baptized and served a mission in New Caledonia while Laydreane served in Tahiti. They married six weeks after Gerry returned home.

Now, several years and one son later, Gerry still participates in *va'a* tournaments—but he supports his family by creating paddles for *va'a* outriggers. “My business is right next to my house,” he explains. “I go out

and look for wood to cut up and glue together to create paddles.” It sounds simple, but each of these beautiful wooden paddles takes five full days to make. And with about 20,000 paddlers on the Huutis’ island of Tahiti, paddles are always in demand.

Though Gerry and Laydreane are both busy with Church callings, they still make time to go to the temple. “Because of our temple attendance, we have a better relationship,” says Gerry. “We are also blessed on the work side of things. Selling paddles by yourself might work well enough, but if you do it with the Lord, it’s better.” That divine aid is vital to the Huutis. Gerry and his wife also have a strong testimony of tithing. “We never worry that Heavenly Father is going to bless us,” Gerry says. “If you pay your tithing, you’ll end up with more than what you have.”

For the Huutis, *va'a* is more than just a sport. The principles of dedication and commitment necessary to be good paddlers have helped both Gerry and Laydreane be more

One young couple in French Polynesia finds that the gospel and their favorite sport have several things in common.

dedicated to the gospel. “In *va'a*, the physical counts for a lot,” Gerry says, “but it’s not the most important thing. What’s more important is the mental—being determined to finish your race. When you have to paddle for four-and-a-half hours, your body can tell you that you can’t make it, but your mind tells you that you can. In the gospel, determination is very important. Sometimes you get discouraged, but faith can help you succeed by following God’s plan for your life. We can always learn something from *va'a* that applies to the gospel.” ■

MORE ABOUT GERRY

What's your favorite traditional Tahitian dish?

Kaku. It's made from crushing breadfruit into dough and eating it with coconut milk and *poisson cru* (raw fish that is a Tahitian specialty).

What do you do for fun?

Our family likes to go to the ocean, gather leaves, and play together.

What is a cultural practice unique to French Polynesia?

Tahitian dancing is part of the Polynesian culture. The annual Heiva dance festival has been going on since 1881.

THE CHURCH IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

22,659 Latter-day Saints

8 stakes

83 wards and branches

16 family history centers

1 mission

1 temple (Papeete)

BY THE NUMBERS

100 million U.S. dollars' worth of black pearls exported annually

French Polynesia covers 1,930,500 square miles (3,106,839 km²) of ocean, but only 1,544 square miles (2,485 km²) of land

79° F/26° C is the average temperature; water temperature averages 80° F/27° C

13 letters in the Tahitian alphabet

FACTS ABOUT TAHITI

Capital: Papeete, on the island of Tahiti
Languages: French, Tahitian



LOOK TO GOD EACH DAY

*By providing a daily sustenance,
one day at a time,
God is trying to teach us faith.*



By Elder D. Todd Christofferson
Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

Included in the Lord's Prayer is the petition "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11) or "Give us day by day our daily bread" (Luke 11:3). I believe that we would all readily acknowledge that we have needs each day that we want our Heavenly Father's help in dealing with. For some, on some days, it is quite literally bread—that is, the food needed to sustain life that day. It could also be spiritual and physical strength to deal with one more day of chronic illness or a painfully slow rehabilitation. In other cases it may be less tangible needs, such as things related to one's obligations or activities in that day—teaching a lesson or taking a test, for example.

Jesus is teaching us, His disciples, that we should look to God each day for the bread—the help and sustenance—we require in that particular day.

The Lord's invitation to seek our daily bread at our Heavenly Father's hand speaks of a loving God, aware of even the small, daily needs of His children and anxious to

assist them, one by one. He is saying that we can ask in faith of that Being "that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given" (James 1:5). That is, of course, tremendously reassuring, but there is something at work here that is more significant than just help in getting by day to day. As we seek and receive divine bread daily, our faith and trust in God and His Son grow.

Looking to God Daily for Our Needs Nurtures Faith

You will remember the great exodus of the tribes of Israel from Egypt and the 40 years in the wilderness before entering their promised land. This massive host of well over a million people had to be fed. Certainly that number in one location could not long subsist on hunting game, and their seminomadic lifestyle at the time was not conducive to raising crops or livestock in any sufficient quantity. Jehovah solved the challenge by miraculously providing their daily bread from heaven—manna. Through Moses, the Lord

instructed the people to gather enough manna each day for that day, except on the day before the Sabbath, when they were to gather enough for two days (see Exodus 16:19–29).

By providing a daily sustenance, one day at a time, Jehovah was trying to teach faith to a nation that over a period of some 400 years had lost much of the faith of their fathers. He was teaching them to trust Him, to “look unto [Him] in every thought; doubt not, fear not” (D&C 6:36). He was providing enough for one day at a time. Except for the sixth day, they could not store manna for use in any succeeding day or days. In essence, the children of Israel had to walk with Him today and trust that He would grant a sufficient amount of food for the next day *on* the next day, and so on. In that way He could never be too far from their minds and hearts.

Trust in the Lord—Solutions May Come over Time

Some time before I was called as a General Authority, I faced a personal economic challenge that persisted for several years. At times this challenge threatened the welfare of my family and me, and I thought we might be facing financial ruin. I prayed for some miraculous intervention to deliver us. Although I offered that prayer many times with

As we seek and receive divine daily bread, our faith and trust in God and His Son grow.



The Lord's invitation to seek our daily bread at our Heavenly Father's hand speaks of a loving God, aware of even the small, daily needs of His children and anxious to assist them, one by one.



great sincerity and earnest desire, the answer in the end was “No.” Finally I learned to pray as the Savior did: “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). I sought the Lord's help with each tiny step along the way to a final resolution.

There were times when I had exhausted all my resources, when I had nowhere or no one to turn to at that moment. More than once I fell down before my Heavenly Father, begging in tears for His help. And He did help. Sometimes it was nothing more than a sense of peace, a feeling of assurance that things would work out. I might not see how or what the path would be, but He gave me to know that, directly or indirectly, He would open a way. Circumstances might change, a new and helpful idea might come to mind, some unanticipated income or other resource might appear at just the right time. Somehow there was a resolution.

Though I suffered then, as I look back now, I am grateful that there was not a quick solution to my problem. The fact that I was forced to turn to God for help almost daily over an extended period of years taught me

truly how to pray and get answers to prayer and taught me in a very practical way to have faith in God. I came to know my Savior and my Heavenly Father in a way and to a degree that might not have happened otherwise or that might have taken me much longer to achieve. I learned that daily bread is a precious commodity. I learned that manna today can be as real as the physical manna of biblical history. I learned to trust in the Lord with all my heart. I learned to walk with Him day by day.

Work through Large Problems in Small, Daily Bites

Asking God for our daily bread, rather than our weekly, monthly, or yearly bread, is also a way to focus us on the smaller, more manageable bits of a problem. To deal with something very big, we may need to work at it in small, daily bites. Sometimes all we can handle is one day (or even just part of one day) at a time. Let me give you a nonscriptural example.

In the 1950s my mother survived radical cancer surgery, but difficult as that was, the surgery was followed by dozens of painful radiation treatments in what would now be considered rather primitive medical conditions. She recalls that her mother taught her something during that time that has helped her ever since: “I was so sick and weak, and I said to her one day, ‘Oh, Mother, I can't stand having 16 more of those treatments.’ She said, ‘Can you go today?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Well, honey, that's all you have to do today.’ It has helped me many times when I remember to take one day or one thing at a time.”

As you ask in prayer for your daily bread,

consider thoughtfully your needs—both what you may lack and what you must protect against. As you retire to bed, think about the successes and failures of the day and what will make the next day a little better. And thank your Heavenly Father for the manna He has placed along your path that sustained you through the day. Your reflections will increase your faith in Him as you see His hand helping you to endure some things and to change others. You will be able to rejoice in one more day, one more step toward eternal life.

Jesus Christ Is the Bread of Life

Above all, remember that we have Him of whom manna was a type and symbol, the very Bread of Life, the Redeemer.

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. . . .

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

“I am that bread of life” (John 6:35, 47–48).

I bear you my witness of the living reality of the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, and of the infinite power and reach of His Atonement. Ultimately, it is His Atonement, His grace, that is our daily bread. We should seek Him daily, to do His will each day, to become one with Him as He is one with the Father (see John 17:20–23). I bless you that as you seek it from Him, your Heavenly Father will grant you your daily bread. ■

From a Church Educational System fireside given on January 9, 2011.





By Elder
Jorge F. Zeballos
Of the Seventy

FINDING STRENGTH in Good Friends

I was born and raised in a small city in Chile. When I was 12 years old, I saw the missionaries for the first time, and I was curious. Then one day a classmate at school told me that he and his family had become members of the Church. He invited me, and I attended all Sunday meetings and Tuesday activities for several months.

Our branch was new, and because I attended practically from the beginning, everyone thought I was a member. After six months I told one of the missionaries I was not, because I thought the missionaries were interested only in families.

The missionaries tried to involve my family, but my parents and siblings were not interested. They invited me to be baptized, but since I was 12, I needed my parents' permission. I thought my father would say I needed to wait until I was 18, but he said, "I have seen my son wake up every Sunday morning while his brothers and sisters keep sleeping, dress up in his best clothes, and walk to the chapel. If my son will be responsible with this decision, you have my permission." I couldn't believe it. I was in heaven in that moment. So I was baptized the following day.

Being a member of the Church provided spiritual blessings, of course. But it also gave me some wonderful

The friends you choose can have a big impact on your life, as they have in mine.



friends. Around the time of my baptism, several young men my age began coming to church, and we formed a very close-knit group. We started attending every meeting and activity together.

When I was 17, I left my city to go to college. Three of my friends decided to go to college in the same city, and we lived together. This was a great blessing because we could support and protect each other. We encouraged each other to go to church. We also had home evening among the four of us, and sometimes we invited other students who were members of the Church. All of those years at the university, we strengthened each other.

Forty-five years later, those young men are still my best friends. Although we live in different parts of the world, we are always in contact. All six of us served missions.

That's why I encourage you to have good Church friends in your youth. Trust in them and help them. A good friend will always be willing to help you, will deserve your trust, and will never want to hurt you. I'm not saying your friends need to be perfect, but they should respect your standards and values. Being a good friend is not always about having

fun. It includes being sincerely interested in the well-being of your friends and being brave enough to tell your friends when they are doing something that's not right.

I admire you youth of the Church. Times have changed a lot since I was a young man. This period of time on earth is fantastic, but at the same time it's dangerous. To make it through you must be "continually holding fast to the rod of iron" (1 Nephi 8:30) and following the counsel and advice of your parents and Church leaders. Developing good friendships will help you to do this.

Some of you may feel alone because you are the only member of the Church in your school or your class. But you are not alone. Our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven consider each one of you a treasure, and They are eager to help you throughout your life. Your true friends will support you in drawing closer to Them.

The scriptures say that the "same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there [in heaven], only it will be coupled with eternal glory" (D&C 130:2). I can only imagine how it will be when we meet together in the next world, surrounded by glory, in total happiness with our friends and our families. That will be a wonderful time, and it will be forever. ■





When GOOD FRIENDS *Falter*

“**S**he and I were good friends, and we always had the same standards. But then . . .”

Does that sound familiar? We’ve all experienced it or seen it happen—a good friend starts to do things that aren’t right and encourages others to join in. Some of the toughest questions you may face are “Should I talk to my friend about this behavior?” and “Should I stop spending time with my friend if this behavior keeps going on?”

There isn’t one answer that fits every situation, so finding a solution will take faith and courage to heed the counsel in *For the Strength of Youth*: “As you seek to be a friend to others, do not compromise your standards. If your friends urge you to do things that are wrong, be the one to stand for the right, even if you stand alone. You may need to find other friends who will support you in keeping the commandments. Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost as you make these choices” ([2011], 16–17).

Here are just a couple of examples of youth who dealt with friends who started urging them down the wrong path.



If a friend who once had high standards slips ever lower, what should you do?

Letting Go

“I had a friend who began to encourage me to disregard my standards, and for a while I listened. I finally decided that enough was enough and I wasn’t going to let her influence me anymore. I prayed for strength and guidance, and because I was again living the way I know I should, I received the guidance I asked for. I eventually stopped hanging out with her, and in the months that have passed, my testimony has grown so much. Who you are friends with *definitely* makes a difference in your ability to live the way the gospel teaches.”

Margaret Denise K., 17, Utah, USA

Keeping Hope

“At the beginning of middle school, I met another member of the Church who was very spiritually strong. He was an Aaronic Priesthood holder and seemed like a good example of someone who lived the gospel. We became good friends and talked a lot about the Church. As we got older, his self-worth and ability to uphold his standards started to deteriorate. Though we were still somewhat friends, he associated with others who were not very good influences. I would hear him curse frequently and joke about immorality and other inappropriate things. Several of his friends

were atheists and would talk rudely about ‘Mormonism.’ Later, he became addicted to tea and, at age 13, got a girlfriend.

“I didn’t know what to do. I tried telling him in a friendly way of my concern for him several times, but he brushed me aside. Still I didn’t give up. I upheld my standards and tried to be an example for him. I didn’t want to stop being his friend, but as things got really bad, that path started looking better and better. Eventually, I got on my knees several times in prayer for his safety.

“Then his father got a job in another state. This upcoming move caused my



THE INFLUENCE OF FRIENDS

“Friends help to determine your future. You will tend to be like them and to be found where they choose to go. Remember, the path we follow in this life leads to the path we follow in the next. . . .

“The friends you choose will either help or hinder your success.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “In Harm’s Way,” Ensign, May 1998, 47.

friend’s eyes to be opened to all he had done. All I had tried to tell him for three years, he suddenly understood. During the next few weeks, he worked hard to undo his past as much as he could. When I spoke to him, he thanked me for my example and willingness to not give up on him. He was the happiest he had been in years and truly understood what it means to be a Latter-day Saint.

“For any friend who falters, I think it’s best to alert him of his actions. But if, like my friend, he won’t listen, don’t give up. This is probably when he’ll need a real friend the most. Keep your standards, even if he tempts you to do otherwise. Pray for him. I know that you can gain strength through this, and that you won’t be alone in your efforts. It’s easy to feel weak and out

of place when we stand for good. But through the weak, the Lord will do a mighty work.”

Collin Z., 16, Wyoming, USA

Again, there’s no one answer to the question “Should I stop hanging out with my friend?” But one thing is certain: always pray for the Spirit’s guidance and be willing to heed it. Your basic attitude should be to care. Care about your spiritual well-being and that of your friend. Care about your example and influence on your friend. Care about your friend’s influence on you. And as you have faith in Heavenly Father’s loving care, you’ll get the answers you’re looking for. ■



OUR SPACE

SHARING THE VIEW AND THE BOOK OF MORMON

While I was serving as a missionary in a small town in Wales, my companion and I were tracting a street leading up one of the many hills there. It was a warm

summer day. As we reached the top of the hill, the view was beautiful, so my companion and I decided to take a short break to enjoy the view and regain our energy.

As I got an orange out of my backpack, I saw a Chinese lady walking up the hill. I don't know why, but I waved to her. She happily waved back and walked over to sit by us. We started talking, and she explained that she came up the hill to enjoy the view because it reminded her of God and His love for her. She also told us that she had been ready to go back to China when a job in Wales came

up. She took it, believing that God provided this job for a reason she didn't know.

Soon after this first meeting, we started teaching her in a recent convert's home and shared many spiritual moments together. One of them I cherish the most. We presented her with a Chinese copy of the Book of Mormon with our testimonies written in the front. The Spirit was so strong that she started crying.

Not long after, I was transferred to another area. Unfortunately, I couldn't go back to that area for her baptism, but it will always strengthen me to think back to our first meeting high on a hilltop.

Jurek Bäder, Germany



TOGETHER FOREVER

"Families can be together forever through Heav'nly Father's plan" ("Families Can Be Together Forever," *Hymns*, no. 300). I love this Primary song, which teaches that families can be sealed for eternity. I prayed that this could be true for my family, especially after my father passed away.

Recently the Lord answered my prayer. My mother, my two brothers, and I were able to travel to the Manila Philippines Temple to be sealed together and to my father. It was our first time in the temple together, and I can still remember the happiness I saw in my mother's and brothers' eyes. There was a great feeling of joy there.

I know the temple is the house of the Lord and that those in the temple have the proper authority to perform sacred ordinances. I'm so grateful that through these ordinances, my family can be with my father again. Since going to the temple, we try to be a stronger family and do all we can to keep our covenants so that we can be together forever.

Crisanto Coloma, Philippines



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MALAN



What We Know about

PREMORTAL LIFE

The basic truths about life before we came to earth bless us with wonderful insights.

By Norman W. Gardner
Seminaries and Institutes

A young man who had decided to get married rather than serve a mission was persuaded to obtain his patriarchal blessing first. “During the blessing, he had a glimpse of who he was in the premortal world. He saw how valiant and influential he was in persuading others to follow Christ. Knowing who he really was, how could he not serve a mission?”¹ This is just one example of how knowledge of premortal life can make a difference for us.

“How old are you?” is easy to answer. Birthdays measure the age of our physical body. But really, we’re much older than that. Each of us “is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents” with “a divine nature and destiny.”² Before our spirit bodies were created, we each existed as “intelligence,” which “had no beginning, neither will it have an end.”³

Knowing that we are eternal beings with heavenly parents changes our lives by helping us see ourselves and our lives from a truly eternal perspective.

In our premortal life, we were taught lessons that prepared us to assist Heavenly Father in bringing about the salvation of His children (see D&C 138:56). We also had the agency to follow and obey God. Some of Father’s children distinguished themselves through their “exceeding faith and good works” and were foreordained, or given assignments, to serve in specific ways on earth (Alma 13:3). The greatest of those who followed Heavenly Father back then was His firstborn spirit son, Jesus Christ—or Jehovah, as He was known there.

The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that while in our premortal state, we were all present when God the Father

explained His plan for the salvation of His children. We learned that a Savior would be needed to overcome the problems brought on by the conditions of mortal life.⁴

Our Father in Heaven asked, “Whom shall I send [to be the Savior]?” Jesus Christ answered, “Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27). He was the Father’s “Beloved and Chosen from the beginning” (Moses 4:2) and was always meant to fulfill this role. But Lucifer interrupted and offered himself along with a proposal that would have destroyed the agency of man and exalted Lucifer above the throne of God (see Moses 4:1–4). Heavenly Father responded, “I will send the first” (Abraham 3:27). Lucifer rebelled and became known as Satan.

Division among spirits caused a war in heaven. A third part of God’s children turned away from Him and

followed Satan (see D&C 29:36–37). These rebellious spirits were denied physical bodies, were cast down to the earth, and continue to make war against the Saints of God (see D&C 76:25–29). The rest of God’s children shouted for joy because they could come to earth and because Jesus Christ was chosen to overcome sin and death (see Job 38:7).

In premortal life, we obtained gospel knowledge, testimony, and faith in the Savior and His Atonement. These things became an important protection and strength in the war in heaven. Those who followed God overcame Satan and his angels “by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). When we learn the gospel and gain a testimony here on earth, we are essentially relearning what we once knew and felt in our premortal life.

Knowing that everyone on earth chose to follow the Savior in the premortal life changes our lives by helping us when we do missionary work. As Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said: “Every child of God in mortality chose the Savior’s plan. Trust that given the opportunity, they will do so again.”⁵

Much like we cannot remember the first few years of mortal life, our memory of premortal life has been withheld. This was necessary to help us learn to walk by faith and prepare

us to become like Him. But we can be assured that we knew and loved our Heavenly Father. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) promised that “nothing is going to startle us more when we pass through the veil to the other side than to realize how well we know our Father and how familiar His face is to us.”⁶

Knowing that Heavenly Father knew and loved us changes our lives by making our prayers more personal and intimate.

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has taught: “There is no way to make sense out of life without a knowledge of the doctrine of premortal life. . . . When we understand the doctrine of premortal life, then things fit together and make sense.”⁷

How has your understanding of premortal life blessed you? ■

NOTES

1. Randall L. Ridd, “The Choice Generation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 57.
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 210; see also Doctrine and Covenants 93:29.
4. See *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 209.
5. Richard G. Scott, “I Have Given You an Example,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 34.
6. Ezra Taft Benson, “Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1988, 6.
7. Boyd K. Packer, “The Mystery of Life,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 18.

**OUR
PREMORTAL LIFE**

Here are some scriptures that relate to different aspects of the premortal existence:

Spirit Children

- Romans 8:16–17
- Doctrine and Covenants 93:23, 29, 33–34
- Abraham 3:22–23

Foreordination

- Jeremiah 1:5
- Alma 13:3
- Doctrine and Covenants 138:55–56

Jesus Christ—Firstborn

- John 1:1–2; 8:56–58; 17:5
- 1 Peter 1:19–20
- Doctrine and Covenants 93:7, 21

Council in Heaven

- Doctrine and Covenants 121:32
- Moses 4:1–4
- Abraham 3:24–28

War in Heaven

- Revelation 12:4, 7–11
- Doctrine and Covenants 29:36–37
- Doctrine and Covenants 76:25–29

“I lost a dear friend recently. How do I deal with the grief?”

The death of a friend is one of the most difficult trials you can face. Grieving is a normal feeling after such a loss. You feel sad because you cared for your friend. “Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die” (D&C 42:45).

Some of the difficult feelings that can come during the grieving process include sadness, anger, hopelessness, fatigue, loss of interest in activities, and feeling overwhelmed. But at the same time, people who grieve often feel peace as they seek the Lord and draw near to Him; they are receiving His promise: “Blessed are all they that mourn, for they shall be comforted” (3 Nephi 12:4). Grief hurts, but it also heals.

As you work through your feelings, try to focus on the positive. Treasure the good memories you have of your friend. Pray to feel the Savior’s peace and comfort. Find hope in Heavenly Father’s love, goodness, and plan of salvation.

Feeling grief doesn’t mean that you don’t have faith. President Thomas S. Monson spoke in general conference about the loss of his wife. He said, “To say that I miss her does not begin to convey the depth of my feelings.” He then spoke of trials and concluded: “We know that there are times when we will experience heartbreaking sorrow, when we will grieve, and when we may be tested to our limits. However, such difficulties allow us to change for the better, to rebuild our lives in the way our Heavenly Father teaches us” (“I Will Not Fail Thee, nor Forsake Thee,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 85, 87).

In what ways could your friend’s death inspire you to be better?



Combine Grief and Faith

Grieving is not a bad thing. (It can become bad, however, if you’re constantly depressed.) Combining grief and faith is the best way to adjust to the hardship of losing a loved one. Think about your friend now, in the spirit world, and what your friend could be doing. He or she loves you and wants you to be happy. Learning about the spirit world can increase your understanding of the plan of salvation and bring peace, hope, and faith. Don’t forget to pray to Heavenly Father for help. Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, know exactly how you feel and will help you if you ask sincerely.

Mary G., age 14, Virginia, USA



God Loves Your Friend

Even though it’s hard for you to deal with grief, our Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation can comfort you through the Holy Ghost that someday you can meet your friend again. And remember that life here on earth is just a very short moment for us to be tried and tested. Our Heavenly Father is providing a place for your friend. God loves His children.

Marvin S., age 16, Metro Manila, Philippines

Be Happy for Your Friend

When I have lost people I love, I try to remember that our Heavenly Father has a plan for them and that I can see them again. We can be happy for them because they do not have to suffer the afflictions of this mortal life any longer. It hurts that they are not physically present anymore, but we can look forward to being with them again.

Ariadna T., age 19, Mexico City, Mexico



Find Help in Scriptures

A good friend of mine recently died in a tragic car accident. I have found comfort through coming unto Christ. I had to gain a testimony of Christ's love for each one of us; I had to understand who we are as children of God; and most importantly I had to understand God's plan and will for His children. As I turned to Him through scriptures, church, and Church materials, I was able to gain that testimony and feel peace and comfort. Especially helpful was the youth lesson titled "How can I find comfort when someone I care about dies?" All of the scriptures, articles, and videos referenced in this lesson are amazing and have changed my life.

Madilin N., age 18, Iowa, USA

ABOUT SUICIDE

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

"The act of taking one's life is truly a tragedy because this single act leaves so many victims: first the one who dies, then the dozens of others—family and friends—who are left behind, some to face years of deep pain and confusion. . . .

"Obviously, we do not know the full circumstances surrounding every suicide. Only the Lord knows all the details, and he it is who will judge our actions here on earth.

"When he does judge us, I feel he will take all things into consideration: our genetic and chemical makeup, our mental state, our intellectual capacity, the teachings we have received, the traditions of our fathers, our health, and so forth. . . .

"Suicide is a sin—a very grievous one, yet the Lord will not judge the person who commits that sin strictly by the act itself. The Lord will look at that person's circumstances and the degree of his accountability at the time of the act."

From "Suicide: Some Things We Know, and Some We Do Not," *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 7, 8; *Liahona*, Mar. 1988, 17, 18.



DEATH IS PART OF GOD'S PLAN

"It has been hard for me to live on earth and see these young men upon whom we have leaned for support and comfort taken from us in the midst of their youth. Yes, it has been hard to be reconciled to these things. I have sometimes thought that I should have felt more reconciled to have been called away myself if it had been the will of God; yet I know we ought to be still and know it is of God, and be reconciled to His will; all is right."

The Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007)*, 178.

UPCOMING QUESTION

"Some of my friends think that going to church is a waste of time. How can I help them see that it can be a great blessing?"

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by March 15, 2015, at liahona.lds.org, by email to liahona@ldschurch.org, or by mail (see address on page 3).

The following information and permission must be included in your email or letter: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (email is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.

WE MISS

SOFÍA

*In the dark and in pain,
I prayed for my sister's
well-being.*



By Fernando Peralta

In 2012 I had completed seminary and high school, and a new world was opening in my life. The beginning of the year was great, especially the multistake youth camp. I felt blessed and protected by my Heavenly Father.

Years before, I had decided I would serve a full-time mission, so in 2012 I planned to dedicate myself to saving all the money I could. Thanks to my older sister, Sofía, I was able to quickly find a job at the company where she worked. On February 22, Sofía and I took the train to work. It was a beautiful day, but when we arrived at the destination, I heard a loud noise, and then everything went dark.

When I awoke, I was hurting and confused. Was my journey on earth coming to an end? I really wanted to be around to experience certain things, like going on a mission and having a family. So I prayed, asking Heavenly Father to give me the opportunity to live and serve a mission.

Lying in the tangled wreckage of the train, I looked around for my

sister, but I couldn't see her. Finally I heard firefighters asking everyone to stay calm, and I could feel hope in my heart. I prayed for my sister's well-being because I didn't know where she was. As I prayed, I felt great peace. I had to fight to endure the pain I felt, but Heavenly Father gave me the necessary strength.

After an hour I was rescued. I felt the Lord with me during that time. As I was taken to the hospital to have an operation on my leg, I couldn't stop thinking about my sister and wondering how she was. But every time I thought about her, I felt peace.

The next day my parents informed me that Sofía had not survived the accident. That news brought the greatest pain I have ever felt. But at the same time, I felt comfort and gratitude for the sacred covenants made by my parents in the temple in sealing our family together for eternity.

When I returned home from the hospital, the Lord blessed my family through our friends and relatives, who were our angels, giving us comfort. We will always be grateful

for that. Thanks to the power of the priesthood, I learned how to walk again much quicker than expected. I was able to walk normally after just a few months.

The gospel is beautiful every way you look at it. I am so grateful for temples and temple ordinances. I know that the Lord has something sacred prepared for my sister. Life without her is not easy, and it never will be, but the assurance and the peace we have is stronger than the pain we feel at her absence. We miss Sofía with all our hearts and remember her every day. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said that heaven without your family just wouldn't be heaven (see *Between Heaven and Earth* [DVD, 2005]), and I testify that is true.

God loves us, and He never leaves us alone. Isaiah 54:10 says, "My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." ■

The author lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

To send feedback about the Liahona, email liahona@ldschurch.org.

“DON'T YIELD TO SATAN'S LIE THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES.

Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!”

Elder Richard G. Scott
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
“Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,”
Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2014, 93.

SPECIAL WITNESS



Elder Richard G. Scott

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

Letters from Grandma Whittle

When Elder Richard G. Scott was young, his father was not a member of the Church. His mother was a member, but she didn't go to church very often. When Richard turned eight years old, he didn't get baptized. Then his Grandma Whittle came to visit.

Grandma Whittle was a very good example. She helped Richard and his brothers learn how important it is to be baptized and go to church. Soon Richard and his older brother were baptized.

Whenever Richard had to give a talk in church, he would call Grandma Whittle on the phone to get her ideas. Soon he would get a letter in the mail with a talk his grandma had written out for him. When he got a little older, she would send just an outline

with ideas to help him write his own talk. Richard always knew that Grandma Whittle loved him and loved the gospel.

In college Richard met another good example. Her name was Jeanene. One night she told him, "When I marry, it will be to a returned missionary in the temple." Richard decided to pray about going on a mission. Soon he and Jeanene both left on missions. After they came home, Richard and Jeanene were married in the Manti Utah Temple. ■





By Bishop Gary E. Stevenson
Presiding Bishop

It's Your Turn



Last year, people all over the world watched athletes from 89 countries compete in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Ten of these athletes were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Three of them even earned medals!

Work Hard

Let me tell you about Noelle Pikus-Pace, one of those Latter-day

Saint athletes. Her event was the skeleton. Imagine traveling headfirst with your face inches above the ground down a winding, icy track at 90 miles (145 km) an hour, all on a small sled! In the Olympics, Noelle had only four minutes—four 60-second runs—to win her medal.

For Noelle, this was not the first time she'd tried for the Olympics. In 2006 she broke her leg and couldn't compete in the Olympics. In 2010

she missed winning a medal by one-tenth of a second. But she didn't give up. She trained for hours, days, weeks, and months. In the 2014 Olympics, her runs were flawless! She won the silver medal!

Keep Trying

Christopher Fogt was a member of the team that won the bronze medal in the four-man bobsled race. He could have given up after a terrible crash in the 2010 Olympics. But like Noelle, he kept trying. And he too won a medal!

Help Others

The Latter-day Saint snowboarder from Australia, Torah Bright, surprised the world when she noticed that the American snowboarder Kelly Clark was nervous after a bad first run. Instead of focusing on her own performance, Torah hugged Kelly until Kelly could calm down. Because of this simple act of kindness from Torah, each girl got to stand on the winners' podium. Torah won a silver medal and Kelly won a bronze. If you have a

friend or family member who needs encouragement, help them too.

Your Turn!

Your eternal life is much like these athletes' experience. As a son or daughter of God, you lived with Him. You prepared to come to this earth for just a short time. Your life on earth is like the four minutes were for Noelle. Your actions here will decide if you win the prize of eternal life.

Checkpoints for You

Noelle, Christopher, and Torah had to take certain steps to be Olympic athletes. You have certain checkpoints to help you return to Heavenly Father. These are things like baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, priesthood ordinations, temple ordinances, and taking the sacrament each week.

To help you reach your checkpoints, you need to have daily prayer and scripture study and attend church. Obey the commandments, keep the covenants you've made, and follow the Lord's standards. If you need to repent,



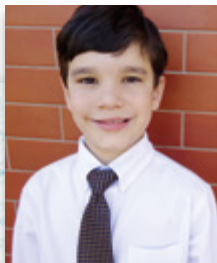
remember the miracle of the Atonement. Heavenly Father will not leave you on your own.

Remember, you have prepared for your time on earth. This is your moment to perform. Your time is now! ■

From "Your Four Minutes," Ensign or Liahona, May 2014, 84–86.

"This life is the time . . .
to prepare to meet God"
(Alma 34:32).

OUR PAGE



*"I want to be a missionary,"
by Samuel Q., age 8, Brazil.*

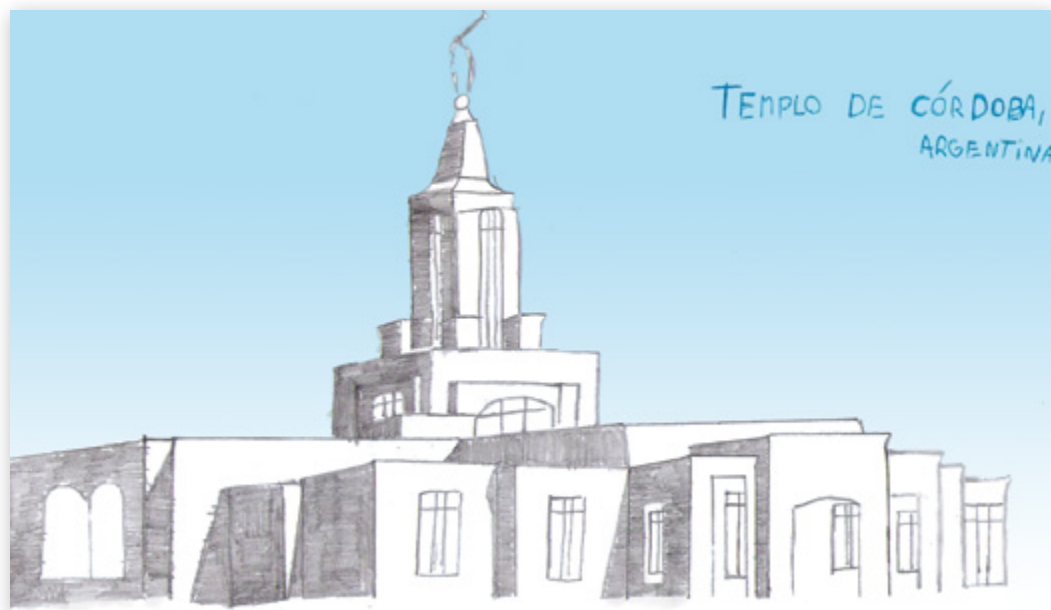


*"Creation," by Vivian A., age 6, Spain.
Vivian says, "I thank my Heavenly Father
for creating animals. They make the earth
beautiful with their colors and variety."*



*"Córdoba Temple,
Argentina" by Tiziano S.,
age 10, Argentina.*

*Tiziano says,
"I really want the temple
to be completed soon
so that when I turn 12,
I can go inside."*



“Heavenly Father is constantly raining blessings upon us.”

—President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

From “Living the Gospel Joyful,”
Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2014, 121.



ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC BARCLAY

By Barbara Hopf

Based on a true story

"I kneel to pray ev'ry day. I speak to Heav'nly Father" ("I Pray in Faith," Children's Songbook, 14).

"Come on, Fynn. It's time to go!" Johan said.

Fynn's brother, Johan, was waiting impatiently at the front door. He didn't want to be late for school.

Fynn frowned. He didn't want to go to school. His family had just moved to a new house. It was his first year at school, and he hadn't made any friends at

school yet. He missed his old friends.

"I'm scared!" Fynn said, running to his mother. "Why do I have to go to school?"

Fynn's mother gave him a hug. "It's going to be OK. Let's say a prayer," she said. "There's always time to pray."

They knelt down and asked Heavenly Father to help Fynn. Then Fynn and his brother went to school. The day went a little better.

Every morning after that, Fynn knelt down and said a

prayer asking Heavenly Father for help.

Slowly, things got better. Fynn made a friend, and he wasn't scared anymore. After a while, Fynn started liking school.

One day Fynn and his brother were walking to school, and Fynn felt happy. He noticed the sun shining. He thought about all the fun things he was learning. Suddenly, he stopped walking.

"I forgot something!" he said to Johan. Fynn ran back to their house.

There's Always Time to PRAY

*School was so hard.
Would things ever get better?*



His mother looked worried when he ran inside.

“What’s wrong?” she asked.

“I forgot to pray!” Fynn said. He knelt down. He wanted to thank Heavenly Father for helping him.

After ending his prayer, he gave his mom a hug. “There’s always time to pray!” he said.

Fynn smiled. His mom smiled. And as Fynn ran to catch up with his brother, he thought maybe Heavenly Father was smiling too. ■

The author lives in Bavaria, Germany.



Helping a New Friend



By Quinnley W.,
age 9,
Missouri, USA

A new girl joined our school class in the middle of the year. She looked and spoke differently than the other students. She had moved around a lot

and had a hard time making friends. She had sad things happening in her family and came to school crying on some days. I knew I wanted to try to help this girl, but I wasn't exactly sure what I should do because she did not always like to talk with other children. I prayed about what I should do and could feel the Holy Ghost whisper that I should just try to be her friend.



Be brave!

I helped her with her school-work, and told her that our Heavenly Father gave her special talents for her to use and share with others. I invited her to play with me and other students at recess. A few months later, she said I was the first friend she ever had.

She had to move again, and I felt really sad. I asked the school

secretary to send a letter to her at her new address. In the letter, I told my friend I would miss her and that she would always be my friend. I drew pictures of us playing together and reminded her of some of her talents. I told her she should be brave and try

to make a new friend because she could help someone else. I prayed that she would find a friend in her new school and that the other children would be nice to her.

I know that Heavenly Father loves all of His children, and I am thankful that He helps us to help each of them. ■

When Jesus Christ Was Baptized

(Simplified)

Words and music by
Jeanne P. Lawler

Reverently ♩ = 88-96

E^b Fm B^b7

1. When Je - sus Christ was bap - tized Down in the Riv - er
2. And now when I am bap - tized, I'll fol - low His ex -

E^b C⁷ F⁷ B^b7

Jor - dan, Three mem - bers of the God - head Were pre - sent there in
am - ple— Be bap - tized by im - mer - sion Through sa - cred priest - hood

E^b Fm B^b7

love. The Fa - ther spoke from hea - ven When Je - sus Christ was
pow'r. Then I will be a mem - ber Of Heav'n - ly Fa - ther's

E^b C⁷ F⁷ B^b7 E^b

bap - tized; The Ho - ly Ghost de - scend - ed As gent - ly as a dove.
king - dom And have the Ho - ly Spir - it To guide me ev - 'ry hour.

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Jesus Was Baptized

By Erin Sanderson and Jean Bingham

What would it have been like to watch Jesus being baptized? The New Testament tells us about what happened that holy day.

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to **Jordan** unto **John**, to be baptized of him.

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, **went up straightway out of the water:** and, lo, the heavens

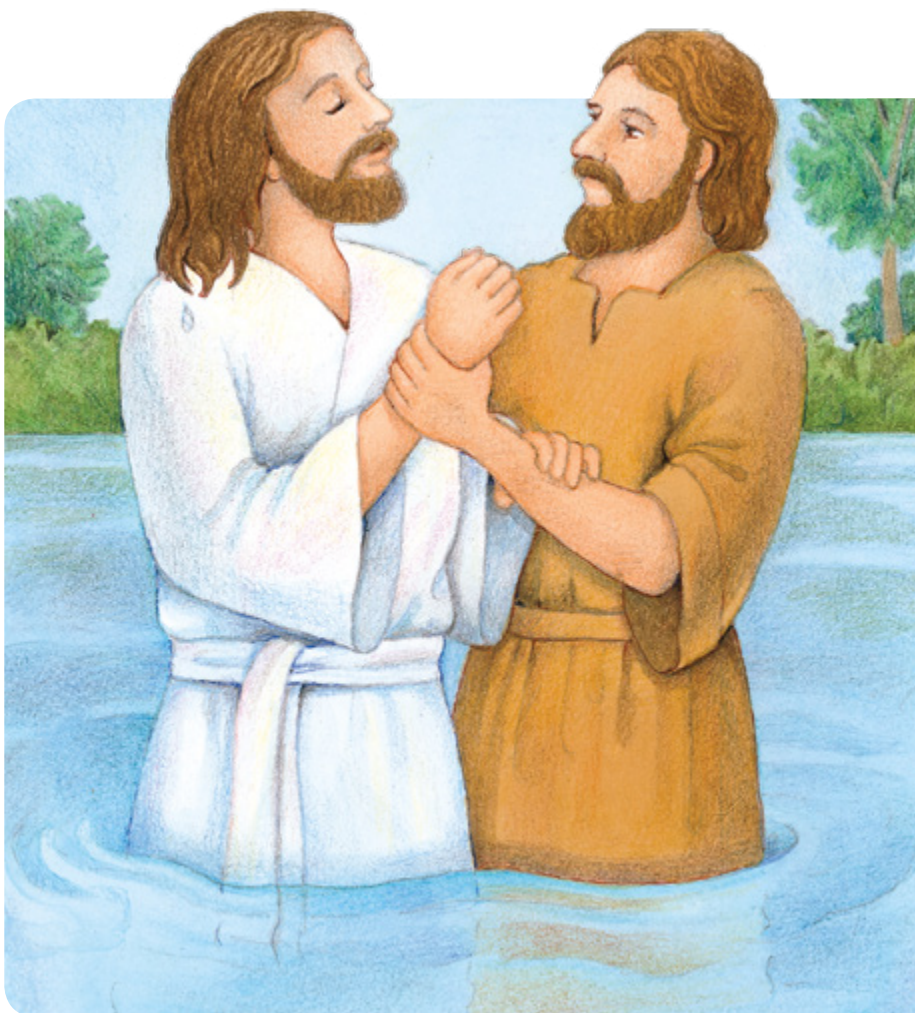
were opened unto him, and he saw the **Spirit of God descending like a dove**, and lighting upon him:

“And lo **a voice from heaven**, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:13, 16–17).

On the special day when you are baptized and confirmed, you are following Jesus Christ. You become

like a new person—you promised to always remember and follow Jesus Christ, you become a member of His Church, you received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and you became completely clean. Heavenly Father is very pleased with you. Baptism opens the gate to the path that leads us back to Heavenly Father. ■

The authors live in Utah, USA.



LEARN MORE

Jordan—the River Jordan

John—John the Baptist

went up straightway out of the water—stood up right after going completely under the water

the Spirit of God—the Holy Ghost

descending like a dove—coming down as gently and peacefully as a dove

a voice from heaven—Heavenly Father’s voice



FAMILY TALK

Let those who have already been baptized tell how they felt on that special day. They could also share how they try to keep their baptismal covenants and how the Holy Ghost has guided, comforted, taught, or warned them.

Song: “When Jesus Christ Was Baptized”
(*Children’s Songbook*, 102)

Scriptures: Matthew 3:13, 16–17; Articles of Faith 1:4

Videos: Go to Biblevideos.lds.org to watch “The Baptism of Jesus.”

SCRIPTURE TIP!

Memorizing a scripture verse can be as easy as 1-2-3.

1. Write each word of the verse on a different card or paper. Put the cards in order and read the verse out loud.
2. Mix the cards up and put them back in order. Read the verse again.
3. Take away a card and read the verse again. Keep taking away cards until you can say the whole verse without any cards.

Now that you’ve memorized it, you can take the verse with you wherever you go!

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS

Cut out the word strips below and put them in a container. Take turns choosing questions and using the scriptures to answer them.

Who baptized Jesus? (Matthew 3:13)

Why did Jesus want to be baptized? (Matthew 3:15; 2 Nephi 31:7, 9)

Why do we need to be baptized? (John 3:5)

What happened right after Jesus was baptized? (Matthew 3:16–17)

What does *immersion* mean? (D&C 76:51; Moses 6:64–65)

How do we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? (D&C 33:15)

What do we promise when we are baptized? (Mosiah 18:8–13; D&C 20:37)

What does Heavenly Father promise us when we are baptized? (D&C 76:52–56)

What must we do after baptism to be able to live forever with Heavenly Father? (2 Nephi 31:18–20)

Juliana Gives a Talk

By Jane McBride Choate

Based on a true story



Juliana was a little bit scared to give a talk in Primary. Grandma gave Juliana a hug. “Heavenly Father will help you,” she whispered.



When it was her turn, Juliana saw her friends, her teacher, and Grandma and Grandpa all smiling at her. Then she gave her talk.



“I am a child of God. I show that I love Heavenly Father by learning about Jesus, saying my prayers, and helping my family. I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus love me too. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”



After Primary, Juliana gave Grandma a big hug. “I wasn’t scared,” she said. “I knew that Heavenly Father was helping me.” ■

All Children of God

Every child is a special child of God.
Can you find Juliana? How many
girls can you count? How many boys?
How many are wearing stripes? How
many are wearing yellow? How many
have glasses?





By Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008)
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

TRUE LOVE

Love leads us to the glory and grandeur of eternal life.

Love is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the pathway of discipleship. It comforts, counsels, cures, and consoles. It leads us through valleys of darkness and through the veil of death. In the end, love leads us to the glory and grandeur of eternal life.

For me, the Prophet Joseph Smith has always exemplified the pure love of Christ. Many asked why he gained so many followers and retained them. His answer: “It is because I possess the principle of love.”¹

The story is told of a 14-year-old boy who had come to Nauvoo in search of his brother who lived near there. The young boy had arrived in winter with no money and no friends. When he inquired about his brother, the boy was taken to a large house that looked like a hotel. There he met a man who said, “Come in, son, we’ll take care of you.”

The boy accepted and was brought into the house, where he was fed, warmed, and given a bed to sleep in.

The next day it was bitter cold, but in spite of that, the boy prepared himself to walk the eight miles to where his brother was staying.



When the man of the house saw this, he told the young boy to stay for a while. He said there would be a team coming soon and that he could ride back with them.

When the boy protested, saying that he had no money, the man told him not to worry about that, that they would take care of him.

Later the boy learned that the man of the house was none other than Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet. This boy remembered this act of charity for the rest of his life.²

In a message of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir’s *Music and the Spoken Word*, a story was told about an elderly man and woman who had been married for many decades. Because the wife was slowly losing her sight, she could no longer take care of herself the way she had done

for so many years. Without being asked, the husband began to paint her fingernails for her.

“He knew that she could see her fingernails when she held them close to her eyes, at just the right angle, and they made her smile. He liked to see her happy, so he kept painting her nails for more than five years before she passed away.”³

That is an example of the pure love of Christ. Sometimes the greatest love is not found in the dramatic scenes that poets and writers immortalize. Often, the greatest manifestations of love are the simple acts of kindness and caring we extend to those we meet along the path of life.

True love lasts forever. It is eternally patient and forgiving. It believes, hopes, and endures all things. That is the love our Heavenly Father bears for us. ■

From “The Great Commandment,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2007, 28–29.

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 5:498.
2. Mark L. McConkie, *Remembering Joseph: Personal Recollections of Those Who Knew the Prophet Joseph Smith* (2003), 57.
3. “Selflessness,” Sept. 23, 2007, broadcast of *Music and the Spoken Word*; available at musicandthespokenword.com/spoken-messages.

INSIGHTS



What is the problem with focusing on the flaws of others?

“As [a] man was walking past his neighbor’s house, he noticed in the middle of [the] beautiful lawn a single, enormous, yellow dandelion weed. . . . Why didn’t his neighbor pull it out? Couldn’t he see it? . . . This solitary dandelion bothered [the man] beyond description, and he wanted to do something about it. Should he just pluck it out? Or spray it with weed killer? Perhaps if he went under cover of night, he could remove it secretly. These thoughts totally occupied his mind as he walked toward his own home. He entered his house without even glancing at his own front yard—which was blanketed with hundreds of yellow dandelions. . . . I’m not sure why we are able to diagnose and recommend remedies for other people’s ills so well, while we often have difficulty seeing our own.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Lord, Is It I?” *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 56, 58.

Also in This Issue

FOR YOUNG ADULTS

STRONG PADDLES,
STRONG TESTIMONIES IN
French Polynesia

This young French Polynesian couple has found that living the gospel successfully depends on the same principles that help them succeed in their favorite sport.



p. 46

FOR YOUTH



p. 48

LOOK TO GOD EACH DAY

Learn why relying daily on the Lord is so important and how He helps us develop faith in Him day by day.

FOR CHILDREN

It's Your Turn

Just like Olympic athletes, we need to use our time here on earth to prepare.



p. 66

