

Nourishing the Soul through Institute

By helping students draw closer to Heavenly Father, make friends, and set priorities, institute strengthens testimonies and changes lives.

STRENGTHENING MY TESTIMONY

I am frequently surprised at what I can learn at institute. I don't remember ever attending class without coming away having learned something new or understanding some

Institute is a great place to learn the gospel and build friendships with other Latter-day Saints.

gospel principle better. As a result, my life has changed.

Among the many blessings I have received by attending institute are improved family relationships and an increased interest in the scriptures. It has also increased my testimony. Before attending institute, I wasn't sure that I wanted to serve a mission. Now I know that serving a mission is what I need to do.

Institute has been a wonderful experience for me. It has helped me understand and obey the Church's standards. The doctrines of the Church are the means of salvation and exaltation, and I am grateful to be able to be learning about them at institute.

Alberto Avilez Rodríguez, Mexico





CHANGING MY GOALS

In sacrament meeting one Sunday, I listened intently to a speaker talk about institute. He shared the words of Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, saying, “[Institute] has enriched my life, and I know it will do the same for you. It will put a shield of protection around you to keep you free from the temptations and trials of the world.”¹ It was then I realized that the truth of Elder Perry’s words had manifested itself to me already. How grateful I was for the blessings that had come to me because I attended institute.

Not long before, I had begun an institute class on the teachings of Isaiah. To this day it remains the most life-altering class I have ever taken. That semester had been a confusing time for me; not all of my goals and priorities were in line with the principles of the gospel. However, I attended institute regularly and participated in numerous one-on-one discussions about Church doctrine with the institute instructor. Over time, as my ideas changed, I slowly and carefully altered my goals to fit the Lord’s plan for me.

It wasn’t until hearing Elder Perry’s quote in sacrament meeting that Sunday that I realized exactly how these new goals were blessing me. My entire life was significantly better when I attended institute. I was much more receptive to the Spirit and succumbed to temptations far less frequently. My attitude and my outlook had improved because of my attendance.

Krista Wren, Arizona, USA

NOTE

1. L. Tom Perry, “Receive Truth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 61–62.



A PROPHETIC PROMISE

“Don’t neglect the opportunity of attending seminary and institute classes.

Participate and gain all you can from the scriptures taught in these great religious-education settings. They will

prepare you to present the message of the restored gospel to those you have opportunity to meet.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Raising the Bar,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 48.

SHOWING FAITH

My love for institute started back in seminary. I joined the Church at age 14, and I had a thirst for knowledge. I enjoyed learning about the gospel and loved the admirable friends and teachers I met along the way.

At times attending seminary was difficult. My family, who are not members of the Church, weren’t supportive of my attendance. But with help from other Latter-day Saints, I was able to go to early-morning seminary. My family could see that I was serious about my membership in the Church. It was my way of going the extra mile.

Just as seminary enriched my life when I was a teenager, institute has enriched my life during my



Institute is for single and married students, generally ages 18 to 30.

FINDING NEW FRIENDS

A few years after my mission, I moved to a city where I didn't know anybody. I went to institute expecting to make new friends and begin socializing with other young single adults in the area, as I had previously done.

Initially, however, I found this difficult. No one was unkind, but there seemed to be little going on, and I sometimes felt lonely and distanced from those who already knew each other well. In contrast, I quickly made good friends outside of the Church.

It sometimes seemed that not going to institute would be easier than going. I didn't have a ride, so I would have to walk or cycle each week to get there. I had found good friends with similar interests elsewhere. Besides, I had already graduated from institute.

However, as I thought about all of these reasons not to go, I remembered how much I had grown in the past because of the lessons I learned and friends I made at institute. Institute had nurtured my testimony and helped me better understand the Lord's plan for me. I decided to keep attending, and I am glad I did. Gradually during that year I did make good friends at institute. I received invitations to social events and over time became much more involved.

young adult years. I have treasured up the words of Christ in my heart and in my mind (see D&C 6:20; 84:85). These teachings helped me serve the Lord more effectively as a missionary.

I am grateful for institute and know that it is an inspired program because I have seen its blessings in my life and in the lives of others.

Malinda Morrison, Western Australia, Australia

GROWING CLOSER TO THE LORD

Ever since I began to attend institute regularly, tremendous spiritual blessings have entered my life. I have developed Christlike love for my fellow institute students, my faith in the Lord is growing stronger, and I have drawn closer to Jesus Christ through scripture study.

The lessons give me direction by helping me understand better how to use my agency. They help me face challenges with a positive viewpoint, and I have learned that God is always near to help me overcome my struggles. When I attend institute, I find answers to my questions. Each time I put into practice the teachings from my classes, other things in my life seem to fall into their proper places a little more easily.

I feel that participating in institute is one of the best ways I can use my time while I am young.

Ngozichi Okwandu, Abia, Nigeria



It was hard to attend institute in a new area at first, but because I kept going anyway, I have received many spiritual and social blessings that I could not have received otherwise.

Dave J. Green, England, United Kingdom

COMING HOME

I was living away from home for the first time when my parents separated. It was only my first month of college, and as my family life shifted, I struggled to understand the meaning of the word *home*. When my parents divorced and my family moved out of the home I had lived in for the last 18 years, I was especially confused. I knew I wasn't homeless, but I certainly felt that way.

I have often heard the Church described as a "refuge from the storm" (D&C 115:6). Institute became that refuge for me as I battled this new storm in my life. I enrolled in institute, and while I don't recall the exact words spoken in the lessons, I will never forget the feelings of peace and comfort that came to me as I listened. I began to discover the love my Heavenly Father has for me, and I became much more closely acquainted with the best counselor I have ever found: Jesus Christ.

I have to pay for my college education, yet I learn the most valuable lessons from institute classes, which are available to me for free. I see now that the definition of *home* isn't necessarily the house in which you grow up but a place where life's lessons are taught and love abounds. Because of what I learned and the Spirit I felt, institute has become a new home for me. It is wonderful having a place where I feel loved and welcome. ■

Suzanne Goble, Utah, USA



Alberto



Krista



Malinda



Ngozichi



Dave



Suzanne

HOW DO I FIND AN INSTITUTE PROGRAM NEAR ME?

Visit <http://institute.lds.org> for information about any of the more than 500 institute locations worldwide. In many cases, you can register for classes online.

Don't have Internet access? Your bishop or branch president has a list of institute locations.

