

Pickles, Turnips, and Testimony

INSPIRATION FROM THE LIFE AND
TEACHINGS OF LORENZO SNOW

As you study President Lorenzo Snow's teachings this year, you will come to know him as a prophet, seer, and revelator whose counsel is remarkably relevant today.

If you have ever seen a portrait of Lorenzo Snow, the fifth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you probably remember his long white beard and his kind face. And if you have paused for a few minutes to examine such a portrait, you may have been drawn to President Snow's eyes—tired but not weary, aged but full of energy and light.

You may have heard that President Snow was inspired to preach about tithing, and you might recall reading something about a sacred experience he had in the Salt Lake Temple.

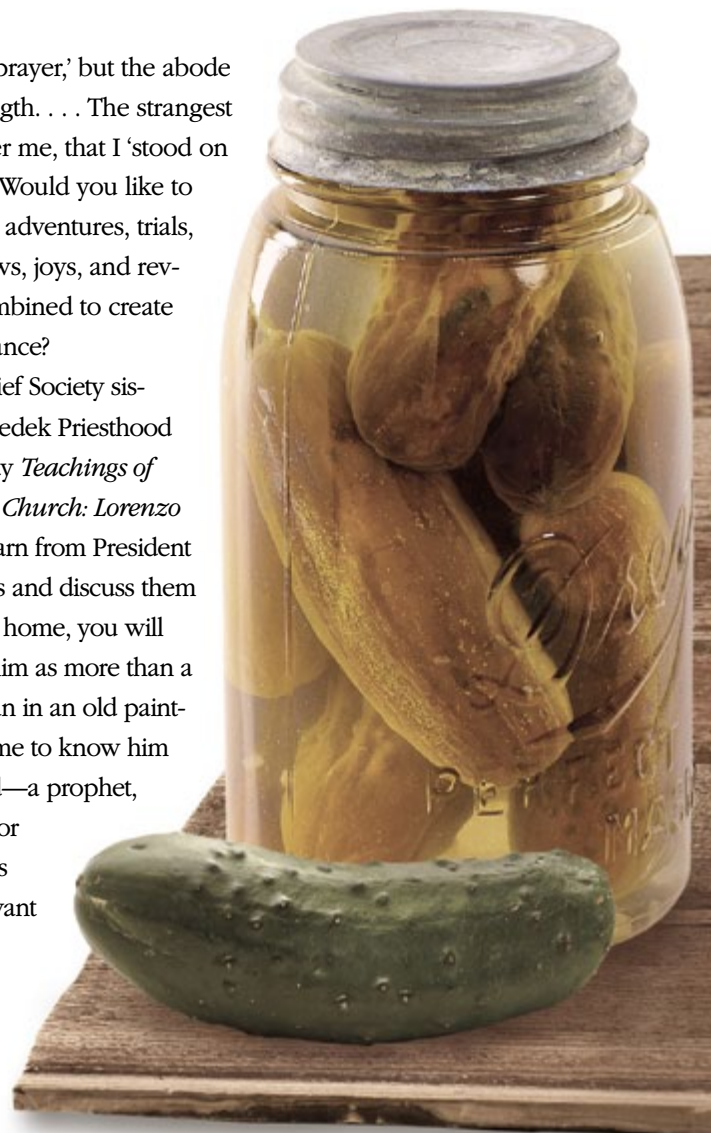
But do you know what led to his temple experience and what resulted from it? Are you curious to know the story about the revelation he received on the law of tithing?

And what about his eyes and his face? After meeting President Snow, a minister of another faith wrote: "His face was a power of peace; his presence a benediction of peace. In the tranquil depths of his eyes were not only the

'home of silent prayer,' but the abode of spiritual strength. . . . The strangest feeling stole over me, that I 'stood on holy ground.'"¹ Would you like to know about the adventures, trials, triumphs, sorrows, joys, and revelations that combined to create such a countenance?

This year, Relief Society sisters and Melchizedek Priesthood holders will study *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow*. As you learn from President Snow's teachings and discuss them at church and at home, you will come to know him as more than a kind-looking man in an old painting. You will come to know him as a man of God—a prophet, seer, and revelator whose counsel is remarkably relevant today.

Just to whet your appetite, here are a few samples of the



BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Lorenzo Snow was born on April 3, 1814, in Mantua, Ohio, USA. His parents, Rosetta and Oliver Snow, raised him and his six siblings in a home dedicated to faith, hard work, service, and education. These foundational principles prepared him to embrace the restored gospel. In June 1836 he joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, influenced by the promptings of the Holy Ghost and some gentle prodding from his sister Eliza, who had already joined the Church. A little less than a year later, he was called to serve as a full-time missionary.

Over the next 12 years, he served several other missions in the United States, and he also led a group of Latter-day Saint pioneers to the Salt Lake Valley. He was a devoted, energetic missionary, laboring in Italy, the Hawaiian Islands, and the western United States. He was ordained an Apostle on February 12, 1849. He also participated in other areas of Church leadership, including more than 5 years of service as the first president of the Salt Lake Temple. On October 10, 1898, he was set apart as President of the Church. He died on October 10, 1901, in Salt Lake City, Utah.



teachings and stories you will find in this year's course of study. In the following paragraphs, the chapter and page numbers refer to *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow*.

You might remember an interesting general conference address in which Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles compared the process of conversion to the process of pickling a cucumber.² Elder Bednar wasn't the first Apostle to make this comparison. President Snow shared a similar insight 150 years earlier:

“Place a cucumber in a barrel of vinegar and there is but little effect produced upon it the first hour, nor in the first 12 hours. Examine it and you will find that the effect produced is merely upon the rind, for it requires a longer time to pickle it. A person's being baptized into this church has an effect upon him, but not the effect to pickle him immediately. It does not establish the law of right and of duty in him during the first 12 or 24 hours; he must remain in the church, like the cucumber in the vinegar, until he becomes saturated with the right spirit.”³

When President Snow spoke of conversion, he spoke from experience. He often told of two events—one that occurred before he joined the Church and one that occurred shortly after his baptism and confirmation—that helped him become “saturated with the right spirit.” You can read accounts of these experiences on pages 1, 3, 59, and 61–62.

“Why is [a] man called to act as president over a people?” President Snow once asked. “Is it in order to acquire an influence and then to use that influence directly for his own aggrandizement? No, but on the contrary, he is called to act in such a position on the same principle as the priesthood was given to the Son of God, that he should make sacrifices. For himself? No,



President Snow preached that paying tithing brought blessings. Tithing used to be received at offices like the one shown here (Salt Lake City, 1880s). Left: In preparation for hosting some friends, President Snow made candle holders out of turnips to illuminate his log home.

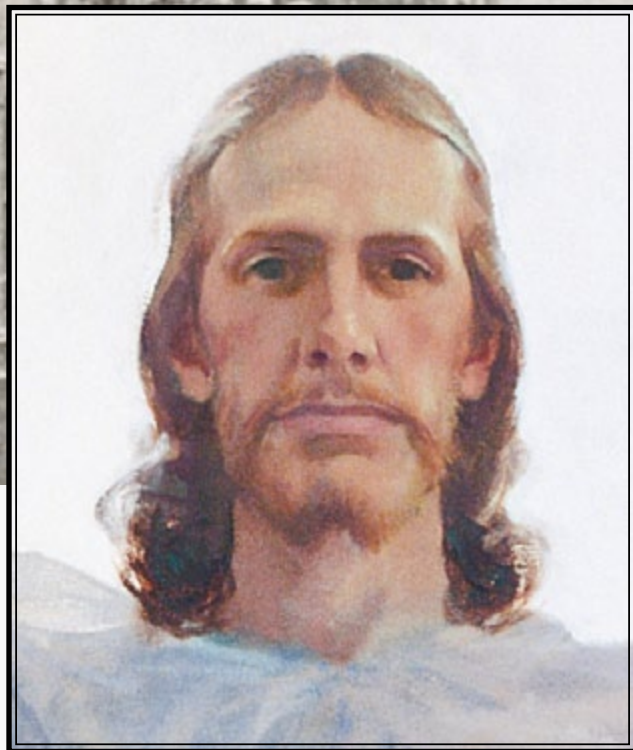
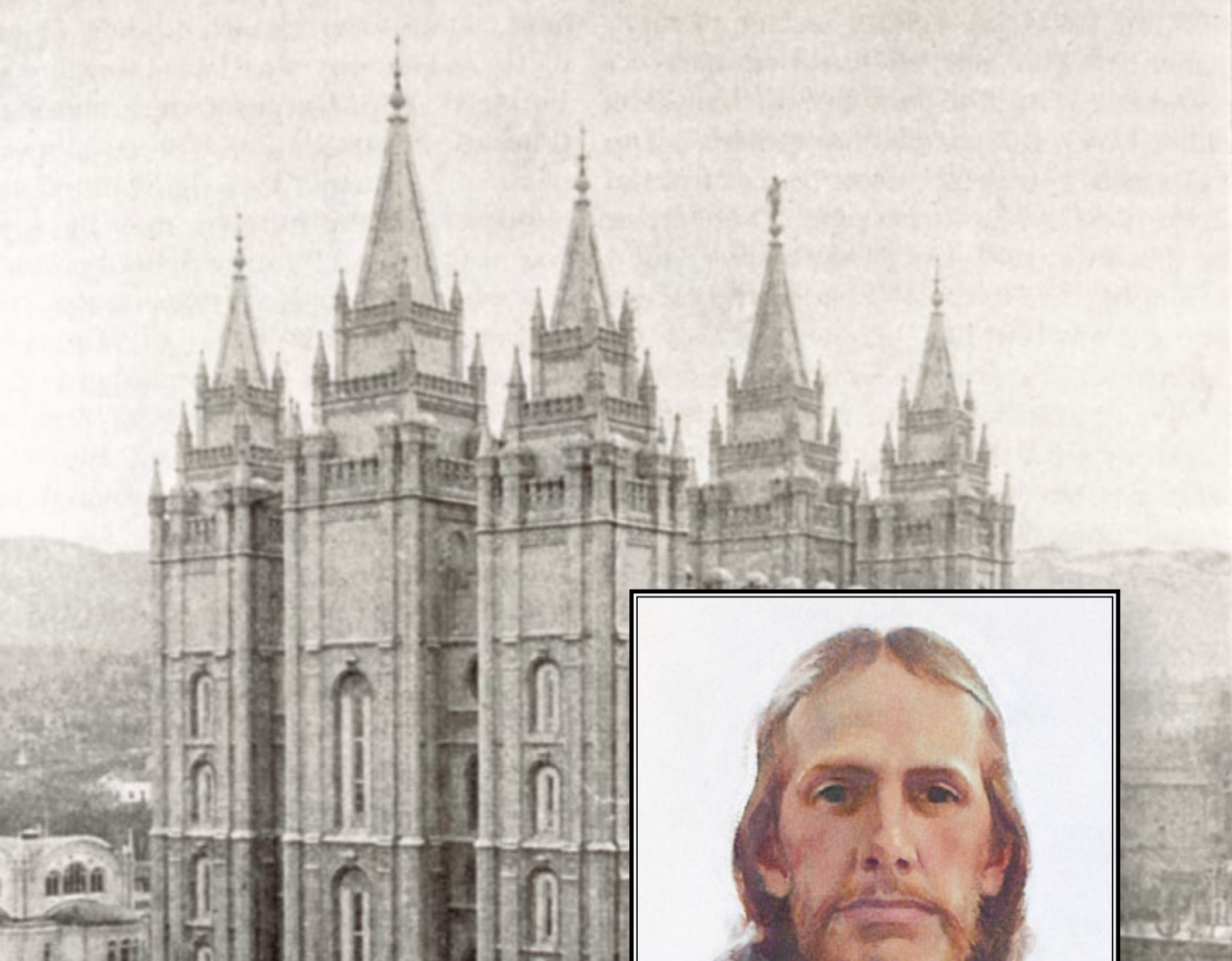
but in the interests of the people over whom he presides. . . . To become the servant of his brethren, not their master, and to work in their interest and welfare.”⁴

As a Church leader, President Snow practiced this principle, and sometimes he found creative ways to do so. For example, he once used turnips, bedsheets, and straw to lift the spirits of a group of suffering Saints. This account is found in chapter 7. To read some of his teachings about leadership in the Church, see chapter 18.

President Snow was a powerful, creative, and effective leader because he knew who the real Leader is. He taught, “The great work now being accomplished—the gathering of the people from the nations of the earth had not its origin in the mind of any man or any set of men; but it emanated from the Lord Almighty.”⁵ In response to a gathering of Church members who honored him on his 85th birthday, he said, “I feel that whatever I have accomplished that it is not Lorenzo Snow, and the scenes that have brought me to this position as President of the Church—it is not Lorenzo Snow, but the Lord has done it.”⁶

He taught this truth throughout his ministry, but he was reminded of it in a sacred and personal way just before he became President of the Church. He became the senior Apostle in the Church at the death of President Wilford Woodruff on September 2, 1898. Considering himself inadequate to carry this responsibility, he went alone to a room in the Salt Lake Temple to pray. He pleaded for guidance but felt no answer to his prayer, so after a time he left the room and entered a large hallway. It was there that the answer came. The resurrected Savior stood before him, about three feet (1 m) off the floor, and told him how to go forward with the leadership of the Church. To learn more about this experience, see chapter 20.

President Snow is well known for receiving a revelation on the law of tithing. For members of the Church in 1899, this revelation began with a bold declaration: “The time has now come for every Latter-day Saint, who calculates to be prepared for the future and to hold his feet strong upon a proper foundation, to do the will of the Lord and to pay his tithing in full. That is the word of the Lord to you.”⁷



Lorenzo Snow had the sacred experience of seeing the resurrected Lord in the Salt Lake Temple.

Latter-day Saints responded faithfully to their prophet's counsel, and the Lord blessed them individually and collectively as a result. The influence of that revelation continues today, as Church members all over the world receive spiritual and temporal blessings through obedience to the law of tithing. To read about the experience that led to this revelation and the blessings that followed it, see chapter 12.

Like every prophet, President Snow bore a powerful witness of Jesus Christ. He taught: "We are all dependent upon Jesus Christ, upon his coming into the world to open the way whereby we might secure peace, happiness and exaltation. And had he not made these

exertions we never could have been secured in these blessings and privileges which are guaranteed unto us in the gospel."⁸ He testified of the Savior's birth, mortal ministry, Atonement, personal involvement in His restored Church, and Second Coming. For more words of testimony about Jesus Christ, see chapter 24.

Of course, this short article can give you only a taste of President Snow's life and ministry. In your study of

Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow, you will find many other inspiring stories, including accounts of his first teaching opportunity as a missionary, his complete surprise at being called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, his feelings when he was on a ship in the Atlantic Ocean during a terrible storm, and four instances of the power of the priesthood saving people (including Lorenzo Snow himself) from death. You can learn much from his teachings on a variety of subjects, including unity, humility, covenants, temple work, family relationships, striving for perfection, priesthood, Relief Society, and the joy of sharing the gospel.

If you have taken time to read and ponder some of the accounts and teachings mentioned in this article—or even if you have determined that you will read them sometime soon—you can be assured that President Snow would be pleased with your effort. He was a lifelong learner, and he taught that we should “exert ourselves” so we can “advance in the principles of truth” and “increase in heavenly knowledge.” He urged, “Each last day or each last week should be the best that we have ever experienced, that is, we should advance ourselves a little every day, in knowledge and wisdom, and in the ability to accomplish good.”¹⁰

May your life be enriched this year through your study of *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow*. As you study, you can have an experience similar to that of the good minister who met President Snow face to face. Seeing beyond that kind face and those tranquil eyes, you too can feel that you stand on holy ground—not because you know Lorenzo Snow but because you have drawn nearer to your Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, of whom he was a witness. ■

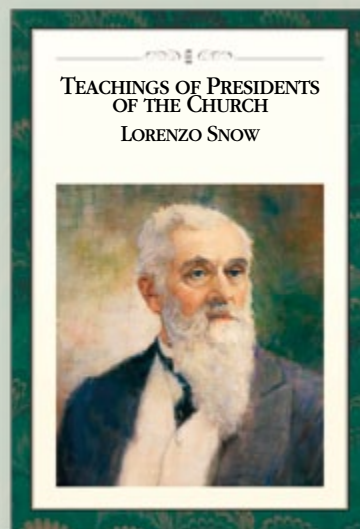
NOTES

1. Reverend Prentiss, quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 30.
2. See David A. Bednar, “Ye Must Be Born Again,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2007, 19–22.
3. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 68.
4. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 219.
5. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 153.
6. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 148.
7. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 157.
8. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 280–81.
9. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 65.
10. *Teachings: Lorenzo Snow*, 103.

FEATURES OF *TEACHINGS OF PRESIDENTS OF THE CHURCH: LORENZO SNOW*

This book is the next addition to your personal and family library of *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*. There are now 11 books in the series, which gives inspired understanding on many gospel topics. Here are some of this book’s key features:

- Inspiring statements from President Lorenzo Snow on more than 75 gospel topics.
- New artwork and photographs from Lorenzo Snow’s life that most members have never seen.
- Three types of teaching and learning aids in each chapter: thought-provoking questions, scriptures related to the chapter’s topic, and teaching helps to improve class participation and discussion.
- Three pages of instructions to help members enhance their study of the book and teach with inspiration at home or at church.



The book is also available online at LDS.org and in the Gospel Library app (in English) at mobile.lds.org.