



By **Elder Juan A. Uceda**  
Of the Seventy

# He Teaches Us to Put Off the Natural Man

*I bear witness of the reality and power of the Savior's Atonement to cleanse, purify, and make us and our homes holy.*

One morning a family gathered to study the scriptures as usual. As they gathered, the father felt a negative spirit: some members of the family did not look very excited to participate. They had family prayer, and as they started to read the scriptures, the father noticed that one of the children did not have her personal set of scriptures with her. He invited her to go to her room and bring her scriptures. She reluctantly did so, and after a period of time that seemed like an eternity, she returned, sat down, and said, "Do we really have to do this now?"

The father thought to himself that the enemy of all righteousness wanted to create problems so that they would not study the scriptures. The father, trying to stay calm, said, "Yes, we have to do this now because this is what the Lord wants us to do."

She responded, "I don't really want to do this now!"

The father then lost his patience, raised his voice, and said, "This is my home, and we will always read the scriptures in my home!"

The tone and volume of his words

hurt his daughter, and with her scriptures in hand, she left the family circle, ran to her bedroom, and slammed the door. Thus ended the family scripture study—no harmony and little love being felt at home.

The father knew that he had done wrong, so he went to his own bedroom and knelt down to pray. He pleaded with the Lord for help, knowing that he had offended one of His children, a daughter whom he truly loved. He implored the Lord to restore the spirit of love and harmony at home and enable them to be able to continue studying the scriptures as a family. As he was praying, an idea came to his mind: "Go and say, 'I'm sorry.'" He continued to pray earnestly, asking for the Spirit of the Lord to come back into his home. Once again the idea came: "Go and say, 'I'm sorry.'"

He really wanted to be a good father and do the right thing, so he stood up and went to his daughter's bedroom. He gently knocked on the door several times, and there was no answer. So he slowly opened the door and found his girl sobbing and crying on her bed. He knelt next to her

and said with a soft and tender voice, "I'm sorry. I apologize for what I did." He repeated, "I'm sorry, I love you, and I don't want to hurt you." And then from the mouth of a child came the lesson that the Lord wanted to teach him.

She stopped crying, and after a brief silence, she took her scriptures into her hands and started to look up some verses. The father watched as those pure and delicate hands turned the pages of the scriptures, page after page. She came to the verses she sought and started to read very slowly with a soft voice: "For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father."<sup>1</sup>

While he was still kneeling next to her bed, humility overcame him as he thought to himself, "That scripture was written for me. She has taught me a great lesson."

Then she turned her eyes to him and said, "I am sorry. I am sorry, Daddy."

At that very moment the father realized she did not read that verse to apply that scripture to him, but she read it applying it to herself. He opened his arms and embraced her. Love and harmony had been restored in this sweet moment of reconciliation born of the word of God and the Holy Ghost. That scripture, which his daughter remembered from her own personal scripture study, had touched his heart with the fire of the Holy Ghost.



My beloved brethren, our homes have to be places where the Holy Spirit may dwell. “Only the home can compare with the temple in sacredness.”<sup>2</sup> There is no place for the natural man in our homes. The natural man is inclined to “cover [his] sins, or to gratify [his] pride, [his] vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, [and when he acts] in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.”<sup>3</sup>

We who hold the Aaronic or the Melchizedek Priesthood ought to always remember that “no power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness, and

pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile.”<sup>4</sup>

Contention departs our homes and our lives as we strive to live these Christlike attributes. “And ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses; for verily I say unto you, he that forgiveth not his neighbor’s trespasses when he says that he repents, the same hath brought himself under condemnation.”<sup>5</sup> “I am sorry. I am sorry, Daddy.”

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, teaches us how to establish peace in our homes.

He teaches us to be submissive, or in other words, to yield to the will or power of the Lord. “Go and say, ‘I am sorry.’”

He teaches us to be meek, or in other words, to be “mild of temper; soft; gentle; not easily provoked or irritated; yielding; given to forbearance under injuries.”<sup>6</sup>

He teaches us to be humble, or in other words, “lowly; modest; meek; submissive; opposed to *proud*, *haughty*, *arrogant*, or *assuming*.”<sup>7</sup>

“I am sorry. I apologize for what I did.”

He teaches us to be patient, or in other words, “having the quality of enduring evils without murmuring or fretfulness” or “calm under the sufferance of injuries or offenses.”<sup>8</sup>

He teaches us to be full of love. “I love you, and I don’t want to hurt you.”

Yes, my beloved brethren, He teaches us to put off the natural man, like the father in this story, who pleaded to the Lord for help. Yes, just as the father embraced his daughter in the arms of his love, so too does the Savior extend His arms to embrace us during our times of true repentance.

He teaches us to become “a saint through the atonement of Christ the

Lord.” And then we will reconcile ourselves to God, and we will become friends to God. I bear witness of the reality and power of the Savior’s Atonement to cleanse, purify, and make us and our homes holy as we strive to put off the natural man and follow Him.

He is “the Lamb of God,”<sup>9</sup> He is “the Holy and Righteous One,”<sup>10</sup> “and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”<sup>11</sup> In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. Mosiah 3:19.
2. Bible Dictionary, “Temple.”
3. Doctrine and Covenants 121:37.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–42.
5. Mosiah 26:31.
6. *Noah Webster’s First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language*, 9th ed. (1996), “meek.”
7. *Noah Webster’s First Edition*, “humble.”
8. *Noah Webster’s First Edition*, “patient.”
9. John 1:29.
10. Acts 3:14, New International Version.
11. Isaiah 9:6.



**By President Dieter F. Uchtdorf**  
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# Pride and the Priesthood

*Pride is a switch that turns off priesthood power.  
Humility is a switch that turns it on.*

**M**y dear brothers, thank you for assembling all around the world for this priesthood session of general conference. Your presence shows your commitment to stand, wherever you are, with your brothers who bear the holy priesthood and serve and honor your Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Often we mark the span of our lives by events that leave imprints on our minds and hearts. There are many such events in my life, one of which happened in 1989 when I heard a timeless sermon by President Ezra Taft Benson, “Beware of Pride.” In the introduction it was noted that this topic had been weighing heavily on President Benson’s soul for some time.<sup>1</sup>

I have felt a similar burden during the past months. The promptings of the Holy Spirit have urged me to add my voice as another witness to President Benson’s message delivered 21 years ago.

Every mortal has at least a casual if not intimate relationship with the sin of pride. No one has avoided it; few overcome it. When I told my wife that this would be the topic of my talk, she smiled and said, “It is so good

that you talk about things you know so much about.”

#### Other Meanings of *Pride*

I also remember one interesting side effect of President Benson’s influential talk. For a while it almost became taboo among Church members to say that they were “proud” of their children or their country or that they took “pride” in their work. The very word *pride* seemed to become an outcast in our vocabulary.

In the scriptures we find plenty of examples of good and righteous people who rejoice in righteousness and at the same time glory in the goodness of God. Our Heavenly Father Himself introduced His Beloved Son with the words “in whom I am well pleased.”<sup>2</sup>

Alma gloried in the thought that he might “be an instrument in the hands of God.”<sup>3</sup> The Apostle Paul gloried in the faithfulness of members of the Church.<sup>4</sup> The great missionary Ammon gloried in the success he and his brothers had experienced as missionaries.<sup>5</sup>

I believe there is a difference between being proud of certain things and being prideful. I am proud of many things. I am proud of my