

BECAUSE OF JOSEPH

Discover six ways your life is (or can be) different because of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

By Ted Barnes

Priesthood Department

Joseph Smith died over 170 years ago. He lived only 38 years, spending most of that time in places so obscure that you probably won't find them on any but the most detailed maps. And you're probably familiar with a lot of things he did in his life. But have you thought about how they affect you personally? While those ways are too numerous to count, you might start with these six.

Because of Joseph Smith:

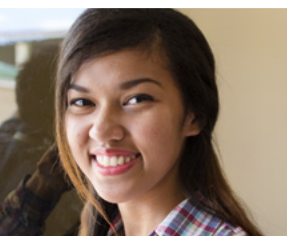
1

You understand who God and Jesus Christ really are.

Even if it wasn't for Joseph Smith, you might still believe in God the Father and in Jesus Christ. You could have the testimonies of the Bible. But think of how much deeper and richer your understanding is because of what Joseph Smith restored—the bold, confirming witnesses of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. For example, you know something that most of the world doesn't: that the risen Savior appeared in the Americas—proving, in His words, that He is not only “the God of Israel, [but also] the God of the whole earth” (3 Nephi 11:14).

Think of how your testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ is strengthened by the powerful witness of prophets like Nephi, Alma, and Moroni—not to mention Joseph Smith himself, who declared: “He lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God” (D&C 76:22–23). In a day when faith in God and Jesus Christ is being challenged and often abandoned, what a blessing it is to have this additional light!





3

Your family can be eternal.

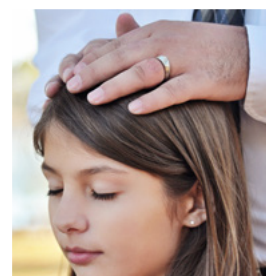
Why are so many people confused about the importance of marriage and family? Maybe because they don't know the doctrine, restored through Joseph Smith, that marriage and family are ordained of God and are meant to be eternal (see D&C 49:15; 132:7). These aren't just man-made traditions that our society has outgrown—they're part of the eternal order of heaven. And thanks to the priesthood keys and temple ordinances that were restored through Joseph Smith, your eternal family can start here on earth.



4

You have access to the priesthood and its blessings.

Because God restored His priesthood through Joseph Smith, you can be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. You can seek priesthood blessings of healing, comfort, and guidance. You can make sacred covenants that bind you to God. And you can renew your covenants every week when you partake of the sacrament. Through the ordinances of the priesthood, the power of God enters your life (see D&C 84:20–21). None of this would be possible without the work accomplished through Joseph Smith.



2

You know that you are a child of God—and so is everyone else.

Perhaps the most important truth Joseph Smith restored was the truth about our relationship with God.¹ He is literally our Father. Have you ever stopped to think about the things that flow from that fact? It changes the way you see yourself: regardless of what the world thinks of you, you know that you are a beloved child of God, with His qualities inside you. It changes the way you see others: suddenly everyone—*everyone*—is your brother or sister. It changes the way you look at life itself: all of its joys and trials are part of Heavenly Father's plan to help you become like Him. Not bad for something you sing about in Primary!²



THE DESIRES OF MY HEART (FIRST VISION) BY WALTER RANE, ASUNCIÓN, PARAGUAY TEMPLE

5

You are free from addiction to harmful substances.

Or at least you can be if you obey the revelation Joseph received back in 1833—long before tobacco was clinically proven to cause lung cancer and alcohol was linked to liver disease. When you have a prophet revealing the wisdom of God, why wait for the wisdom of the world to catch up? The Word of Wisdom shows that God cares not only about our spirits but also about our bodies (see D&C 89). After all, as the revelations to Joseph Smith demonstrated, having a body makes us more—not less—like our Father in Heaven, who also has a body of flesh and bones (see D&C 130:22).



6

You can know the truth for yourself through the Holy Ghost.

When young Joseph stepped into the Sacred Grove in 1820, the common belief among many churches was that revelation was a thing of the past. Joseph's First Vision proved that wrong. The heavens are open—and not just to prophets. Anyone with a question can receive an answer through humble, diligent seeking (see D&C 42:61; 88:63). For example, you can find out for yourself that Joseph Smith was God's prophet the same way Joseph found out: by asking God Himself.

This list is only a start. What would you add? How is your life different because of Joseph Smith? **NE**

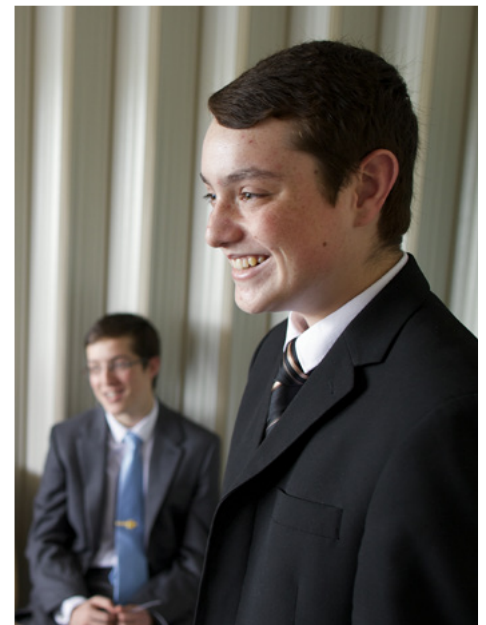
JOIN THE CONVERSATION

THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- How can I strengthen my testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith?
- How can I better show gratitude for the living prophet through my words and actions?

THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- Just as Joseph Smith did, ask Heavenly Father your questions. Take time to kneel in prayer and ask Him for guidance. Afterward, wait and listen for ideas or feelings. Record your thoughts in your journal.
- Read the talk "Joseph Smith" by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from the October 2014 general conference. Make a plan to apply the two ideas he gives on building and sharing your testimony of Joseph Smith.
- Share your feelings about Joseph Smith with your family, at church, or on social media at lds.org/go/Joseph4NE.



NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 37–44.
2. See "I Am a Child of God," *Hymns*, no. 301.