

# DECIDING to be *Faithful*

*These four decisions can be very beneficial to you.*

One of the greatest challenges I faced growing up as a child in Guatemala was poverty—spiritual poverty because we didn't know the gospel and temporal poverty because of the lack of money. My mother died when I was five years old, which left my father to raise four young children by himself. Because my father wanted to keep us all together, he had to delegate some of the household responsibilities to us children.

I was the oldest child and was assigned the task of preparing lunch and dinner for the family every day. It was hard at first, but I learned a few ways to cook. Each day my dad would leave me 25 cents to buy the food. I would buy a pound of beans for 6 cents and a pound of rice for 7 cents. Then I would buy 5 cents of charcoal that I used to cook everything, 2 cents of kindling, and 5 cents of tortillas. I did this every day, and every day we ate rice and beans with tortillas. Even back then 25 cents wasn't much, but this was how we got by.

The challenge was how to leave this cycle of poverty. And it all comes down to decisions—the choice to do something to better my life. We as individuals are always making decisions for ourselves, even when we don't think we are. For example, we *choose* to believe. Sometimes we can feel confused when faced with what the world teaches and what Jesus Christ teaches. But the best source to guide our lives is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. As I made decisions based on this doctrine, I felt the hand of the Lord in my life.



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I would like to share with you four decisions that have had a profound impact on my life. If you make these same decisions and hold firm to them, they will be a blessing to you as well: (1) the decision to be baptized, (2) the decision to believe in Jesus Christ and remain active in the Church, (3) the decision to trust in the Lord's promises, and (4) the decision to remain faithful and follow the counsel of the prophets.



## → The Decision to Be Baptized

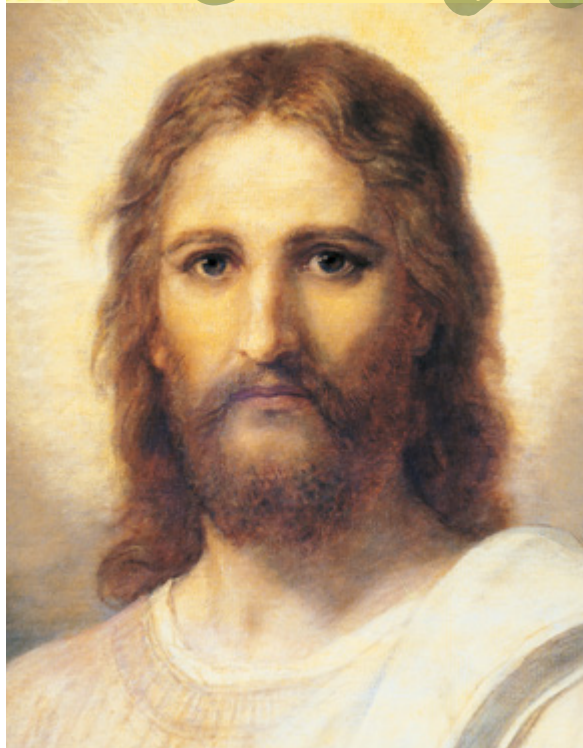
When I was 12, the missionaries began to teach my siblings and me. At first my father didn't participate. He would just sit in a back room behind a curtain and listen. But then he read a Church pamphlet that described how a man and a woman married with the right authority could live together forever. This got his attention because even though his wife had passed away, he could be with her again. Once he learned this, he decided to be baptized. And we were all baptized as a family.

The newfound perspective that the gospel provided helped me realize it was possible to achieve better things in life if I applied myself and was obedient. I made the personal decision that I would do whatever it took to remain on the Lord's path.

## → The Decision to Believe in Christ and Remain Active in the Church

I remember specifically making this promise one day as I sat in a chapel waiting for a baptismal service to start. As I sat pondering the doctrine of Christ, I began to have a strong feeling of joy telling me that everything I had learned from the missionaries was true. In that moment I silently committed to God to always trust Him and that I would remain active in His Church throughout my life if it meant I could continue to have the joy that comes from the Holy Ghost. To me this promise included not only attending church every week but also trusting in the Lord's doctrine, the scriptures, the living prophets, and especially my Savior, Jesus Christ.

# Four



## → The Decision to Trust the Lord's Promises

It was relatively early in my life that I made this important decision to trust in the Lord's promises. Since then my decision has proved to be very beneficial to me. Whenever a doubt or a question has come up, I have been able to think back to the commitment I made and have based my life decisions on that commitment. Deciding early on the standards you will live by will help you make correct choices when doubts or problems come.

I had a memorable experience with this principle when I was a student. I always worked hard in school to try to learn and prepare for the future. I knew that in order to leave poverty, I would have to find a career that would open doors to new opportunities in life. I also knew that in order to obtain this type of career, I would have to focus on my education.

As important as education was to me, I made the personal decision to forgo studying on Sundays. As a member of the

Church, I knew the Lord had said that the Sabbath is His day, not ours. I tried to make purposeful decisions about what I would do on this special day. However, even after having made this decision, at times I was tempted to bend my own rule, especially when I had a test coming up. I would think, "It's not bad; it's just studying. I can go to church in the morning and study in the afternoon and evening."

But as I remembered the promise I had made that I would remain active and faithful to the counsel of the Lord's prophets, it was much easier to stick to my decision to not study on Sundays and instead use the Lord's day for service and worship. I had already decided to remain faithful, so for me it was just a matter of interpreting what the Lord had said about the Sabbath day and applying His counsel as best as I could in my life.

I ended up excelling in my studies and obtaining a good career that helped me provide for my family. I know that because I kept my promise to the Lord, He blessed me to be able to create a better life.

# decisions

*that can have a profound impact on your life.*

## → The Decision to Remain Faithful and Follow the Counsel of the Prophets

For each of us, remaining faithful to the Lord is a matter of establishing to what extent we personally believe that Jesus is the Christ, that those who wrote the scriptures were inspired of God, and that the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles truly are servants of God. Knowing that revelation exists in our day and that the prophets were called of God makes it easier to stay true to the gospel when you come across difficult situations.

If you can develop this type of confidence, then you will never be troubled by questions about what behaviors or activities are or are not appropriate. All of these concerns will be answered as you seek answers in faith through the scriptures, the Spirit, and the prophets—the appointed servants of God. **NE**

