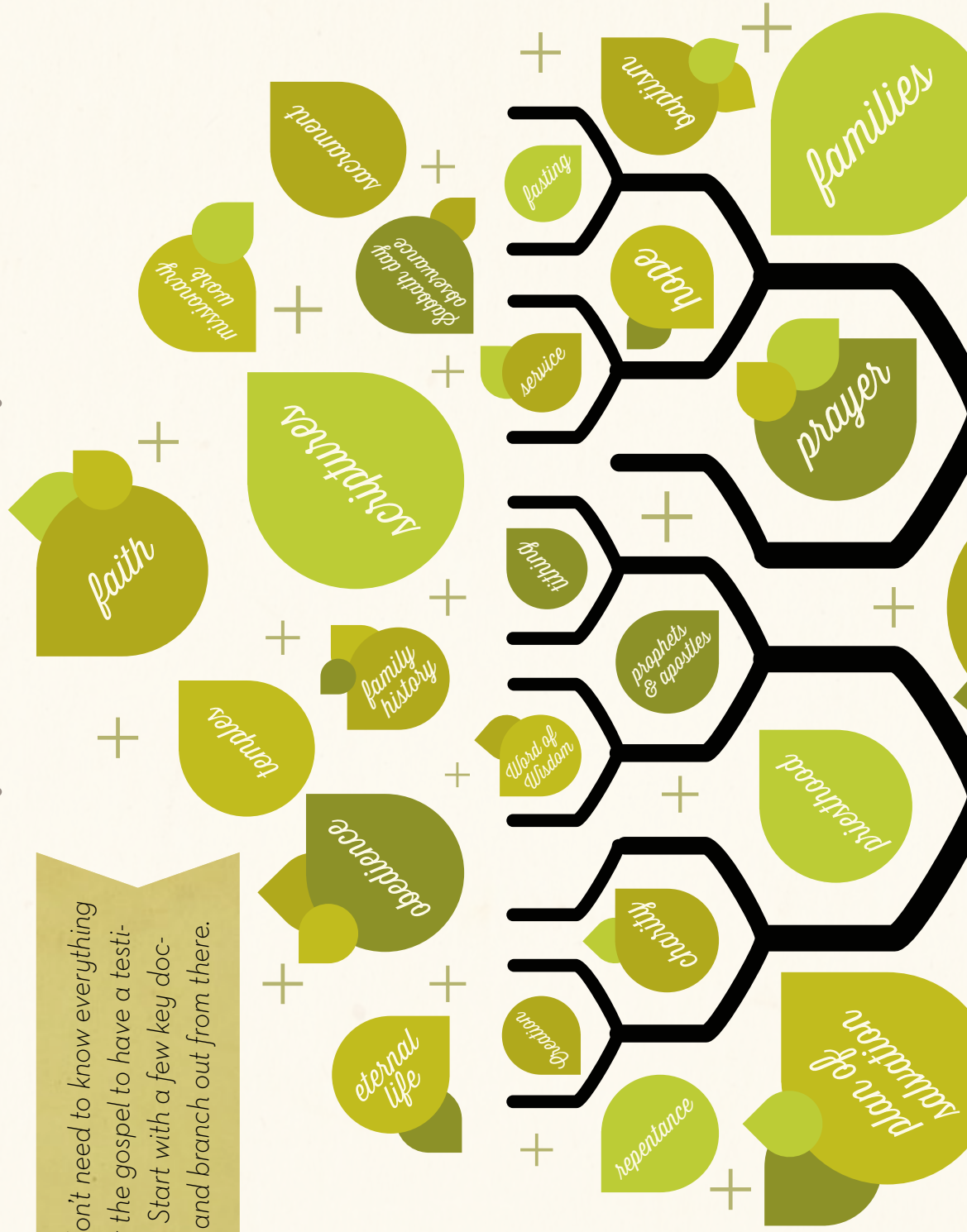


Growing YOUR Testimony

You don't need to know everything about the gospel to have a testimony. Start with a few key doctrines and branch out from there.



By **Mindy Raye Friedman**
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Some people may occasionally feel overwhelmed because they think they need to have a strong testimony of every gospel principle *right now*. Or they may think they don't have a testimony just because they don't understand *everything* about the gospel.

Sometimes learning about the gospel can seem hard, especially when you talk with people who have been studying the gospel for decades. Does that mean you don't have a testimony just because you don't know as much as another person? Of course not! Gaining a testimony of all the principles of the gospel at once is impossible. A testimony is meant to grow "line upon line, precept upon precept" (2 Nephi 28:30) throughout your life. But there is a place you can start to build your testimony. *True to the Faith* gives this helpful information:

"A testimony is a spiritual witness given by the Holy Ghost. The foundation of a testimony is the knowledge that Heavenly Father lives and loves us; that Jesus Christ lives, that He is the Son of God, and that He carried out the infinite Atonement; that Joseph Smith is the prophet of God who was called to restore the gospel; that we are led by a living prophet today; and that The Church of Jesus

the Restoration

revelation

Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Savior's true Church on the earth. With this foundation, a testimony grows to include all principles of the gospel" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 178–79).

Your testimony is like a tree that grows over time. It first grows with a few main branches, and then it develops from there. Your testimony can grow as you first focus on these five basic principles mentioned in *True to the Faith* and then strengthen your knowledge and testimony over time to eventually include all the principles of the gospel.

THE FOUNDATION OF TESTIMONY IS:

- 1 Knowing Heavenly Father lives and loves His children.
- 2 Jesus Christ lives and is the Son of God. He carried out the infinite Atonement.
- 3 Joseph Smith is the prophet of God who was called to restore the gospel.
- 4 The Church is led by a living prophet today.
- 5 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Savior's true Church on the earth.

A testimony of these principles comes through the witness of the Holy Ghost.



More Ideas

For ideas on how to strengthen your testimony of these principles and others, see pages 16 and 20 in this issue.



THE ROOTS OF TESTIMONY

"Unless the roots of your testimony are firmly planted, it will be difficult for you to withstand the ridicule of those who challenge your faith. When firmly planted, your testimony of the gospel, of the Savior, and of our Heavenly Father will influence all that you do throughout your life."

President Thomas S. Monson, "May You Have Courage," *Ensign*, May 2009, 126.