

An Example of **OBEDIENCE & LOVE**

PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON, 1927-2018



We will remember President Monson as someone whose sense of duty and love moved him to serve God and his fellowmen.



President Thomas Spencer Monson had a contagious, grinning smile, and he loved to make others laugh. But one of the most memorable things about President Monson was his storytelling. The stories he shared from his life gave us a glimpse of who he was: an obedient servant, an example to others, and a man dedicated to service.

1. An Obedient Servant

At the age of 22, President Monson was called as the bishop of the ward he grew up in. He had only been married for 18 months and was trying to move forward with a new job. Obviously, he was in a very new, busy stage of life! Yet he obediently accepted the call and “[trusted] in the Lord with all [his] heart” (Proverbs 3:5).

As bishop, President Monson learned the importance of obeying the Spirit. After failing to act on a prompting to visit an elderly ward member in the hospital, he was devastated to discover that the ward member had died calling his name. In that moment, he promised God he would always follow the Spirit, wherever it led him.¹ Because of his obedience, he was a blessing and a miracle in the lives of many.

2. An Example to Others

Wiggling his ears? During general conference? Yep. President Monson once did it to stump a young boy who was copying his every movement during a stake conference—and then he demonstrated his ear-wiggling skills again during general conference! Even though President Monson didn’t

realize it at first, he was being an example, just in the way he was sitting and moving.²

President Monson was an example in other ways as well. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared that President Monson was “like young Nephi in his humility and in his faith. In all that he . . . successfully accomplished, he [was] resolute in his commitment to ‘go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded’ (1 Nephi 3:7).”³ He was willing to stick to his beliefs at

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navy boot camp, even when he felt alone.⁴ While visiting Louisiana for a stake conference, he was willing to rearrange his schedule and drive 80 miles to bless a 10-year-old girl who was sick with cancer.⁵ He followed the example of the Savior by following the Spirit and submitting himself to Heavenly Father’s will.

3. A Man Who Served with Compassion

President Monson dedicated his life to service. He often went out of his way to help others. As a boy, he frequently delivered hot meals to his lonely neighbor, “Old Bob.”⁶ As a young bishop, he visited all 84 widows in his ward every Christmas season.⁷ And on one birthday as the prophet, when he was asked what the ideal

birthday present would be from members of the Church, he said he wanted members to find someone they could serve.⁸ He strove to love others as Jesus Christ does, for “love is the very essence of the gospel.”⁹

Remembering President Monson

“For more than half a century, President Monson [gave] the suits off his back to the destitute. He . . . sat at the bedside of the ill and elderly. . . . He [would] go to someone in a wheelchair who [had] a hard time coming to him, ‘high-five’ a group of teenagers, and wiggle his ears at deacons on the front row. He [exhibited] great reverence for the lives of those he [described] as ‘unnoticed and unrecognized,’ known to few but their Father in Heaven.”¹⁰

We will always remember President Monson as the 16th President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But more than that, we will remember him as a man who obeyed the Lord’s will, stood as a valiant example, and lovingly served all of God’s children. **NE**

More in This Issue

For information about President Monson, go to pages 45, 48, and 49 of this issue.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “President Thomas S. Monson: Man of Action, Man of Faith, Always ‘on the Lord’s Errand,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1986, 11.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Examples of Righteousness,” Apr. 2008 general conference.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Man of Action, Man of Faith,” 11.
4. Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” Oct. 2011 general conference.
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, “President Thomas S. Monson: In the Footsteps of the Master,” Supplement to the *Ensign*, June 2008, 11.
6. Jeffrey R. Holland, “In the Footsteps of the Master,” 4.
7. Jeffrey R. Holland, “In the Footsteps of the Master,” 9.
8. Thomas S. Monson, “What Have I Done for Someone Today?” Oct. 2009 general conference.
9. Thomas S. Monson, “Love—the Essence of the Gospel,” Apr. 2014 general conference.
10. Heidi S. Swinton, “Have I Done Any Good in the World Today?” *Ensign*, Mar. 2012, 37.