

FINDING PEACE

JULY 2015

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By phone: Call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express. Online: Go to store.lds.org.

By mail: Send \$8 U.S. check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

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Send old and new address information to: Distribution Services P.O. Box 26368 Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA. Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

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POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 707.4.12.5). NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FA-CILITIES: Send address corrections to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement

THE MONTHLY YOUTH MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

July 2015 · Volume 45 · Number 7

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The plan of happiness is a plan for families.







By Elder Russell M. Nelson Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

— Jesus Christ — OUR PRINCE OF PEACE

Peace can come to all who earnestly seek the Prince of Peace.

ocusing on the Lord and everlasting life can help us through all the challenges of mortality. Imperfect people share planet earth with other imperfect people. Ours is a fallen world marred by excessive debt, wars, natural disasters, disease, and death.

Personal challenges come. Whatever may cause the worry, each of us yearns to find inner peace.

My message pertains to the only source of true and lasting peace, Jesus the Christ—our Prince of Peace.¹

Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." ²

He can bring peace to those whose lives have been ravaged by war.

Families disrupted by military duty bear memories of war, which in my mind were embedded during the Korean War.

Wars of our present era are more sophisticated but are still as wrenching to families. Those who so suffer can turn to the Lord. His is the consoling message of peace on earth and good will among men.³

Peace can come to those who are not feeling well. Some bodies are wounded. Others ache spiritually because of missing loved ones or other emotional trauma. Brothers and sisters, peace can come to your soul as you build faith in the Prince of Peace.

"Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, \dots or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them."



"I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you."5

Peace can come to one who suffers in sorrow. Whether sorrow stems from a mistake or a sin, all the Lord requires is real repentance. Scripture pleads with us to "flee [from] youthful lusts: . . . [and] call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Then His soothing "balm in Gilead" can heal even a sin-sick soul.

Think of the change in John Newton, born in London in 1725. He repented from his sinful life as a slave trader to become an Anglican clergyman. With that mighty change of heart, John wrote words to the hymn "Amazing Grace."

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see.8

"Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." 9

Peace can come to those whose labors are heavy:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." 10

Peace can come to those who mourn. The Lord said,

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." As we endure the passing of a loved one, we can be filled with the peace of the Lord through the whisperings of the Spirit.

"Those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them." 12

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." ¹³

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." ¹⁴

Peace can come to all who earnestly seek the Prince of

Peace. His is the sweet and saving message our missionaries take throughout the world. They preach the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored by Him through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Missionaries teach these life-changing words of the Lord: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." ¹⁵

Peace can come to all who choose to walk in the ways of the

Master. His invitation is expressed in three loving words: "Come, follow me." ¹⁶

We'll sing all hail to the Prince of Peace,¹⁷ for He will come again. Then "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." ¹⁸ As the millennial Messiah, He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁹

As we follow Jesus Christ, He will lead us to live with Him and our Heavenly Father, with our families. Through our many challenges of mortality, if we remain faithful to covenants made, if we endure to the end, we will qualify for that greatest of all the gifts of God, eternal life.²⁰ In His holy presence, our families can be together forever.

God bless you, my dear brothers and sisters. May you and your loved ones enjoy forever all the blessings of our Lord—our Prince of Peace. NE

From a 2013 Christmas Devotional address.

NOTES

- 1. See Isaiah 9:6; 2 Nephi 19:6.
- 2. Matthew 19:14.
- 3. See Luke 2:14.
- 4. 3 Nephi 17:7.
- 5. 3 Nephi 17:8; see also Matthew 13:15; 3 Nephi 18:32; Doctrine and Covenants 112:13.
- 6. 2 Timothy 2:22; see also 3 Nephi 9:13.
- 7. See Jeremiah 8:22; see also "Did You Think to Pray?" *Hymns*, no. 140; "There Is a Balm in Gilead," *Recreational Songs* (1949), 130.
- 8. "Amazing Grace," Olney Hymns (1779), no. 41; see also John 9:25.
- 9. Luke 15:7; see also verse 10.
- 10. Matthew 11:28-30.
- 11. Matthew 5:4; see also 3 Nephi 12:4; Doctrine and Covenants 101:14.
- 12. Doctrine and Covenants 42:46.
- 13. John 14:27.
- 14. John 11:25–26.
- 15. John 14:15.
- 16. Luke 18:22.
- 17. See "We'll Sing All Hail to Jesus' Name," Hymns, no. 182.
- 18. Isaiah 40:5.
- 19. See Revelation 19:16.
- 20. See Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

SCATER SUNSHIE

A smile can do a world of good.

Brighten someone's day.

(See Matthew 5:14-16.)



······ MATERIALS ······

- WHOLE MILK (low-fat milk won't cut it)
- DAWN® LIQUID DISH SOAP in a small cup
- COTTON SWABS
- FOOD COLORING in various colors
- ROUND PLATE OR PIE TIN with recessed edges

Ever wonder how far your acts of kindness spread? Grab some milk and find out.

oesn't the world seem awfully big sometimes? Whether you live in a sprawling city or in a place so rural that there are more cows than people, it's sometimes easy to glance around and feel like the tiniest dot on the landscape. And how much influence for good can a tiny dot have anyway?

Plenty!

Not convinced?

You can prove it during your next family home evening. Object lesson time!

WHAT A DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE



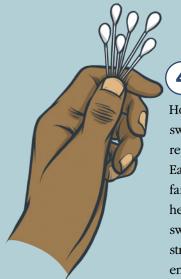
Read a few of your favorite scriptures on service or kindness (such as Matthew 7:12 or Moroni 7:47). Spend time talking with your family about the importance of kindness, and then pour milk into the plate. Explain to your family that the milk represents the world around you. You can decide whether that means your school, your ward or branch, your neighborhood, or something else.



Squeeze a few drops of each color of food coloring into the milk toward the edge of the plate. Be sure to keep the colors separate. The drops of color represent the people you interact with.

Chat with your family about how acts of kindness and service enrich our lives. You might share the following quote from Sister Neill F. Marriott, second counselor in the Young Women general presidency:

"Our small acts of faith and service are how most of us can ... bring eternal light and glory to our family, our friends, and our associates. You truly carry a circle of influence with you!" 1



Hold up your cotton swab and point out that it represents a single person. Each member of your family should pretend that he or she is this cotton swab. It's time to demonstrate that "circle of influence" in action.



Swirl the end of your cotton swab through the soap. Explain that the soap represents acts of service and kindness. Place the heavily soaped end of the cotton swab straight down into the milk and hold it steady (no stirring). Try not to pass out from amazement the first time you do this. Maybe have smelling salts just in case.







YOUR GOOD DEEDS IN ACTION

Due to some awesome science at work, the cotton swab causes movement in the milk that seems to defy physics. It's nothing at all like dropping a pebble in a pond. It's more like dropping a water pump into the pond that pushes water outward in all directions. Soon the food coloring will move around, mixing with and influencing the other colors.

This represents how your kindness not only helps other people but also helps them to help others as well.

Pull the cotton swab out of the milk and place it straight down in it again, this time in a different part of the plate. The same result will occur but with an added twist—the outward motion should still be happening from the first place you placed the swab! The influence lasts.

Point out that this is what happens as we provide service. When we brighten somebody's day, we change the world a little.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Kind words not only lift our spirits in the moment they are given, but they can linger with us over the years."2

Kind words and deeds tend to have a domino effect. Show kindness to somebody and that somebody might be so cheered up that he or she passes it along to another. That's a cycle that can keep on turning forever.

The world might indeed be a big place. But you can be a mighty big part of it too. NE

- 1. Neill F. Marriott, "Sharing Your Light," Ensign, Nov. 2014, 119.
- 2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "The Virtue of Kindness," Ensign, May 2005, 26.



By Elder Kent F. Richards Of the Seventy and Executive Director of the Temple Department

PREPARING TO ENTER THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

Smile when you think of the temple. It is a place of power and blessing.

t a temple open house, I noticed some girls file behind their parents through the temple. They smiled as they found their reflections in brides' room mirrors. "Remember." their grandmother whispered, "how special you are and how much Heavenly Father loves you." Each girl imagined the time when she would return to the temple as a woman of faith, with maturing loveliness and capacity, ready to fulfill her mission on the earth. Boys who attended the open house also had glimpses of their future blessings and responsibilities.

What these children felt in the temple was right. Heavenly Father wants to bless you. His greatest blessings come as you enter the temple to receive sacred ordinances and to make and keep sacred covenants. You are responsible to prepare and be ready.

The temple is important in your life, especially when you're young: "The young man needs his place in the

temple even more than his father and his grandfather, who are steadied by a life of experience; and the young girl just entering life, needs the spirit, influence and direction that come from participation in the temple ordinances." Begin now to prepare your heart and mind to be able to fully *receive* and *understand* these blessings (see Matthew 13:23; Mark 4:20).

Receiving the Fulness of the Gospel

If you will prepare yourself to enter the temple, you will be "ready to receive the fulness of [His] gospel" in the temple (D&C 35:12; emphasis added). The temple is a place of power and blessing. The Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith and the early Saints to gather to Kirtland, Ohio, USA, where they would eventually build a temple. "There you shall be endowed with power from on high" (D&C 38:32; emphasis added).

At a recent temple open house, an Apostle gathered his family around

the holy altar in a sealing room. He taught them that everything we do in the Church—classes, activities, programs, and meetings—prepares us to come to the temple altar to receive the sealing ordinance. The temple represents the very essence of your Heavenly Father's plan for your eternal happiness and progression.

Preparing to Make Covenants with God

Your preparation to enter the temple and make covenants doesn't happen quickly. It began with your baptism and the confirming gift of the Holy Ghost and then grows with prayer, scripture study, obedience, and service. It invites cleanliness weekly as you participate in the sacrament. It happens as you learn to seek forgiveness through repentance, as you keep standards, and as you worthily carry a limited-use temple recommend. Youth programs will help you, but your preparation is personal; you are developing *your* worthiness,



KEY POINTS

- In the temple you receive ordinances essential to your salvation.
- You must enter the temple clean and pure, free from any unforgiven transgression.
- As in the scriptures, many of the teachings and ordinances in the temple are symbolic, allowing you to learn more and more each time you return to the temple.

your testimony, your conversion. The Savior's Atonement applies to you personally.

As you increase your level of spiritual maturity, you will desire to prepare for and enter the temple. There you will receive ordinances and make covenants, which are necessary steps to draw closer to your Heavenly Father. Temple ordinances are "the most exalted ... ordinances that have been revealed to mankind."2

As you receive temple ordinances, you make solemn covenants with your Father only one time for yourself, and then you will strive to abide by them throughout your life. Each time you enter the temple, you can feel of His Spirit and receive additional revelation and understanding while providing the necessary ordinances for others. You will understand and receive assurance of your eternal existence and the unending power of your covenants. If we were not eternal beings, the temple would have no significance. You enter the temple and make covenants because you will exist eternally and want to be with your Heavenly Father and your family in "never-ending happiness" (Mosiah 2:41). This assurance grows in your own soul and is confirmed by the Holy Ghost.

Being Worthy

The role of the Holy Ghost is real. He teaches you, purifies you, and conveys the Father's love (see Romans



5:5). The Holy Spirit of Promise is the ratifying power of the Holy Ghost, which validates each covenant eternally.

In order to receive the Spirit, you must enter the temple clean and pure, free from any unforgiven transgression. If the adversary could succeed in any way to overcome you, it would be to keep you from the temple or to entice you to go there unworthily.

For this reason, you will be invited to sit in a personal interview with your bishop or branch president, to consider your worthiness and readiness to receive a recommend to enter the temple. Be honest and trust him to help you. In reality, you are determining your own standing before the Lord (see D&C 109:24). You will sign your own recommend first. You are witnessing your worthiness before the Lord.3

To be worthy does not mean you are perfect yet. It means that your heart is right, that you are living the commandments, and that you desire to be better each day.

Learning from Symbols

In the temple, as in the scriptures, the Lord teaches using symbols. You can find many symbols in the scriptures, such as the rock, the seed, the fruit, the tree of life, and the bread and water of the sacrament (see, for example, 1 Nephi 11; Alma 32; Helaman 5:12). Baptism by immersion symbolizes new life, rebirth, and cleanliness (see Romans 6:3–5). In the temple we all wear white, symbolizing purity, holiness, light, and equality.

Some symbols in the temple are both physical and spiritual. For example, wearing the garment is a physical daily reminder of the temple covenants and the promised blessings. If respected and honored, the garment protects us from temptations and unrighteous influences.

Each of the temple ordinances is symbolic. "In a sacred ceremony, an individual may be washed and anointed," reminiscent of the kings and priests of ancient Israel being prepared to take their positions (see 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13). The instruction and covenants in the endowment signify being clothed or invested with additional power and promises from God (see Luke 24:49). Perhaps the most beautiful symbol is the sealing ordinance, in which a couple is united in an unbreakable bond which can last through all eternity.

The promises in the temple are rich and noble. They are the "great favors" and "great blessings" (3 Nephi 10:18)



that our Father has reserved for you personally. So smile when you think of the temple.

No matter your age, do whatever is necessary to be ready to receive the greatest blessings your Father in Heaven offers to you. Trust how it felt when you were a child and sang, "I love to see the temple. I'm going there someday. . . . I'll prepare myself while I am young. This is my sacred duty." 5 It can be true for you. NE

NOTES

- 1. John A. Widtsoe, "Temple Worship," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Apr. 1921, 91–92.
- 2. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (booklet, 2002), 1.
- 3. See Joshua 24:22, 27: "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, we are witnesses." Then Joshua took a large stone and placed it beneath an oak, saying, "This stone [like our personal temple recommend] shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words."
- 4. Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple, 1.
- 5. "I Love to See the Temple," *Children's Songbook*, 95.

WHY DO WE BUILD TEMPLES?

"We must gain some feeling for why we build temples, and why the ordinances are required of us. Thereafter we are continually instructed and enlightened on matters of spiritual importance. It comes line upon line, precept upon precept, until we gain a fullness of light and knowledge. This becomes a great protection to us—to each of us personally....

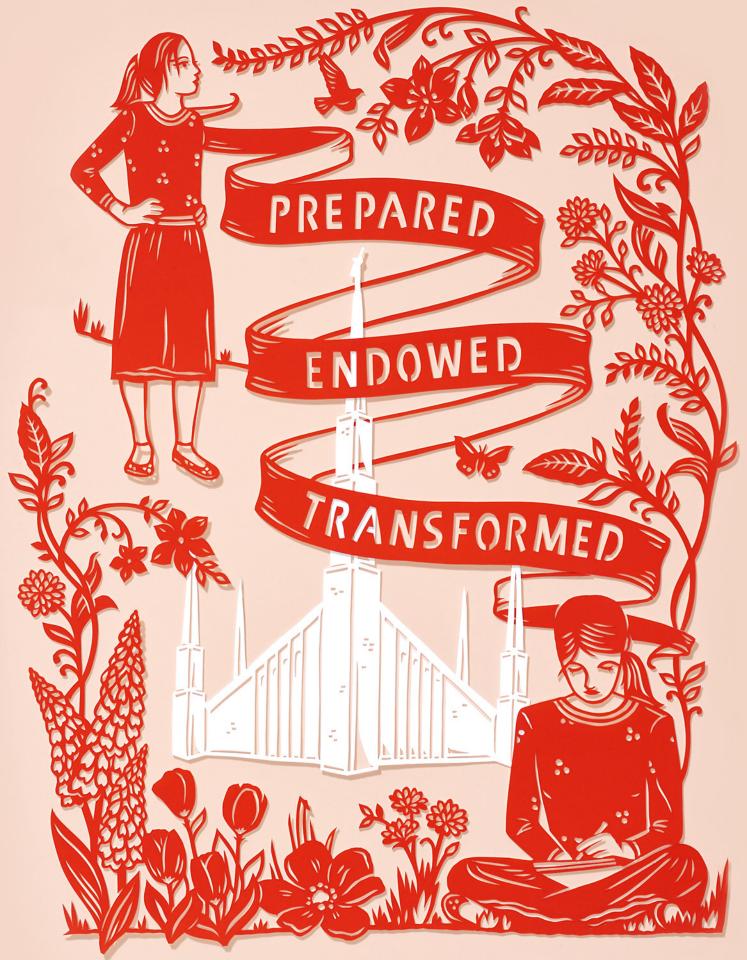
"... No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.

"Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection....

"... If we will enter into our covenants without reservation or apology, the Lord will protect us. We will receive inspiration sufficient for the challenges of life....

"So come to the temple—come and claim your blessings."

Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple (booklet, 2002), 37.



Focusing on the temple blessed my life long before I was endowed.

By Pang Kou Yang



efore I entered the temple for the first time, I always felt a special connection to it from reading and learning about it, studying my patriarchal

blessing, and hearing the testimonies of others.

I committed myself to prepare so that one day I'd be ready and worthy to enter. Even before receiving my temple endowment, I'd drive three hours just to sit at the temple grounds to pray, ponder, and write in my journal. Each time I left, I felt a greater sense of strength and confidence that I could face the challenges and struggles in my life.

Throughout my youth, I'd do baptisms for the dead. Those experiences contributed to my testimony of temples and the ordinances performed in them. I thought that if just being on the temple grounds and doing baptisms for the dead felt so good, then it must feel even more wonderful to receive my own ordinances in the temple.

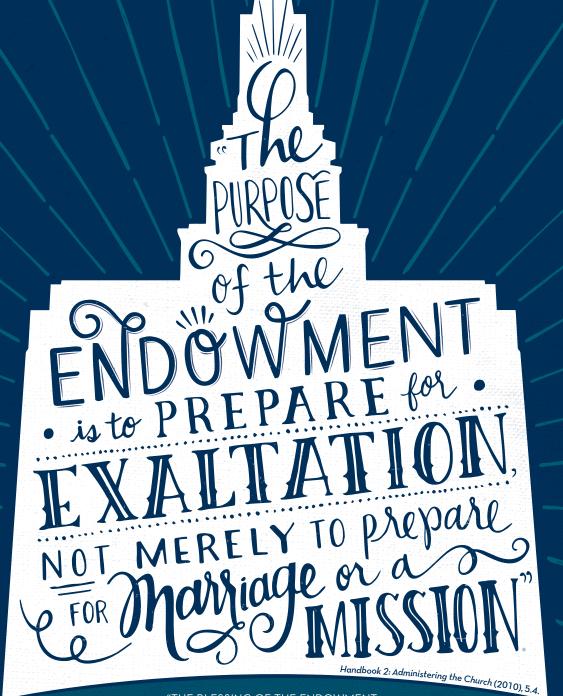
On the day I received my endowment, my family and I ran into a few obstacles before we got to the temple. But despite the challenges we had getting there, once I was inside I felt that nothing mattered but the sweet and peaceful feeling of joy that comes as we perform temple ordinances. One of the greatest feelings I had that day was, "I made it! I know this is where I am supposed to be."

I knew in my heart that I'd done everything I could to be worthy and ready to receive what Heavenly Father had prepared for me. I could feel His love and His gratitude for my desire to follow Him and make and keep covenants so that I can return to live with Him someday.

I'm so grateful for all those who played a role in helping me prepare to enter the temple. I'm grateful for the Book of Mormon, which helped me receive spiritual guidance and nourishment to be prepared to make and keep temple covenants. My experiences in the temple will always hold a special place in my heart. Those experiences gave me strength when I served my mission, and they continue to give me strength to face challenges with the hope and faith I need to endure. I can still look back and remember the wonderful, peaceful feelings I felt in the temple that first time.

I love the temple. I know that it's the house of the Lord. It's where we can go to perform ordinances and help others who have passed on receive the blessings of eternal life and exaltation. It's where I continue to go to receive strength, guidance, and knowledge. It's where I go to feel close to Heavenly Father and feel of His love. NE

Pang Kou Yang lives in Wisconsin, USA.



"THE BLESSING OF THE ENDOWMENT
IS REQUIRED FOR FULL EXALTATION. EVERY LATTER-DAY SAINT
SHOULD SEEK TO BE WORTHY OF THIS BLESSING AND TO OBTAIN IT."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Come to the Temple," Ensign, Oct. 2007, 21.

Learn more about preparing for the temple endowment at lds.org/go/endowment7NE.



MUSIC in My Life

I quit playing the piano because I was afraid of making a mistake. Now I had a chance to overcome my fear.

By Sabrina de Sousa Teixeira

y dream since childhood had been to play the piano. When I was 12, a beloved member of the Church taught me to play. Later I received a keyboard as a present from my father. However, the enchantment of playing began to diminish because I became nervous when trying to play in sacrament meeting. I made many mistakes, felt ashamed, and did not want to play anymore. I told myself that I would try it again only after I had practiced a lot and could play almost perfectly. But I became discouraged and ended up selling my keyboard and hiding this talent.

Years later, one Sunday there was no accompanist. The sister who played the piano in our ward had moved. When I saw the members singing without a piano or organ to accompany them, I felt the Spirit encourage me to talk to the bishop. I said, "Is it all right if I play?" He accepted.

After years of avoiding the piano, I conquered my fear of

making mistakes. To my surprise, I began to play as though there had not been much time since I stopped. I made mistakes on some notes but not many. That experience gave me the strength to suggest to my bishop that I would commit to play every Sunday.

I practice every week, and I have learned to love the piano again. Whenever I practice, I feel the Spirit strongly in my home. Sometimes when I play, my family members who are doing housework join in singing. We become one, singing the same hymn.

Many members of the ward have noticed my progress and congratulate me. I am grateful to contribute to the spirituality of my ward's meetings and grateful that I went back to a talent that I had left behind.

I have learned to appreciate piano music; the calmness it brings is marvelous. I hope that in heaven we will hear this style of music, and who knows, I might be there playing in the celestial choirs! **NE**Sabrina de Sousa Teixeira lives in Brazil.



SERVING THOSE IN

'No member of the Church

who has helped provide for those in need ever forgets or regrets the experience. Industry, thrift, self-reliance, and sharing with others are not new to us."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Are We Prepared?" Ensign, Sept. 2014, 4.





SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS

ne of the characteristics of a disciple of Christ is the desire to reach out and serve others. When we "embark in the service of God" (D&C 4:2), we commit to serve others and to remember that we are all children of a loving Father in Heaven. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "[A member of the Church] is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all, wherever he finds them" (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 426).

The following stories are examples of how youth work to make a difference where they live.

These youth put the principles from the 2015 Mutual theme into action through service projects that benefit their communities.







Building Hope after the Fire

A few years ago 345 homes were destroyed in the Waldo Canyon forest fire. Two years later, damage from the fire continued as erosion caused by the destruction of vegetation and dangerous floodwaters still provoked havoc. In response, nearly 100 young men and women from Colorado Springs reported to work for a six-hour youth conference project to revitalize the forest.

Armed with shovels, safety goggles, and hard hats, the youth prepared mulch, spread seed, and raked the ground to create a proper bed for new grass to grow. Audrie P., 14, admitted that she wasn't excited about the project at first but soon changed her attitude. "I was surprised at how much fun it could be. Who knew spreading dirt would be so much fun?"

Jamison S., 16, remembered seeing endless piles of mulch. "We created an assembly line to fill buckets and passed them down, sometimes sprinting, to where they needed to be." Joshua G., 17, acknowledged the power of 100 youth working together: "It could have been done without us, but it would have been a lot harder and taken a lot longer."

By the end everyone was hot, tired, and covered in dirt. The work was difficult, but a good kind of difficult. Emily L., 16, recalled, "It was really hard but fun!" Mulch colored their faces, but they were happy, and bright smiles beamed through.

Anne B., 14, said, "The service project made me realize there is more to the world than the everyday things that we do. There are people who need our help, and serving others helps us too." Zach A., 15, who remembers being evacuated from the fire, said, "It was really cool to see our Church directly correlated with something that affected me and my neighbors."

In the end, a hard day's work made a difference as the youth not only rebuilt the land but also rebuilt hope for others in their area.

Ashley S., Colorado, USA

Making Bears for a Children's Hospital

While serving on the planning committee for my stake's Young Women camp, we decided to make stuffed bears to donate for our camp service project. After getting approval from our camp director, I contacted the local hospital about our idea, gathered all the supplies we needed to make the bears, and cut out 517 11x13 squares from donated material. We ended up making 289 bears for the hospital.

This service project gave the girls at our Young Women camp a chance to

serve, and I saw how thrilled and excited they were to be able to do some good for the community. It is so amazing to see the good that service can do. This project showed me that service benefits those who do it as much as those who receive it and helped my testimony to grow. I will never forget this experience.

Cassie T., Texas, USA





















Helping Others Keep Warm

For many who live in central Idaho, USA, burning firewood to heat their homes is a necessity. Woodstock, a community event that takes place there each July, helps those in need. It has also built bridges of understanding and fellowship between the different congregations, the Forest Service, and smokejumpers (firefighters who parachute into wildfire areas) stationed in the area. The event helps people serve together to meet a common goal: providing wood for those who cannot do it for themselves.

Naomi P., 18, said, "There's a certain spirit behind doing Woodstock. Where we live. wood is such a valuable resource, and seeing the reaction on everyone's face as we show up with freshly split wood makes all of the hard work worth it. Woodstock makes me so much more aware of the people in my community and the world outside of myself. It helps me see opportunities to serve."

Ryan H., 18, said that participating in Woodstock has helped others in the area know more about the Church as they work together. "It's cool seeing so many peers from the community, both recipients and nonrecipients, come out to help. An entire pit is filled with wood, and it's almost miraculous seeing the huge trees chipped into usable blocks of wood. We do 100-plus cords in one day. A cord is 8 feet by 4 feet by 4 feet; we cut and deliver all those in one day."

"The feeling of serving the needy was overpowering," said Jessica J., 12. "When delivering the wood, we experienced a once-in-a-lifetime feeling. Many of those we visited began to cry."

Seth J., 13, also said, "This year when we were delivering some wood, we came to a house with a widow who tries to cut her own wood but was unable to do it. We threw some wood into a woodshed but then started to stack wood alongside her house. When we finished, she had tears in her eyes and couldn't thank us enough. She also pitched in some s'mores, but besides this treat, we received something greater: we all learned that a simple act of service can go a really long way."

Benjamin M., 14, admitted that at first he wasn't excited about spending a summer day splitting and delivering wood but was humbled by the experience. "Many people who were going through hard times themselves participated in the project," he said. "This actually showed me how to serve; it was an example of seeing people putting others' needs before theirs, which is the second great commandment according to Jesus Christ" (see Matthew 22:39).

The spirit of service is alive and well in this rugged mountain community as they look forward to the opportunity to work together, serve, and increase faith and goodwill in their area.

Becky J., Idaho, USA











Eagle Scouts at an Elementary School

When I helped my older brother, Tahoe, with his Eagle Scout project, I learned important lessons about service. Along with many other people, I helped Tahoe with various acts of service at a local elementary school. Some people helped paint over some old benches, others helped repaint some poles, and some helped build a garden shade. I helped sand and paint two rows of poles.

The job took some time and was tiresome, but when we were done, I saw the positive effect it had on the school and how filled with joy the principal was when she saw the improvements. The experience reminded me that we, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are constantly being reminded to live more like Christ and to serve as He did. I saw that even though I was tired, I was happy with what I had done and was glad that I could help with the work.

Diego J., California, USA

Organizing a Run

When my younger sister, Dania, was diagnosed with a rare disorder, I wanted to do something to help her. Turner Syndrome is a genetic disorder where a girl is missing one of her X chromosomes,

and that results in short stature, possible heart problems, and other difficulties. My sister was 11 when she was diagnosed, and she sees this as a blessing in her life and a chance to help other girls who have this syndrome.

My mom and I brainstormed ideas on what I could do to help, and we decided to sponsor a run for a society to help those with Turner Syndrome. I didn't know where to start, but I gathered a group of friends together who helped me find sponsors and to spread the word around the community.

The response from community members was great—so many people were willing to help out. The event turned out to be fun and lively, and everybody had an amazing time. There were 12 girls with Turner Syndrome at the run, as well as many Church and community members.

I met so many wonderful people and heard their stories; I saw these people through God's eyes. I learned that we really develop a love for those whom we serve, and I know that "when [we] are in the service of [our] fellow beings [we] are only in the service of [our] God" (Mosiah 2:17).

Makaila E., California, USA

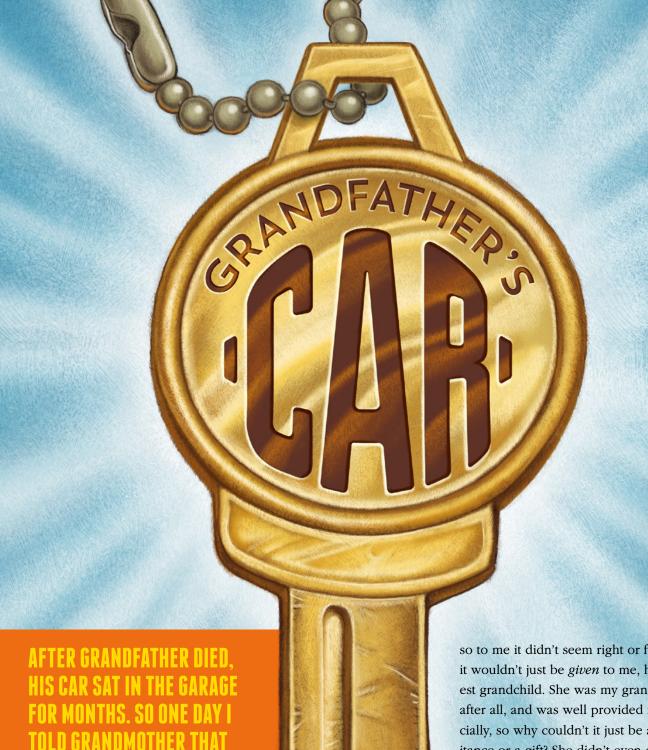






Share Your Experiences

Share your experiences of serving others and living this year's Mutual theme at church, at home, through social media, or online at lds.org/go/serve7NE.



TOLD GRANDMOTHER THAT I'D LIKE TO OWN IT!

By Cheryl Easton Okubo

was shocked! My grandmother wanted me to pay for my own grandfather's car! Really? That car had been parked, just sitting there in her garage, ever since Grandfather's funeral several months before. It was unused and old now,

so to me it didn't seem right or fair that it wouldn't just be given to me, her oldest grandchild. She was my grandmother, after all, and was well provided for financially, so why couldn't it just be an inheritance or a gift? She didn't even drive it, so wouldn't I be doing her a favor taking it off her hands?

Adding insult to injury, my own grandmother decided to call a neighbor of hers—a retired judge—to come over to the house and write up a purchase and loan agreement for me to sign before she would let me buy the car. At first it made me angry-then very sad. I started to believe she didn't love me, her first grandchild.

There were a few minutes when I thought about leaving in a huff of insulted pride, to never look back or talk with my grandmother again. But luckily I didn't, for a few very important reasons:

- 1. I needed a car.
- I knew I could trust that car because Grandfather always kept his cars in top condition.
- 3. I could afford it.
- 4. Most of all, I knew Grandmother was insisting upon her method of transferring the car to me for a good reason, even if I didn't know what it was.

Besides, as I thought about it, I realized she wasn't the kind of person who would intentionally hurt anyone, much less me. She'd loved me all my life, so why would I think conducting a business deal between us would ruin our relationship? She was probably also thinking that my siblings and cousins could have felt slighted if the car had been an outright gift.

When we came to a mutual understanding, we both signed the document, and the judge signed as a witness. According to an ancient Chinese proverb: "The weakest ink is more powerful than the strongest memory." Because we signed an agreement we had worked out together, I was able to keep my part of the bargain.

At the end of our meeting, with my copy of our contract in hand, I drove away in what was now *my* car, deeply assured that my grandmother really did still love me. Although she showed it in a way that at first caused me to doubt, I learned many other things from her that day. Most important to

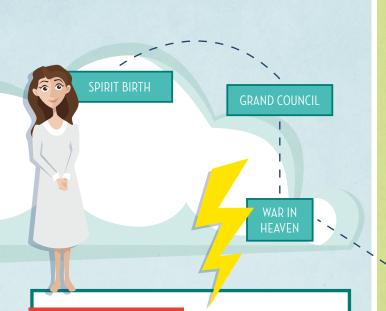
me was that if I wanted something in this life, there would ultimately be some kind of price I would have to pay for it, even things that seem to be offered for free—or that I think should be.

Perhaps the best part was that I was

treated like an adult by a grandmother

"I LEARNED ... THAT IF I WANTED SOMETHING IN THIS LIFE, THERE WOULD ULTIMATELY BE SOME KIND OF PRICE."





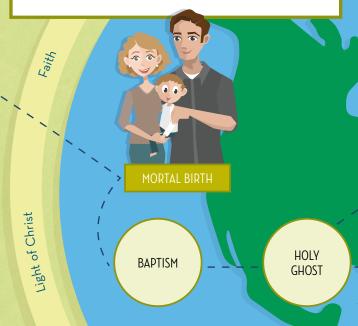
PREMORTAL LIFE

We existed as individuals. We were members of Heavenly Father's family, and He wanted us to have the opportunity to become like Him.

We chose to follow Heavenly Father's plan to become like Him, and we accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior.

EARTH LIFE

We receive a body and are tested. The test of obedience to our Father includes how we treat our brothers and sisters and how we use the powers given to us, including the godly power a man and a woman have to create life and raise and teach children in families.



THE PLAN OF SALVATION



'The **Father's plan** for His children is a plan of love. It is a plan to unite His children-His family-with Him."

Carole M. Stephens, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, "The Family Is of God," Ensign, May 2015, 13.



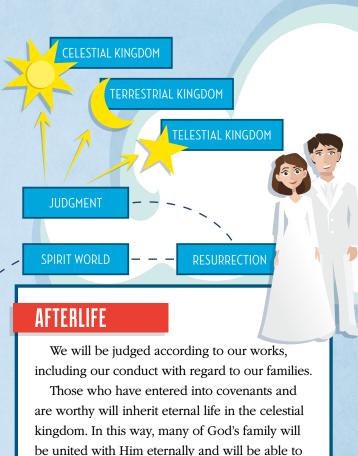
"Knowing why we left the presence of our Heavenly Father and what it takes to return and be exalted with Him, it becomes very clear that nothing relative to our time on earth can be more important than physical birth and spiritual rebirth, the

two prerequisites of eternal life....

"... The matrimonial union of male and female ... is not a human invention. Such marriage is indeed 'from above, from God' and is as much a part of the plan of happiness as the Fall and the Atonement."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Why Marriage, Why Family," Ensign, May 2015, 51-52.





receive all that He has and become like Him.

IN THE MOST RECENT GENERAL CONFERENCE, CHURCH LEADERS TAUGHT US THAT THE PLAN OF HAPPINESS IS A PLAN FOR FAMILIES.



"The commandment to multiply and replenish the earth ... is essential to the plan of redemption and is the source of human happiness.... The **power of procreation** is not an incidental part of the plan; it is the plan of happiness; it is the key to happiness."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Plan of Happiness," *Ensign*, May 2015, 26.



"For anyone to attain the fulness of priesthood blessings, there must be a husband and a wife sealed in the house of the Lord, working together in righteousness and remaining faithful to their covenants. This is the Lord's plan for His children."

Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president, "Defenders of the Family Proclamation," *Ensign*, May 2015, 15.



"The entire theology of our restored gospel centers on families and on the new and everlasting covenant of marriage....

"We believe that the organization and government of heaven will be built around families and extended families."

Elder L. Tom Perry (1922-2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Why Marriage and Family Matter—Everywhere in the World," *Ensign*, May 2015, 41.





REMEMBERING ELDER L. TOM PER

(1922-2015)

hey couldn't hold another quorum meeting without Bill. So, with cooperation from Bill's mother, Brother L. Tom Perry and the young men he led entered Bill's bedroom one Sunday morning.

"We started the meeting with a spirited opening hymn," said Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Bill came up out of those sheets like he had been shot out of a gun." By meeting's end, however, Bill knew he was valued and appreciated.1



A Friend to All

Everywhere he went, Elder Perry was known for his boundless energy, his spirituality, his optimism, and his ability to make everybody feel at ease. He made friends easily with people from every walk of life. "He was as much at home with a rancher or a farmer as he was with a business executive," said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.²

Recently, Elder Perry worked with Catholic Church leaders to discuss religious freedom and other matters. He became close with many of the cardinals. "He connected with them in a very personable, wonderful

way," said Lee Perry, Elder Perry's son. "They just love him."3

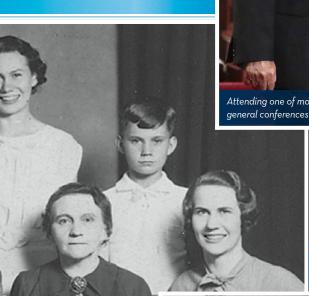
Growing up in a Christ-centered home (top left).

Elder Perry had a lifelong gift for making friends. When he worked in New York, USA, as a retail executive, he thought his fellow commuters seemed unfriendly. So he decided to shake things up.

One man always stood on the same platform location to wait for the train. He also picked the same seat on the train every day.

To build a friendship, Elder Perry showed up early several days in a row to grab those spots before the man could. At first the man was irritated, but before long, the two were laughing and it turned into a game—a game the whole train station eventually enjoyed as more and more commuters joined in. In time









Receiving a humanitarian award from the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City.



they all grew so close that they sang Christmas carols together at the station. "It livened up the whole platform," Elder Perry remembered.

A Family Man

Serving in the Northern States

Mission in 1942 (right).

Family was extremely important to Elder Perry. He met his first wife, Virginia Lee, as he

was counting attendance for a stake leadership meeting in college. He said later that he did all right in taking the young men's attendance, but when it was time to tally the young women, his math skills hit a roadblock. "Suddenly my eyes met a charming, beautiful young woman. I completely lost my ability to count."

Eight months later, on July 18, 1947, L. Tom Perry and Virginia Lee were married in the Logan Utah Temple.⁴ Together they raised three children. Virginia Lee passed away in 1974. Elder Perry later fell in love again and married Barbara Taylor Dayton in 1976.

His whole life, Elder Perry made time for birthdays, family vacations, family traditions, and other important occasions.

A Servant of God

For over 40 years as an Apostle, Elder Perry's booming voice—and his daily conduct—bore fervent testimony of the Savior and His restored gospel. "He knew the Savior, he loved the Savior," said Elder Quentin L. Cook.5

That powerful testimony strengthened the lives of those who heard it. "The gospel of Jesus Christ is true," Elder Perry said in one general conference. "It has been restored to bless our lives in these latter days. It contains all the truths, principles, and ordinances contained in our Father in Heaven's great plan of happiness, which is a plan for us to return and live with Him in the eternal realms beyond. That the gospel of Jesus Christ is His divine way for us to face our glorious future is my testimony to you."6 NE

NOTES

- 1. L. Tom Perry, "When Ye Are Prepared, Ye Shall Not Fear," Ensign, Nov. 1981, 39.
- 2. Interview with Elder Quentin L. Cook, May 5, 2015.
- 3. Interview with Lee Perry, May 5, 2015.
- 4. See Lee Tom Perry, L. Tom Perry, An Uncommon Life: Years of Preparation, 1922-1976 (2013), 146.
- 5. Interview with Elder Quentin L. Cook, May 5, 2015.
- 6. L. Tom Perry, "The Past Way of Facing the Future," Ensign, Nov. 2009, 76.

25



EAGLES' WINGS

Wing type: Broad and long, with long, slotted feathers. Wingspan: between 6 feet (1.8 meters) and 9 feet (2.7 meters).

Eagles' wings are built for soaring and gliding on updrafts of warm air (thermals). The long feathers are slotted and can separate to allow air to flow smoothly and to prevent the eagles from stalling when flying at slower speeds.

The outermost wing feathers display gradual narrowing (emarginations) or abrupt narrowing (notches) toward the tip of the feathers to create greater lift during flight.

Eagles and other soaring birds have been seen at heights of over 20,000 feet (6,100 meters).

Eagles' bones, while strong, are hollow, making up less than 10 percent of their total body weight. This, of course, makes it easier for them to fly.

The slow gliding and soaring facilitated by eagles' wings enable eagles to spot prey from afar with their keen eyes.





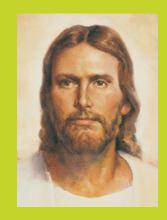
SANCTIFYING RENEWAL

"I know that in times of fear or fatigue, 'they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they

shall walk, and not faint' [Isaiah 40:31].

"We receive the gift of such majestic might and sanctifying renewal through the redeeming grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has overcome the world, and if we will take upon us His name and 'walk in His paths' [Isaiah 2:3] and keep our covenants with Him, we shall, ere long, have peace. Such a reward is not only possible; it is certain."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "'The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom,'" *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 84.



"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

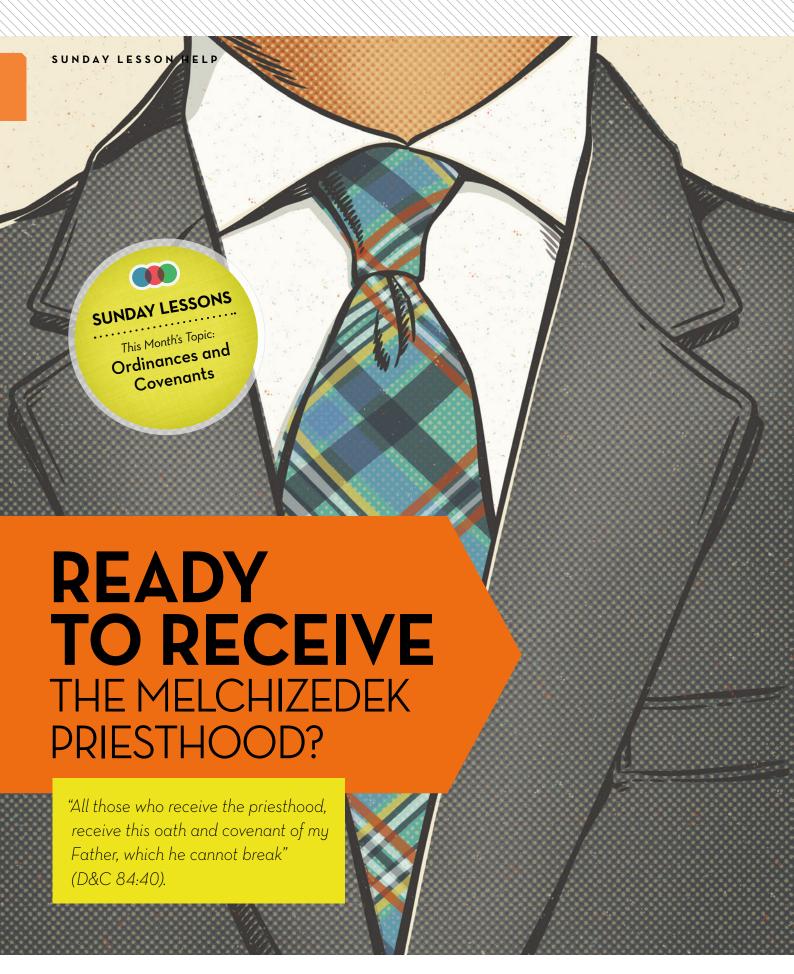
WHAT WE CAN LEARN

Having "wings as eagles" helps us:

Rise toward the heavens. When we "wait upon the Lord" by patiently trusting in Him and keeping our covenants, He blesses us with His divine help. In His strength we are lifted up so that we can receive "peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come" (D&C 59:23).

Move away from the earth. When we turn to the Lord, obey His commandments, and keep our covenants with Him, we separate ourselves from the world. We are less weighed down or heavy laden and are able to obtain a higher and more advantageous perspective—an eternal perspective. God blesses us with the Holy Ghost, and we feel our spirits rise above the trifling concerns of worldly living.

Find nourishment. Just as eagles' ability to soar on their wings can help them use their eyesight to receive their nourishment, we receive spiritual nourishment as we keep our covenants and stay alert to the things of the Spirit. We see this truth particularly in the ordinance of the sacrament as we partake of bread and water and renew the baptismal covenant.



nlike the Aaronic Priesthood, which is received without an oath, the Melchizedek
Priesthood is received with an oath made by Heavenly Father and with a covenant made between you and Him. The following ideas will help you understand key phrases in Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–44, where the Lord revealed the oath and covenant of the priesthood.

WHAT IS THE OATH MADE BY OUR HEAVENLY FATHER?

"Rising to the possibilities of the oath and covenant brings the greatest of all the gifts of God: eternal life. That is a purpose of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Through keeping the covenants as we receive the priesthood and renewing them in the temple ceremonies, we are promised by an oath made by our Heavenly Father, Elohim, that we will gain the fulness of His glory and live as He lives."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Faith and the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood," Ensign, May 2008, 61.

WHAT IS YOUR PART IN THE COVENANT?

"The covenant on man's part is that he will magnify his calling in the priesthood [see D&C 84:33], and that he will live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, and that he will keep the commandments."

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972), "Magnifying Our Callings in the Priesthood," in Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 59.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO VHAVE YOUR BODY RENEWED?

"I have seen that promise fulfilled in my own life and in the lives of others. A friend of mine served as a mission president. He told me that at the end of every day while he was serving, he could barely make it upstairs to bed at night wondering if he would have the strength to face another day. Then in the morning, he would find his strength and his courage restored. You have seen it in the lives of aged prophets who seemed to be renewed each time they stood to testify of the Lord Jesus Christ and the restored gospel. That is a promise for those who go forward in faith in their priesthood service." President Henry B. Eyring, "Faith and the

President Henry B. Eyring, "Faith and the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood," Ensign, May 2008, 62.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO RECEIVE THE LORD?

"Men who worthily receive the priesthood receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and those who receive the Lord receive God the Father. And those



CAN YOUNG WOMEN RECEIVE THESE BLESSINGS TOO?

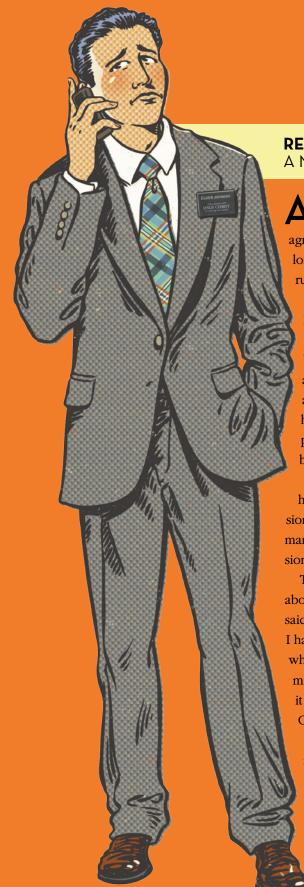
"The blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out upon our wives and daughters and upon all the faithful women of the Church. These good sisters can prepare themselves, by keeping the commandments and by serving in the Church, for the blessings of the house of the Lord. The Lord offers to his daughters every spiritual gift and blessing that can be obtained by his sons."

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876-1972), "Magnifying Our Callings in the Priesthood," in Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 59.

SCRIPTURE CHAIN: RECEIVING THE LORD

Receiving the priesthood is one way to receive the Lord. Read these verses to learn two more: John 13:20 and Doctrine and Covenants 112:20.

who receive the Father receive all that He has. Incredible blessings flow from this oath and covenant to worthy men, women, and children in all the world." Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Covenants," Ensign, Nov. 2011, 88.



RECEIVING ALL THE FATHER HAS: A MODERN PARABLE

young man was preparing to serve a mission. His parents agreed to pay for his mission as long as he would keep the mission rules and work hard. He agreed.

After entering the mission field, he found missionary work much harder than he thought it would be. Learning a new language, adjusting to a different culture, and facing rejection discouraged him. His companion and mission president tried to encourage him, but he still felt like giving up.

He told his mission president he wanted to go home. His mission president called the young man's father and gave him permission to call his son.

The missionary told his father about his discouragement. His father said, "For years your mother and I have looked forward to the day when you would serve a full-time mission. We know how important it is to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who don't have it."

The son replied, "Dad, I didn't realize that a mission meant so much to you."

"It means everything to me," the father declared. "All my life I have worked, built up my business, and saved with one person in mind: you. My goal has been to provide you an abundant inheritance."

"But, Dad," the son interjected, "that doesn't change the fact that I don't enjoy . . . "

The father interrupted, "How can I trust my business to your care if you can't prove yourself by serving the Lord for two short years?"

There was a pause as the son pondered the father's question.

Then the father said, "My son, if you will be faithful in this calling and prove yourself worthy, all that I possess will be yours."

Touched by this promise, the son courageously told his father, "I will stay."

The son did stay, and he served faithfully. He followed the mission rules and worked hard. And yes, sometime after his mission, he received from his father the promised inheritance, even all that his father had to share.

From Elder Carlos E. Asay (1926-1999) of the Seventy, "The Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood," Ensign, Nov. 1985, 45.

BLESSINGS I RECEIVE THROUGH THE PRIESTHOOD

As I live righteously as a daughter of God, I can receive many blessings through His priesthood. I can be a member of Jesus Christ's Church, which was restored through the priesthood. I can partake of the sacrament that was blessed by the priesthood power of Jesus Christ to renew my covenants and help me repent more fully. I receive personal direction from Heavenly Father through priesthood blessings.

I can be set apart under the direction of someone holding priesthood keys and be given authority to act in callings. I can use that authority to bless the lives of others. I can make more covenants with Heavenly Father through priesthood power found in temples. I can marry a worthy priesthood holder in the temple, and together we can raise a family in righteousness. With my eternal family, I can receive all that my Heavenly Father has (see D&C 84:38).

Melissa Hart, Utah, USA



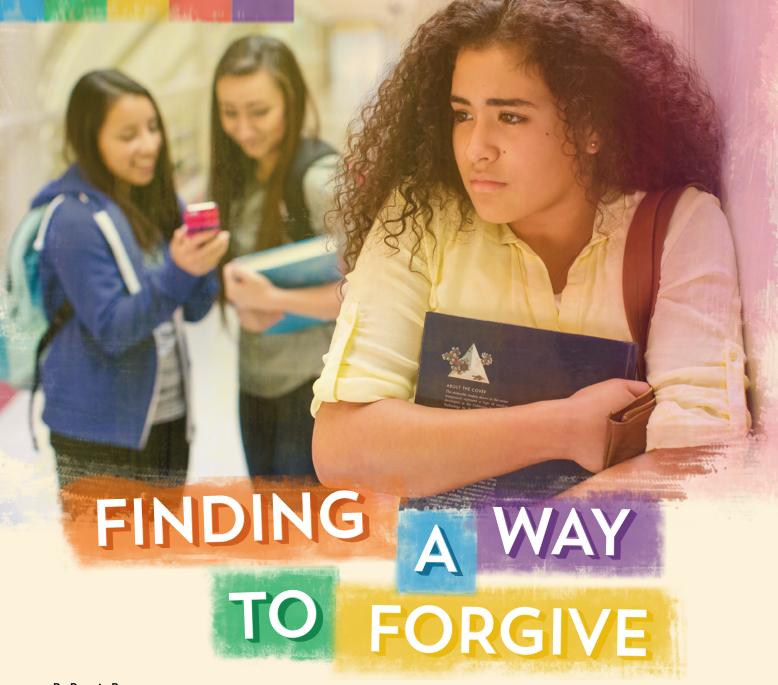
JOIN THE CONVERSATION

THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- How do you think keeping your covenants prepares you to receive all the Father has?
- What do you think is the difference between "obtaining" the priesthood (D&C 84:33) and "receiving" the priesthood (see verse 35)?
- How can the teachings in Doctrine and Covenants 98:11-12 help you "live by every word ... of God" (D&C 84:44)?

THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- Seek to be worthy of the Holy Ghost. Inspiration will help you better understand the doctrine of the priesthood.
- Prayerfully study additional scriptures about the priesthood, such as Alma 13 and Doctrine and Covenants 13; 20; 107; 121.
- Share your feelings about the priesthood with your family, at church, or online at lds.org/go/priesthood7NE.



By Bonnie Brown

e will all face a time when someone does something that hurts us. Sometimes it feels impossible to let go of the pain. But even when the offense is great, the Savior taught us to forgive all people. Forgiveness can be hard work, but by doing things that bring us closer to Christ, we can access the peace that forgiveness provides. Here, two young women share their experiences with forgiving others.

FORGIVING A FRIEND

When Renee* moved to a new school in Belgium, she was happy to make new friends. Then one friend did something to make things difficult. Renee explains:

"My friend Nora created a Facebook account using another friend's name, Kate. She started harassing people using that profile, and everyone accused Kate of being the bully. Nora even made fun of me at school, picking on my religion and my personality. I tried to avoid these attacks but I couldn't, so I started hanging out with other people.

"When Nora confessed about the fake profile, everyone was mad at her. Nora gave me a letter of apology, but I didn't think I could forgive her. I was so angry.

"One day I was reading the scriptures, and I came across Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–10: 'Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not

his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.'

"Instantly I thought about Nora. I knew it wasn't right for me to feel so angry. I prayed and asked Heavenly Father if He would help me forgive her. It wasn't easy, but I still managed to do it. I started by sending her messages asking her about her day, and occasionally we talked at lunch. I learned that Nora's father had died four years earlier. Her life was hard, and she thought everyone disliked her. I was glad I hadn't stayed mad at her. Kate and some others didn't understand how I could forgive Nora, but I knew that what I had done was right, and I knew that Heavenly Father was proud of me."

Renee learned that God commands us to forgive all. By following that commandment, she gained compassion and understanding for Nora and was able to completely forgive.

FINDING PEACE IN MY BROTHER'S DEATH

When Janet's brother was killed in a car accident caused by a drunk teenage driver and his passengers, she knew she needed to let go of the bitterness she felt, but she didn't know how.

"It was hard to tell what pained me most—my anger toward these mindless teenagers or my sincere yearning to have my brother back. I couldn't bear to think of the huge void in my life. I remember praying fervently for what seemed like hours. All I wanted was to have Nathan back.

"I felt pity for the boys responsible for Nathan's death because I knew that they felt a tremendous guilt. But I also felt anger and resentment. It was easy to blame them. I said in my mind that I forgave these young men, but anger still flooded my thoughts when I dwelt on the accident. I frequently asked myself, 'How will I ever truly forgive these young men, and how will I know when I have?'

"It wasn't until after hundreds of prayers, earnest fasts, and much studying and reflection that I finally felt I had truly forgiven them. I remember pondering one day. I thought, 'I forgive them. How could I not? Everyone makes mistakes, and who am I to judge? I will never solve anything by holding on, so I am letting go.' The feeling was amazing! I'd constantly yearned to know that I'd truly forgiven the young men, and in time it came. I cannot change what happened to Nathan, but I can choose to react with forgiveness and love rather than anger."

Janet learned that truly forgiving can take time and effort. The Savior said, "Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you" (D&C 88:63). Janet drew closer to the Lord through fasting, prayer, scripture study, and

other efforts. As we do the same, we can let our anger and hurt be replaced with feelings of peace and forgiveness.

FILLED WITH LOVE

Just like with Renee and Janet, forgiveness helps us feel compassion, understanding, and patience. As we forgive others, the Lord will fill us with His pure love and we will become more like Him. **NE**

Bonnie Brown lives in Utah, USA.

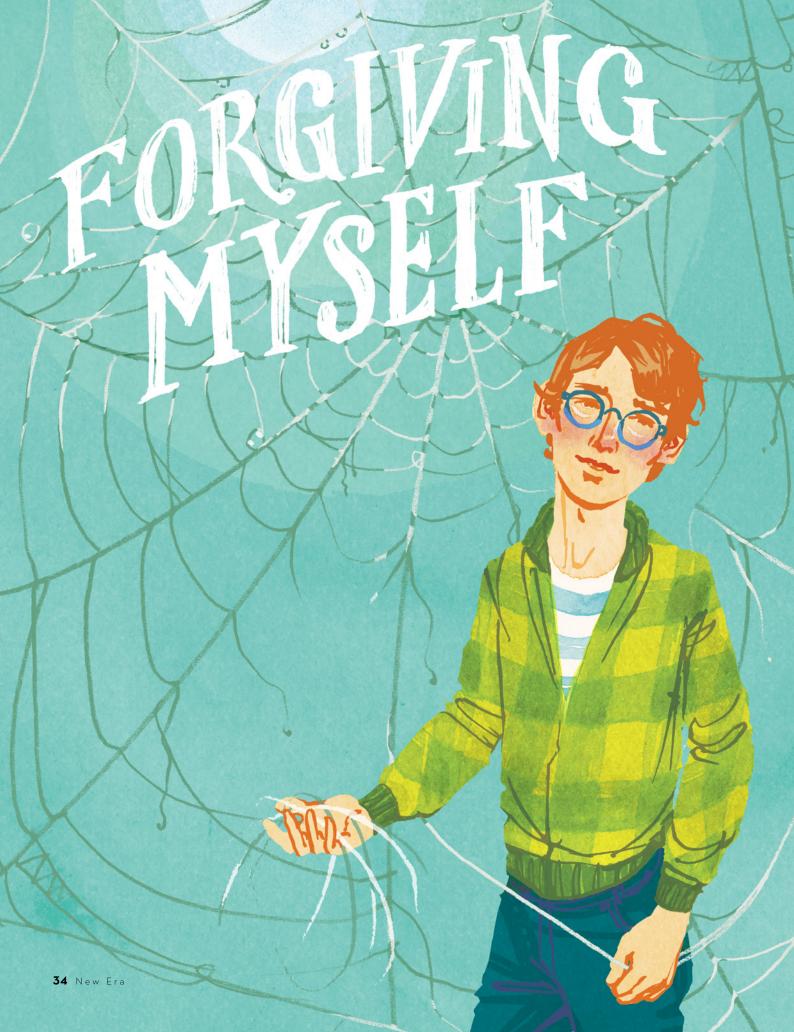
* Names have been changed.



PURE LOVE

"The pure love of Christ can remove the scales of resentment and wrath from our eyes, allowing us to see others the way our Heavenly Father sees us: as flawed and imperfect mortals who have potential and worth far beyond our capacity to imagine. Because God loves us so much, we too must love and forgive each other."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "The Merciful Obtain Mercy," *Ensign*, May 2012, 76.





HOW CAN I KNOW THAT I'VE BEEN FORGIVEN?

"Once we have truly repented, Christ will take away the burden of guilt for our sins. We can know for ourselves that we have been

forgiven and made clean. The Holy Ghost will verify this to us; He is the Sanctifier. No other testimony of forgiveness can be greater."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "Point of Safe Return," *Ensign*, May 2007, 101.

Others had forgiven me. Why couldn't I do the same?

By Justice Pinter

ver the years I've found that of everyone I need to forgive, the hardest to forgive is myself. One time I lied to my parents, and then one lie led to another until it became a giant web of lies and cover-ups. I felt guilty and generally unhappy, but I was too embarrassed to admit what I'd done. To make matters worse, instead of coming clean about my lies on my own, I got caught! It was hard to be around my parents because I knew they loved and trusted me, and I'd betrayed that trust.

Once it was all out in the open, I did feel some relief, but I just couldn't seem to forgive myself. I was ashamed of my behavior and vowed to be honest from then on, no matter what. I didn't want to disappoint myself or my parents anymore.

I knew my parents would be understanding and forgiving, and they were. They like to say, "Clean up the mess and let's move forward," which we did.

Once I set things right with my parents, I changed my habits to help me access the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ more than ever before. I fasted and prayed, particularly seeking to understand the Atonement better. I also tried to make scripture study a part of my everyday routine and to make it more meaningful. This meant making personal prayer a priority so that I was prepared to not only read the scriptures but also to understand them through the Spirit.

As I searched, I found answers and peace in the scriptures. I more fully understood that Jesus Christ atoned for my sins and that as I repented of them, He truly would "remember them no more" (D&C 58:42). Part of forgiving myself was being able to accept this great gift that Christ offered me. I realized He invites all of us to partake, but we actually have to be willing to accept it.

One day I was reading in Alma 22 where Aaron teaches the gospel to the king of the Lamanites and invites him to pray. I love what the king says when he prays: "I will give away all my sins to know thee [God]" (Alma 22:18). That phrase struck my heart with particular force at that time. As I recommitted myself to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through repentance, I was able to forgive myself and feel peace again.

It took time, and it wasn't easy, but by prioritizing and putting my personal prayer and scripture study first, I found comfort and felt the pure love of Christ through a greater understanding of what He did for me personally. When I realized that He loves me despite my mistakes, I felt the forgiveness He offers. I accepted His forgiveness and was able to forgive myself. **NE**

Justice Pinter lives in Virginia, USA.



we'd added up all the money from the register, the assistant manager told us we had \$100 more than what the cash register receipts said we should have.

"There's no record of this \$100," he said. "So it looks like we each make an extra \$33 tonight."

I didn't feel right accepting the cash, but I put it in my pocket anyway. The longer the money stayed there, the worse I felt. About half an hour later I approached the assistant manager.

"The money may be unaccounted for," I told him, "but it isn't mine." Then I handed it back.

The following week Mr. Lee called me into his office. I was hoping he didn't want to talk about God, but actually he did. He asked some questions about the Church and my beliefs. After I'd answered, he said something that surprised me.

"You appear to be the only worker at the drive-in I can trust," he said. "I'd like to ask a favor, and I'd like to give you some extra work."

He told me that the other employees were, in his words, "stealing me blind." He asked me to keep setting a good example for them and to encourage them to be honest. Then he gave me some extra after-hour security duties he didn't trust the other workers to do. Those extra duties meant more money for college and my mission.

BE HONEST AT ALL TIMES

"Be honest at school; choose not to cheat in any way. Be honest in your job, giving a full amount of work for your pay. Do not rationalize that being dishonest is acceptable, even though others may think it does not matter."

For the Strength of Youth (2011), 19.



Hear stories from youth, watch videos, learn from Church leaders, and see Mormonads about honesty at Ids.org/go/honest7NE.



HONESTY: AN ETERNAL PRINCIPLE

"Honesty, integrity, and truth are eternal principles that significantly shape our experience in mortality and help

determine our eternal destiny. For a disciple of Christ, honesty is at the very heart of spirituality."

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Honesty—the Heart of Spirituality" (Brigham Young University devotional, Sept. 13, 2011), 4; speeches.byu.edu.

I didn't ask Mr. Lee if the money I'd been given the week before was a test. But obviously, the assistant manager told him what had happened. I was just glad I'd been honest. I was also glad my boss knew that my belief in God and my participation at church had influenced my actions.

Through that experience, I learned for myself that "being honest will enhance your future opportunities and your ability to be guided by the Holy Ghost" (*For the Strength of Youth* [2011], 19).

I quit the drive-in job at the end of the summer and left for college. When I returned home during Thanksgiving vacation, I went to the drive-in one night to watch a movie and to say hello to my former co-workers. During the movie, one of them announced over the drive-in speakers: "Reverend Morris, please report to the snack bar. Reverend Morris, your congregation would like to see you."

We had a fun reunion, and I was glad I'd left everyone with a positive impression. I'm especially grateful, though, that my honest behavior had made a believer out of my boss. **NE**

* Name has been changed.

FACING THE WILDFIRE

When the flames of life approach, how do you react?

By Sally Johnson Odekirk

Church Magazines

n 1867, when Johanna Larsen Winters was 16 years old, she and her family left their comfortable home in Denmark to join with the Saints in Utah. It was a hard journey—hard to give up their home, and harder still to cross the plains on that long, tedious walk on foot.

One day, things went from hard to much worse in a hurry.

"We were camped on a large, open flat," Johanna wrote. "The oxen were brought to camp as usual and yoked up, ready to start. We sang our morning hymn, and prayer was offered by Brigham Young Jr., the leader of our company. Just then we all noticed at a distance something like a small campfire that was in the direction we were to travel. The fire increased in size and the wind bore it right toward us.

"Captain Rice ordered the oxen unyoked and said, 'we will sing again,' and he offered up a prayer for our safety. The oxen were driven in the opposite direction for fear of a stampede as the fire was coming closer and we could feel heat."

The danger was real and the pioneers didn't exactly have any good options. They had to choose between the possibility of being trampled to death by frightened oxen or being trapped by a fire rushing ever closer. What could they do? What would *you* do?

"Brother Young stepped up on the highest part of a wagon tongue, raised his hand and said, 'Brethren and sisters, stand still; we are not here to be destroyed.' He stood still there; all at once he pointed to a little cloud not much bigger than a man's hand. He said, 'There is our deliverance.'

"At the same moment, there was a terrific peal of thunder, a flash of lightning, and rain poured down. We thanked the Lord for our deliverance, and we went on our way rejoicing."

Most of us won't experience the danger of a prairie fire or a stampede of frightened animals or even a three-month journey traveling on foot with a covered wagon, but we can learn important lessons from this episode that will help us in our lives today.

FROM BRIGHAM YOUNG JR.'S JOURNAL

Brother Brigham Young Jr. wrote a surprisingly humble account of the event: "Saturday, Aug. 24th, 1867: Our camp was near Courthouse Rock, or Butte. It rained terrifically and entirely quenched a prairie fire which threatened to destroy our [company]."

"We Noticed a Fire"

Brigham

Just like the pioneers, we can be going about our regular activities when we notice danger in the distance. The danger may be the changing standards of the world, friends who tempt us to break the commandments, or a decision that could put us in spiritual or physical danger. It may seem like a small thing, but even something minor can turn dangerous quickly. What we do makes a difference: do we continue toward the danger, or do we listen to our leaders?

"Avoiding the temptations and evils of the world requires the faith and fortitude of a real modern-day pioneer. We need to walk together as today's pioneers, living Christlike lives, supporting good causes in our communities, and strengthening our families and homes" (Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Pioneer Faith and Fortitude—Then and Now," *Ensign*, July 2014, 29).



THE NEED FOR THE **PIONEER SPIRIT**

"The passage of time dims our memories and diminishes our appreciation for those who walked the path of pain, leaving behind a tear-marked trail of nameless graves. But what of today's challenges? Are there no rocky roads to travel, no rugged mountains to climb, no chasms to cross. no trails to blaze, no rivers to ford? Or is there a very present need for that pioneer spirit to guide us away from the dangers that threaten to engulf us and to lead us to a Zion of safety?"

President Thomas S. Monson, "The World Needs Pioneers Today," Ensign, July 2013, 4.

"The Captain Ordered the Oxen Unyoked"

The pioneers listened to their leaders and obeyed the counsel that kept them safe from the hazards of fire or stampede. When we listen to our leaders and follow their counsel, we will be kept from the dangers of our time.

"The calling of 15 men to the holy apostleship provides great protection for us as members of the Church. Why? . . . They are committed to see that the Lord's will truly will be done" (Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Sustaining the Prophets," Ensign, Nov. 2014, 75).

"We Are Not Here to Be Destroyed"

Brigham Young Jr. had been called as an Apostle shortly before this experience. Elder Young knew, as our current prophets and apostles know, we are here to accomplish many good and important things in our lives as we go forward with faith.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "My appeal is that you nurture your own physical and spiritual strength so that you have a deep reservoir of faith to call upon when tasks or challenges or demands of one kind or another come. Pray a little more, study a little more, shut out the noise and shut down the clamor, enjoy nature, call down personal revelation, search your soul, and search the heavens for the testimony that led our pioneer parents. Then, when you need to reach down inside a little deeper and a little farther to face life and do your work, you will be sure there is something down there to call upon" ("Faith to Answer the Call," Ensign, July 2011, 54).

"We Thanked the Lord for Our Deliverance"

After their trial, the pioneers remembered to thank the Lord and "went on our way rejoicing." Do we stop and thank Heavenly Father when our prayers are answered?

"Do we remember to give thanks for the blessings we receive? Sincerely giving thanks not only helps us recognize our blessings, but it also unlocks the doors of heaven and helps us feel God's love" (President Thomas S. Monson, "The Divine Gift of Gratitude," Ensign, Nov. 2010, 87). NE

Why must I forgive someone who is responsible for causing me pain?

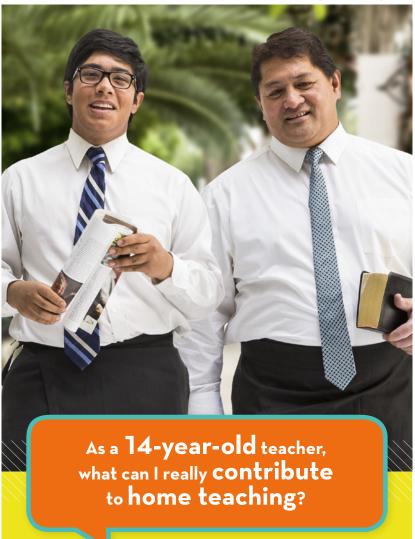
he commandment to forgive all people is one that many of us struggle with. But the Lord has said that we must forgive them or we're committing the greater sin (see D&C 64:9–11). That may not make much sense to us at first, but the Lord is trying to help us become more like Him and find greater joy. If we cast our burden on Him and let go of anger, bitterness, and hurt, we will obtain peace in this life and great blessings in the eternities. It may take time, tears, fasting, prayer, counseling with priesthood leaders, and visits to the temple, but it will be worth it.

As President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has taught:

"We must let go of our grievances. Part of the purpose of mortality is to learn how to let go of such things. *That is the Lord's way*.

"Remember, heaven is filled with those who have this in common: They are forgiven. And they forgive" ("The Merciful Obtain Mercy," *Ensign*, May 2012, 77). **NE**

For more on forgiving others, see Gordon B. Hinckley, "Forgiveness," Ensign, Nov. 2005, 81–84; James E. Faust, "The Healing Power of Forgiveness," Ensign, May 2007, 67–69.



ccording to the scriptures, the purpose of home teachers is to "visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties" (D&C 20:51). Home teachers are to "watch over . . . and be with and strengthen" the people they are assigned to teach (D&C 20:53). They "warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ" (D&C 20:59).

Now ask yourself, "Can I do those things?" The answer is yes. Ask your companion how you can contribute. He can help you learn to make appointments, bear testimony, give lessons, and more. Then you can see for yourself how you can bless the lives of those you visit, and you'll feel confident about using the gifts God has given you to fulfill this and many other priesthood duties throughout your life. **NE**

How do I get more motivated to do Personal Progress?

ou probably already know Personal Progress is important. However, sometimes it can be hard making the leap from knowing something is important to actually getting excited about spending time doing it. But have no fear! It's easy to find momentum once you get going on something this rewarding.

First, think about the goals of Personal Progress, and then imagine all the amazing things you'll experience and learn as you move through the program. Addi L., 15, of Utah, USA, says, "I became motived to do Personal Progress when I gave a talk on the Knowledge value. After I researched the program, it became easier to do, because I had a testimony of why it was put together."

Sometimes it helps to remember the big picture when it comes to feeling more motivation. Ultimately, this program is all about creating an even more incredible you! The Young Women Personal Progress booklet says: "The Personal Progress program uses the eight Young Women values to help you understand more fully who you are, why you are here on the earth, and what you should be doing as a daughter of God to prepare for the day you go to the temple to make sacred covenants" ([2009], 6).

When you keep in mind why you're encouraged to work on Personal Progress, it's much easier to become excited about spending time in that way. Kali D., 15, of Wyoming, USA, says, "Remember that Personal Progress isn't about checking off the values or projects. It is a fun way to learn how to live the gospel. It isn't supposed to stress you out; it's a reminder that you should live every day like Christ did." NE



Live the Values Personal Progress helps us grow spiritually. I have seen this happen

in my life. When I do Personal Progress, my relationship with Heavenly Father is strengthened because I am becoming who He wants me to be. When I live the values, my faith and testimony in Jesus Christ are strengthened because I learn about who Jesus Christ is and what His Atonement means for all of us.

Maren B., 14, California, USA

Focus on How It Helps You Grow

At first, I thought Personal Progress was just more "work." Then one day, my Young Women leader challenged us to do Divine Nature value project 5, which invites us to try to strengthen our relationship with a family member. I chose to do this with my mom. Every morning I left a sticky note for her to tell her how awesome she is. I began to enjoy doing nice things for her, and I loved the great spirit I felt in doing it. After I completed that value project, I was hooked on the spirit I felt and I could tell my testimony had grown. My advice is to focus on how it helps you grow in testimony and in feeling the Spirit.

Amber P., 18, Florida, USA



Make It Personal
Personal Progress is a
way to strengthen your

way to strengthen your testimony, and whether you just started, are

working through the projects, or are almost finished, you'll be able to see the wonderful effects of it someday. You can make your own experience in the back of each value section, creating it however you want to, with the approval of a parent or leader. Just remember: Personal Progress is for your own progression—one step at a time—and anything is possible. *Kali R., 15, Missouri, USA*



Gain a Testimony

At first I found Personal Progress to be timeconsuming. One thing that helped me become

more motivated was to receive my own testimony. Once I focused on receiving that testimony, everything fell into place.

Adriana F., 17, Arizona, USA



Complete Value Projects as Motivation to Do More

When I was a Beehive

I experienced the great feeling of completing at least one or two value projects. This helped me gain a strong testimony of my own to share with my friends. Seeing other young women who have been doing their Personal Progress values has also helped me complete more projects during my own time and also at our Young Women activities.

Juanita U., 17, New Zealand

Think about the Blessings

Think about the many blessings that come from doing Personal Progress: spiritual growth, homemaking skills, familiarity with scripture passages, and realizing your own individual worth. Doesn't this make accomplishing Personal Progress worth it? It may be tough, but I've realized that thinking about your future while working on the value projects helps. You're doing it not only for yourself but also for your future posterity.

Chelsea C., 16, Philippines

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.



THE PURPOSE OF THE PERSONAL PROGRESS PROGRAM

"Personal Progress helps young women prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple. They are helped by the examples of mothers, grandmothers, and every righteous woman around them in the Church."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Help Them on Their Way Home," *Ensign*, May 2010, 24-25.

UPCOMING QUESTION

Fasting just feels
like going
hungry.
How can I enjoy
fasting more?

Send your answer and photo by August 15, 2015.

Go to newera.lds.org, click "Submit Your Work," and sign in with your LDS Account. Under "Choose Magazine," select "New Era." To select the files to upload for your answer and photo, click "Add File." Then click "Submit" to upload and send us your files.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.



Ordinances and Covenants

You'll be studying about ordinances and covenants in your Sunday classes this month. As you study and discuss this topic, you may ponder these questions: How can honoring my covenants help me follow the Savior? How can I better understand the plan of happiness?

For some answers to these questions, read the scriptures listed in the Topical Guide under "Covenants," "New and Everlasting Covenant," and "Ordinance." You can also find teachings on ordinances and covenants in the April 2015 general conference talks at conference.lds.org, including the following:

- · "Therefore They Hushed Their Fears," by Elder David A. Bednar
- "Stay by the Tree," by Elder Kevin W. Pearson

Share these Cards

Give yourself an easy reminder to prepare for your Sunday lessons. Just place these cards in your scriptures, locker, or bedroom. You can also download or share them online at Ids.org/go/cards7NE.

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THIS LIFE AND FOR ETERNITY

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INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY RIGHTEOUSNESS,

CHURCH ORDINANCES,

AND FOLLOWING THE SAVIOR.

Elder Quentin L. Cook Quorum of the Twelve Apostles April 2015 general conference

minimum UNDERSTANDING [the] minimum

PROVIDES US WITH AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE AND HELPS US TO TRULY VALUE THE COMMANDMENTS. THE ORDINANCES, THE COVENANTS, AND THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS.

> Elder Rafael E. Pino of the Seventy
>
> April 2015 general conference

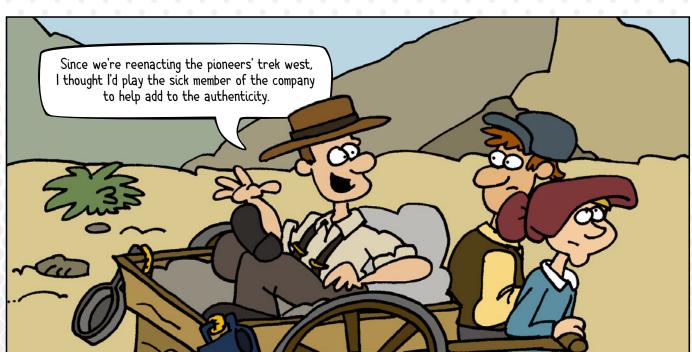


Why didn't someone tell Mormon the scriptures are all online?

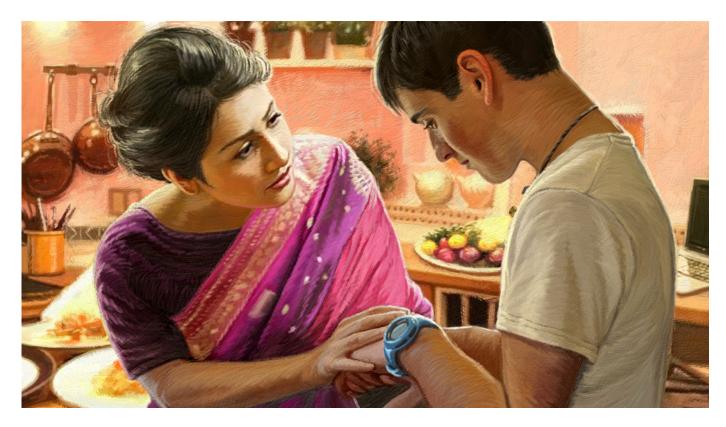
Why didn't samoone tell Marmon



RYAN STOKER



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF



WILL YOU WORK ON SUNDAY?

hen I was 15 years old, I gained a strong testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ and was so happy to join the Church. At the time, I was working to help support my family. Not long after I was baptized, however, I lost my job.

I needed to find a new job soon because my family depended on me, but every job I applied for required that I work on Sundays. I turned down many job offers because I knew that I needed to be at church on Sundays (see D&C 59:9-10).

After two months of searching, I still hadn't found a job. My mom was not a member of the Church, and although she believed in God, she was very angry that I was passing up so many jobs.

One night she looked at me with tears in her eyes and asked, "Why is God letting this happen to us when you are so faithful in doing what is right?"

I replied, "Mom, I don't know why this is happening to us, but I do know that I am doing the right thing, and I know that God will bless us for it."

The next morning someone offered me a considerable amount of money to spend two days moving some heavy cargo from one house to another. The work was strenuous, but when I received the money, I went straight home and offered a prayer of gratitude. I soon found a good job that allowed me to take Sundays off, and I haven't been unemployed since.

I am glad that I chose to keep the Sabbath day holy. There are many challenges in life, but I know that if we strive to be strong despite those challenges, the Lord will bless us.

Sahil S., India

LUNCHROOM DILEMMA

ight before I started high school, our family moved almost 500 miles to Tennessee, USA. My goal was to make new friends as fast as possible. But by the end of the year I had just a few friends.

At lunch, I always sat with a girl I knew, as well as her friends. At first things went great and I enjoyed hanging out and talking with them. Unfortunately, as time went on, their conversations became more and more crude and riddled with profanity. I felt really uncomfortable because I didn't want to participate in their conversations or hear that much vulgarity.

I decided to pray for an answer to what I should do. Should I stay and just ignore it or should I give up lunch with my friends for my beliefs? I received my answer shortly afterward; I knew I could not put my religious beliefs aside for friends. After lunch, I talked with my friend, and I decided to switch tables the next day. My friend was upset, but I knew the reasons for my decision, and my mind was made up.

Later on, I talked with a few people who were in my English class, and they were happy to make room for me at their table.

I'm now in my senior year, and my entire high school experience has

A MODEST BELLE AT THE BALL

oing to prom was something I'd dreamed about since I was a little girl. Now my dream was about to be a reality.

Several of my friends and I went dress shopping together. I was the only member of the Church among my friends, and I soon realized it would be impossible to find a modest dress that fit my standards. There was no doubt that having sleeves would make me stand out from all the other young women at the dance. Plus, where I lived, there were not many modest dresses for sale. I didn't know what to do.

Luckily, my cousin had a beautiful, modest ball gown I was able to borrow. I was nervous about what others would think, but I had confidence in knowing I was doing the right thing.

I stood out at prom that year because I was the only young woman with sleeves on my dress. It didn't matter what others thought; I was beautiful in the eyes of the Lord. That night I had a blast, and wearing that dress made me feel like royalty. And I was! I was confident in knowing I was a daughter of a King, and I was making Him proud.

More than anything, I want to be married in the temple for time and all eternity. Being modest now will prepare me for that special day. Finding a modest dress may not be easy, but it is more than worth it.

Sydney J., Alabama, USA



changed because of that decision.

After moving to a new table

I made several new friends. My
friends in this group know my
standards and frequently talk to me
about them and ask me questions.

They respect my religious beliefs

and don't try to change me.

I know that the decisions I make today will affect me for the rest of my life. By acting on faith, I was blessed with what have become my best friends.

Matthew F., Tennessee, USA



By Elder L. Tom Perry (1922-2015)Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

HOW TO **PREPARE NOW TO SERVE A MISSION**

et me offer a few suggestions about what each of you can do to raise the bar as you prepare for missionary service.

The minimum physical standard for full-time missionary service refers to a potential missionary's physical health and strength. For example, one of the questions on the missionary recommendation forms asks if you "can work 12 to 15 hours per day, walk 6 to 8 miles per day, ride a bicycle 10 to 15 miles per day, and climb stairs daily." Missionary work is hard, and full-time missionaries must be in good physical condition to serve. Raising the bar to a higher physical standard could involve further physical conditioning.

Raise the bar higher in your intellectual preparation. Take your schooling seriously. It is important to be able to read, speak, and

write with intelligence. Expand your knowledge of the world around you by reading good books. Learn how to study. Then apply your improved study habits to learning the gospel of Jesus Christ. Consistently and regularly read from the Book of Mormon.

Don't neglect the opportunity of attending seminary and institute classes. Participate and gain all you can from the scriptures taught in these great religiouseducation settings. They will prepare you to present the message of the restored gospel to those you have opportunity to meet. Study from Preach My Gospel, emphasizing the basic doctrines taught in chapter 3. Each time you are asked to speak in church or to teach a family home evening lesson, focus on these basic doctrines.

You must recognize that missionary service is emotionally demanding. Your support system is going to be withdrawn from you as you leave home and go out into the world. Many of the ways you use now to cope with emotional stress—like hanging out with friends, going off by yourself, playing video games, or listening to music—are not allowed by the rules of missionary conduct. There will be days of rejection and disappointment. Learn now about your emotional limits, and learn how to control

your emotions under the circumstances you will face as a missionary. By doing this, you raise the bar to greater heights and, in effect, fortify yourself against emotional challenges during your missionary service.

Prospective missionaries also must be prepared with the social skills needed to serve a mission. More and more, young people are isolating themselves from others by playing video games; wearing headphones; and interacting through cell phones, e-mail, text messaging, and so on instead of in person. Much of missionary work involves relating face-to-face with people, and unless you set the bar higher in the development of your social skills, you will find yourself underprepared. Let me offer a simple suggestion: get a job that involves interacting with people. As an increased motivation, set a goal to earn enough money from your part- or full-time work to pay for at least a significant part of your mission. I promise great blessings—social, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual blessings—to every young person who pays for a significant part of his or her mission. NE From an October 2007 general conference address.

Share Your Experiences

Share how you're preparing to serve a mission and read the experiences of other youth at Ids.org/go/mission7NE.

THE OF SIGNATURE O

IS THE MOST

WE EVER MAKE.

IT SHAPES ALL OUR OTHER DECISIONS.

Elder L. Whitney Clayton
Presidency of the Seventy

