

ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS



What if I pay tithing but haven't received the blessings I think I ought to receive?



"We may need and pray for help to find suitable employment. Eyes and ears of faith (see Ether 12:19) are needed, however, to recognize the spiritual gift of enhanced discernment that can empower us to identify job opportunities that many other people might overlook—or the blessing of greater personal determination to search harder and longer for a position than other people may be able or willing to do. We might want and expect a job offer, but the blessing that comes to us through heavenly windows may be greater capacity to act and change our own circumstances rather than expecting our circumstances to be changed by someone or something else.

"We may appropriately desire and work to receive a pay raise in our employment to better provide the necessities of life. Eyes and ears of faith are required, however, to notice in us an increased spiritual and temporal capacity (see Luke 2:52) to do more with less, a keener ability to prioritize and simplify, and an enhanced ability to take proper care of the material possessions we already have acquired. We might want and expect a larger paycheck, but the blessing that comes to us through heavenly windows may be greater capacity to change our own circumstances rather than expecting our circumstances to be changed by someone or something else."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

How can we have unity in the Church when we're all so different?



"Unity is not achieved by ignoring and isolating members who seem to be different or weaker and only associating with people who are like us. On the contrary, unity is gained by welcoming and serving those who are new and who have particular needs. These members are a blessing for the Church and provide us with opportunities to serve our neighbors and thus purify our own hearts.

"So, . . . it is your duty to reach out to anyone who appears at the doors of your Church buildings. Welcome them with gratitude and without prejudice. If people you do not know walk into one of your meetings, greet them warmly and invite them to sit with you. Please make the first move to help them feel welcome and loved, rather than waiting for them to come to you."

Bishop Gérald Caussé, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



"So many times it felt like the speakers were talking directly to me, and the Spirit testified the truth of what they spoke to my heart. I was able to receive answers to my prayers and strengthen my testimony that these leaders were all called by the Lord."

Emmett F., 16, South Carolina, USA



Why is life so hard?



"As we draw near to Him, we realize that mortality is meant to be difficult and that 'opposition in all things' (2 Nephi 2:11) is not a flaw in the plan of salvation. Opposition, rather, is the indispensable element of mortality and strengthens our will and refines our choices. The vicissitudes of life help us fashion an eternal relationship with God—and engrave His image upon our countenance as we yield our hearts to Him (see Alma 5:19)."

Elder Timothy J. Dyches of the Seventy

"I felt the Spirit telling me that if I want to become better, then this talk is my answer, and then this one, and so on, all the way through conference. I look forward to the next six months as I work to improve myself with what I have gained."

Joseph R., 17, British Columbia, Canada

Why is the Church opposed to same-sex marriage?



"Marriage between a man and a woman is fundamental to the Lord's doctrine and crucial to God's eternal plan. Marriage between a man and a woman is God's pattern for a fulness of life on earth and in heaven. God's marriage pattern cannot be abused, misunderstood, or misconstrued. Not if you want true joy. God's marriage pattern protects the sacred power of procreation and the joy of true marital intimacy. We know that Adam and Eve were married by God before they ever experienced the joy of uniting as husband and wife.

"In our day civil governments have a vested interest in protecting marriage because strong families constitute the best way of providing for the health, education, welfare, and prosperity of rising generations. But civil governments are heavily influenced by social trends and secular philosophies as they write, rewrite, and enforce laws. Regardless of what civil legislation may be enacted, the doctrine of the Lord regarding marriage and morality *cannot be changed*. Remember: sin, even if legalized by man, is still sin in the eyes of God!"

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

What will happen to people with disabilities after this life?



"I bear witness of that day when loved ones whom we knew to have disabilities in mortality will stand before us glorified and grand, breathtakingly perfect in body and mind. What a thrilling moment that will be! I do not know whether we will be happier for ourselves that we have witnessed such a miracle or happier for them that they are fully perfect and finally 'free at last.' Until that hour when Christ's consummate gift is evident to us all, may we live by faith, hold fast to hope, and show 'compassion one of another' [1 Peter 3:8]."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles





"Hearing the leaders of this Church talk about how to stay strong has helped me realize that the struggles I'm facing are not eternal struggles. They are just temporary, and with the Lord's help, I can do anything!"

Cassidy M., 16, Alabama, USA



How can I control my temper?



"Another important step to becoming meek is learning how to control our temper. Because the natural man dwells within each one of us and because we live in a world full of pressure, controlling our temper may become one of the challenges in our lives. Think for a few seconds how you react when someone does not comply with your desires the moment you want them to. What about when people disagree with your ideas, even though you are absolutely sure that they represent the proper solution to a problem? What is your response when someone offends you, critiques your efforts, or is simply unkind because he or she is in a bad mood? At these moments and in other difficult situations, we must learn to control our temper and convey our feelings with patience and gentle persuasion. This is most important within our homes and within our relationships with our eternal companions. During the 31 years I've been married to my sweetheart, she has often given me gentle reminders of this as we have faced life's unsettling challenges."

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Elder Ulisses Soares of the Presidency of the Seventy



I've repented, so why can't everything go back to the way it was before?



"It is a fundamental truth that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we can be cleansed. We can become virtuous and pure. However, sometimes our poor choices leave us with long-term consequences. One of the vital steps to complete repentance is to bear the short- and long-term consequences of our past sins."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



What if I don't feel like I can live up to the Church's standards?



"Some might say, 'I don't think I could live up to your standards.'"

"All the more reason to come! The Church is designed to nourish the imperfect, the struggling, and the exhausted. It is filled with people who *desire* with all their heart to keep the commandments, even if they haven't *mastered* them yet."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency



I've been asked to teach a lesson in church. How should I prepare?



"The power of the gospel comes into the lives of those who so live that the Holy Ghost is their companion

and who follow the promptings they receive. Some focus their attention only on obtaining the word, and they become experts in delivering information. Others neglect their preparation and hope that the Lord in His goodness will somehow help them get through the class period. You cannot expect the Spirit to help you remember the scriptures and principles you have not studied or considered. In order to successfully teach the gospel, you must have both the word and the power of the gospel in your life. . . .

"After you have prepared yourself and your lesson to the very best of your ability, you must be willing to let go. When the quiet promptings of the Holy Ghost come, you must have the courage to set aside your outlines and your notes and go where those promptings take you. When you do this, the lesson you deliver is no longer your lesson, but it becomes the Savior's lesson."

David M. McConkie, first counselor in the Sunday School general presidency





What can I do if a member of my family is straying from the Church's standards and teachings?



"The way for . . . all of God's servants will not be easy in a decaying world. We cannot force God's children to choose the way to happiness. God cannot do that because of the agency He has given us.

"Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son love all of God's children no matter what they choose to do or what they become. The Savior paid the price of all sins, no matter how heinous. Even though there must be justice, the opportunity for mercy is extended which will not rob justice. . . .

"My message then . . . is that there is joy guaranteed for the faithful. From before the world was, a loving Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son loved and worked with those who They knew would wander. God will love them forever.

"You have the advantage of knowing that they learned the plan of salvation from the teachings they received in the spirit world. They and you were faithful enough to be allowed to come into the world when many others were not.

"With the help of the Holy Ghost, all truths will be brought to our remembrance. We cannot force that on others, but we can let them see it in our lives. We can always take courage from the assurance that we all once felt the joy of being together as a member of the beloved family of our Heavenly Father. With God's help we can all feel that hope and that joy again."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency

"I learnt a lot about humility and the importance of turning to the Lord to know His will. I also learnt about treasuring up the words of the gospel through the prophets and scriptures and how important it will be as I prepare to serve a full-time mission. In order to really understand the gospel and preach, I will need to treasure the words to explain the feelings and thoughts coinciding with doctrine I have felt, not just simply memorising words from a book but expressing the testimony of these truths myself."*

Joshua F., 17, West Yorkshire, England

* British spellings have been preserved.

Why doesn't God just stop bad stuff from happening?



"Why does He warn any of us to remove ourselves from a source of danger when He could simply stop the danger from happening? President Wilford Woodruff told the story of being spiritually warned to move the carriage that he, his wife, and child slept in, only to discover that a whirlwind shortly thereafter uprooted a large tree and dropped it exactly where the carriage had previously stood (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* [2004], 47).

". . . The weather could have been adjusted to eliminate the dangers. But here is the point—rather than solve the problem Himself, the Lord wants us to develop the faith that will help us rely upon Him in solving our problems and trust Him. Then we can feel His love more constantly, more powerfully, more clearly, and more personally. We become united with Him, and we can become like Him. For us to be like Him is His goal. In fact, it is His glory as well as His work (see *Moses 1:39*)."

Elder Terence M. Vinson of the Seventy