

New Testament

Class Member Study Guide



Cover: *The Sermon on the Mount*, by Carl Bloch. Used by permission
of the National Historic Museum at Frederiksborg in Hillerød.

© 1997 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

English approval: 8/96

Published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Salt Lake City, Utah

Introduction

Jesus said, “Learn of me” (Matthew 11:29). Learning of the Savior and his truths is an essential part of living his gospel. Your efforts to search the scriptures daily will help you draw nearer to him, for “these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31).

This study guide is divided into numbered sections that correspond with the lessons in the New Testament Gospel Doctrine course. Each section provides the week’s reading assignment and questions to enhance your study. You may use the questions to improve personal application of the scriptures, to prompt gospel-centered discussions among family members, and to prepare to make meaningful contributions to class discussions.

This study guide is a valuable resource for families. Each section contains a suggestion for an activity or discussion to add interest and variety to gospel learning in the home.

Also included in each section is a scripture chain—a list of scripture passages that relate to the reading assignment. You may want to write these lists in the back of your scriptures. You may also want to develop your own scripture chains by selecting passages from the lists in the Topical Guide and the information in the Bible Dictionary. To highlight a scripture chain in your

scriptures, mark in your scriptures the first passage in the list. Beside that passage write the reference for the second passage in the list. Turn to the second passage, mark it, and write the reference for the third passage. Continue until you have marked the last passage in the list, and complete the chain by writing next to that passage the reference for the first passage. You will be able to use these scripture chains to quickly find scripture passages on a given gospel principle.

An additional section at the end of the study guide contains statements by latter-day prophets on the blessings of scripture study.

You share with your Gospel Doctrine teacher the responsibility to help the class be successful. The Lord has said that teachers need to “preach . . . by the Spirit of truth” and that those who receive “the word of truth” should “receive it by the Spirit of truth” (D&C 50:17, 19). Come to class prepared to contribute insights, ask questions, share experiences, bear testimony, and listen attentively to the teacher and the other class members. When you have studied the reading assignment and pondered the questions in this study guide, you will be better prepared to experience the fulfillment of the Lord’s words when he said, “He that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22).

“That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ”

1

*Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11;
John 1:1–14; 20:31*

- What do you learn about Jesus Christ from John 1:1–3, 14? (Note that “the Word” in John 1:1, 14 refers to the Savior. Use the Joseph Smith Translation of these verses if it is available.)
- The Apostle John said that “in [Jesus] was life” (John 1:4). He also testified that Jesus is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). How has the Savior given you life and light?
- What accounts or teachings in the New Testament have particularly inspired or helped you? How might studying the New Testament this

year help strengthen your testimony of Jesus Christ?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read John 1:1–3 or Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–3. Explain that Jesus (“the Word” in John 1:1–3) created the earth under Heavenly Father’s direction. Take a walk as a family, giving close attention to the many beauties of creation.

Scripture Chain: Jesus Christ’s Foreordained Mission

John 1:1–5	Mosiah 3:5–10
John 1:9–17	Isaiah 61:1–2
Abraham 3:22–27	Luke 4:16–21

“My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord”

2

Luke 1; Matthew 1

- What do you learn about Mary from her conversations with the angel Gabriel and with Elisabeth? (See Luke 1:26–38, 45–49; see also Alma 7:10.) What can you do to follow her example?
- How do the examples of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph help you see the Savior’s greatness and increase your faith in him? How can you help others increase their faith in Jesus Christ?

to the Lord” by sharing the gospel with them. Make a list of family members or friends who are not members of the Church or who are less-active members of the Church. Pray as a family for guidance in deciding whom you can share the gospel with and how to go about it.

Scripture Chain: Prophecies about John the Baptist

Isaiah 40:3	Luke 1:13–17
1 Nephi 10:7–10	Luke 1:67, 76–79

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Luke 1:16, and discuss the importance of helping people “turn

“Unto You Is Born . . . a Saviour”

3

Luke 2; Matthew 2

- What were the circumstances of Jesus’ birth? (See Luke 2:7.) In what ways do people today refuse to make room for the Savior in their lives? What can you do to make room for him in your life?
- Why did Jesus come to earth? (See 3 Nephi 27:13–16.)
- What did the “wise men from the east” do when they found the child Jesus? (See Matthew 2:11.) What gifts can you offer to the Lord?
- As a youth, Jesus “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). In other words, he developed intellectually,

physically, spiritually, and socially. What are some specific things you can do to grow intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read lines from several hymns or Primary songs about Jesus’ birth, and invite family members to identify the hymns or songs. Sing one of the hymns or songs as a family, and discuss the importance of remembering Jesus’ birth throughout the year rather than just during the Christmas season.

Scripture Chain: Jesus’ Birth

Isaiah 9:6 1 Nephi 11:13–21
Helaman 14:1–8 Luke 2:7–14

“Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord”

4

Matthew 3–4; John 1:35–51

- What message did John preach to prepare the people for the coming of the Savior? (See Matthew 3:1–2.) What does it mean to repent? (See 2 Corinthians 7:9–10; Luke 19:8; Mosiah 7:33; D&C 1:31–32; 58:42–43.)
- As you read about the Savior’s encounter with Satan in the wilderness, what do you learn about withstanding temptation? (See Matthew 4:1–11. See also the footnotes to Matthew 4:1–2, 5–6, 8–9, and 11, which contain the Joseph Smith Translation of these verses.)
- After receiving a witness that Jesus was the Messiah, how did Philip answer Nathanael’s doubts? (See John 1:43–46.) What can you do to invite others to “come and see” the Savior?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Prepare a lesson to help family members who are preparing for baptism or to discuss ways to help converts who will soon be baptized. Discuss why Jesus needed baptism (Matthew 3:13–15; 2 Nephi 31:6–9) and why we need baptism (2 Nephi 31:5, 10–12; D&C 20:71–73; 49:13–14). Invite family members who have been baptized to tell about when they were baptized and express their feelings about the blessings they have received because they were baptized.

Scripture Chain: Repentance

Luke 15:3–10 1 John 1:8–9
2 Corinthians Matthew 3:1–2
7:9–10 D&C 58:42–43
Alma 34:31–34

“Born Again”

5

John 3–4

- Jesus told Nicodemus that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). What does it mean to be born again? (See the scripture chain in this section.)
- Read and ponder Alma 5:14–31 as if Alma were speaking to you. What do you need to do personally to be “spiritually . . . born of God”? (Alma 5:14).
- Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he could give her “living water” (John 4:10). What do you think “living water” means? (See 1 Nephi 11:25; D&C 63:23.) How can we obtain living water? How has this living water blessed you?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Give each family member a drinking glass. Pour water into each glass, and invite family members to drink the water. Ask family members if they think they will ever need another drink of water. Then read John 4:1–15, and discuss the questions in the third paragraph of this section. Testify that if we will come to Christ and live his gospel, we will receive “everlasting life” (John 4:14).

Scripture Chain: “Born Again”

John 3:3–5	Mosiah 27:25–26
John 3:16–17	Alma 5:14–16
Mosiah 5:1–7	Alma 22:15–18

“They Straightway Left Their Nets”

6

Luke 4:14–32; 5; 6:12–16; Matthew 10

- Why was it important that Jesus call Apostles? (See Matthew 9:36–38; 16:19; Mark 3:14–15; John 20:19–21, 23; Ephesians 4:11–15.) Why is it important that the Lord has called Apostles today?
- What do you learn about the powers and responsibilities of Apostles from Jesus’ counsel in Matthew 10? How have you seen latter-day Apostles fulfill these responsibilities?
- How have you been blessed by following the counsel of an Apostle?

of the Church magazine in your area. Help family members recognize and learn the names of the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Share your feelings about the blessing it is to be led by prophets and apostles.

Scripture Chain: The Calling of an Apostle

Luke 6:13	D&C 107:33, 35
Matthew 10:5–8	D&C 112:14
Ephesians 4:11–15	D&C 112:19–22
D&C 107:23	

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Show the chart of General Authorities from the most recent conference issue

“[He] Took Our Infirmities, and Bare Our Sicknesses”

7

Mark 1–2; 4:35–41; 5; Luke 7:11–17

- A miracle is an extraordinary event caused by divine or spiritual power (Bible Dictionary, “Miracles,” 732–33). Why did Jesus perform miracles during his mortal ministry? (See Matthew 9:27–30; Mark 1:27; 2:10–11; 5:19 for some answers to this question.)
- Why do you think faith must precede miracles? Why don’t miracles alone provide a firm foundation for faith?
- Why are the miracles that Jesus performed during his mortal life important to you? Why is it impor-

tant to know that he continues to perform miracles today? What are some examples of modern miracles?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Invite family members to tell of miracles that have occurred in their lives or the lives of people they know.

Scripture Chain: Miracles and Faith in Jesus Christ

2 Nephi 27:23

Ether 12:12

Mark 1:34

Mormon 9:15–21

3 Nephi 17:5–10

The Sermon on the Mount: “A More Excellent Way”

8

Matthew 5

- How can Latter-day Saints be “the light of the world”? (Matthew 5:14; see also verse 16).
- How are the Savior’s teachings in Matthew 5:22–24, 28, 34–37, 39–40, and 44–48 higher laws than the laws mentioned in Matthew 5:21, 27, 33, 38, and 43?
- How do the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount help us “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him”? (Moroni 10:32).

statement (or another statement that might be more applicable to family members): *The teachings in the Sermon on the Mount can help me at school.* Ask family members to read a few passages in Matthew 5 and discuss how those passages relate to the statement you have written.

Scripture Chain: Perfection through the Atonement of Jesus Christ

Matthew 5:48

Moroni 10:32–33

Ether 12:27

D&C 76:68–70

Suggestion for Family Discussion

On a chalkboard, poster board, or piece of paper, write the following

“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”

9

Matthew 6–7

- What will be the reward for people who do good things to be seen by others? (See Matthew 6:2, 5, 16.) What things might we do to be seen by others instead of to please God? How can we purify our motives for serving and performing other good works?
- The teaching in Matthew 7:12 is often called the Golden Rule. What experiences have shown you the value of this principle? How does following the Golden Rule make us better disciples of Jesus Christ?
- Jesus promised that if we “seek . . . first the kingdom of God,” we will be given all other things that we need (Matthew 6:33). What experiences have helped you gain a testimony of this promise?

Suggestions for Family Discussion

1. Display a stone and a pile of sand. Ask family members which material

they would use as a foundation for a house. Read Matthew 7:24–27, and discuss how building our lives on the Savior’s teachings is like building a house on a firm foundation of rock.

2. Display a map. Ask family members how a map could help them plan a trip. If your family has recently taken a trip or will take one soon, discuss how a map was used or will be used on the trip. Explain that in our journey toward eternal life, the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets are like a map, helping us know how to return to our Heavenly Father.

Scripture Chain: Living as Disciples of Christ

Matthew 16:24–25 John 13:35
Matthew 7:21 2 Nephi 31:10–13
John 8:31 Moroni 7:48

“Take My Yoke upon You, and Learn of Me”

10

Matthew 11:28–30; 12:1–13; Luke 7:36–50; 13:10–17

- What are some examples of burdens we bear in this life? How can the Lord “give [us] rest” from these burdens? (See Matthew 11:28–30.) What does it mean to take Christ’s yoke upon you? (See the scripture chain in this section.)
- The woman who entered the house of Simon the Pharisee carried the burden of sin (Luke 7:37). What did the woman do that allowed Jesus to take away her burden? (See Luke 7:38, 44–50.) What can we do so

the Savior will remove the burden of sin from our lives?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Have a family member hold an open, empty container such as a bag or box. Ask other family members to put objects into the container, one at a time. When the container becomes heavy, invite a family member to help carry it. Explain that the objects represent burdens we carry, such as adversity and sorrow. The help from the second family member represents the rest

the Savior offers us as we come to him when we “labour and are heavy laden” (Matthew 11:28). Read Matthew 11:28–30 and Mosiah 24:8–15, and help family members understand that when we follow the Savior, he will ease our burdens and make them light.

Scripture Chain: “Take My Yoke upon You, . . . and Ye Shall Find Rest”

Matthew 11:28–30 D&C 54:10
Mosiah 24:8–15 D&C 59:23
Alma 12:33–35

“He Spake Many Things unto Them in Parables”

11

Matthew 13

- What is the meaning of the parable of the sower? (See Matthew 13:3–8, 18–23.) Why do you think the parable focuses more on the ground than on the sower or the seed?
- What invitation did Jesus extend after he presented the parable of the sower? (See Matthew 13:9.) What do you think the word *hear* means in this invitation? What does it mean to see but see not and to hear but hear not? (See Matthew 13:13–15.)
- The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven are about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 98–100). How have you seen the work of God increase as illustrated by these parables?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Obtain 14 small pieces of paper. On each piece of paper write one of the following phrases, which relate to the parable of the wheat and the tares: (1) *the sower*, (2) *the Lord and his Apostles*, (3) *the good seed*, (4) *the righteous members of the Church*, (5) *the field*, (6) *the world*, (7) *the tares*, (8) *the wicked*, (9) *the enemy*, (10) *the devil*, (11) *the harvest*, (12) *the end of the world*, (13) *the reapers*, and (14) *the angels*. To review the parable of the wheat and the tares, mix the pieces of paper. Have family members match the persons, objects, and actions in the parable with their meanings. You may want to read Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43 and Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7 as you conduct this discussion.

Scripture Chain: “Ears to Hear”

Matthew 13:9–16 Alma 10:2–6
Mosiah 2:9 Alma 12:9–11

“I Am the Bread of Life”

John 5–6; Mark 6:30–44; Matthew 14:22–33

- Jesus challenged the Jewish leaders to “search the scriptures” (John 5:39). What is the difference between searching the scriptures and reading them? How have you made you

personal and family scripture study more meaningful? How have you been blessed as you have searched the scriptures?

12

- Why did Peter’s faith falter as he walked on the water? (See Matthew 14:30.) How do we sometimes make similar errors when difficulties arise?
- How is “bread of life” an appropriate description of the Savior and the blessings he offers us? (See John 6:35, 47–51.) How can we partake of the “bread of life”? (See John 6:47, 51–54; Matthew 26:26–28; Alma 5:33–35; D&C 20:77.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Matthew 14:22–32. Point out that Peter showed great faith when

he walked on the water, but he began to sink when he became frightened. Display a picture of Jesus Christ, and assure family members that although there will sometimes be trouble around them, they can overcome fear by remembering the Savior and following him. Ask family members to tell about times when they overcame fear by remembering Jesus Christ and his teachings.

Scripture Chain: The Scriptures Testify of Christ

John 5:39	Acts 18:28
John 20:31	2 Nephi 25:26

“I Will Give unto Thee the Keys of the Kingdom”

13

Matthew 15:21–17:9

- Jesus said to Peter, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the rock Jesus referred to is revelation (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 274). In what way is revelation the foundation of the Lord’s Church?
- Elder David B. Haight taught that Jesus’ Transfiguration “was meant for our spiritual enlightenment as well as for those who were personal witnesses” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 7). What can you learn from the Transfiguration to help you when you need spiritual strength? (See Matthew 17:1–5.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Matthew 16:13–17. Explain that Peter gained a testimony of Jesus Christ through revelation and that we can gain a testimony of the Savior in the same way. Tell family members about how you have received a testimony of Jesus Christ and what you continue to do to strengthen your testimony. As appropriate, ask family members to bear their testimonies. Encourage them to strengthen their testimonies through daily prayer, scripture study, and obedience to the commandments of God.

Scripture Chain: Revelation

Proverbs 29:18	Galatians 1:11–12
Amos 3:7	2 Peter 1:20–21
1 Corinthians 2:9–12	Alma 5:46
	Moroni 10:5

“Who Is My Neighbour?”

14

Matthew 18; Luke 10

- What is Jesus' counsel to those who desire to achieve true greatness in his kingdom? (See Matthew 18:2–4; Mark 9:35.) How can we become more childlike and more submissive to the will of our Father in Heaven?
- In teaching the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus emphasized the importance of forgiving others (Matthew 18:23–35). How are we like the king's servant in our debt to the Lord? What can you learn from the king's example in forgiving others? What are some of the dangers of not forgiving others? (See Matthew 18:34–35.)
- What can you learn from the parable of the good Samaritan? (See Luke 10:25–37.) How have you been blessed by “good Samaritans”? How can you be a “good Samaritan”? (See Mosiah 4:26.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Give particular attention to the Savior's invitation to “go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37). Then make a list of your friends, relatives, and other acquaintances, asking each family member to contribute at least one name to the list. Make plans to serve one or two of the people on the list in the coming week.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “Have I Done Any Good?” (*Hymns*, no. 223).

Scripture Chain: “Love Thy Neighbour”

Luke 10:25–37	John 13:34–35
Leviticus 19:18	Mosiah 2:17
Matthew 22:35–40	D&C 38:24–25

“I Am the Light of the World”

15

John 7–8

- What did Jesus instruct the people to do to gain a testimony of his teachings? (See John 7:17.) How can you apply this instruction in your life?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world? (See the scripture chain in this section.) How can you help others see the light that Christ offers? (See Matthew 5:16; 28:18–20; Philippians 2:14–15.)
- What did Jesus promise to those who would continue to follow him? (See John 8:31–32.) What does truth free

us from? (See John 8:33–34.) How does committing sin place us in bondage? (See Alma 12:11; 34:35.) How has knowing the truth made you free?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Turn off the lights in the room, and close the curtains or blinds. Ask a family member to do a simple task requiring sight, such as reading a scripture or describing a picture. Then turn on the lights, open the curtains or blinds, and ask the family member to do the task again. Discuss why it is easier to

do the task with the light on. Read John 8:12, and ask family members to discuss ways that Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Scripture Chain: Jesus Christ—“The Light of the World”

John 8:12	Alma 38:9
Psalm 27:1	3 Nephi 15:9
Isaiah 2:5	D&C 88:6–13

“I Was Blind, Now I See”

John 9–10

- Jesus healed a man who had been born blind (John 9:1–7). How did the healed man’s testimony grow as he continued to share it? (See John 9:11, 17, 33, 38.) How has your testimony grown as you have shared it?
- How did the parents of the man who had been blind respond when the Pharisees asked them about the miracle? (See John 9:18–23.) Why did the parents respond this way? (See John 9:22.) How are we sometimes like this man’s parents? How can you be more valiant in your testimony?
- In Jesus’ discussion of the shepherd and his sheep, whom do the sheep represent? (See John 10:4, 27.) Who is the shepherd? (See John 10:11.)

What are some qualities of a good shepherd? (See John 10:3–4, 7, 9–15.) How is Jesus the perfect example of a shepherd?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read John 9:1–38, asking family members to look for ways the Savior helped the blind man see both physically and spiritually. Discuss how spiritual sight and physical sight are alike and different. Ask family members to discuss ways they can increase their ability to “see” gospel truths.

Scripture Chain: Jesus Christ—“The Good Shepherd”

Psalm 23:1–6	John 10:11
Isaiah 40:11	Mosiah 26:21
Ezekiel 34:11–12	Alma 5:60

16

“What Shall I Do That I May Inherit Eternal Life?”

Mark 10:17–30; 12:41–44; Luke 12:13–21; 14; 16

- What blessings are more important than material possessions? (See Luke 12:31–34; D&C 6:7 for some examples.)
- Why do many people set their hearts on worldly wealth even though they know it is only temporary? How can we determine whether we are too concerned with material possessions?
- What has the Lord asked you to sacrifice? How have you been blessed for making these sacrifices?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Place a set of scriptures at one end of the room and a piece of money at the other end. Invite a family member to try to walk in a straight line toward the scriptures while looking at the money.

17

If the family member has difficulty reaching the scriptures, ask why it is difficult. If he or she is able to reach the scriptures, ask how long he or she would be able to go without wandering from the straight line. Read Mark 10:17–24, and explain that we cannot enter the kingdom of God (represented by the scriptures) if we focus our attention on worldly

possessions (represented by the money). Discuss how to develop and maintain proper attitudes about material possessions.

Scripture Chain: Seeking the Kingdom of God

Matthew 6:19–21 Jacob 2:18–19
Matthew 6:33 D&C 6:6–7
Mark 10:28–30

“He Was Lost, and Is Found”

Luke 15; 17

- What can you learn from the actions of the shepherd in the parable of the lost sheep and the woman in the parable of the piece of silver? (See D&C 18:10–13.) In what ways might a person be “lost”? What is our responsibility toward those who are lost? (See Luke 15:4–5, 8; Alma 31:34–35.)
- In the parable of the prodigal son, what did the father do when he saw his son returning? (See Luke 15:20.) How did the father respond to his son’s confession? (See Luke 15:21–24.) How is the father’s response like the Lord’s response when we repent? (See Luke 15:7; Mosiah 26:30; D&C 58:42.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Review the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers (Luke 17:11–19). Discuss some reasons that we, like the nine lepers, do not always express our gratitude to the Lord. Talk about things we can do to better express gratitude to the Lord each day.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193).

Scripture Chain: Rejoicing with the Lord over Those Who Repent

Luke 15:4–10 Alma 26:11–16
Luke 15:11–24 D&C 18:10–16

18

“Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee”

Luke 18:1–8, 35–43; 19:1–10; John 11

- How did the blind man near Jericho show that he had faith in the Lord? (See Luke 18:38–42.) How have you been blessed as you have exercised faith in Jesus Christ?
- How did Zacchaeus show his great desire to see Jesus? (See Luke 19:3–4.) What did Jesus tell Zacchaeus after seeing him in the tree? (See Luke 19:5.) How did Zacchaeus respond to Jesus’ words? (See Luke 19:6.) What can we do to receive the Savior joyfully into our homes?
- What impresses you about Martha’s testimony recorded in John 11:21–27?

19

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read John 11:1–46. Ask family members how this account makes them feel about the Savior. Review verses in the passage that show the faith Mary and Martha had in Jesus Christ. Ask family

members to choose one thing they can do to show greater faith in the Savior.

Scripture Chain: Unfailing Faith

Matthew 8:5–10, 13 2 Timothy 4:7
Mark 10:46–52 Ether 3:3–13

“Woe unto You, . . . Hypocrites”

Matthew 21–23; John 12:1–8

20

- What impresses you about the account of Jesus riding humbly yet triumphantly into Jerusalem? (See Matthew 21:1–11.) How do you think you would have felt if you had been there that day?
- Why do you think the commandments in Matthew 22:37–40 are so important? What can you do to more fully live these commandments?
- The Savior repeatedly pronounced woe upon the scribes and Pharisees because they were hypocrites. They paid a great deal of attention to outward ordinances and actions that would make them appear righteous, but they were not as concerned with actually being righteous in their hearts (Matthew 23:13–33). What can you do to avoid hypocrisy?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Draw on a piece of paper a picture of a tree with leaves but no fruit. On the reverse side of the paper, draw a picture of a tree with leaves and fruit. Show family members the picture of the tree without fruit, and ask a family member to read Matthew 21:17–20. Explain that when we pretend to be righteous but do not live righteously, we are like a fruit tree with many leaves but no fruit. Show family members the picture of the tree with fruit, and encourage them to live righteously—to do more than just give the appearance of righteousness.

Scripture Chain: Genuine Commitment

Matthew 22:37 Omni 1:26
Joshua 24:15 D&C 4:1–2
1 Nephi 3:7 D&C 20:37

“What Is the Sign of Thy Coming?”

Joseph Smith—Matthew (Matthew 24)

21

- What sign of the Savior’s Second Coming is described in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22? What evidence do you see that this prophecy is being fulfilled? How can we avoid being deceived by false prophets? (See Matthew 7:15–20; D&C 45:57; 46:7–8.)
- The Lord taught that we should “be not troubled” by wars and rumors of war (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:23). How can we find peace during such troubled times? (See 1 John 4:16–18; D&C 6:34–36; 45:34–35; 59:23.)
- The Lord told his followers in Jerusalem to “stand in the holy place” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:12), and he has given similar counsel in our day (D&C 87:8; 101:22). What are

some holy places in which we should stand?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Discuss some of the signs that precede the Second Coming, as outlined in the scripture chain in this section. Hand out recent newspapers and Church magazines. Have family members work individually or in pairs to look in the

newspapers and magazines for signs of the Second Coming. As they share what they have found, discuss how to prepare for the Second Coming.

Scripture Chain: Signs of the Second Coming

Isaiah 2:2–3 Daniel 2:44
Joseph Smith— D&C 45:16–35
Matthew 1:21–37

“Inherit the Kingdom Prepared for You”

22

Matthew 25

- The parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1–13) is a representation of the Second Coming. The bridegroom represents the Savior, the ten virgins represent members of the Church, and the oil in the lamps represents preparation for the Second Coming. What are some ways we can add “oil” to our “lamps”?
- In Matthew 25:14–30, the talents represent gifts from God. Every person has been given at least one gift from God (D&C 46:11–12), but some gifts are easier to recognize than others. What are some gifts that might be difficult to recognize but that can be used to serve others and glorify God?
- What do you think the Savior meant when he said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these

my brethren, ye have done it unto me”? (Matthew 25:40; see also Mosiah 2:17).

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30), and explain that the talents represent gifts from God. Ask each family member to talk about one or two talents or gifts that he or she has been blessed with. Then have each family member talk about talents or gifts that each of the other family members have been blessed with. Discuss ways family members can use these gifts to help build up the kingdom of God on the earth.

Scripture Chain: Preparing for the Second Coming

Matthew 25:1–13 D&C 45:36–39
D&C 38:29–30 D&C 88:123–26

“Love One Another, As I Have Loved You”

23

Luke 22:1–38; John 13–15

- When Jesus and his Apostles met to eat the Passover meal, Jesus introduced the ordinance of the sacrament (Luke 22:19–20). Why is it important to take the sacrament

each week? How can you prepare yourself spiritually before partaking of the sacrament?

- What did Jesus tell the Apostles about why he had washed their feet? (See

John 13:12–17.) How has service to others brought you happiness?

- Jesus said, “By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). Does the way you treat others show that you are a disciple, or follower, of Christ? What are some specific things you can do to follow Christ’s example of love?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Ask a family member to read Doctrine and Covenants 20:77. Discuss the meaning of the sacramental bread. Ask another family member to read

Doctrine and Covenants 20:79. Discuss the meaning of the sacramental water, noting that today we use water instead of wine. Explain that when we partake of the sacrament, we promise to always remember Jesus. Talk about things family members can do that will help them remember Jesus.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together a sacrament hymn or the Primary song “To Think about Jesus” (*Children’s Songbook*, 71).

Scripture Chain: The Sacrament

Matthew 26:26–28 3 Nephi 18:5–12
Luke 22:19–20 D&C 20:77, 79

“This Is Life Eternal”

John 16–17

- What is the mission of the Holy Ghost? (See John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7–14.) How can we recognize the influence of the Holy Ghost? (See Galatians 5:22–23; D&C 6:15, 23; 11:13.) How has receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost helped you?
- Jesus said to his Apostles, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). How can the knowledge that Jesus has overcome the world help us be of good cheer when we are faced with tribulation? Why is it important to be of good cheer?
- In his prayer, the Savior said, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). How is knowing Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ different from merely knowing *about* them? How can we come to know them?

24

Suggestion for Family Discussion

In a box, place a piece of paper labeled *The Gift of the Holy Ghost*. In a second box, place a piece of paper labeled *Eternal Life*. Wrap the boxes to look like gifts. Explain that in John 16–17, Jesus mentions two of the greatest gifts we can receive. Have a family member open the first box and read the piece of paper inside it. Read John 16:13, and explain that in this verse “the Spirit of truth” refers to the Holy Ghost. Have another family member open the second box and read the piece of paper inside it. Read John 17:1–3. Express your gratitude for the gift of the Holy Ghost and the opportunity to receive eternal life.

Scripture Chain: “Be One, Even As We Are One”

John 17:20–26 4 Nephi 1:15–17
Philippians 1:27 D&C 35:2
Mosiah 18:21 D&C 38:24–27

“Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done”

25

Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46

- Why was Jesus willing to submit to the great suffering he knew he would experience in the Garden of Gethsemane? (See Matthew 26:39, 42, 44.) What can you learn from the Savior’s prayer in Gethsemane? How have you been blessed as you have submitted to Heavenly Father’s will?
- What did the Savior experience in Gethsemane? (See D&C 19:16–19; Luke 22:44; Mosiah 3:7; Alma 7:11–13.)
- Why do we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See 1 Nephi 10:21; 2 Nephi 2:5–9; Alma 34:9; Moses 6:48.) What blessings are available to us because of the Savior’s atoning sacrifice? (See Mosiah 16:7–8; Alma 7:11–13; D&C 19:23.) How can we

receive these blessings? (See Alma 7:14; Articles of Faith 1:3.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Display the picture Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (Gospel Art Picture Kit 227). Read the account of Jesus in Gethsemane, as found in Matthew 26:36–46, Luke 22:39–46, or Doctrine and Covenants 19:16–19. Invite each family member to share his or her feelings about the Savior’s Atonement.

Scripture Chain: The Atonement of Jesus Christ

Luke 22:39–44	2 Nephi 9:5–8
D&C 19:15–19	Alma 7:11–14
Mosiah 3:7, 9	Articles of Faith 1:3

“To This End Was I Born”

26

Matthew 26:47–27:66; Mark 14:43–15:39; Luke 22:47–23:56; John 18–19

- What did Peter do when people outside Caiaphas’s palace said that he knew Jesus? (See Matthew 26:69–75; see also verse 34.) How do some of us, like Peter, sometimes deny our faith? What can we learn from Peter’s life after he denied the Lord?
- How do you feel when you ponder the Savior’s suffering in your behalf? How can you show your gratitude for the Atonement? (As you ponder these questions, you may want to record your thoughts in your journal.)

and burial. Ask family members what they remember about each person or group of people.

Jesus Christ	Two thieves
Pilate	Mockers
Simon of Cyrene	John the Beloved
Soldiers	The centurion
Joseph of Arimathea	Mary, the mother of Jesus

Scripture Chain: “Greater Love Hath No Man”

Luke 23:33–46	1 Nephi 19:9–10
John 15:13	D&C 34:1–4

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Discuss the following people mentioned in the scripture account of Jesus’ death

“He Is Not Here, for He Is Risen”

27

Matthew 28; Luke 24; John 20–21

- Why is it important to know that Jesus has risen from the dead? What impact does this news have on mankind? What impact does it have on you?
- The resurrected Lord showed himself to seven of his Apostles as they were fishing and miraculously provided them with a large amount of fish (John 21:4–7). After they had eaten, what did Jesus ask Peter and the other Apostles to do? (See John 21:15–17.) How can we feed the Lord’s sheep?
- What was John’s reason for writing down some of the things that the resurrected Jesus said and did? (See John 20:30–31.) How have you benefited from studying the scriptural accounts of Jesus’ Resurrection?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Have a family member put a glove on his or her hand and move his or her fingers. Explain that the glove represents our bodies and the hand represents our spirits. A spirit combined with a body makes a living person. Have the family member remove the

glove. Explain that when we die, our spirits will separate from our bodies. Then our bodies will be dead, but our spirits will still be alive. Have the family member put the glove back on his or her hand. Explain that resurrection is the reuniting of the spirit with the body. When we are resurrected, we will never die or be subject to sickness again. Testify that because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected. (This object lesson is an adaptation of a presentation by Elder Boyd K. Packer [in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 79–80; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 51, 53].)

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “He Is Risen!” (*Hymns*, no. 199) or “Did Jesus Really Live Again?” (*Children’s Songbook*, 64).

Scripture Chain: Appearances of the Resurrected Lord

John 20:11–29	Acts 9:1–6
Luke 24:36–51	3 Nephi 11:1–14
1 Corinthians 15:3–8	Joseph Smith— History 1:11–17

“We Are Witnesses”

28

Acts 1–5

- How did the gift of the Holy Ghost help the Apostles in their responsibility to be witnesses of Jesus Christ? (See John 15:26–27; 1 Corinthians 12:3.) What is the role of the Holy Ghost in our efforts to teach the gospel? (See 2 Nephi 33:1; D&C 42:14.)
- How did Peter respond to those who mocked the Apostles for speaking in tongues? (See Acts 2:14–24, 36.) What impresses you about Peter’s response? Why is it important to have a testimony of Jesus Christ and his divine mission? How can the Holy Ghost help us share our testimonies?

- Peter used a miracle as an opportunity to testify of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:12–26; 4:5–12). What opportunities do you have to testify of Christ? How have you been blessed as you have been a witness (or have heard others be witnesses) of Jesus Christ?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Mosiah 18:8–9, giving close attention to the instruction to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places.” Ask family

members how they can follow this instruction. Have a family member relate an experience he or she has had in being a witness of Jesus Christ and his gospel. Encourage family members to be witnesses of the Savior in the things they say and do during the coming week.

Scripture Chain: Apostles—Special Witnesses of Christ

Acts 1:1–8	D&C 27:12
Acts 4:33	D&C 107:23

“The Number of the Disciples Was Multiplied”

29

Acts 6–9

- As the early Church grew, groups within it sometimes had disagreements with each other (Acts 6:1). How can we as Church members overcome disagreements and divisions among us? Why is it important that we do so?
- How did Philip meet the Ethiopian eunuch? (See Acts 8:25–29.) What blessings came to Philip and to the Ethiopian because Philip followed the Spirit? (See Acts 8:30–38.) What blessings have come to you (or to someone you know) because you have followed the Spirit?
- Saul changed from a persecutor of the Saints to a great servant of the Lord after he heard the Lord’s voice (Acts 9:1–9, 17). How can we hear the voice of the Lord? (See D&C 1:38; 6:23; 8:2; 18:34–36.) How can

hearing his voice help us become converted?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

After reading and marking the scripture chain in this section as a family, ask the following questions:

- Why do you think it is important to be a member of a ward (or branch)? Who are some of the leaders and teachers in our ward? What do they do to help and support us? What can we do to help and support them?

Scripture Chain: Working Together in the Kingdom of God

Exodus 18:13–26	1 Corinthians
Acts 6:1–3	12:12–21
D&C 64:33–34	Ephesians
D&C 107:99	4:11–16

“God Is No Respector of Persons”

30

Acts 10–14; 15:1–35

- How did some Church members react when they heard that Peter had been teaching the gospel to Gentiles? (See Acts 11:1–3.) What should we do when we receive new instructions from our Church leaders, even if we initially dislike the instructions or find them difficult to understand? (See John 7:17; 2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 6:11, 14–15.)
- What does the calling of Saul and Barnabas show about how Church members are called to God’s service? (See Acts 13:1–3.) What experiences have helped you know that Church callings are inspired by the Spirit?
- Paul and Barnabas return to the cities where they had established branches of the Church to help the Saints “continue in the faith” (Acts 14:22; see also verses 21 and 23).

What can you do to support new members of your ward or branch?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Discuss the experiences of Saul and Barnabas as missionaries (Acts 13–14). Share experiences you had as a full-time missionary, or invite a returned missionary to share his or her mission experiences. Discuss how the experiences of Saul and Barnabas are similar to the experiences of today’s missionaries. As a family, write a letter to a missionary. As part of family prayer, ask Heavenly Father to bless and protect the missionaries.

Scripture Chain: “God Is No Respector of Persons”

Acts 10:34–35

Romans 2:9–11

Acts 15:7–11

2 Nephi 26:33

“And So Were the Churches Established in the Faith”

31

Acts 15:36–18:22; 1 and 2 Thessalonians

- How did the people in the synagogue in Berea receive Paul’s teachings? (See Acts 17:10–12.) How can you develop a “readiness of mind” for learning the gospel?
- What did Paul teach the Athenians about God? (See Acts 17:22–31; see also the Joseph Smith Translation of Acts 17:27 in footnote 27*b*.) Why is it important to know that “we are [God’s] offspring”? (Acts 17:28). How does an understanding of God’s true nature and his role as our Father help us love and worship him?

- What does Paul teach in 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:2–12 about how to teach the gospel to others? How has following these principles helped you teach the gospel?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Make plans to invite the full-time missionaries in your area to your home for dinner. Ask them to share their feelings about the importance of missionary work and to talk about how they prepared to serve as full-time missionaries.

As part of this discussion, you may want to sing together “Called to Serve” (*Hymns*, no. 249; *Children’s Songbook*, 174–75) or “I Hope They Call Me on a Mission” (*Children’s Songbook*, 169).

Scripture Chain: Characteristics of Successful Missionaries

1 Thessalonians 2:1–12	D&C 38:41 D&C 88:81
2 Corinthians 4:5	D&C 123:12–14
D&C 4:1–7	

“Live in the Spirit”

Acts 18:23–20:38; Galatians

32

- Paul concluded his address to the Ephesian brethren by reminding them of the Lord’s teaching that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). How have you found this to be true in your life?
- Paul encouraged the Galatians to seek the fruits, or results, of living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25). What are some of these fruits? (See the scripture chain in this section.) How have these fruits been manifest in your life? What should we do if we feel an absence of these fruits in our lives?
- What does it mean that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”? (See Galatians 6:7–9.) How does this

principle apply to our ability to hear and follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost? How does it apply to our relationships with other people and to other situations in our lives?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Ask family members how they can tell when the influence of the Spirit is in the home. Discuss things you can do as a family to invite the Spirit. Set goals as a family to invite the Spirit into your home during the coming week.

Scripture Chain: Fruits of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22–23	Moroni 8:26
John 14:26	Moroni 10:3–5
John 15:26	D&C 6:22–23

“Ye Are the Temple of God”

1 Corinthians 1–6

33

- What problem did Paul address in 1 Corinthians 1:10–13? How do divisions and contention affect our fellowship as disciples of Christ? (See Mosiah 18:21–22; 3 Nephi 11:29–30; D&C 38:27.) What did Paul counsel the Saints to do to be more unified? (See 1 Corinthians 1:10.)
- Paul taught that God’s wisdom will “make foolish” the wisdom of the world (1 Corinthians 1:18–21). How is God’s wisdom different from the world’s wisdom? (See Isaiah 55:8–9; D&C 38:1–2.) What are some examples of God’s wisdom making foolish the wisdom of the world? How can we know the “things of God”? (See 1 Corinthians 2:10–13.)
- What did Paul compare our bodies to? (See 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19–20.) What can we do to treat our bodies as temples? What are the blessings of being morally clean?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Explain that Paul often communicated with the members of the Church by sending epistles, or letters. Discuss some ways prophets, apostles, and other Church leaders communicate with us today. As a family, read a conference address from the *Ensign* or

another Church publication. Discuss how you can apply its message.

Scripture Chain: Moral Cleanliness

1 Corinthians 3:16–17	Galatians 5:16 3 Nephi 12:27–30
1 Corinthians 6:19–20	D&C 42:22 D&C 46:33

“Keep the Ordinances, As I Delivered Them”

1 Corinthians 11–16

- What does it mean that “neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord”? (1 Corinthians 11:11). Why is the relationship of husband and wife so important in the kingdom of God? What does this teach us about how husbands and wives should treat each other?
- According to Paul, what are the purposes of the sacrament? (See 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; see also Luke 22:19–20.) Why is examining our worthiness an important part of the sacrament?
- The scriptures counsel us to seek spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31; D&C 46:8). What should be our reasons for seeking spiritual gifts? (See 1 Corinthians 14:12; D&C 46:9.)
- What did Paul teach about the kingdoms of glory? (See 1 Corinthians

15:35–44; see also D&C 88:27–32.) How does your knowledge of the Resurrection and the kingdoms of glory influence the way you live?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read some of the passages in the scripture chain in this section. Then discuss the questions in the third paragraph in this section. Have family members comment on the spiritual gifts they see in each other that help strengthen the family as a whole. Help each family member know that he or she is an important part of the family.

Scripture Chain: Gifts of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:1–11	James 1:17 3 Nephi 29:5–6
1 Corinthians 12:31	Moroni 10:8–19 D&C 46:8–26

“Be Ye Reconciled to God”

2 Corinthians

- Why were Paul and Timothy able to avoid despair despite being troubled, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down? (See 2 Corinthians 1:3–5; 4:5–15.) How have Heavenly Father

and Jesus Christ helped you during adversity?

- Paul admonished the Saints to forgive each other (2 Corinthians 2:5–8).

34

35

Why is it important that we forgive others? (See Matthew 6:14–15; 2 Corinthians 2:7–8; D&C 64:9–10.) What can we do to become more forgiving?

- What does it mean to have “godly sorrow” for our sins? (2 Corinthians 7:9–10). Why is godly sorrow an important part of repentance?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3–4, giving special attention to Paul’s efforts to comfort others “by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” Arrange to visit a local hospital, shelter, or care

center. Help serve a meal, entertain residents, or donate food, clothing, or other needed items.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “Because I Have Been Given Much” (*Hymns*, no. 219).

Scripture Chain: Characteristics of Disciples of Christ

2 Corinthians 1:3–5	2 Corinthians 4:5–10
2 Corinthians 1:11	2 Corinthians 5:17–21
2 Corinthians 2:5–8	2 Corinthians 7:9–10

“Beloved of God, Called to Be Saints”

36

Romans

- We are justified when we are reconciled to God, pardoned from punishment for sin, and declared righteous and guiltless. Why do we need to be justified? (See Romans 3:10–12, 23; see also Alma 7:21.) What did Paul teach about how we are justified? (See Romans 3:24, 28; 5:1–2; see also 2 Nephi 2:6.)
- How does baptism represent death, burial, and resurrection (new birth)? (See Romans 6:3–4; D&C 76:50–52.) How was baptism a new birth for you?
- How have you seen “all things work together for good to them that love God”? (Romans 8:28).
- What attributes of true Saints are listed in Romans 12:9–21? Which

of these attributes is the hardest for you to develop? What can you do this week to further develop this attribute?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read the passages in this section’s scripture chain, and have family members identify members of the ward or branch who have some of the qualities listed in those passages. Challenge each family member to do something in the coming week to follow the examples of those people.

Scripture Chain: Qualities of Saints

Romans 1:7–8	Mosiah 3:19
Romans 12:9–21	D&C 4:5–6
Ephesians 4:1–3	D&C 88:74–77, 81

Jesus Christ: “The Author and Finisher of Our Faith”

37

Hebrews

- What do you learn about Jesus Christ from Hebrews 1?
- Why must a priesthood holder be “called of God” rather than “[take] this honour unto himself”? (Hebrews 5:4).
- Paul gave many examples of people who accomplished great things through faith in Jesus Christ. Whom did he mention? (See Hebrews 11:4–12, 17–34.)
- Paul said that faith can help us during times of adversity or opposition (Hebrews 11:32–38). How has faith helped you deal with adversity? What other blessings have you (or someone you know) received by exercising faith in Jesus Christ?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Plant a seed. Read Hebrews 11:1 and Alma 32:21, and ask how planting a seed is an act of faith. Then read James 2:17. Ask what works are necessary to help a seed grow. In the coming weeks, care for the seed you have planted and check it regularly to see how your faith and works help it grow.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “Faith” (*Children’s Songbook*, 96–97).

Scripture Chain: Faith

Hebrews 11:1–6	Alma 32:21
James 2:14–18	Ether 12:6
1 Nephi 7:12	D&C 63:10–11

“Thou Hast Testified of Me”

Acts 21–28

- Paul showed great courage by telling the angry crowd in Jerusalem the story of his conversion and his vision of Jesus Christ (Acts 21:27–22:21). When have you borne testimony in a situation that required courage? How did you gain the courage to do this? How can learning about Paul’s actions help you have more courage to share your testimony with others?
- What happened when the master of the ship sailing from Fair Havens rejected Paul’s warning that it was too dangerous to sail? (See Acts 27:7–20.) What motivated the centurion to disregard Paul’s counsel? (See Acts 27:11–12.) Why do some of us occa-

sionally disregard our Church leaders’ counsel? How have you learned the importance of following Church leaders’ counsel?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Ask family members to think of someone whose example has inspired them or given them courage. Have them tell about who they thought of and why they chose those people.

Scripture Chain: Standing as Witnesses of God

Acts 26:22–23	D&C 18:10–16
Acts 28:30–31	D&C 33:7–11
Romans 1:16	

38

“For the Perfecting of the Saints”

39

Ephesians

- What did Paul teach in Ephesians 2:20 and 4:11–14 about the importance of apostles and prophets? Why are living apostles and prophets essential to the true Church? What are some teachings from latter-day apostles and prophets that help us progress toward perfection and unity?
- How can Paul’s counsel in Ephesians 6:1–4 help strengthen family relationships and maintain unity in the home? What counsel have latter-day apostles and prophets given us regarding families?
- What are the different pieces of what Paul calls the armor of God? What does each piece represent? (See Ephesians 6:13–18; D&C 27:15–18.) How can each piece of the armor of God protect us against the influence

of Satan? What can we do to put on this armor each day?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Give each family member a piece of paper. Ask each person to tear his or her piece of paper. Then give one member of the family a thick book and ask him or her to try to tear all its pages at the same time. Explain that just as the pieces of paper in the book are stronger when they are together, we are stronger when we are unified in our families and as a Church. Discuss what you can do as a family to promote unity in your home and in your ward or branch.

Scripture Chain: Unity

Psalm 133:1 2 Nephi 1:21
1 Corinthians 1:10 Moses 7:18
Ephesians 4:11–16

“I Can Do All Things through Christ”

40

Philippians; Colossians; Philemon

- How can we apply Paul’s counsel in Philippians 4:8? (See also Articles of Faith 1:13.) How are we blessed when we follow this admonition?
- What does it mean to be “grounded and settled” in the gospel? (See Colossians 1:23.) What causes some people to be “moved away from the hope of the gospel”? (Colossians 1:23). What can you do to strengthen your testimony?
- Paul repeatedly emphasized the importance of being thankful (Colossians 2:7; 3:15, 17). Why is it important to be thankful? How can you show gratitude to Heavenly

Father and the Savior?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Write the thirteenth article of faith on a chalkboard, poster board, or piece of paper. Have the family read the passage together several times. Each time the passage is to be read, cover or erase a key word. Have family members continue repeating the passage until they have memorized it.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “The Thirteenth Article of Faith” (*Children’s Songbook*, 132–33).

Scripture Chain: “The Admonition of Paul”

Philippians 4:8 Articles of Faith
1:13

Using the Topical Guide, add to the scripture chain by finding one scripture for each of the following words: *truth, honesty, purity, chastity, benevolence, and virtue.*

“I Have Finished My Course”

1 and 2 Timothy; Titus

41

- Why are some people “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”? (2 Timothy 3:7). How can we ensure that our learning brings us to a knowledge of the truth? How has learning the true doctrines of the gospel blessed your life?
- What do you think it means to be “an example of the believers”? (1 Timothy 4:12). How can you be an example in each of the ways mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:12? How have you been influenced by someone who was “an example of the believers”?
- In what sense is the love of money the “root of all evil”? (See 1 Timothy 6:7–10.) How can we ensure that we do not focus too much on money

and other material wealth? (See 1 Timothy 6:17–19; Jacob 2:18–19.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Display several pictures, such as pictures from the Gospel Art Picture Kit or the Church magazines, that depict familiar scriptural accounts. Then sing a few hymns or Primary songs. After viewing each picture and singing each hymn or song, ask family members to suggest doctrines, or teachings, that could be presented using the picture, hymn, or song.

Scripture Chain: The Power of True Doctrine

1 Timothy 4:16 3 Nephi 11:31–41
2 Timothy 3:16–17 D&C 88:77–78
John 8:31–32

“Pure Religion”

James

42

- What counsel did James give to those who “lack wisdom”? (See James 1:5–6.) How was the Prophet Joseph Smith influenced by this counsel? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:11–13.) What experiences have you had with receiving answers to prayer?
- James taught that we should be “swift to hear, slow to speak” (James 1:19). What experiences in your life have confirmed the wisdom of his counsel?

- What did James emphasize that we should do to live a pure religion? (See James 1:27.) Why do you think visiting and helping people in need is part of pure religion? What can you do to stay “unspotted from the world”?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

James said that part of practicing “pure religion” is keeping ourselves “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

Discuss how this teaching can affect our daily decisions. In your discussion you may want to refer to the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth* (34285), which contains counsel from the First Presidency on how to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world.”

Scripture Chain: Receiving Answers to Prayer

James 1:5–6	3 Nephi 18:20–21
Matthew 21:22	D&C 112:10
Alma 37:37	Joseph Smith— History 1:11–19

“A Chosen Generation”

1 and 2 Peter; Jude

- What can we do to follow the Savior’s example in responding to trials and persecution? (See 1 Peter 2:19–23.) What examples have you seen of people who are Christlike in enduring trials? How are we blessed as we follow the Savior’s example in responding to trials?
- Which attributes did Peter describe as part of divine nature? (See 2 Peter 1:4–7.) Why is it important that we develop these qualities? (See 2 Peter 1:8.) How have you seen these attributes demonstrated by others?
- Peter and Jude warned that there would be false teachers among the members of the Church. What did they say were some characteristics of false teachers? (See 2 Peter 2:1–3, 10, 12–19; Jude 1:4, 8, 10–13, 16, 18–19.) What counsel did Peter and Jude give that can help us avoid

false teachings and remain faithful as we prepare for the Second Coming? (See 2 Peter 3:11–14, 17–18; Jude 1:3, 20–21; see also Moroni 7:12–17; D&C 45:57; 46:7–8.)

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Choose a recipe for a treat to prepare together. As family members follow the recipe, discuss why it is important to have all the ingredients in the recipe. When you are finished, read 2 Peter 1:4–8. Discuss why each attribute of divine nature is important in order for us to become like Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Scripture Chain: “Beware of False Prophets”

2 Peter 2:1–3	2 Nephi 28:7–9
Matthew 7:15–20	D&C 45:57
Matthew 24:24	

43

“God Is Love”

1, 2, and 3 John

- What word did John use to describe Heavenly Father in 1 John 4:8, 16? Why is this an appropriate word?
- Read 1 John 4:9–10. What manifestation of God’s love did John mention in these verses? (See also John 3:16; 1 John 5:11; 2 Nephi 9:10.) How does sending his Son to atone for our sins manifest Heavenly Father’s love for us?
- John taught that Heavenly Father will answer our prayers if we ask

44

according to His will (1 John 5:14–15). How has prayer helped you feel Heavenly Father’s love?

- How did John describe those who claim to love God but do not “love one another”? (See 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:14–15, 17; 4:20.) Why is our love for others a measure of our love of God?
- Why do parents receive such joy when they “hear that [their] children walk in truth”? (3 John 1:4).

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Tell the family that you are going to go exploring together. Then take a

walk or ride, looking for things that help family members see that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love them. When a family member finds something that shows the love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, write it down. When you have finished exploring, read the list you have made together.

As part of this family discussion, you may want to sing together “Where Love Is” (*Children’s Songbook*, 138–39).

Scripture Chain: “He That Loveth His Brother Abideth in the Light”

1 John 2:10–11	1 John 4:20–21
1 John 3:16–19	John 21:15–17
1 John 4:7–11	Moroni 7:45–48

“He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things”

Revelation 1–3; 12

To obtain a better understanding of these chapters, see the footnotes and Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 1:1–8; 2:26–27; 12:1–17.

- What came out of the Savior’s mouth in John’s vision? (See Revelation 1:16.) What did this sword represent? (See D&C 6:2.) In what ways is the word of the Lord like a sword? (See Hebrews 4:12; Helaman 3:29.)
- In John’s vision, what did the Lord promise those who overcome the trials and temptations of mortality? (See the scripture chain in this section.)
- How will the Church and kingdom of God finally overcome Satan? (See Revelation 12:11.) How can the Atonement of Christ and your testimony of it help you in your own struggle against Satan?

45

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Revelation 6:12–14 and 16:18–21, and explain that these passages describe things John saw in his vision of the last days. Then explain that although some of the prophecies in the book of Revelation can be frightening, other prophecies in the book of Revelation can give us hope and help us be unafraid during difficult times. Read a few of the passages from the scripture chain in this section to find some of those messages of hope.

Scripture Chain: Promises to Those Who Overcome

Revelation 2:7	Revelation 3:5
Revelation 2:11	Revelation 3:12
Revelation 2:17	Revelation 3:21

“He Will Dwell with Them, and They Shall Be His People”

46

Revelation 5–6; 19–22

- One thing we learn from Revelation chapter 6 is that Satan has fought against the righteous throughout the history of the earth. According to Revelation 6:4–11, what are some ways he has done this? What tactics does Satan use today to try to overcome the righteous? How can we maintain hope and a positive outlook as we fight the war against Satan?
- The Second Coming of Jesus Christ will usher in the Millennium, a thousand-year period when Christ will reign personally upon the earth. What will happen to Satan during the Millennium? (See Revelation 20:1–3.) What will life be like when Satan is bound? (See 1 Nephi 22:26;

D&C 45:55, 58.) How can we limit the power of Satan in our lives right now?

Suggestion for Family Discussion

Read Revelation 20:1–3, which shows that Satan will be bound during the Millennium. Then give family members recent newspapers or magazines. Have them look through the newspapers or magazines and determine which articles may or may not be in a newspaper or magazine during the Millennium.

Scripture Chain: Words of Hope and Comfort in the Book of Revelation

Revelation 3:20 Revelation 22:1–7
Revelation 7:13–17 Revelation 22:17
Revelation 21:3–7

Teachings of Latter-day Prophets on the Blessings of Scripture Study

“Search the scriptures—search the revelations which we publish, and ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting, He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then know for yourselves and not for another. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God; nor will there be any room for speculation. No; for when men receive their instruction from Him that made them, they know how He will save them” (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 11–12).

“I am grateful for emphasis on reading the scriptures. I hope that for you this will become something far more enjoyable than a duty; that, rather, it will become a love affair with the word of God. I promise you that as you read, your minds will be enlightened and your spirits will be lifted. At first it may seem tedious, but that will change into a wondrous experience with thoughts and words of things divine” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Light within You,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 99).

“As you read of the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will draw closer to Him who is the author of our

salvation" (Gordon B. Hinckley, "Rise to the Stature of the Divine within You," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 97).

"When we follow the counsel of our leaders to read and study the scriptures, benefits and blessings of many kinds come to us. This is the most profitable of all study in which we could engage" (Howard W. Hunter, in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 64).

"When individual members and families immerse themselves in the scriptures regularly and consistently, . . . other areas of activity will automatically come. Testimonies will increase. Commitment will be strengthened. Families will be fortified. Personal revelation will flow" (Ezra Taft Benson, "The Power of the Word," *Ensign*, May 1986, 81).

"Let us not treat lightly the great things we have received from the hand of the Lord! His word is one of the most valuable gifts He has given us. I urge you to recommit yourselves to a study of the scriptures. Immerse yourselves in them daily so you will have the power of the Spirit to attend you in your callings. Read them in your families and teach your children to love and treasure them" (Ezra Taft Benson, "The Power of the Word," *Ensign*, May 1986, 82).

"I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns. I find myself loving more intensely those whom I must love with all my heart and mind and strength, and loving them more,

I find it easier to abide their counsel" (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 135).

"I am convinced that each of us, at least some time in our lives, must discover the scriptures for ourselves—and not just discover them once, but rediscover them again and again" (Spencer W. Kimball, "How Rare a Possession—the Scriptures!" *Ensign*, Sept. 1976, 4).

"I think that people who study the scriptures get a dimension to their life that nobody else gets and that can't be gained in any way except by studying the scriptures. There's an increase in faith and a desire to do what's right and a feeling of inspiration and understanding that comes to people who study the gospel—meaning particularly the Standard Works—and who ponder the principles, that can't come in any other way" (Bruce R. McConkie, in *Church News*, 24 Jan. 1976, 4).

"I challenge every Latter-day Saint to come to a knowledge and an understanding of the scriptures. These sacred books are our bulwark of defense against a cunning adversary" (Marvin J. Ashton, in Conference Report, Oct. 1977, 110; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 73).

"I promise you that daily family prayer and scripture study will build within the walls of your home a security and bonding that will enrich your lives and prepare your families to meet the challenges of today and the eternities to come" (L. Tom Perry, in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 113; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 92).

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

