



By Elder John A. McCune
Of the Seventy

Come unto Christ—Living as Latter-day Saints

We can do difficult things and help others do the same, because we know in whom we can trust.

Thank you, Elder Soares, for your powerful and prophetic testimony of the Book of Mormon. Recently, I had the unique opportunity to hold a page of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon. On this particular page, for the first time in this dispensation, these bold words of Nephi were recorded: “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.”¹

As I held this page, I was filled with a profound appreciation for the efforts of the 23-year-old Joseph Smith, who translated the Book of Mormon by the “gift and power of God.”² I also felt appreciation for the words of a young Nephi, who had been asked to perform a very difficult task in obtaining the plates of brass from Laban.

Nephi knew that if he continued to stay focused on the Lord, he would be successful in fulfilling what the Lord commanded him. He remained focused on the Savior throughout his life even though he suffered temptations, physical trials, and even the

betrayal of some in his immediate family.

Nephi knew in whom He could trust.³ Shortly after exclaiming, “O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh,”⁴ Nephi stated, “My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness; and he hath preserved me upon the waters of the great deep.”⁵

As followers of Christ, we are not spared challenges and trials in our lives. We are often required to do difficult things that, if attempted alone,

would be overwhelming and maybe impossible. As we accept the Savior’s invitation to “come unto me,”⁶ He will provide the support, comfort, and peace that are necessary, just as He did for Nephi and Joseph. Even in our deepest trials, we can feel the warm embrace of His love as we trust Him and accept His will. We can experience the joy reserved for His faithful disciples, for “Christ is joy.”⁷

In 2014, while serving a full-time mission, our family experienced an unexpected turn of events. When riding down a steep hill on a longboard, our youngest son fell and sustained a life-threatening injury to his brain. As his situation deteriorated, medical personnel rushed him into emergency surgery.

Our family knelt on the floor of an otherwise empty hospital room, and we poured our hearts out to God. In the midst of this confusing and painful moment, we were filled with our Heavenly Father’s love and peace.

We did not know what the future held or if we would see our son alive again. We did know very clearly that his life was in God’s hands and the



Millcreek, Utah, USA

results, from an eternal perspective, would work out for his and our good. Through the gift of the Spirit, we were fully prepared to accept any outcome.

It was not easy! The accident resulted in a two-month hospital stay while we were presiding over 400 full-time missionaries. Our son experienced a significant loss of memory. His recovery included long and difficult physical, speech, and occupational therapy sessions. Challenges remain, but over time we have witnessed a miracle.

We understand clearly that not every trial we face will have a result we wish for. However, as we remain focused on Christ, we will feel peace and see God's miracles, whatever they may be, in His time and in His way.

There will be times when we will not be able to see any way that a current situation will end well and might even express, as Nephi, "My heart sorroweth because of my flesh."⁸ There may be times that the only hope we have *is* in Jesus Christ. What a blessing to have that hope and trust in Him. Christ is the one who will always keep His promises. His rest is assured for all who come unto Him.⁹

Our leaders deeply desire all to feel the peace and comfort that come through trusting in and focusing on the Savior Jesus Christ.

Our living prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, has been communicating the Lord's vision for the world and for members of Christ's Church: "Our message to the world is simple and sincere: we invite all of God's children on both sides of the veil to *come unto their Savior*, receive the blessings of the holy temple, have enduring joy, and qualify for eternal life."¹⁰

This invitation to "come unto Christ" has *specific* implications for



Latter-day Saints.¹¹ As members of the Savior's Church, we have made covenants with Him and have become His spiritually begotten sons and daughters.¹² We have also been given the opportunity to labor with the Lord in inviting others to come unto Him.

As we labor with Christ, our most deeply focused efforts should be within our own homes. There will be times when family members and close friends will face challenges. The voices of the world, and maybe their own desires, might cause them to question truth. We should do everything we can to help them feel both the Savior's love and our love. I am reminded of the scripture verse that has become our beloved hymn "Love One Another," which teaches us, "By this shall . . . men know . . . ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."¹³

In our love for those who are questioning truth, the enemy of all joy might try to make us feel that we betray those we love if *we* ourselves continue to live the fulness of the gospel and teach its truths.

Our ability to help others come unto Christ or return to Christ will largely be determined by the example we set through our own personal commitment to stay on the covenant path.

If our true desire is to rescue those we love, we ourselves must stay firmly with Christ by embracing His Church and the fulness of His gospel.

In returning to Nephi's story, we know that Nephi's inclination to trust in the Lord was influenced by his parents' propensity to trust in the Lord and by their covenant-keeping example. This is beautifully exemplified in Lehi's vision of the tree of life. After partaking of the sweet and joyful fruit of the tree, Lehi "cast [his] eyes round about, that perhaps [he] might discover [his] family."¹⁴ He saw Sariah, Sam, and Nephi standing "as if they knew not whither they should go."¹⁵ Lehi then stated, "I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit."¹⁶ Please note that Lehi did not leave the tree of life. He stayed spiritually with the Lord and invited his family to come where *he* was to partake of the fruit.

The adversary would entice some to leave the joy of the gospel by separating Christ's teachings from His Church. He would have us believe that we can stay firmly on the covenant path on our own, through our own spirituality, independent of His Church.

In these latter days, Christ's Church was restored in order to help Christ's covenant children stay on His covenant path.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we read, "Behold, this is my doctrine—whosoever repenteth and *cometh unto me*, the same *is* my church."¹⁷

Through Christ's Church, we are strengthened through our experiences as a community of Saints. We hear His voice through His prophets, seers, and revelators. Most importantly, through His Church we are provided with all the essential blessings of Christ's Atonement that can be realized only through participation in sacred ordinances.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is Christ's Church on the earth, restored in these latter days for the benefit of all of God's children.

I bear witness that as we come unto Christ and live as Latter-day Saints, we will be blessed with an added measure of His love, His joy, and His peace. Like Nephi, we can do difficult things and help others do the same, because we know in whom we can trust.¹⁸ Christ is our light, our life, and our salvation.¹⁹ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. 1 Nephi 3:7.
2. Title page of the Book of Mormon; see also introduction to the Book of Mormon.
3. See 2 Nephi 4:19.
4. 2 Nephi 4:17.
5. 2 Nephi 4:20.
6. Matthew 11:28.
7. Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.
8. 2 Nephi 4:17.
9. See Matthew 11:28–30.
10. Russell M. Nelson, "Let Us All Press On," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 118–19; emphasis added.
11. See Doctrine and Covenants 20:59.
12. See Mosiah 5:7.
13. John 13:35; see also "Love One Another," *Hymns*, no. 308.
14. 1 Nephi 8:13.
15. 1 Nephi 8:14.
16. 1 Nephi 8:15.
17. Doctrine and Covenants 10:67; emphasis added.
18. See 2 Nephi 4:19.
19. See Psalm 27:1.