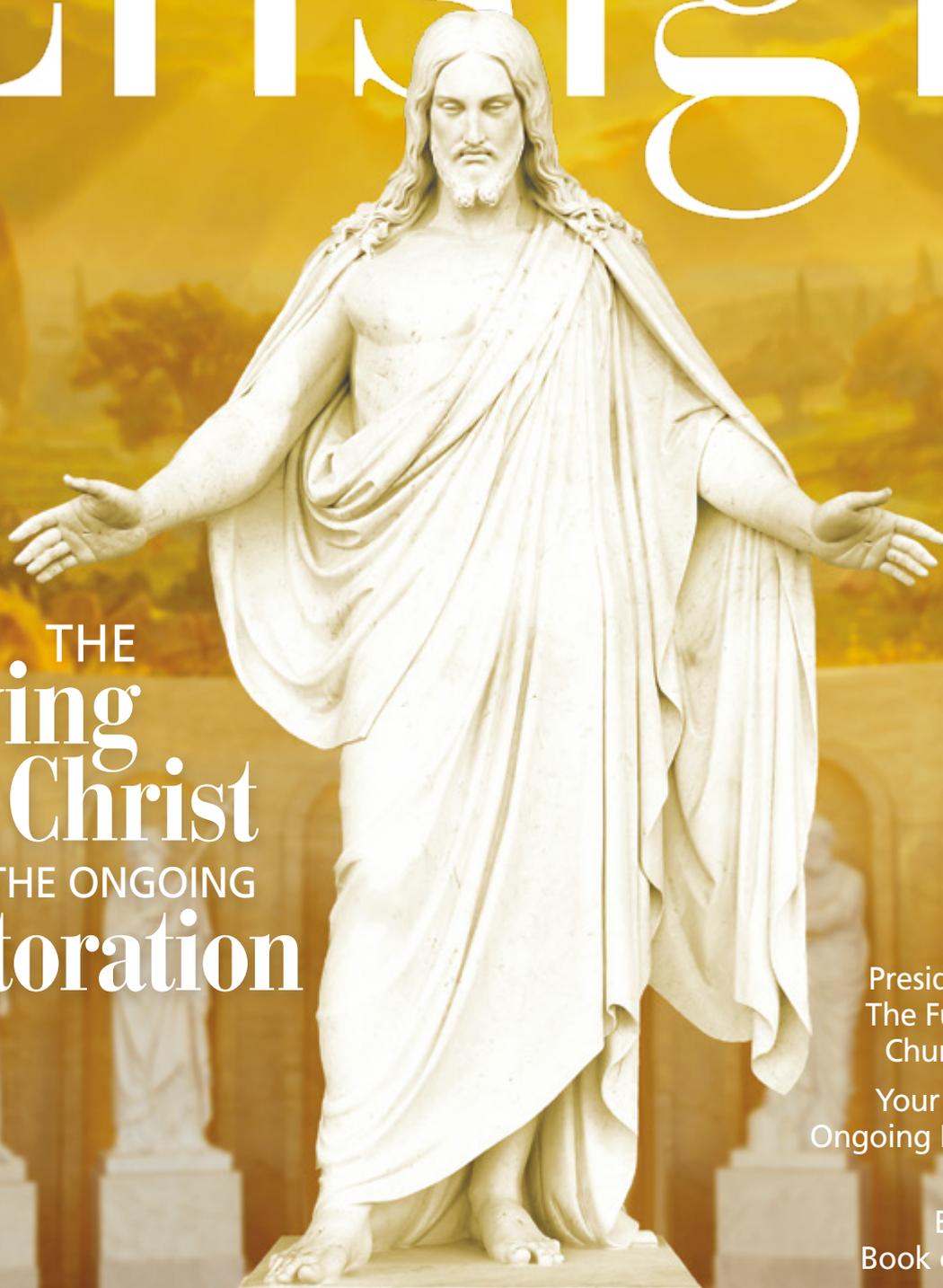


# Ensign



THE  
**Living  
Christ**  
AND THE ONGOING  
**Restoration**

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page 20

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pages 32, 48

VENITE A ME

MATTEO 11:28

THE  
CHURCH  
IS HERE

# Nairobi Kenya





As the ongoing Restoration continues, the gospel is found throughout the world. Kenya is an example of Church growth in Africa.

members  14,143

2  stakes

congregations  48

1  mission

family history centers  5

78  percent of population is Christian

**1979** First local converts join the Church.

**1988** Special fast raises funds to relieve drought in 15 villages.

**2001** Nairobi Stake organized.

**2020** Area offices in Nairobi become fully operational, serving 100,000 members in 18 central African countries.



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES



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# 200 Years of Light

**O**n a beautiful, clear day 200 years ago, a young man entered a grove of trees with the intention of seeking forgiveness and praying about which church was right, that he might know which he should join. From a miraculous vision, he learned that he should join none of them. Thus marked the beginning of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ—a process that continues in our day.

In this issue, we celebrate 200 years of light:

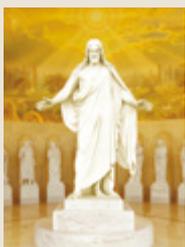
- President Russell M. Nelson teaches how gathering Israel on both sides of the veil can prepare us and others for the Lord's Second Coming (page 12).
- Elder LeGrand R. Curtis Jr. shows how Latter-day Saints have contributed to the ongoing Restoration—and how each of us can contribute (page 20).
- Young adults share their thoughts about making a difference in the work of this final dispensation (page 70).

As we learn from the words of our prophet and the stories of faithful Saints, may we come to the same knowledge the Prophet Joseph did 200 years ago: that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are real, living beings who love us. And let us share that knowledge with our friends and neighbors.

Sincerely,  
Elder Randy D. Funk of the Seventy  
Editor of Church Magazines

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### *Come, Follow Me* Resources

For a list of articles and activities (organized by week) that can enrich your family's study of the Book of Mormon, see "Come, Follow Me: Book of Mormon—Support Articles and Activities" in the digital version of this issue (available in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)).

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By Jeff Bates

A young adult shares how inviting Jesus Christ into our lives can help us move forward.



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By Lauri Ahola

A young adult shares how following President Nelson's counsel helped him better share the gospel.



### Finding Joy in Doing the Lord's Work

Young adults around the world share how they are participating in the ongoing Restoration.

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APRIL 2020 VOLUME 50 • NUMBER 4

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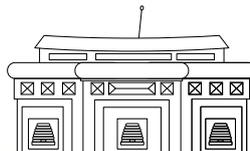
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## GENERAL CONFERENCE THROUGH THE YEARS



### 1830

Two months after the Church was organized, Joseph Smith presided over the first general conference in Fayette, New York. About 30 members and several others attended.

### 1850

The *Deseret News* published the first full report of conference because a young reporter, George D. Watt, had been able to transcribe the talks in shorthand.

### 1867

General conference lasted four days instead of the usual three because the congregation voted to stay an extra day.

### 1924

Microphones were first used at the pulpit in the Tabernacle. Previously, speakers had to rely on the strength of their voices to be heard.

### 1949

With cameras set up in the Tabernacle, conference was first broadcast on television.

two P. M. Conference called to order by W. Snow; singing, prayer by W. Snow, singing. Elder O. Hyde delivered a lecture to the Honorable Chancellor and board of Regents of the University of the State of Deseret, in presence of the Conference, on Education. Education is not confined to letters only, but to the excluding of all darkness, and when a man has ascended to the summit, he

guage is better than n If you could bring all others now living, together now living, together will express their ideas in different words, and they will that our language is yet we have to use this have, in order to accomplish the object which is before us. fil the obligations we owe to the other, by instruments already in use. A certain portion of perty ought to be de



### 1962

Talks were interpreted into other languages—German, Dutch, and Spanish—for the first time in the Tabernacle. Now talks are interpreted in over 90 languages!

### 1967

General conference was broadcast on TV in color. The men of the Tabernacle Choir wore light blue jackets and the women wore salmon-colored blouses.

### 1977

Changing from three days and six general sessions, conference lasted two days and included five general sessions.

### 2000

The new Conference Center in Salt Lake City, seating 21,000 people, hosted its first general conference.

To find the talks from the current and past general conferences, visit [gc.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://gc.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or the “General Conference” section of the Gospel Library app.



ILLUSTRATION OF PODIUM BY DAVID GREEN

PHOTOGRAPH OF TELEVISION FROM GETTY IMAGES



## Berglind Guðnason

Árnessýsla, Iceland



*Berglind (left) with her sister Elín (right). When Berglind was in the deepest depression she had ever faced, she felt that she couldn't go on. By opening up about her struggles to family and friends, she has found spiritual and emotional healing through the tools Heavenly Father has provided.*

MINDY SELU, PHOTOGRAPHER

Talking about my depression with family and friends has helped so much. It also led to more help. I didn't want to take medications or go to therapy. I kept telling myself, "I have God." But God provides many other tools, like medication and therapy, for us to use in addition to spiritual things.

When I was in my worst depression, people would tell me, "It's going to get better." I would get so tired of hearing that but, as weird as it sounds, it's true.

I never thought I would be as happy as I am now. Some days I still struggle, but with the tools Heavenly Father has given me, I can handle it. Now when I feel myself slipping into depression, I tell myself I am loved, I have people to talk to, and things will get better.

### DISCOVER MORE

See more about Berglind's journey of faith, including additional photos, in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E4207](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E4207).

If you or someone you know shows persistent signs of depression, you can find helpful resources at [mentalhealth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/mentalhealth).

# Ministering Principles

## MINISTERING THROUGH GENERAL CONFERENCE

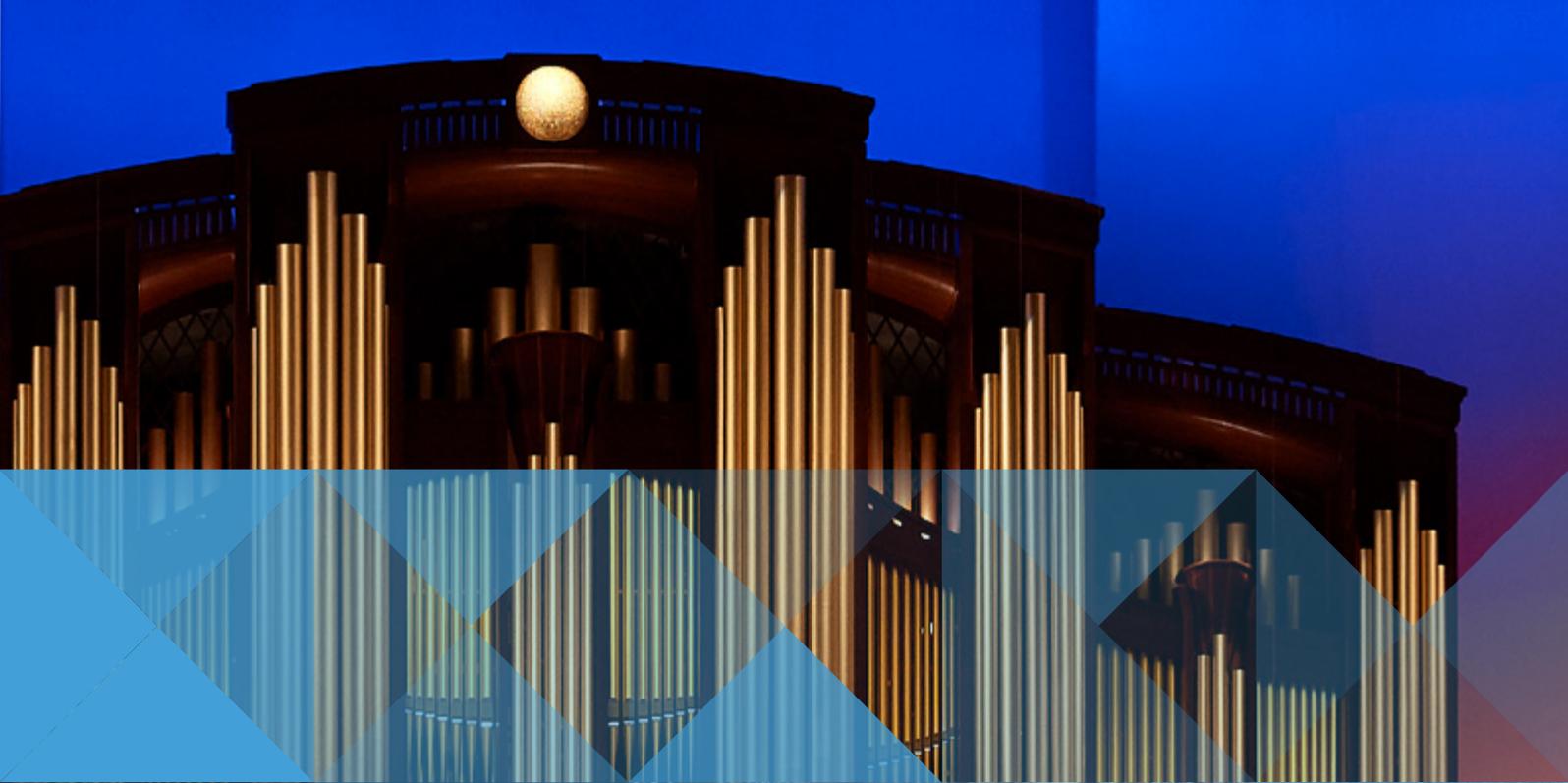
*With all the uplifting quotes, family traditions, and teachings from the Lord's servants, general conference gives us many ways to minister—before, during, and after general conference weekend!*

As mission-preparation class teachers, Susie and Tom Mullen regularly encourage the members of their classes to invite someone to watch general conference. “Inviting someone to do something is an integral part of missionary work, and it applies to ministering as well,” she says. “Our students regularly report back about how well it turned out for them and also for the person they invited.”

Here are a few of the ways their students reported reaching out:

- “We minister to a friend who has some issues he is struggling with. We invited him to listen to general conference for answers. When we visited with him after conference, he told us that he heard so many ideas that would help.”
- “We threw a general conference party and everyone brought treats to share. It was so much fun that we decided to do it again.”
- “I invited a friend to watch general conference with me. As we talked about it, we decided to drive to the meetinghouse to see if we could watch it there. We did, and it was the best experience to be there!”

As the Mullens and their students have learned, there are many ways to minister through general conference. It's a wonderful way to share uplifting quotes, family traditions, meaningful discussions, and the teachings of the Lord's servants!





## Invite Others to Your Home

*“The Savior commanded His followers to ‘love one another; as I have loved you’ (John 13:34). So we look at how He loved us. . . . If we make Him our role model, we should always be trying to reach out to include everyone.” —President Dallin H. Oaks<sup>1</sup>*

### PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER

#### “Noticed”

The Savior lovingly took the time to see the needs of others and then acted to meet those needs (see Matthew 9:35–36; John 6:5; 19:26–27). We can do the same.

#### “Immediately invited”

After we notice the needs of those we minister to, the next step is to act.

#### “Hearing the words of the prophets”

We should “meet together oft” (Moroni 6:5) to learn together, grow together, and speak about the spiritual things that matter most to our souls.

“Come, listen to a prophet’s voice, and hear the word of God”<sup>2</sup> may be one of the most important invitations we can extend to those we minister to.

#### “Love and friendship”

To truly help and influence others, we must build relationships with compassion and “love unfeigned” (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41).

Years ago our wonderful home teacher Mike **noticed** that my three children and I only had a small laptop to watch general conference on. He **immediately invited** us to come over to his house to watch with him and his wife, Jackie, insisting they would love the company. My kids were thrilled to watch conference on a real TV; I greatly appreciated having the support; and we all loved our time together.

After that, watching general conference together was a tradition. Even when we got a TV of our own, we still happily headed over to Mike and Jackie’s with our pillows, notebooks, and snacks for general conference. **Hearing the words of the prophets** together made it more special. We became like family. Mike and Jackie became some of my best friends and second grandparents to my kids. Their **love and friendship** have been an incredible blessing to my family. I’m so grateful for their willingness to open their home and their hearts to us.

**Suzanne Erd, California, USA**

## Share on the Internet

*“Social media channels are global tools that can personally and positively impact large numbers of individuals and families. And I believe the time has come for us as disciples of Christ to use these inspired tools appropriately and more effectively to testify of God the Eternal Father, His plan of happiness for His children, and His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of the world.”*  
—Elder David A. Bednar<sup>3</sup>

The internet allows us to **share the gospel** with the entire world. I love that! I share a few activities for general conference, but mostly I try to help others **create a discussion** from general conference addresses. Seeing questions from others can often help us see things in a new light and can be a springboard to our own great discussion questions.

I’ve found that as you **use questions** to discuss general conference talks with your ministering families, it helps you see their strengths as well as their needs. One of my favorite questions to ask is, What do you feel was a theme from the most recent session of general conference?

The answer almost always lets you see what is going on in their life and what’s important to them. It allows you to become a better ministering brother or sister because you get to see them more clearly. ■

**Camille Gillham, Colorado, USA**

### NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Love and the Law” (video), mormonandgay. ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. “Come, Listen to a Prophet’s Voice,” *Hymns*, no. 21.
3. David A. Bednar, “Flood the Earth through Social Media,” *New Era*, Aug. 2015, 32.
4. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 185.

### PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER

#### “Share the gospel”

We have covenanted to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9).

#### “Create a discussion”

General conference messages can inspire amazing, relevant, and spiritually led conversations. And these kinds of discussions can strengthen your relationships, help your testimony grow, and bring you joy! (see Doctrine and Covenants 50:22).

#### “Use questions”

“Good questions will help you understand interests, concerns, or questions that others have. They can enhance your teaching, invite the Spirit, and help people learn.”<sup>4</sup>





*The Church  
of Jesus Christ  
of Latter-day  
Saints is  
preparing the  
world for the  
day when  
“the earth shall  
be full of the  
knowledge  
of the Lord”  
(Isaiah 11:9).*



By President  
Russell M. Nelson

# The Future of the Church

## PREPARING THE WORLD FOR THE SAVIOR'S SECOND COMING

**Y**ou and I get to participate in the ongoing Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is wondrous! It is not man-made! It comes from the Lord, who said, “I will hasten my work in its time” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:73). This work is empowered by a divine announcement made 200 years ago. It consisted of only seven words: “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

Uttered by Almighty God, that announcement brought a young Joseph Smith to the Lord Jesus Christ. Those seven words launched the Restoration of His gospel. Why? Because our living God is a loving God! He wants His children to gain immortality and eternal life! The great latter-day work of which we are a part was established, on schedule, to bless a waiting and weeping world.

I cannot speak of the Restoration in tempered tones. This fact of history is absolutely stunning! It is incredible! It is breathtaking! How amazing is it that messengers from heaven came to give authority and power to this work?

Today, the Lord’s work in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is moving forward at an accelerated pace. The Church will have an unprecedented, unparalleled future. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, . . . the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9; see also Doctrine and Covenants 76:10).

Remember that the fulness of Christ's ministry lies in the future. The prophecies of His Second Coming have yet to be fulfilled. We are just building up to the climax of this last dispensation—when the Savior's Second Coming becomes a reality.

### **Gathering Israel on Both Sides of the Veil**

A necessary prelude to that Second Coming is the long-awaited gathering of scattered Israel (see 1 Nephi 15:18; see also the title page of the Book of Mormon). This doctrine of the gathering is one of the important teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Lord has declared: "I give unto you a sign . . . that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion" (3 Nephi 21:1).

We not only teach this doctrine, but we participate in it. We do so as we help to gather the elect of the Lord on both sides of the veil.

As part of the planned destiny of the earth and its inhabitants, our kindred dead are to be redeemed (see Doctrine and Covenants 128:15). Mercifully, the invitation to "come unto Christ" (Jacob 1:7; Moroni 10:32; Doctrine and Covenants 20:59) can also be extended to those who died without a knowledge of the gospel (see Doctrine and Covenants 137:6–8). Part of their preparation, however, requires the earthly efforts of others. We gather pedigree charts, create family group sheets, and do temple work vicariously to gather individuals unto the Lord and into their families (see 1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Peter 4:6).

Families are to be sealed together for all eternity (see Doctrine and Covenants 2:2–3; 49:17; 138:48; Joseph Smith—History 1:39). A welding link is to be forged between the fathers and the children. In our time, a whole, complete, and perfect union of all dispensations, keys, and powers are to be welded

*Remember that  
the fulness of  
Christ's ministry  
lies in the future.*





together (see Doctrine and Covenants 128:18). For these sacred purposes, holy temples now dot the earth. I emphasize again that construction of these temples may not change your life, but your service in the temple surely will.

The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 6:1–7). Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house. The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house. His gift to you will be the peace and security of knowing that you are worthy to meet Him, whenever that time comes.

In addition to temple work, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a sign to the entire world that the Lord has commenced to gather Israel and fulfill the covenants He made

to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Genesis 12:2–3; 3 Nephi 21; 29). The Book of Mormon declares the doctrine of the gathering (see, for example, 1 Nephi 10:14). It causes people to learn about Jesus Christ, to believe His gospel, and to join His Church. In fact, if there were no Book of Mormon, the promised gathering of Israel would not occur.

Missionary work is also crucial to that gathering. Servants of the Lord go forth proclaiming the Restoration. In many nations our members and missionaries have searched for those of scattered Israel; they have hunted for them “out of the holes of the rocks”

(Jeremiah 16:16); and they have fished for them, as in ancient days.

Missionary work connects people to the covenant the Lord made with Abraham anciently:

“Thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

“And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father” (Abraham 2:9–10).

Missionary work is only the beginning of the blessing. The fulfillment, the consummation, of those blessings comes as those who have entered the waters of baptism perfect their lives to the point that they may enter the holy temple. Receiving an endowment there seals members of the Church to the Abrahamic covenant.

The choice to come unto Christ is not a matter of physical location; it is a matter of individual commitment. All members of the Church have access to the doctrine, ordinances, priesthood keys, and blessings of the gospel, regardless of their location. People can be “brought to the knowledge of the Lord” (3 Nephi 20:13) without leaving their homelands.

True, in the early days of the Church, conversion often meant emigration as well. But now the gathering takes place in each nation. The Lord has decreed the establishment of Zion (see Doctrine and Covenants 6:6; 11:6) in each realm where He has given His Saints their birth and nationality. The place of gathering for Brazilian Saints

---

*The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house.*



*I promise you that  
as you follow Jesus  
Christ, you will  
find sustained  
peace and true joy.*

is in Brazil; the place of gathering for Nigerian Saints is in Nigeria; the place of gathering for Korean Saints is in Korea. Zion is “the pure in heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 97:21). It is wherever righteous Saints are.

Spiritual security will always depend upon *how* one lives, not *where* one lives. I promise that if we will do our best to exercise faith in Jesus Christ and access the power of His Atonement through repentance, we will have the knowledge and power of God to help us take the blessings of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people and to prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord.

### **The Second Coming**

The Lord will return to the land that He made holy by His mission there in mortality. In triumph, He will come again to Jerusalem. In royal robes of red to symbolize His blood, which oozed from every pore, He shall return to the Holy City (see Doctrine and Covenants

133:46–48). There and elsewhere, “the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together” (Isaiah 40:5; see also Doctrine and Covenants 101:23). His “name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

He will govern from two world capitals: one in old Jerusalem (see Zechariah 14) and the other in the New Jerusalem “built upon the American continent” (Articles of Faith 1:10). From these centers He will direct the affairs of His Church and kingdom. Another temple will yet be built in Jerusalem. From that temple He shall reign forever as Lord of Lords. Water will issue from under the temple. Waters of the Dead Sea will be healed. (See Ezekiel 47:1–8.)

In that day He will bear new titles and be surrounded by special Saints. He will be known as “Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that [will be] with him [will be those who] are called, and chosen, and faithful”

(Revelation 17:14) to their trust here in mortality. Then He “shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

The earth will be returned to its paradisiacal state and be made new. There will be a new heaven and a new earth (see Revelation 21:1; Ether 13:9; Doctrine and Covenants 29:23–24).

It is our charge—it is our privilege—to help prepare the world for that day.

### Face the Future with Faith

Meanwhile, here and now, we live in a time of turmoil. Earthquakes and tsunamis wreak devastation, governments collapse, economic stresses are severe, the family is under attack, and divorce rates are rising. We have great cause for concern. But we do not need to let our fears displace our faith. We can combat those fears by strengthening our faith.

Why do we need such resilient faith?

Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord “shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives.

How you deal with life’s trials is part of the development of your faith. Strength comes when you remember that you have a divine nature, an inheritance of infinite worth. The Lord has reminded you, your children, and your grandchildren that you are lawful heirs, that you have been reserved in heaven for your specific time and place to be born, to grow and become His standard bearers and covenant people. As you walk in the Lord’s path of righteousness, you will be blessed to

continue in His goodness and be a light and a savior unto His people (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:8–11).

Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth. Anchored in pure doctrine, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord.

You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some who you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair.

However, I promise you that as you follow Jesus Christ, you will find sustained peace and true joy. As you keep your covenants with increasing precision, and as you defend the Church and kingdom of God on the earth today, the Lord will bless you with strength and wisdom to accomplish what only members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can accomplish.

We are to be builders of an individual faith in God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in His Church. We are to build families and be sealed in holy temples. We are to build the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth (see Matthew 6:33).

We are to prepare for our own divine destiny: glory, immortality, and eternal lives (see Romans 2:7; Doctrine and Covenants 75:5).

I humbly testify to you that—as the Prophet Joseph Smith proclaimed—the restored gospel of Jesus Christ “will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done” (*History of the Church*, 4:540).

We are engaged in the work of Almighty God. I pray for His blessings to be with each and every one of you. ■

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*Strength comes when you remember that you have a divine nature, an inheritance of infinite worth.*



FIND YOUR NEXT  
**Song of Praise**

By Marissa Widdison, Church Magazines, and Katie Bastian, Church Music

**S**inging songs of praise has been an important part of Latter-day Saint worship since the earliest days of the Restoration, and modern tools make this music more accessible than ever before.

One such resource is the Church online music library, which contains compositions and arrangements for soloists, small groups, choirs, and instrumentalists. During this joyful time of year, when we are celebrating the Resurrection of the Savior and the Restoration of His Church, we hope you'll enjoy exploring these four arrangements from the online library.

## EASTER



### I Stand All Amazed

While this intermediate piano solo starts and ends simply, the middle section features beautiful musical momentum, reminding us that the Savior's Atonement and Resurrection impact each of us personally.

[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420a](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420a)



### That Easter Morn

Jesus Christ conquered death for each of us, and His Atonement also helps us conquer fear. These messages are woven throughout this intermediate choir arrangement. Optional organ and string quartet parts may be added to the piano accompaniment.

[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420b](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420b)



### LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? KEEP EXPLORING

Browse the entire Church music library online at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420e](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420e).

## THE RESTORATION



### Oh, How Lovely Was the Morning (Joseph Smith's First Prayer)

We are celebrating the First Vision this month. Here's an arrangement with four-part harmony that would help your congregation continue to feel the Spirit of that historic event.

[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420c](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420c)



### This Is My Beloved Son

A simple choir arrangement of a beloved children's song, this piece ties together the topics of covenants, the Restoration, and the Savior. It is mostly unison, with some four-part harmony.

[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420d](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E420d)





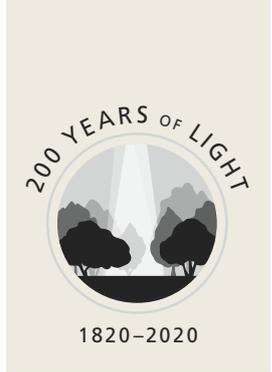
**By Elder  
LeGrand R.  
Curtis Jr.**

General Authority  
Seventy and  
Church Historian  
and Recorder

# *The Ongoing* RESTORA



*The Restoration began in the  
Sacred Grove 200 years ago and  
continues today—and you and I  
can be part of it.*



# TION

This is a wonderful and exciting time to be on earth. We have the blessing of participating in great events happening in the dispensation of the fulness of times, preparatory to the Lord's Second Coming.<sup>1</sup> We get to not only watch these magnificent events unfold but also be part of them.<sup>2</sup>

We sometimes talk of the Restoration of the gospel as if it happened all at once. Two hundred years ago, the First Vision began the process, but the Restoration did not, of course, end there. The Lord's work through Joseph Smith and his associates proceeded with translating the Book of Mormon, restoring the priesthood, organizing the Church, sending forth missionaries, building temples, organizing the Relief Society, and so forth. These Restoration events started in 1820 and

continued throughout Joseph Smith's life.

As wonderful as the things are that God revealed through Joseph Smith, the Restoration was not completed in Joseph's lifetime. Through prophets after him we have received such things as the ongoing development of temple work; additional scriptures; the translation of scripture into many languages; the taking of the gospel throughout the world; the organization of Sunday School, Young Women, Primary, and priesthood quorums; and numerous adjustments to Church organization and procedure.

"We're witnesses to a process of restoration," President Russell M. Nelson has said. "If you think the Church has been fully restored, you're just seeing the beginning. There is much more to come. . . . Wait till next year. And then

*God has given us  
the magnificent  
opportunity to  
play vital roles  
in this work.*

*Early missionary Samuel Smith  
sharing a Book of Mormon*



the next year. Eat your vitamin pills. Get your rest. It's going to be exciting.”<sup>3</sup>

Consistent with President Nelson’s declaration that the Restoration is continuing, we have seen many significant adjustments in the Church since he became its President. Among those are the restructuring of priesthood quorums, ministering replacing home and visiting teaching, and the institution of a home-centered, Church-supported way of studying the gospel.<sup>4</sup> More adjustments have happened since then, and more will be coming.

#### **An Example in West Africa**

My testimony of the ongoing nature of the Restoration was impacted by the five years that I spent serving in the Africa West Area Presidency. Since I was a young man, I have

1,000 people who used the Book of Mormon and other Church materials in their church services. They prayed for the day that the Church would come to Ghana. He joined with other young men traveling around Ghana and teaching the gospel as found in our materials. Once missionaries arrived in 1978, he was baptized on the first day that Latter-day Saint baptisms were performed in Ghana.

Early in Fred’s time as a member, he attended the funeral of a relative who was a tribal chief. There he found out that the family plan was to make him the new chief. Knowing that such a position would cause him to do things contrary to his gospel beliefs, he sped away after the burial and turned his back on a position that would have brought him prominence and wealth.

had a testimony of the gospel. But living in Africa, I associated with some of the first West Africans to accept the gospel. I also saw the Church spreading rapidly across the continent, with hundreds of wards and stakes being formed, temples and meetinghouses being filled to overflowing with faithful members, and good women and men embracing, with all of their hearts, the restored gospel. Before my eyes I saw the fulfillment of Joseph Smith’s prophecy that the Church “will fill the world.”<sup>5</sup>

Two such faithful members, James Ewudzie and Frederick Antwi, assisted me one day in the Accra Ghana Temple. Several years before Latter-day Saint missionaries arrived in Ghana, James had been part of a group of about

Once the Accra Temple was dedicated, both James and Fred traveled over four hours, one way, every week so that they could be temple workers. As I performed ordinances with them, I was overcome with the sense of history that surrounded me. Realizing the Church history in Africa that the two of them represented, I felt like it was akin to having John Taylor or Wilford Woodruff or other early members of the Church with me doing those ordinances.

What I saw, experienced, and felt in West Africa was being part of what the Lord told Enoch would happen: “And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; . . . and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the

*Fred Antwi, a pioneer member  
of the Church in Ghana*



four quarters of the earth” (Moses 7:62).

I saw righteousness and truth sweeping across the African continent and the elect being gathered from that part of the world. My testimony of the Restoration was enhanced because I saw that important part of the Restoration happening before my eyes.

I also saw something else about the continuing Restoration: a vibrant faith and spiritual energy among the African members. I have heard Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles say, “Kirtland [where Latter-day Saints lived in the 1830s] is not just in Ohio. It is also in Africa.” Many people are joining the Church in Africa based on their powerful personal spiritual experiences. Those new members bring spiritual energy and a need for further gospel learning. For them the Restoration is continuing in a personal sense. As they learn more and more about the Church, the truths of the gospel continue to unfold to their view. The same is true of all of us as we continue to expand our gospel knowledge.

By making and keeping covenants, we not only prepare ourselves for eternal life, but we also help prepare and strengthen what the Lord calls “my covenant people” (Doctrine and Covenants 42:36). We make covenants with God and become part of His covenant people through baptism, confirmation, the sacrament, the Melchizedek Priesthood, and temple ordinances.

### **A second way that we can participate in the ongoing Restoration is by fulfilling**

*Youth lining up to enter the Accra Ghana Temple*



### **Three Ways to Help in the Ongoing Restoration**

God has given us the magnificent opportunity to play vital roles in this work. The Lord said that the “body [of the Church] hath need of every member” (Doctrine and Covenants 84:110). All members of the Church have the blessing of participating in this continuing Restoration. How do we do so?

**One way that we participate is by making and keeping sacred covenants.** Ordinances, including temple ordinances, do not have a purpose unless people actually make and then keep the covenants associated with those ordinances. Sister Bonnie Parkin, former Relief Society General President, has taught, “Making covenants is the expression of a willing heart; keeping covenants, the expression of a faithful heart.”<sup>6</sup>

**the callings and assignments that we receive.** That is how the Church moves forward. Devoted teachers teach the gospel to children, youth, and adults. Ministering sisters and brothers care for the individual members of the Church. Presidencies and bishoprics give guidance to stakes, districts, wards, branches, quorums, organizations, classes, and groups. Youth leaders care for young women and young men. Clerks and secretaries record essential information that is then recorded in heaven, and a host of others perform essential roles in preparing people for eternal life and the Second Coming of the Savior.

**A third way that we can participate in the Restoration is by helping to gather Israel.** From the earliest days of the Restoration, this has been a key part of the

*As taught by President Nelson, we have the opportunity and duty to assist in the gathering that happens on both sides of the veil.*

work. As taught by President Nelson, we have the opportunity and duty to assist in the gathering that happens on both sides of the veil. In his closing message in his first general conference as President of the Church, President Nelson succinctly stated, “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.”<sup>7</sup>

Gathering Israel on this side of the veil means missionary work. All of us who can serve full-time missions should carefully consider that opportunity. I count it as a great blessing that I was able to serve a mission in Italy at a time when the Church was very young there. Our branches met in rented halls, and we hoped that someday stakes and wards might exist there. I watched brave pioneers come into the Church and lay the foundation for the gathering of Israel in that great land.

they raised four children, all of whom served missions and have continued since to serve in the Church.

Agnese and Sebastiano also served a mission, with Sebastiano as mission president. When I served a second mission in Italy, 25 years after the first, I was able to see what the Carusos and other pioneers had done to expand the kingdom of God there. My missionaries and I worked to build the Church, dreaming that someday a temple might be built in Italy. Imagine my joy in the fact that

*Elder and Sister Curtis with some members of the Caruso family*



One of these was Agnese Galdiolo. We all felt the Spirit powerfully as she was taught the missionary lessons. But, even feeling that Spirit, she knew that her family would be strongly opposed to her being baptized. At a certain point, however, filled with the Spirit, she agreed to be baptized. But she changed her mind the morning of her scheduled baptism. She came early to the rented hall where she was to be baptized to tell us that because of family pressure, she could not do it.

Before leaving, she agreed that we could talk for a few minutes. We went to a classroom where we suggested that we pray together. After we had knelt, we asked her to say the prayer. After the prayer she stood up in tears and said, “All right, I will be baptized.” And a few minutes later she was. The next year she married Sebastiano Caruso, and

we now have the Rome Italy Temple.

There are few joys that can compare with missionary joy. What a great blessing to be born at a time when we can joyously participate in the ongoing Restoration by helping to gather Israel!

Missionary joy, of course, is felt not only by full-time missionaries. Each of us can assist in the conversion or activation of our sisters and brothers by working hand in hand with the full-time missionaries. We have the opportunity to gather Israel by inviting others to come and see and by fellowshipping those being taught.

**It is by temple and family history work that we help gather Israel on the other side of the veil.** For years it has been our sacred responsibility to do this work. Before Joseph Smith’s death, the Saints performed

*At Agnese Galdiolo’s baptism*



Eliza R. Snow, early Relief Society leader



baptisms for the dead, and a few received their endowments and sealings. With the completion of the Nauvoo Temple, endowments for the living began in earnest. Endowments and sealings for ancestors also began in temples in Utah.

Eliza R. Snow, a key participant in that restorative process, understood the importance of that part of the Restoration. She spent much time in the endowment house, assisting with ordinances there.<sup>8</sup> During one Relief Society visit in 1869, she taught her sisters, “I have been reflecting on the great work we have to perform, even in helping the salvation of the living and the dead. We want to be . . . fit companions of the Gods and Holy Ones.”<sup>9</sup>

And, of course, the availability of temple ordinances has expanded dramatically with

world began” (Doctrine and Covenants 27:6). That restoration has continued to the present as God “does now reveal” and “will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God” (Articles of Faith 1:9). I am deeply grateful that we get to participate in this ongoing Restoration. ■

*“If you think the Church has been fully restored, you’re just seeing the beginning. There is much more to come.”*

*—President Nelson*

the construction of many temples around the world, with more to come.

With the tools we now have at our disposal, temple and family history work can be a regular part of our participation in the ongoing Restoration. I have been interested and involved in family history work for years, but online tools have greatly enhanced my success in taking family names to the temple. I have sacred memories of sitting at a table in our apartment in Ghana and finding names of my European ancestors that my wife and I could take to the Accra Ghana Temple. That joyous opportunity has followed us to other places that we have been sent.

Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, God began the process of “bringing to pass the restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the

*It is by temple and family history work that we help gather Israel on the other side of the veil.*

#### NOTES

1. See Ephesians 1:10; Doctrine and Covenants 27:13.
2. See Daniel 2:35–45; Doctrine and Covenants 65.
3. Russell M. Nelson, in “Latter-day Saint Prophet, Wife and Apostle Share Insights of Global Ministry,” Oct. 30, 2018, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
4. See “Inspired Direction,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 121.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 137.
6. Bonnie D. Parkin, “With Holiness of Heart,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 103.
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Let Us All Press On,” *Ensign*, May 2018, 118–19. Echoing that thought, President Nelson said in general conference a year later: “May we dedicate and rededicate our lives to serving God and His children—on both sides of the veil” (“Closing Remarks,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 112).
8. The endowment house was built on Temple Square while the Salt Lake Temple was being built. Dedicated in 1855, the endowment house was used for temple ordinances until 1889.
9. Eliza R. Snow, address to Lehi Ward Relief Society, Oct. 27, 1869, Relief Society Minute Book, 1868–79, Church History Library, 26–27.





By Elder  
Kyle S. McKay  
Of the Seventy

# A Mighty Change of Heart

With the Fall of Adam, sickness and sin were introduced into the world. Both can be fatal in their respective realms. Of all sicknesses, perhaps none is so pervasive or devastating as cancer. In some countries, more than one third of the population will develop some form of cancer, and it is responsible for almost one-fourth of all deaths.<sup>1</sup> Cancer often begins with a single cell, so small it can be seen only with a microscope. But it is capable of growing and spreading rapidly.

Cancer patients undergo treatment in order to put the cancer in remission. Complete remission means that there is no longer any detectable evidence of the disease. However, professionals are quick to point out that although a patient may be in remission, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is cured.<sup>2</sup> Thus, although remission provides relief and hope, cancer patients always hope for something beyond remission—they hope to be cured. According to one source, “To render someone cured of cancer, one has to wait and see if the cancer will ever come back, so, time is the crucial factor. If a patient remains in remission for a few years, the cancer might be cured. Certain cancers can reoccur after many years of remission.”<sup>3</sup>

## Sickness and Sin

As devastating as cancer is to the body, sin is even more devastating to the soul. Sin usually starts small—sometimes imperceptibly small—but it is capable of growing rapidly. It cankers, then cripples, then kills the soul. It is the major cause—indeed, the only cause—of spiritual death in all creation. The treatment for sin is repentance. True repentance is 100 percent effective in putting the sinner in remission, or bringing about a remission of sins. This

Sin cankers, cripples,  
and kills the soul.  
Sin is the major cause—  
indeed the only cause—  
of spiritual death.  
The treatment for sin  
is repentance.

remission offers relief and joy to the soul. However, receiving a remission of sin and being free from its symptoms and effects does not necessarily mean that the sinner has been completely cured. There is something about the heart of fallen man that allows or is susceptible to sin. Thus, sin can reoccur, even after years of remission. Staying in remission, or in other words, retaining a remission of sins, is crucial to being completely healed.

### Cleansed and Cured

This analogy helps us understand that spiritually, we must be not only cleansed from sin but also cured of sinfulness. The war that pits our will to do good against our nature to do bad can be tiring. If faithful, we will be victorious not simply because we have imposed our will upon our nature, but because we have yielded our will to God and He has changed our nature.

King Benjamin taught, “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man . . . through the atonement of Christ the Lord” (Mosiah 3:19). In response to this and other teachings, Benjamin’s people prayed, “O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, *and* our hearts may be purified” (Mosiah 4:2; emphasis added). After they prayed, the Lord responded to their two-part request. First, “the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience” (Mosiah 4:3).

Seeing that his people were “in remission,” King Benjamin urged them toward a complete cure by teaching them how to stay in remission (see Mosiah 4:11–30). “If ye do this,” he promised, “ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins” (Mosiah 4:12).

The people believed and bound themselves to King Benjamin’s words, whereupon the Lord answered the second part of their prayer—that “[their] hearts may be purified.” In gratitude and praise, the people cried out, “The Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent . . . has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2). King Benjamin explained that this mighty change meant they had been born of God (see Mosiah 5:7).

### “How Is It Done?”

The prophet Alma taught that we must both repent *and* be born again—born of God, changed in our hearts (see Alma 5:49). As we

continually repent, the Lord will take away all our sins *and* He will take away that which naturally causes or allows sin in us. But, in the words of Enos, “Lord, how is it done?” (Enos 1:7). The answer is simple, yet profound and eternal. To those who have been healed from any condition, physical or spiritual, the Lord has declared, “Thy faith hath made thee whole” (see Mark 5:34; Enos 1:8).

The mighty change of heart experienced by Alma was wrought “according to his faith,” and the hearts of his followers were changed as they “put their trust in the true and living God” (Alma 5:12, 13). The hearts of King Benjamin’s people were “changed through faith on [the Savior’s] name” (Mosiah 5:7).

If we would have this kind of faith, so that we can trust the Lord with all our heart, we must do what leads to faith and then do what faith leads to. Among the many things that lead to faith, in context of this change

*This mighty change of heart is wrought in us; it is not wrought by us.*

of heart, the Lord has emphasized fasting, prayer, and the word of God. And although faith leads to many things, repentance is its first fruit.

Consider the following two verses from the book of Helaman that highlight these principles. First, we read of a people who “did fast and pray oft, and did wax . . . firmer



*Thanks to the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can not only be cleansed from sin; we can also be cured of sinfulness.*

and firmer in the faith of Christ . . . even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35). Then, from Samuel the Lamanite prophet, we learn, “The holy scriptures, yea, the prophecies of the holy prophets, . . . leadeth . . . to faith on the Lord, and unto repentance, which faith and repentance bringeth a change of heart” (Helaman 15:7).

### Reliant on God

Here we should pause and acknowledge that this mighty change of which we speak is wrought *in* us; it is not wrought *by* us. We are capable of repenting, changing our conduct, our attitudes, even our desires and beliefs, but it is beyond our power and capacity to change our nature. For this mighty change, we are wholly reliant on Almighty God. It is He who graciously purifies our hearts and changes our nature “after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). His invitation is constant and sure: “Repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall *heal* [you]” (3 Nephi 18:32; emphasis added).

The effect of being healed from sinfulness is that we become “changed from [our] carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness

. . . becoming his sons and daughters; And thus [we] become new creatures” (Mosiah 27:25, 26). Our countenances radiate the Light of Christ. Moreover, the scriptures tell us that “whosoever is born of God sinneth not” (1 John 5:18). This is so, not because we are incapable of sinning, but because it is now our nature *not* to sin. That is a mighty change, indeed.

It should be remembered that experiencing a mighty change of heart is a process over time, not a point in time. The change is usually gradual, sometimes incrementally imperceptible, but it is real, it is powerful, and it is necessary.

If you have not yet experienced such a mighty change, I would ask of you: Have you repented and received a remission of your sins? Do you study the holy scriptures? Do you fast and pray often, that you may wax firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ? Do you have faith enough to trust the Lord with all your heart? Are you standing steadfastly in that faith? Do you watch your thoughts, words, and deeds and observe the commandments of God? If you do these things, you will always rejoice and be filled with the love of God and always retain a remission of your sins. And if you stay in remission, you will be healed, cured, and *changed!*

Jesus Christ has power to cleanse us from our sins and also cure us of our sinfulness. He is mighty to save, and to that end, He is mighty to change. If we will yield our hearts to Him, exercising faith by making all the changes we are capable of making, He will exercise His power in us to bring about this mighty change of heart (see Alma 5:14). ■

### NOTES

1. See Stacy Simon, “Facts & Figures 2019: US Cancer Death Rate Has Dropped 27% in 25 Years,” American Cancer Society, Jan. 8, 2019, [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).
2. See “Remission: What Does It Mean?” [webMD.com](https://www.webmd.com).
3. Cathy Sweat, *The Gates to Recovery* (2019).



# Family Study fun



## Movies to Move You

### Easter (March 30–April 12)

As your family reviews the Easter story in the scriptures, consider supplementing your study with the following Church videos (view them by scanning the QR codes or visiting the web addresses):



"Follow Him: An Easter Message about Jesus Christ" (2 minutes):  
[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030a](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030a).

"He Is Risen" (7.5 minutes):  
[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030b](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030b).



"Because of Him" (2.5 minutes):  
[ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030c](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42030c).

**Discussion:** After watching the videos, invite family members to express their feelings about the Savior's sacrifice. How might our lives be different without the knowledge of a Savior?

*Selected activity ideas contributed by Camille Gillham, Mitzi Schoneman, Brenda Slade, and Lisa Thomas*

Consider these activities during family scripture study or home evening.



## Gratitude Tower of Service

### Mosiah 2:17 (April 13–19)

King Benjamin built a tower and taught his people that when we serve each other, we are really serving God (see Mosiah 2:17).

- 1 Build a tower. It can be a chair, an ottoman, a few boxes, etc.
- 2 Take turns getting up on your tower and thanking someone in the family for the service they have done recently.
- 3 Now take turns getting on the tower again and sharing with the family one way you're going to provide service this week.

**Discussion:** Why is it important to serve others? How does it make you feel when someone serves you? How can we serve someone (and God) as a family this week?

## FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Find more home evening ideas in this month's *Friend*.



### Heart Scrambler

#### Mosiah 5:2 (April 20–26)

After King Benjamin taught his people about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, they experienced “a mighty change” in their hearts, so that they had “no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2).

- 1 Cut out six paper hearts and write the letters C-H-A-N-G-E, one letter on each heart. Turn the hearts upside down on the table and scramble them.
- 2 Choose a family member to flip the papers over and unscramble the word. Discuss how King Benjamin’s people experienced a change in their hearts.
- 3 Each family member now chooses a letter from the table and thinks of a word or phrase that suggests a mighty change of heart. (Example: C = charity, or choose the right; H = happiness; and so on.)

**Discussion:** What caused the people to experience “a mighty change” in their hearts? What blessings can we receive when we turn our hearts to God?



### Paper Chain of Deliverance

#### Mosiah 7:33 (April 27–May 3)

In Mosiah 7, Limhi reminds his people of instances when God has delivered groups out of physical bondage. Likewise, the Lord is willing and able to deliver us from spiritual bondage.

- 1 On strips of paper, write the tools that Satan uses to keep us in spiritual bondage (pornography, alcohol, immorality, and so on).
- 2 Connect the paper strips to make a paper chain.
- 3 Bind someone’s wrists with the paper chain.
- 4 Read Mosiah 7:33 aloud. As you discuss ways we can turn to the Lord, trust Him, and serve Him, break the chain to represent how the Lord can deliver us.

**Discussion:** What does it mean to “turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart”? How do we “serve him with all diligence of mind”?



## Easter

MARCH 30–APRIL 12

**O**n Easter, we celebrate “the most important day in history”<sup>1</sup>—the Resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ. This event is central to Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness.

In the premortal life, Jesus Christ was chosen to be our Savior. He promised to provide the way for us to be forgiven of our sins and to return to our heavenly home.

On that first Easter morning, Jesus fulfilled His promise. He overcame death. As a result, “He is the light and the life of the world; yea, a light that is endless, that can never be darkened; yea, and also a life which is endless, that there can be no more death” (Mosiah 16:9).

What blessings does the Resurrection bring to you?

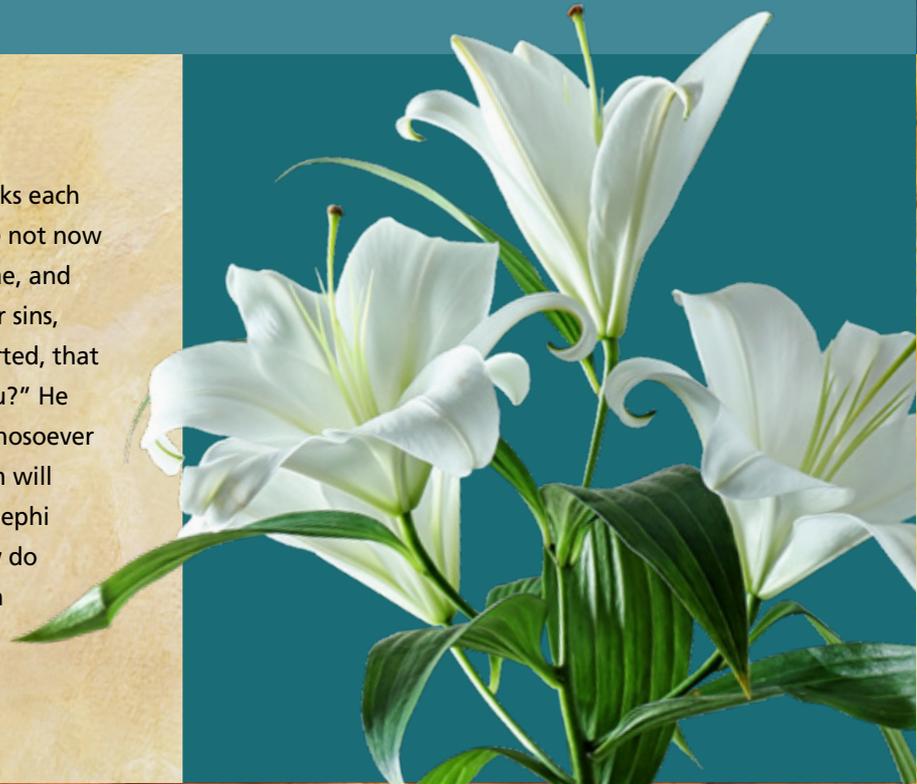
### NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Behold the Man!” *Ensign*, May 2018, 108.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2018, 7.

# What Does Easter Mean for Me?

## Repentance

Jesus Christ asks each of us, “Will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?” He promises, “Whosoever will come, him will I receive” (3 Nephi 9:13–14). How do you feel when you repent?





### Resurrection

Death is inevitable, but the Savior's victory over death ensures that all will be resurrected—body and spirit joined once more in perfect form (see Alma 11:43). How does knowledge of the Resurrection bring you hope?



### Eternal Life

The Savior's Atonement makes eternal life, or exaltation, possible. To receive this blessing, we must obey the commandments. President Russell M. Nelson has called the way to eternal life "the covenant path."<sup>2</sup> What must we do to follow this path to eternal life?





## Mosiah 1-3

APRIL 13-19

**H**ave you ever felt your heart soften as you've observed a child? Children often speak from the heart and express love and simple statements of faith. The Savior taught, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as [a] little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:4).

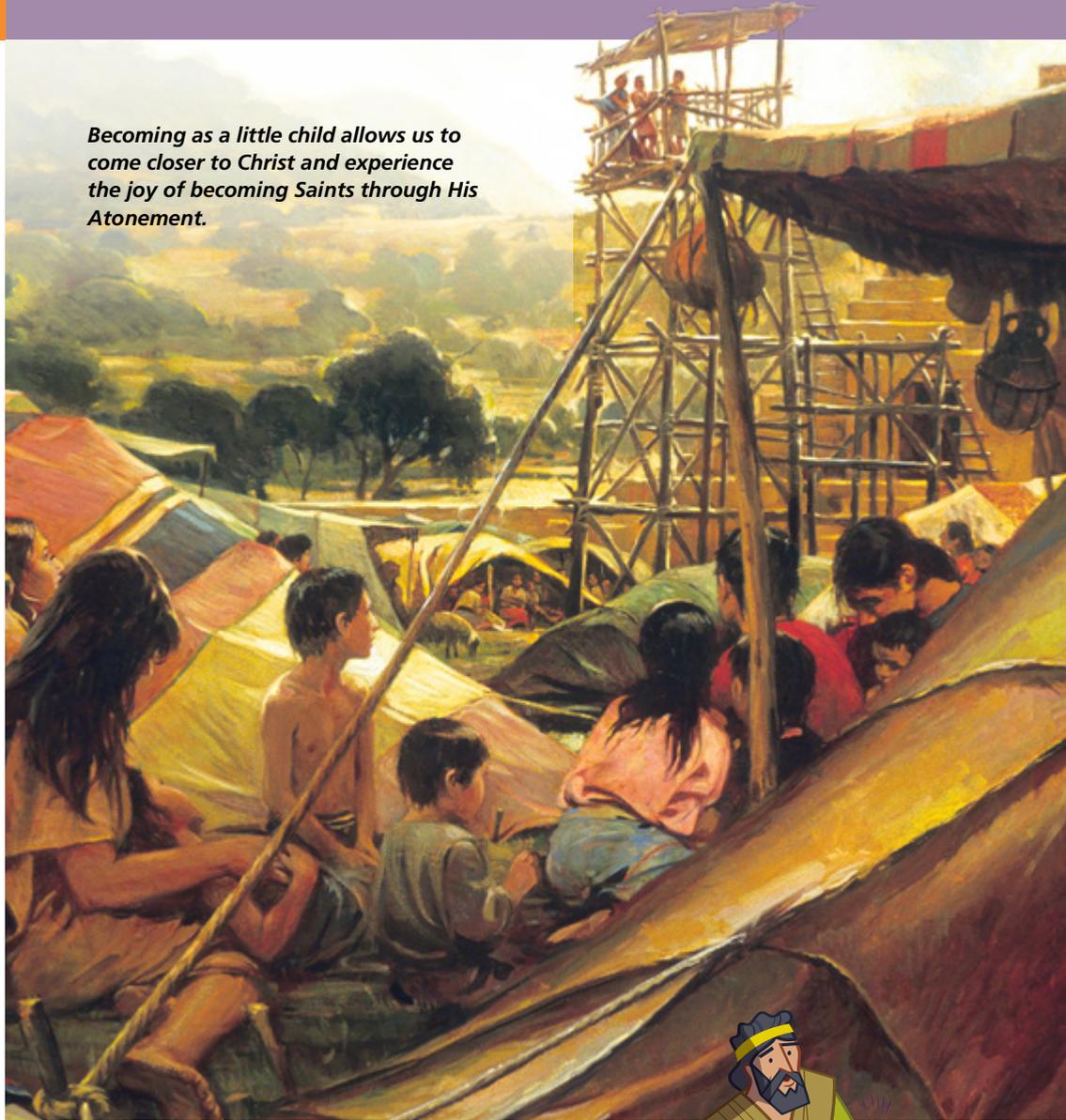
This could be one reason King Benjamin asked his people to put off the natural man and become as children (see Mosiah 3:19).

How do we become like children? Refer to Mosiah 3:19 to fill in the blanks with the words King Benjamin used to describe a childlike person.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# Why Does King Benjamin Invite Us to Become like a Child?

*Becoming as a little child allows us to come closer to Christ and experience the joy of becoming Saints through His Atonement.*



### DISCUSSION

Find childlike traits in your favorite Book of Mormon heroes. How can you follow their example?



## Mosiah 4–6

APRIL 20–26

In the Book of Mormon, people are called by many names—Nephites, Lamanites, and Anti-Nephi-Lehies are just a few. But King Benjamin desired his people to be called by a higher, holier name—the name of Jesus Christ.

Here is how we can keep the Savior’s name “written always in [our] hearts” (Mosiah 5:12):

### DISCUSSION

What do you do each day to ensure that you retain the name of Christ written in your heart?

# What Does It Mean to Have the Name of Christ Written in Our Hearts?



### COVENANT THROUGH BAPTISM

At baptism, we covenant with God to take upon ourselves the name of Christ. What do you think that means? (See Mosiah 18:8–9.)



### PARTAKE OF THE SACRAMENT

We are commanded to partake of the sacrament worthily each week. During the sacrament, we recommit to our covenant to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ (see Moroni 4:3).

### ACT AS A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

Our covenants require us to keep the commandments. Our actions should reflect our desire to follow Christ and become like Him.

In doing so, we can continue to be called by His name. This is how we *retain* Christ’s name written in our hearts (see Mosiah 5:12).



WEEK

4

# Sherem's Skepticism

## The Tactics of a Faith Shaker

*Our foundation of faith can become unshaken in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Ghost, the scriptures, and the words of living prophets.*

**By Benjamin Hyrum White**

Visiting Instructor in Ancient Scripture, Brigham Young University

**A**fter a fitting conclusion to his record in the Book of Mormon, the prophet Jacob writes a prophetic postscript. He recounts his experience with a man named Sherem,<sup>1</sup> who tries in vain to “shake [him] from the faith” (Jacob 7:5) using several tactics. Understanding the eroding influence of one who tries to shake our foundation in Jesus Christ is critical today, when information is ubiquitous but wisdom is scarce.<sup>2</sup>

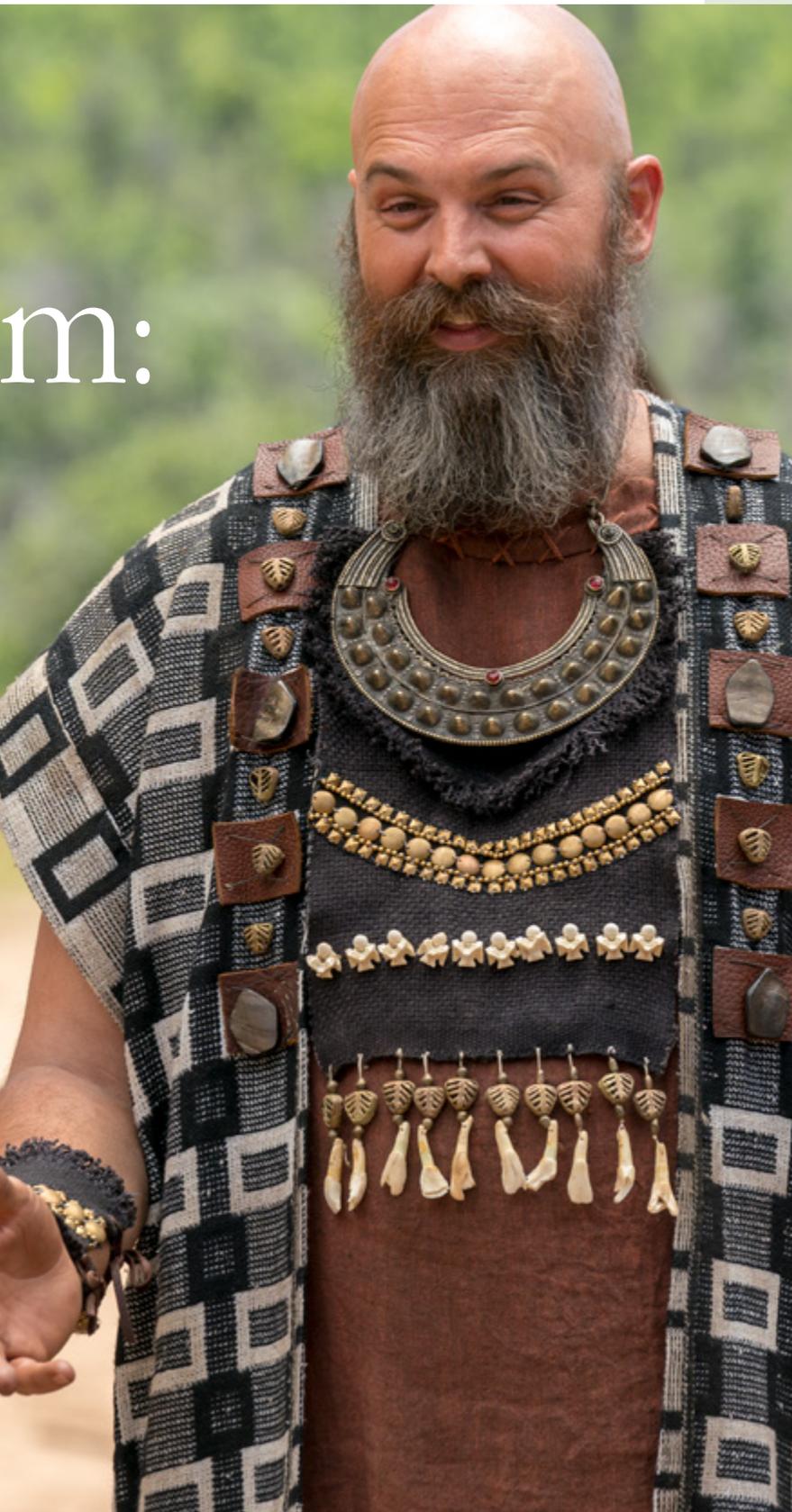
### Sherem's Tactics

#### 1. Your faith in Christ will be attacked.

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When he comes among the Nephites, Sherem declares “that there should be no Christ” (Jacob 7:2). Likewise, some people today declare that Jesus of Nazareth was not divine and that if God exists, He is irrelevant. They rely instead on their own learning and prosperity. If anything could destroy us today, it would be to disconnect ourselves from the source of all light and protection. Jesus Christ is the rock of our salvation, the only true foundation that can survive hurricane-force winds of doubt and adversity (see Helaman 5:12).

m:



## 2. You will be enticed.

Sherem labors diligently to “lead away the hearts of the people,” using “much flattery” (Jacob 7:3–4; see also 2 Nephi 28:22). He manifests his ulterior motives through his knowledge of language and his power of speech. Some individuals in our day likewise adopt the adversary’s methods to attempt to shake the faith of others. Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has warned: “Satan is a subtle snake, sneaking into our minds and hearts when we have let our guard down, faced a disappointment, or lost hope. He entices us with flattery, a promise of ease, comfort, or a temporary high when we are low. He justifies pride, unkindness, dishonesty, discontent, and immorality, and in time we can be ‘past feeling’ [1 Nephi 17:45].”<sup>3</sup>

## 3. You will be accused.

Following in the tradition of Satan, “the accuser of our brethren” (Revelation 12:10), Sherem accuses Jacob of teaching false doctrine (see Jacob 7:7). Today some individuals similarly claim that the Church needs to change to accommodate the world. The Sherems of today sound accusations against the Church, which they say is outdated and led by men who are too old and out of touch. Those who are quick to challenge the servants of God but slow to pay them heed become vulnerable to the power of the adversary.

#### 4. You will face misinterpretation of God's word.

Sherem misinterprets scripture by missing the entire point of the law of Moses (see Jacob 7:7), which points “our souls to [Christ]” (Jacob 4:5). Questions of scriptural interpretation can plague members of the Church who find perceived inaccuracies or misinterpretations in the word of God. If we do not diligently and prayerfully study His word, our own interpretations and biases may overshadow what the united voices of prophets and apostles have consistently taught and emphasized in the scriptures.



#### 5. You will be asked to “prove it.”

When Sherem is confounded by Jacob, he falls back on the faith-shaking fail-safe: “Show me a sign” (Jacob 7:13). But divine demonstration does not provide concrete flooring in a matter of seconds. Likewise, foundations of faith are not built on the flippant quip, “Prove it,” but rather on prayer, study, service, and righteousness

### Triangle of Faith

Because Sherem “had been deceived by the power of the devil” (Jacob 7:18), he thought he was doing good by correcting a prophet. We can avoid being similarly deceived by today’s Sherems—or becoming like them ourselves—if we appeal to the same three things Jacob appealed to: the Spirit, the scriptures, and the prophets (see Jacob 7:8, 10, 11), especially living ones. This triangle of faith can give us stability and strengthen our spiritual defense as we build our testimony on Jesus Christ and the strength of His words.

Like Jacob, whose faith “could not be shaken” (Jacob 7:5), and like his son, Enos, whose “faith began to be unshaken in the Lord” (Enos 1:11), we too can have a foundation of faith that becomes unshaken through the power of the Holy Ghost, the scriptures, and the words of living prophets. ■

#### NOTES

1. Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor are often grouped as the three anti-Christ in the Book of Mormon, though only Korihor is expressly labeled as one in Alma 30:6 (see John W. Welch, “Comparing Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor,” in *The Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon* [2008], 302, [archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/node/323](http://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/node/323)).
2. Many of the ideas that follow in this article had a genesis with Robert L. Millet’s work “Sherem the Anti-Christ,” in *The Book of Mormon: Jacob through Words of Mormon, To Learn with Joy*, eds. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (1990), 175–91, [rsc.byu.edu](http://rsc.byu.edu).
3. Ronald A. Rasband, “Build a Fortress of Spirituality and Protection,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 108.



By Elder  
Paul V. Johnson  
Of the Seventy

# Make Conference a Priority

*Decide now to listen and follow the teachings that are given.*

**M**y mother loved general conference. She always turned the volume loud enough that it was difficult to find a place in the house where conference couldn't be heard. She wanted her children to listen and would ask us from time to time what we remembered.

Once in a while I went outside with one of my brothers to play ball during a Saturday conference session. We would take a radio with us because we knew our mother might quiz us later. Occasionally we would take a break to listen carefully so we could report to Mom. I doubt my mother was fooled when we both happened to remember the same thing from an entire session.

That is no way to listen to conference. I have since repented. I have grown to love conference, partly because of my mother's love for the words of the living prophets. I remember listening to the sessions of a particular conference all alone in an apartment while I was in college. The Holy Ghost witnessed to my soul that the President of the Church was truly a prophet. In the mission field, the country where I served did not have conference broadcasts, but my mother sent me audiotapes and I listened to them over

and over. I grew to love the words of the prophets and apostles.

However, in order for conference messages to change our lives, we need to follow the counsel we hear. Every time we are obedient to the words of the prophets and apostles we reap great blessings, and we continue to receive blessings long after our initial decision to be obedient.

Decide now to make general conference a priority in your life. Decide to listen carefully and follow the teachings that are given. Listen to or read the talks more than once to better understand and follow the counsel. By doing these things, the gates of hell will not prevail against you, the powers of darkness will be dispersed from before you, and the heavens will shake for your good. (See Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6.) ■

*Adapted from "The Blessings of General Conference," Ensign, Nov. 2005, 50–52.*



# OUR BLESSING OF BECOMING DEBT FREE

By Bruce Ward

From the beginning of our marriage, we struggled with effective budgeting and money management. Over the years, we never learned the essential principles of wise financial management, which was a frequent source of stress.

We would pay our tithing and bills and then use anything left over to meet a need or a want. Often we experienced anxiety over an unanticipated expense. Revolving consumer debt became a problem.

Sometimes I took side jobs to make ends meet. I believed that more money would solve our financial problems. Subsequent salary increases, however, did not improve our money-management abilities.

We were not achieving our desire of becoming debt free, and serving missions as a senior couple felt impossible.

In the fall of 2017, we learned that a Personal Finances for Self-Reliance course was being offered in our branch in Bethel, Alaska, USA. My wife, Karen, and I knew we needed this course. Thus began our journey of change and miracles.

## Principles and Accountability

We were surprised that each lesson focused on both a spiritual principle and a financial principle. Before the course, we never saw the connection between effective money management and spiritual principles like faith

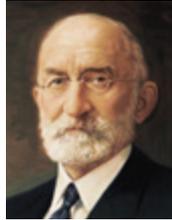
*A budget, like the commandments, is not a restriction in our lives but a powerful source of freedom.*

in Jesus Christ, prayer, and family councils. We accepted each week's assignment and faithfully fulfilled it.

The accountability built into the course was a key to our success. Knowing we would have to report our progress at the next class was a strong motivator to keep up our efforts. Having an "action partner" contact us during the week was also a powerful tool in maintaining our efforts to apply what we had learned.

At the weekly class, when others shared how the Lord had blessed them that week in the principle they obeyed, the Spirit bore witness to us, and our testimonies of that principle grew. Likewise, when we shared our own experiences, the Spirit





## LIVE WITHIN YOUR MEANS

“If there is any one thing that will bring peace and contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to live within our means. And if there is any one thing that is grinding and discouraging and disheartening, it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet.”

*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant (2002), 122.*

reinforced our testimonies of the truths we were practicing.

As the 12-week course passed, we saw progress in both our financial and spiritual lives:

- We became more goal oriented and purposeful with our spending.
- We developed a working budget and lived it.
- We learned that a budget, like the commandments, is not a restriction in our lives but a powerful source of freedom.
- We have always faithfully paid tithing, but we reevaluated our fast-offering contributions and other freewill offerings.
- We started holding regular

family councils and saw a dramatic improvement in the quality of our marriage and communication skills.

### Freed from Bondage

Seven months after we started the course, we experienced the miracle of being freed from the bondage of debt. Now we are able to plan regular trips to the temple in Anchorage, 400 miles (644 km) away, and we are preparing financially and spiritually to serve missions as a senior couple.

We learned that:

- Financial stress and instability created strong, sometimes overwhelming, feelings of anxiety, stress, and frustration.

- These negative feelings seriously limited our ability to effectively feel the whisperings of the still, small voice.
- Achieving and maintaining financial self-reliance increases our receptivity to the Spirit.

We also know that regardless of your financial circumstances, this course can change the spiritual trajectory of your life. It has the power to increase your access to heaven’s help, increase your trust and confidence in the Lord, deepen your spiritual roots, increase your ability to get answers to your prayers, and enable you to live a more fully consecrated life as a disciple of our Savior, Jesus Christ. ■

*The author lives in Alaska, USA.*



# THEY HAD A HOPE OF CHRIST'S COMING —AND WE CAN TOO

*The Book of Mormon prophets had hope that Christ would come.  
In reading their words, we can have that same hope for when He comes again.*

**By Mindy Selu**  
Church Magazines

**W**hat words come to mind when you think of the Book of Mormon?  
Nephites, Lamanites, other -ites?

War, wilderness, wo?

Repentance, redemption, righteousness?

Jesus Christ?

Hope?

Easter is the perfect time to ponder anew the message of the Book of Mormon. Most importantly, the message that Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Because of Him, we can eventually be freed from the pains of body and soul. From death and sin. We can overcome every bad thing the world throws at us.

Simply put, we can have hope.

Hope—true hope, centered on Jesus Christ—inspired ancient prophets to keep records on the gold plates that would become the Book of Mormon. Jacob tells us, “For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and *we had a hope of his glory* many hundred years before his coming” (Jacob 4:4; emphasis added).

Jacob wanted us to know that he—and the other record-keeping prophets—knew of Christ’s coming.

Many hundreds of years before He came! And they were inspired to have that hope from the words of prophets *they* read. Jacob explains:

“And not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us.

“Behold, they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. . . .

“Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken” (Jacob 4:4–6; see also 1 Nephi 19:21; Jacob 7:11; Mosiah 3:13; Helaman 8:16).

The hope they gained from both their own experiences and the prophecies they read in the scriptures prepared them for the day Christ would come. Likewise, prophets today encourage us to prepare for when Christ will come again. If we are to have that same hope, we too need to “search the prophets, and [seek to] have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy.” Their testimonies of Jesus Christ will not only strengthen ours but also help us prepare for His coming.



## Lehi

“Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise.”

**2 Nephi 2:8**

## Nephi

“And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”

**2 Nephi 25:26**



## Alma

“And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.”

**Alma 7:11–12**

## Amulek

“And that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.

“And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance.

“And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption.”

**Alma 34:14–16**

## Samuel the Lamanite

“For behold, he surely must die that salvation may come; yea, it behooveth him and becometh expedient that he dieth, to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, that thereby men may be brought into the presence of the Lord.

“Yea, behold, this death bringeth to pass the resurrection, and redeemeth all mankind from the first death—that spiritual death; for all mankind, by the fall of Adam being cut off from the presence of the Lord, are considered as dead, both as to things temporal and to things spiritual.

“But behold, the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord.”

**Helaman 14:15–17**

## King Benjamin

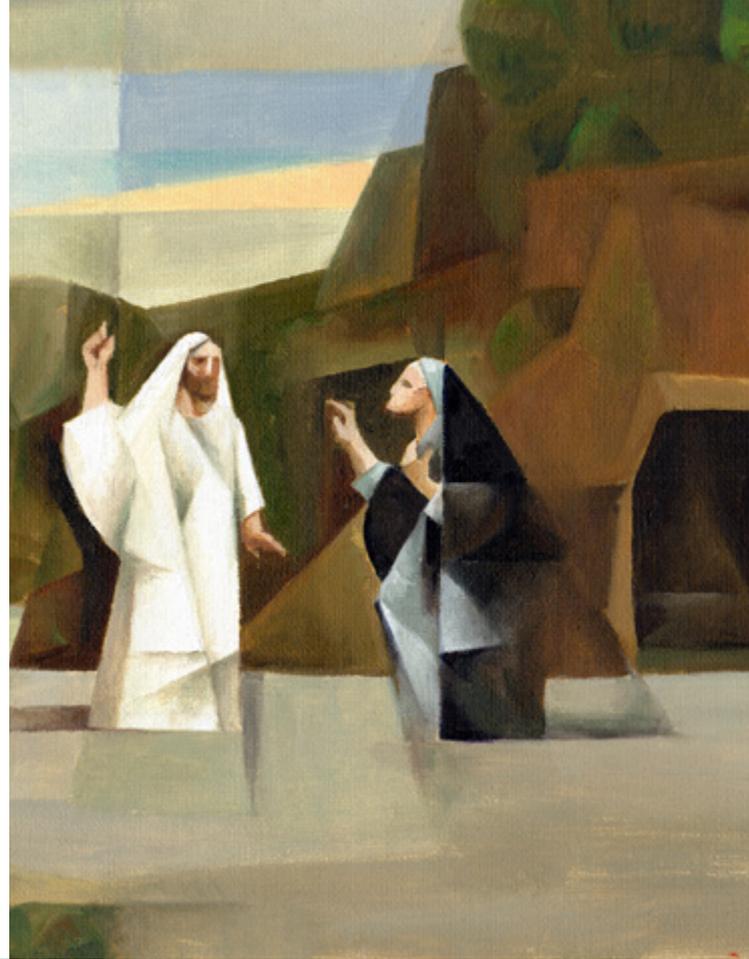
“And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God. . . .

“And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name; . . .

“And he shall rise the third day from the dead. . . .

“For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned.”

**Mosiah 3:8–11**



## Mormon

“Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God, and that he was slain by the Jews, and by the power of the Father he hath risen again, whereby he hath gained the victory over the grave; and also in him is the sting of death swallowed up.

“And he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead, whereby man must be raised to stand before his judgment-seat.

“And he hath brought to pass the redemption of the world, whereby he that is found guiltless before him at the judgment day hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end.”

**Mormon 7:5–7 ■**

# MY NOT-SO-TRADITIONAL EASTER TRADITION

By Brooke Anderson

Church Magazines

*As I sat in the cemetery that Easter morning, the Resurrection took on a whole new meaning.*

I grew up celebrating Easter with colored eggs, Easter baskets, and candy. But when I moved away from home, I wasn't sure how to celebrate Easter on my own.

One day, as I was reading the account of Mary Magdalene and the “other Mary” going to the Savior's tomb on that first Easter morning (see Matthew 28:1), I had an idea: What if I put myself in the shoes of those women by going to the cemetery near my house just before sunrise on Easter morning?

It seemed like the perfect way to commemorate Easter.

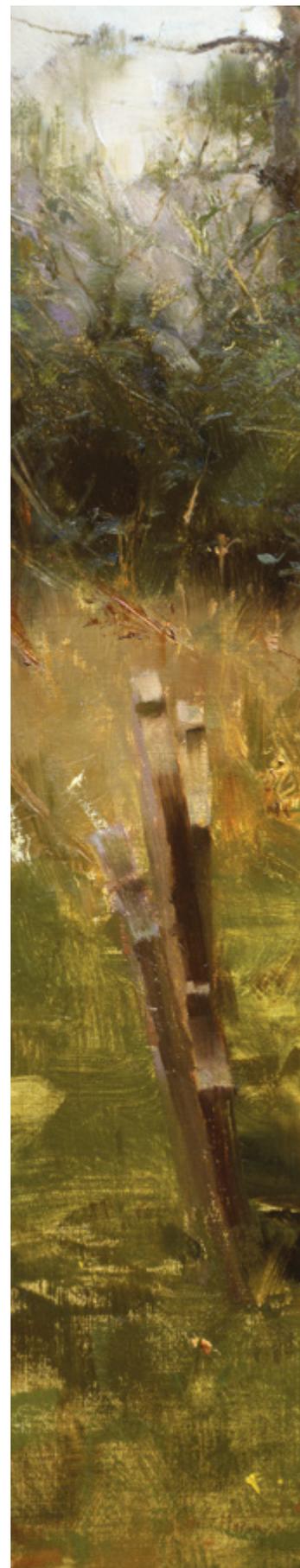
And so, on Easter morning I meandered through the gravestones until I found a quiet spot on the grass to sit and read the account of the Resurrection.

As I read the words of the angel to the women, “He is not here: for he is risen” (Matthew 28:6), a sweet spirit settled over me, and I saw what a truly remarkable and wonderful gift His sacrifice was. I looked at all the gravestones and realized the immense

magnitude of His gift. Each gravestone represented a person for whom Christ had suffered—and who, because of His suffering, would rise again.

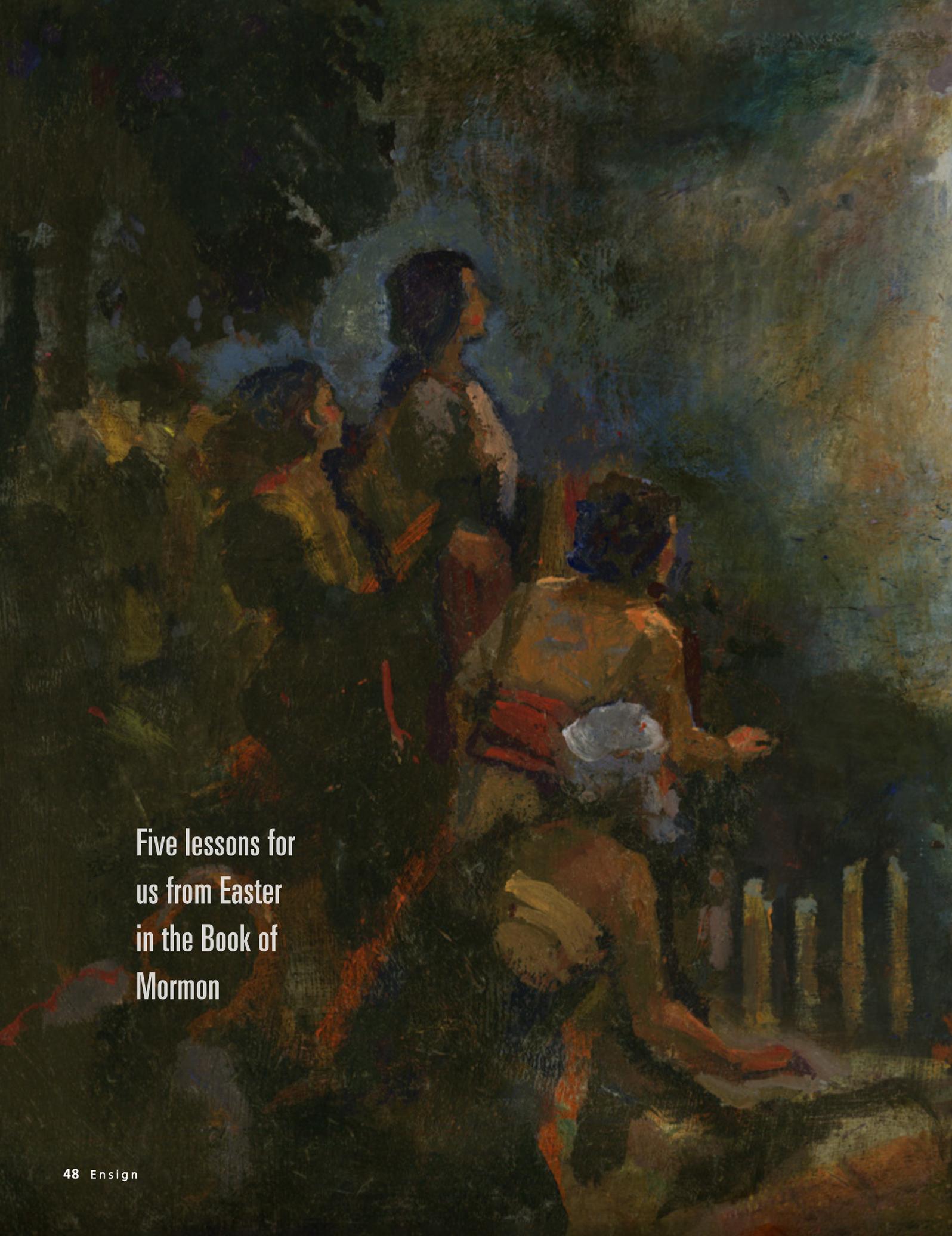
I thought of my deceased grandfather, who had been paralyzed for most of his life, and the joy I would feel not only to see him again but also to see him standing and running and to feel his arms around me. I thought of all the tears that had been shed here for loved ones lost and of the joy that would come with future tender reunions. I thought of Mary Magdalene seeing her resurrected Lord (see John 20:15–17)—of the wonder, the joy, the hope of His glorious gift.

Now each Easter morning, before I eat my bunny-shaped chocolates and boiled Easter eggs, I walk to the cemetery and sit and read the story of His Resurrection. And with a new appreciation for it all, I find myself exclaiming, in the words of Paul, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Corinthians 9:15). ■

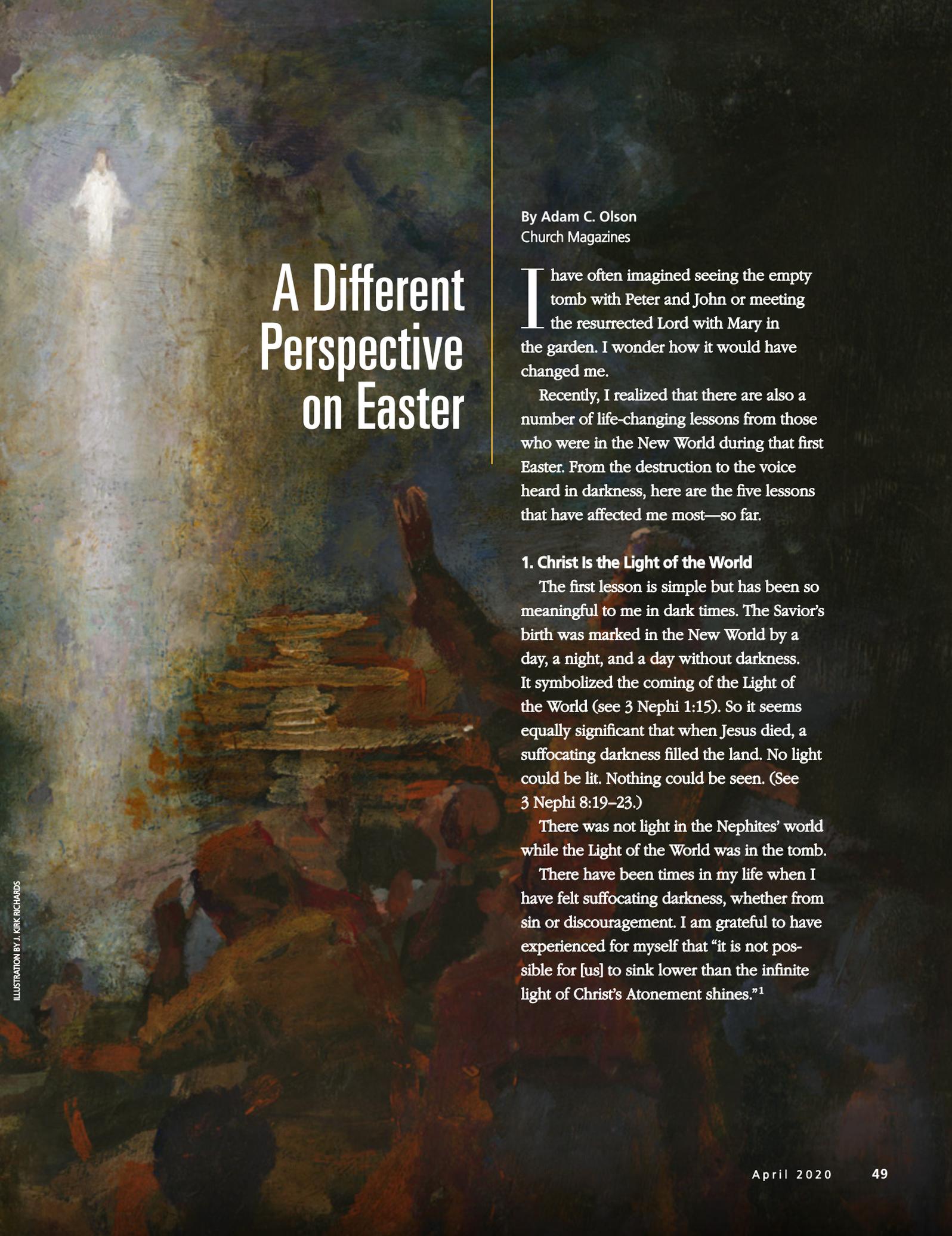


DALMALLY CHURCHYARD, BY RICHARD SCHMID, MAY NOT BE COPIED





Five lessons for  
us from Easter  
in the Book of  
Mormon



# A Different Perspective on Easter

By Adam C. Olson  
Church Magazines

I have often imagined seeing the empty tomb with Peter and John or meeting the resurrected Lord with Mary in the garden. I wonder how it would have changed me.

Recently, I realized that there are also a number of life-changing lessons from those who were in the New World during that first Easter. From the destruction to the voice heard in darkness, here are the five lessons that have affected me most—so far.

## 1. Christ Is the Light of the World

The first lesson is simple but has been so meaningful to me in dark times. The Savior's birth was marked in the New World by a day, a night, and a day without darkness. It symbolized the coming of the Light of the World (see 3 Nephi 1:15). So it seems equally significant that when Jesus died, a suffocating darkness filled the land. No light could be lit. Nothing could be seen. (See 3 Nephi 8:19–23.)

There was not light in the Nephites' world while the Light of the World was in the tomb.

There have been times in my life when I have felt suffocating darkness, whether from sin or discouragement. I am grateful to have experienced for myself that “it is not possible for [us] to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines.”<sup>1</sup>

## 2. I've Been Given a Chance to Prepare

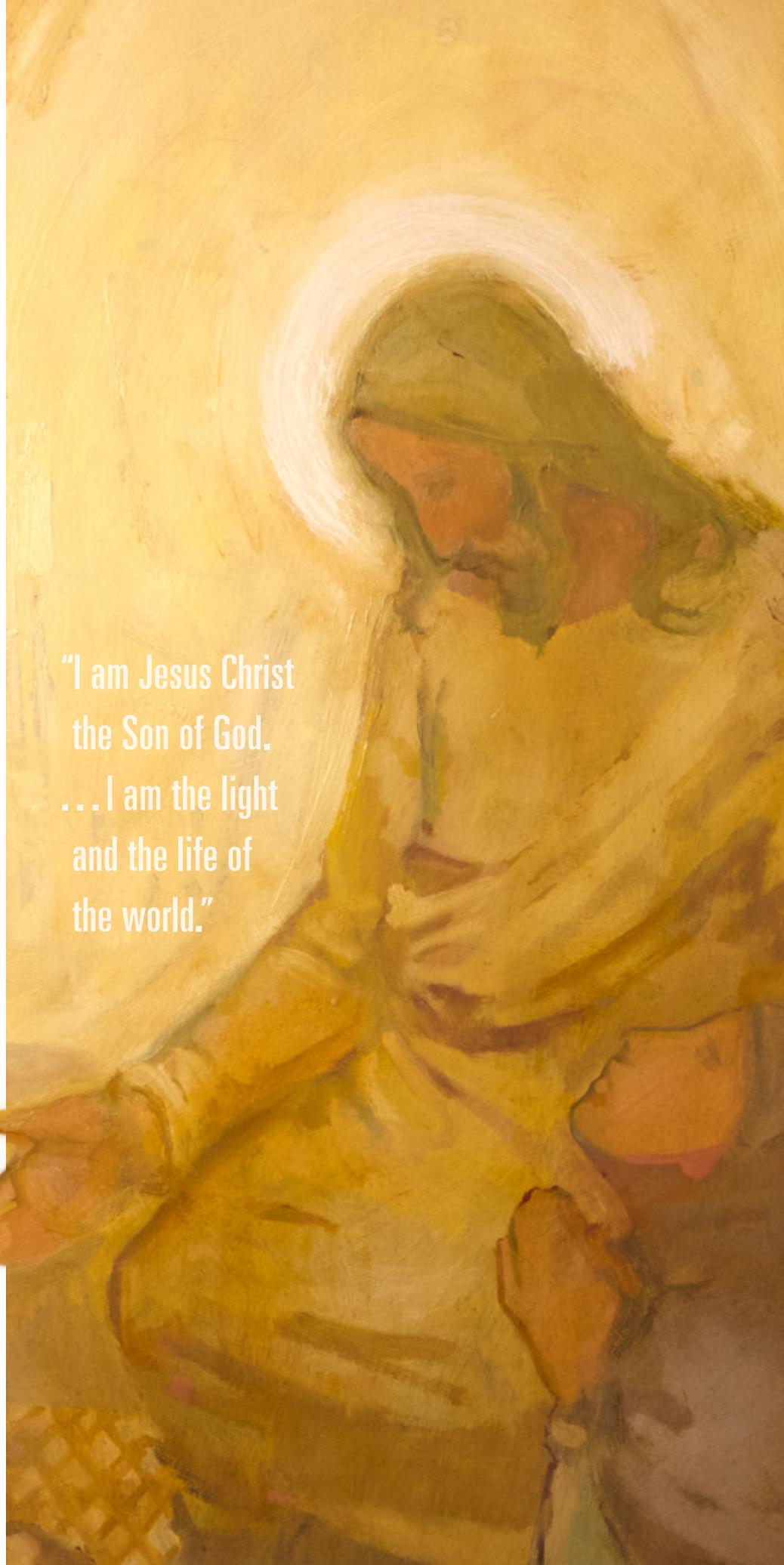
I find it fascinating that thanks to living prophets, the Nephites knew with a great deal of detail that the darkness was coming (see Helaman 14:20–27). Many people looked for it, waited for it, even argued about it (see 3 Nephi 8:3–4). But were they prepared for the destruction that accompanied the Savior's death? Were they ready when He came to them?

More importantly, are we? Thanks to His prophets, we know He will come a second time. We have likewise been given a great deal of detail about the events that will lead up to that day. There will be earthquakes, tempests, and the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds prior to His Second Coming (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:89–90).

But while the world debates its end, we have been given the opportunity to prepare. Are we taking it? (For more ideas on how to prepare, read on.)

## 3. I Shouldn't Be Afraid of Repentance

How can I prepare for that great and terrible day? Book of Mormon prophets took great care to include that lesson for us. After the destruction had ended and the earth had calmed, the people in darkness heard a voice: "Wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants



"I am Jesus Christ  
the Son of God.  
... I am the light  
and the life of  
the world."

of the whole earth except they shall repent” (3 Nephi 9:2).

Jesus invited them, just as He invites us, to repent and be healed: “O all ye that are spared, . . . will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?” He offers mercy to each of us one last time: “If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive” (3 Nephi 9:13–14).

His Easter victory is a chance for us to change. He promises He will receive anyone who will repent and come unto Him. The promise of eternal life is within reach of each of us who will take advantage of the “never-ending privilege”<sup>2</sup> of repentance.

#### 4. How I Feel about His Prophets Is Important

The more I studied the Easter story in the Book of Mormon, the more the power of this lesson surprised me. After the destruction in the New World, in which many cities were destroyed by flood, fire, and earthquake, the voice of the Savior was heard describing the judgments that had fallen upon the land. Six times He made the connection between how the people treated His prophets and whether or not they were spared. Killing the Lord’s prophets was the primary reason listed for the destruction of more than a dozen cities. (See 3 Nephi 9:5–13.) The record goes on to say that the survivors were spared because they had not cast out and killed God’s prophets (see 3 Nephi 10:12–13).

Clearly there is a lesson here for us about how the Savior feels about His prophets and apostles. But if we go back a little farther in the Book of Mormon, we begin to grasp the importance of this lesson for us. Nephi, the first record keeper of the Book of Mormon, prophesied that the day of the Savior’s death would be “great and terrible . . . unto the wicked, for they shall . . . perish because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them” (2 Nephi 26:3).

How did Nephi know? And what does it have to do with our day? In his vision of the tree of life, Nephi saw that “the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceedingly great.” And then

the angel of the Lord told him, “Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (1 Nephi 11:36).

The Lord has warned us. In the last days, our decision to follow those He has called to lead His Church—when so many others reject them—will become a protection to us. What is our attitude toward the Apostles of the Lamb?

#### 5. Jesus Saves

During the three days of darkness, the voice revealed to the people who He was, saying, “I am Jesus Christ the Son of God.” Then, to those who had been saved from death but who still sat in darkness, He said, “I am the light and the life of the world,” and to those who needed to begin again after nearly meeting their end, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (3 Nephi 9:15, 18).

He had saved them from physical death, but He was offering them salvation from so much more. With His awful atoning sacrifice just hours behind Him and His glorious Resurrection mere hours away, the Savior shared this essential message of Easter:

“Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

“Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved” (3 Nephi 9:21–22). ■

#### NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 33.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “The Savior’s Four Gifts of Joy,” *New Era*, Dec. 2019, 4.

What Church  
Leaders Are Saying

# about the Atonement of Jesus Christ

## Hope for Eternal Life

“We worship Him who commenced His infinite Atonement in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was willing to suffer for the sins and weaknesses of each of us, which suffering caused Him ‘to bleed at every pore’ [Doctrine and Covenants 19:18]. He was crucified on Calvary’s cross and rose the third day as the first resurrected being of our Heavenly Father’s children. I love Him and testify that He lives! It is He who leads and guides His Church.

“Without our Redeemer’s infinite Atonement, not one of us would have hope of ever returning to our Heavenly Father. Without His Resurrection, death would be the end. *Our Savior’s Atonement made eternal life a possibility and immortality a reality for all.*

“I testify that He is the living Christ—our Lord and Savior, Redeemer, Exemplar, and Judge. *Thanks to Him, no condition is hopeless.* Brighter days are ahead, both here and hereafter.”<sup>1</sup>

President Russell M. Nelson



### Comfort at the Loss of a Loved One

"You can spend your entire life believing in the plan of salvation, but often it's not until you lose a loved one that you ask yourself, 'Do I really believe it?' As I stood alone one afternoon at the grave of our granddaughter Millee, *I felt an overwhelming peace and assurance that Millee lives and that the plan of happiness is real.* I wish I knew how to better express my gratitude to my Heavenly Father for His plan and to the Savior for His infinite Atonement. It's a blessing to belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where eternal truth and knowledge have been restored. I am comforted (and excited!) to know that our daughter will hold her baby in her arms again and that we can be an eternal family."<sup>2</sup>

Sister Becky Craven, Second Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

### We Can Be Cleansed

"The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ opens the door for 'all men [to] repent and come unto him' (Doctrine and Covenants 18:11). . . .

". . . Our loving Savior opens His arms to receive all men and women on the loving conditions He has prescribed to enjoy the greatest blessings God has for His children.

"Because of God's plan and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, *I testify with a 'perfect brightness of hope' that God loves us and we can be cleansed by the process of repentance.* We are promised that 'if [we] press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life' (2 Nephi 31:20)."<sup>3</sup>

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency

### The Solid, Sure Foundation of the Atonement of Jesus Christ

"Learning to choose the things of the Spirit over the things of the flesh is one of the primary reasons why this earthly experience is part of Heavenly Father's plan. It's also why *the plan is built upon the solid, sure foundation of the Atonement of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* so that our sins, including the errors we make when we yield to the flesh, can be overcome through constant repentance and we can live spiritually focused. Now is the time to control our bodily appetites to comply with the spiritual doctrine of Christ. That is why we must not procrastinate the day of our repentance."<sup>4</sup>

President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THY WILL BE DONE, BY KEN SPENCER, MAY NOT BE COPIED



HIS LIGHT, BY MICHAEL MALIM, MAY NOT BE COPIED

### His Infinite Atonement

“On occasion, I have met with good Saints who have had trouble forgiving themselves, who have innocently but incorrectly placed limits on the Savior’s redemptive powers. Unwittingly, they have converted an infinite Atonement to a finite one that somehow falls short of their particular sin or weakness. But *it is an infinite Atonement because it encompasses and circumscribes every sin and weakness, as well as every abuse or pain caused by others.*”<sup>5</sup>

Brother Tad R. Callister, former Sunday School General President

### Limitless in Duration and Scope

“We must remember that *it is never too late* and no one has ever wandered so far from the path that he or she is beyond the reach of the infinite Atonement of Jesus Christ, which is limitless in its duration and scope.”<sup>6</sup>

Bishop W. Christopher Waddell, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

### We Are Not Alone

“Yes, life can be overwhelming at times. My wife Dantzel died suddenly when her heart stopped beating. All my knowledge as a heart surgeon could not save her. Cancer has claimed the lives of two of our daughters. I understand the heartbreak of separation from loved ones.

“But *Jesus is the Light that shines in the dark*. He is ‘the way, the truth, and the life’ [John 14:6]. He is our anchor when we are desperately in need.

“We do not have to go through this life alone. Jesus Christ atoned to help us find the covenant path that leads back home. He can give us the strength and courage to walk confidently on that path.”<sup>7</sup>

President Russell M. Nelson

### We Are Made Equal to Our Tasks

“Because of our Savior’s atoning sacrifice, *we can be made equal to the tasks that lie ahead*. The prophets have taught that as we climb the path of discipleship, we can be sanctified through the grace of Christ.”<sup>8</sup>

Sister Michelle Craig, First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

THE GOOD SHEPHERD, BY KEN SPENCER, MAY NOT BE COPIED

### The Savior Works through Us

“I testify that when Jesus Christ, through the power of His Atonement, works *on* us and *in* us, He begins to work *through* us to bless others. ***We serve them, but we do so by loving and serving Him.*** We become what the scripture describes: ‘Every man [and woman] seeking the interest of his [or her] neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God’ [Doctrine and Covenants 82:19].”<sup>9</sup>

Sister Joy D. Jones, Primary General President

### Jesus Heals Our Wounds

“Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through the incalculable gift of His Atonement, not only saves us from death and offers us, through repentance, forgiveness for our sins, but He also stands ready to save us from the sorrows and pains of our wounded souls. . . .

“. . . It is my promise to you that ***increasing your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will bring you added strength and greater hope.*** For you, the righteous, the Healer of our souls, in His time and His way, will heal all your wounds.”<sup>10</sup>

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Is there a particular quotation in this article that stands out to you? Why? Consider sharing your feelings with a member of your family.

### Reborn through the Atonement

“Being ‘converted unto the Lord’ means leaving one course of action, directed by an old belief system, and adopting a new one based on faith in Heavenly Father’s plan and in Jesus Christ and His Atonement. This change is more than an intellectual acceptance of gospel teachings. ***It shapes our identity, transforms our understanding of life’s meaning, and leads to unchanging fidelity to God.*** Personal desires that are contrary to being anchored to the Savior and to following the covenant path fade away and are replaced by a determination to submit to the will of Heavenly Father.”<sup>11</sup>

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

#### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, Facebook post, Apr. 21, 2019.
2. Becky Craven, Facebook post, Apr. 19, 2019.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Cleansed by Repentance,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 91–92, 94.
4. M. Russell Ballard, “Giving Our Spirits Control over Our Bodies,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 109.
5. Tadd R. Callister, “The Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 85–86.
6. W. Christopher Waddell, “Just as He Did,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 21.
7. Russell M. Nelson, Facebook post, July 28, 2019.
8. Michelle Craig, “Divine Discontent,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 54–55.
9. Joy D. Jones, “For Him,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 52.
10. Neil L. Andersen, “Wounded,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 85, 86.
11. Dale G. Renlund, “Unwavering Commitment to Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 22.

# Ten Tips

## for Parenting THE STRONG- WILLED CHILD

By Kevin Hinckley

Licensed Professional Counselor

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive to follow the Savior's perfect example of patience, kindness, and long-suffering (see Mosiah 4:6). As parents, however, our patience is often tested, especially if we parent a child who is spirited, stubborn, or engaged in frequent power struggles with us. We might even become discouraged and ask ourselves, "What am I doing wrong?"

As you seek to build loving and lasting relationships with your children and make your



*Feeling frustrated with that child who tests your patience? Here are some ways to make things better for both you and your child.*

home “a house of order” and “a house of God” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:119), consider these 10 guidelines to minimize the daily “strong-willed” battles.



### 1. Set rules together.

If your child constantly fights the rules you create, consider creating rules collaboratively, allowing children to give their input on what the rules should be and why such rules should exist. If they understand the “why” of a rule, children are more likely to be compliant.

### 2. Talk to them about their experiences.

Strong-willed children are often experiential learners. Talk to them about their missteps and ask what they’ve learned. If they say, “I don’t know,” be prepared to offer up possible lessons and let them choose. Then ask, “What do you think you will do differently next time?”

### 3. Recognize their successes.

As with most children, strong-willed children need the confidence that comes from seeing they have mastered something. Regularly acknowledge their accomplishments and successes with specific praise. Vaguely telling them they are “great” is usually not enough.

#### 4. Provide them with choices.

Providing strong-willed children with options can help them feel that they are in control of their own decisions. For example:

- “Do you want to mow the lawn or pull weeds?”
- “As a consequence, you can choose between extra chores or loss of phone privileges.”

#### 5. Listen before providing solutions.

Strong-willed children respond best when they believe they’re being heard. If your child approaches you with a problem, resist the urge to merely give them a solution. Instead, listen to what they have to say and arrive at a solution together.

You can show you’re listening by:

- Asking questions for clarification.
- Restating their words to ensure you understood correctly.
- Eliminating distractions (stopping what you were doing and putting away devices).

#### 6. See issues from their point of view.

Make a concerted effort to see things as they would. Ask questions about why they think or believe what they do. Listen closely. This builds empathy and understanding.

#### 7. Be flexible and open to input.

Avoid giving ultimatums and closed-minded reasoning such as “That’s just the way it is.” Be open to discussion and willing to incorporate their input when appropriate. Most importantly, don’t be ashamed to admit when you are wrong and to acknowledge openly when their idea is better.



### 8. Focus on discipline and natural consequences and avoid punishment.

When behavior needs to be corrected, focus on discipline rather than punishment. Punishment is designed to create pain and remorse and can increase the tension between the parent and the child. Instead of punishing, focus on the natural consequences of the child's choices. Strong-willed children need to learn that their behavior has consequences and that they can learn to better control those consequences.



### 9. Offer large doses of respect and empathy.

Rules without relationships lead to rebellion. Make time to have fun together and enjoy each other's company. Work to establish a relationship of love and trust with your child. Whether they are dealing with a failure or negative consequences, a warm relationship will help them know that they can turn to you for help and support.

### 10. Love, love, and love some more.

The Savior's invitation to love one another as He loves us (see John 13:34) is some of the most effective parenting advice ever given. As we love our children like He does—kindly, patiently, completely—hearts in our home will soften, beginning with our own, allowing Him to shape us into the parents He wants us to be. ■



# TEACHING CHILDREN THE VALUE OF WORK

By Christy Monson

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

*Here are some ideas to help your children roll up their sleeves and experience the blessings of work.*

**H**eavenly Father has taught by example that work is a divine principle (see Exodus 20:9–11; Moses 1:39). As we teach this principle to our children and provide opportunities for them to apply it, they can experience a sense of accomplishment and belonging, learn needed skills to become self-sufficient, and prepare themselves for greater responsibilities, including Church service. Here are nine tips to help you in your efforts:

## Include children in creating a family work plan.

In a family council, discuss the work that needs to be done to maintain the home and yard. Talk about how these duties can be shared among family members. Children will be more motivated to help if they are part of this process. Be mindful of children's ages and capabilities, but give them opportunities to try hard things.

## Help children experience success.

Discuss (and demonstrate if necessary) each new job. Kindly reassure children that they can complete the task. Show patience and stay positive. Resist the urge to complete the job for them.

## Find a fun way to track progress and reward their work.

Have everyone place a cotton ball (or some other item) in a jar when a task is finished. When the jar is full, go on a family adventure. Or make a pizza chart and have each child color a slice when their work is done. When the chart is full, have a pizza party.



### Work together.

Rather than send everyone off in multiple directions, tackle jobs together, like weeding the garden or cleaning out the car. Working alongside your children gives you opportunities to strengthen relationships and have conversations.



### Make it fun.

Put on some music. Or turn the chore into a game. If folding laundry together, you might say, "Who can put the most sock pairs together in 30 seconds? I'll get my stopwatch."



### Praise their efforts and avoid criticism.

Commend everyone as they work. "Great job clearing off the cabinets. Now you just have the table left." Teach as you go, staying positive. "Way to go with the sink. It's spotless. Now as you wash the mirror, I'd recommend using a different, clean cloth."



### Allow children to experience natural and logical consequences.

Set consequences as you assign tasks and follow through. "We can't have family movie night until all the chores are complete."

Job-specific consequences might also help. If a child has failed to wash the dishes as asked, you might kindly say, "I'd hate for us to eat dinner tonight on dirty dishes. That would be gross. Could you please finish the dishes?"



### Be a positive role model.

Show by your example that work can be joyful, even when strenuous. Smile. Whistle. If your children experience setbacks, show patience, stay calm, and lovingly discuss the challenges as a family.



### Serve others.

Serving others is a very joyous kind of work (see Mosiah 2:17). As you roll up your sleeves as a family to help others, testimonies of service and strong work ethics will result. ■



# Improving Our Temple Experience

By the First Presidency

“**T**he crowning jewel of the Restoration is the holy temple. Its sacred ordinances and covenants are pivotal to preparing a people who are ready to welcome the Savior at His Second Coming.”<sup>1</sup>

From time to time, the First Presidency has made adjustments to temple ceremonies and procedures in order to improve the temple experience for members and help all who enter to feel a closer connection to God within these sacred spaces.

As part of the temple experience, members put on ceremonial clothing with doctrinal and symbolic significance that can be traced back to temple worship in the Old Testament (see Exodus 28 and Leviticus 8).

Some adjustments have been made to temple ceremonial clothing. These adjustments don't reflect changes to temple symbolism or doctrine but are intended to make the temple experience more simple, comfortable, and accessible by making the clothing easier to put on, care for, and afford.

Some of these adjustments include:

- A simpler design for the veil and robe.
- Removing the plastic insert from the cap and the tie from the cap and veil.
- Using a more durable material that is the same for the robes, cap, and sash, which helps them last longer and makes them easier to care for.

We hope these adjustments will help improve this sacred experience for you as you make temple worship a regular part of your life. ■

**NOTE**

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Closing Remarks,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 120.

“Any adjustments made to ordinances and procedures do not change the sacred nature of the covenants being made [in the temple]. Adjustments allow for covenants to be planted in the hearts of people living in different times and circumstances.”

**President Russell M. Nelson,**  
general conference leadership  
training meeting, Oct. 2019.



## ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS

### **Can I continue to use the ceremonial clothing I already have?**

Yes. Previous styles can continue to be used until they need to be replaced.

### **How do I appropriately discard old ceremonial clothing?**

“To dispose of worn-out temple ceremonial clothing, members should destroy the clothing by cutting it up so the original use cannot be recognized” (*General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [2020], 27.3.8, ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

### **Can I alter my existing clothing to reflect the new adjustments?**

Yes. Further information about how can

be found at [store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ceremonialclothing](https://store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ceremonialclothing) when you log in with your membership account or by visiting Distribution Services and asking a store clerk.

### **Can I donate old ceremonial clothing?**

When appropriate, you may give gently used clothing to endowed family members or friends. However, ceremonial clothing, regardless of condition, should not be donated to a temple, Deseret Industries, or any clothing exchange.

### **How do I obtain the new clothing?**

For information about cost and availability in your area, go to [store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ceremonialclothing](https://store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ceremonialclothing) or visit Distribution Services.

## A Blessing Was All I Could Give

I finished law school around the time of my daughter's first birthday. My wife and I looked forward to celebrating my graduation, our daughter's birthday, and the new opportunities that would come to us, but nothing went as planned.

I found myself unemployed shortly after completing my degree and had difficulty finding work. Soon, financial difficulties came. Just having a simple birthday celebration would be difficult.

After many conversations with my wife, we accepted our situation. It was not easy for me as a father not to have the ability to buy even a simple present for my daughter and to see my beloved wife feeling frustrated.

I didn't understand what was happening. I prayed and asked Heavenly Father to help me understand what He expected of me. Suddenly, as if a voice spoke to my mind, I heard the following words: "You possess something more valuable than any material possession on this earth. You hold the priesthood. What better gift could you give your daughter than a priesthood blessing?"

Tears filled my eyes as I thought about what

*As if a voice spoke to my mind, I heard: "You possess something more valuable than any material possession on this earth."*

the priesthood means to me. My heart filled with gratitude when I considered that the priesthood is the power that can unite my family for all eternity.

I shared my feelings with my wife. I told her that offering a blessing to our daughter was all I could give. We both decided that this would bring happiness and peace to her, and that would be enough.

On the day of our daughter's birthday, friends, relatives, and neighbors brought a cake and simple decorations. We were grateful to celebrate this special day with those we love.

That night, I placed my hands on my daughter's head and gave her a blessing. I blessed her with all that the Spirit of the Lord prompted me to say.

We are still going through a period of changes and challenges regarding unemployment and finances. But even in the midst of sadness and frustration, peace and comfort comes to us through our Savior, Jesus Christ. I have no doubt that being a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with access to priesthood power is a blessing. It was all I could give on my daughter's birthday, and it was more than enough. ■

Jonathan Mafra Sena de Santana,  
Santa Catarina, Brazil

### BONUS ARTICLE

Read an additional "Latter-day Saint Voices" article in the digital version of this issue in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).



# A Little Bird Reminded Me

I was 26 when my husband and I lost our first child. Kennedy was diagnosed with a brain tumor when she was only 13 months old. After three surgeries, five rounds of chemotherapy, and many medications and treatments, she passed away in our arms at 20 months old.

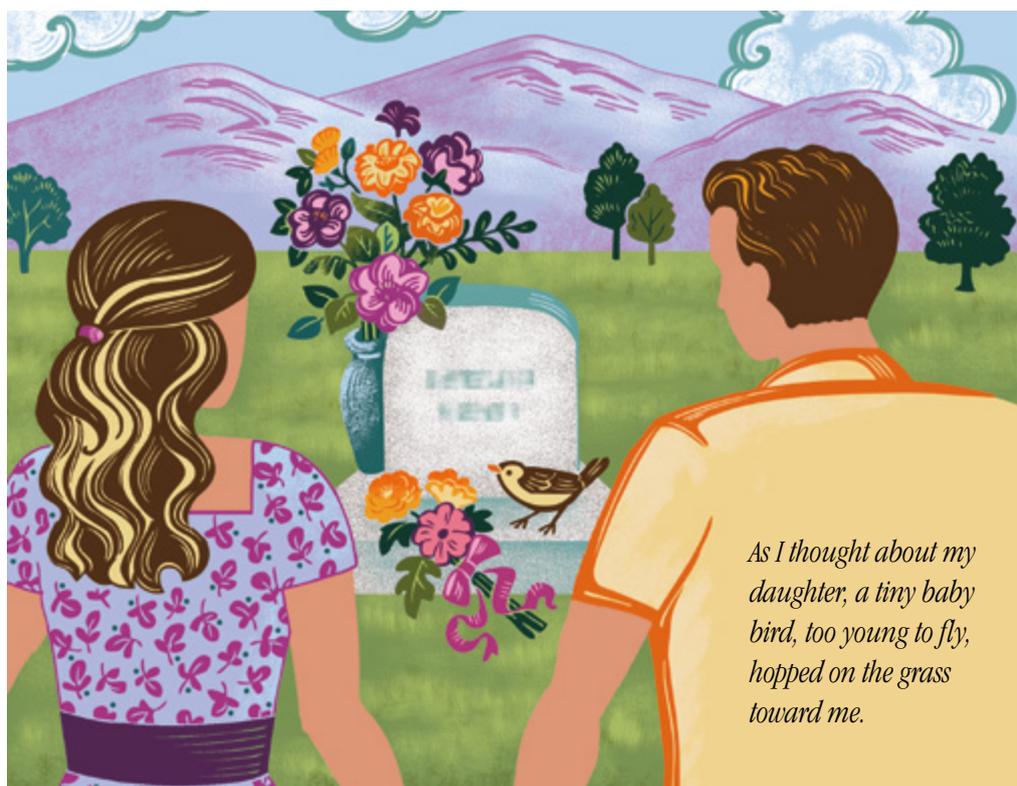
I was devastated to lose my beautiful, curious, and energetic little girl. How could this happen? How could I move on? I had so many questions, but I didn't have any answers. A couple of days after the funeral, my husband and I visited the gravesite, still covered with beautiful pink flowers and ribbons from the funeral.

As I thought about my daughter, I saw a tiny baby bird, too young to fly, hopping on the grass. This bird reminded me of Kennedy because she loved animals. The bird hopped over to the grave and played in the ribbons and flowers. I smiled, knowing this is exactly what Kennedy would have wanted. The bird then hopped toward me. I didn't dare move a muscle. The little bird hopped right next to me, leaned against my leg, closed its eyes, and fell asleep.

I can hardly explain the feelings I had in that moment. I felt as if I was getting a hug from my Kennedy. I could not hold my daughter, but this

little bird—a creation of our Father in Heaven—could come and rest its tiny head on me, reminding me that Heavenly Father understood my pain

perhaps we are so totally alone, truly we are blessed by the tender mercies of the Lord” (“The Tender Mercies of the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 100).



*As I thought about my daughter, a tiny baby bird, too young to fly, hopped on the grass toward me.*

and would always be there to comfort me and help me through this trial.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “When words cannot provide the solace we need . . . , when logic and reason cannot yield adequate understanding about the injustices and inequities of life, . . . and when it seems that

I still didn't have all the answers to my questions, but this tender mercy reassured me that Kennedy and I are both loved by our Heavenly Father and that through the atoning sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, I have the hope that Kennedy, my husband, and I will one day be together again as a family. ■  
Laura Linton, Utah, USA

## More Precious Than a Silver Bracelet



*One morning, I realized that my silver bracelet was missing. My heart was heavy because this bracelet was precious to me.*

When I was asked to lead a discussion in Relief Society on the Savior's invitation to feed His sheep, I decided that if I wanted to motivate the sisters, I should do something for one of His sheep.

I gathered up my courage and invited a less-active sister to come to a Relief Society activity with me. She accepted my invitation and we had an enjoyable time. I felt that this was a good example, and I was eager to share my experience. But the Lord had more to teach me.

One morning while getting dressed, I realized that my silver bracelet was missing. This bracelet was given to me as a birthday present while I was visiting France, so it has special meaning to me. I began

searching for it in the most likely places, but I couldn't find it. I then told myself that if I just prayed, I would be able to find my bracelet quickly.

After I prayed, I looked everywhere. For two days I prayed intently and searched intensely. I pled with Heavenly Father to help me find it, but I still couldn't find it. My heart was heavy because this bracelet was precious to me.

One evening my son prayed with me at my bedside. After our prayer, he picked something up and handed it to me. It was my bracelet! He had found it under the bed. I somehow must have missed it in my search. I cried for joy to have it back again.

Suddenly, an impression came to me: "Do you pray just as earnestly for your sisters in the Church? Are they as precious to you as your bracelet? What about your sisters outside the Church? Do you also pray for them?"

When I shared my experience with my missing bracelet in Relief Society, we had a beautiful discussion. I told the sisters that I had learned that when the Savior asks us to feed His sheep, we must remember that "the worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (Doctrine and Covenants 18:10). He wants us to be mindful of those around us and to love, care, and pray with all our energy for them. As we do so, we will find that everyone is far more precious than a silver bracelet. ■  
Sylvie Houmeau, Quebec, Canada

# “See What a Little Faith Can Do?”

*We stumbled down the trail as the storm raced toward us.*

*“Let’s say a prayer,” our youngest son said.*

Some time ago, my wife and I took our two youngest sons to France to tour the areas I had served in as a full-time missionary. We visited branches of the Church I had served in and rejoiced with members I had taught. We also visited historical sites.

One site was the ruins of the Château de Châluçet. This massive medieval castle was attacked and largely destroyed centuries ago. Vegetation had grown all around the ruins, and the trail to get there was narrow and steep. We had a difficult climb, but it was worth the effort once we arrived.

The boys loved climbing down into what was once the dungeon and high up on what little was left of the castle walls. The castle captivated their imaginations just as it had captivated mine 24 years earlier.

While we were there, a summer storm appeared in the distance. It moved in fast. Dark clouds and lightning filled the sky, followed by great claps of thunder.

We scrambled down the trail and made a run for the car as the storm raced toward us. Soon, torrential, pounding rain drenched us and the dirt trail turned to mud. We worried that we would lose our footing and fall down the steep, rocky trail.

We spotted some shelter among the trees on the edge of the path. We huddled together under the shelter and wondered how long we would have to wait to get back down.

“Let’s say a prayer,” our youngest son said.

He asked to offer it and prayed that the rain would stop so we could get down the hill safely. He looked at us and said, “Now all we need is enough faith.”

I explained that prayers don’t always work like that.

“No,” he said, “it’ll stop in 10 minutes!”

After about 10 minutes, the rain stopped.

“OK, let’s go!” he said.

“If we leave now, the rain will start again and we’ll be trapped,” our older son said.

“It won’t!” our youngest replied. “Let’s go!”

We made our way through the drier parts of the path, holding back bushes and branches as we went. Back at the car, we offered a prayer of gratitude. Soon the rain started again.

“See what a little faith can do?” our son said humbly.

He taught us all a great lesson that day. ■

Godfrey J. Ellis, Washington, USA



# Young Adults

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By Emma and Jacob Roberts

## We Can Spread the Light of the Gospel

**Y**oung adulthood is a time for growth, opportunities, and a chance to begin building your life. And that can be overwhelming, exciting, and scary all at the same time (it definitely has been for us).

But while we may not know the answers to all of life's questions, there is one thing we are certain of—that **young adults have always been a crucial force in the ongoing Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ.**

In planning this section, we spoke with many young adults about their participation in gathering Israel. And we have been humbled by their sincere dedication to the gospel of Jesus Christ. These **young Saints understand the vital role they have in this final dispensation.** On page 70, you can read how young adults are preparing the world for the Savior's Second Coming. And on page 76, you can find comfort in realizing you can figure out how to organize the "chaos" in your life one step at a time.

In digital-only articles, young adults give insight on their experiences with temple service, leadership, following the prophet's counsel, ministering, family history, missionary work, and realizing the power of our limitless potential.

Whatever your circumstances may be, **you can make more of a difference in the gathering of Israel than you might think.** As young adults, we are the future leaders of this Church. And the spark of our efforts today will ignite and spread the light of the gospel throughout the world tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Chakell Wardleigh and Mindy Selu

Church Magazines Young Adult Section Editors

Find these articles and more at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or in **YA Weekly** (under the Young Adults section in the Gospel Library app).



PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT THE CONFERENCE CENTER DURING APRIL 2013 GENERAL CONFERENCE BY WESTON C. COLTON

# How Young Adults Are Making a Difference in the Ongoing Restoration

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Young adults have always had an important role in the work of salvation.

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**W**henever you hear an invitation by a Church leader to participate in the ongoing Restoration or to help gather Israel, do you ever think, “What can I do? I’m just one person,” “I’m too young,” “I’m not married yet,” or “I don’t know enough. What difference could I make?”

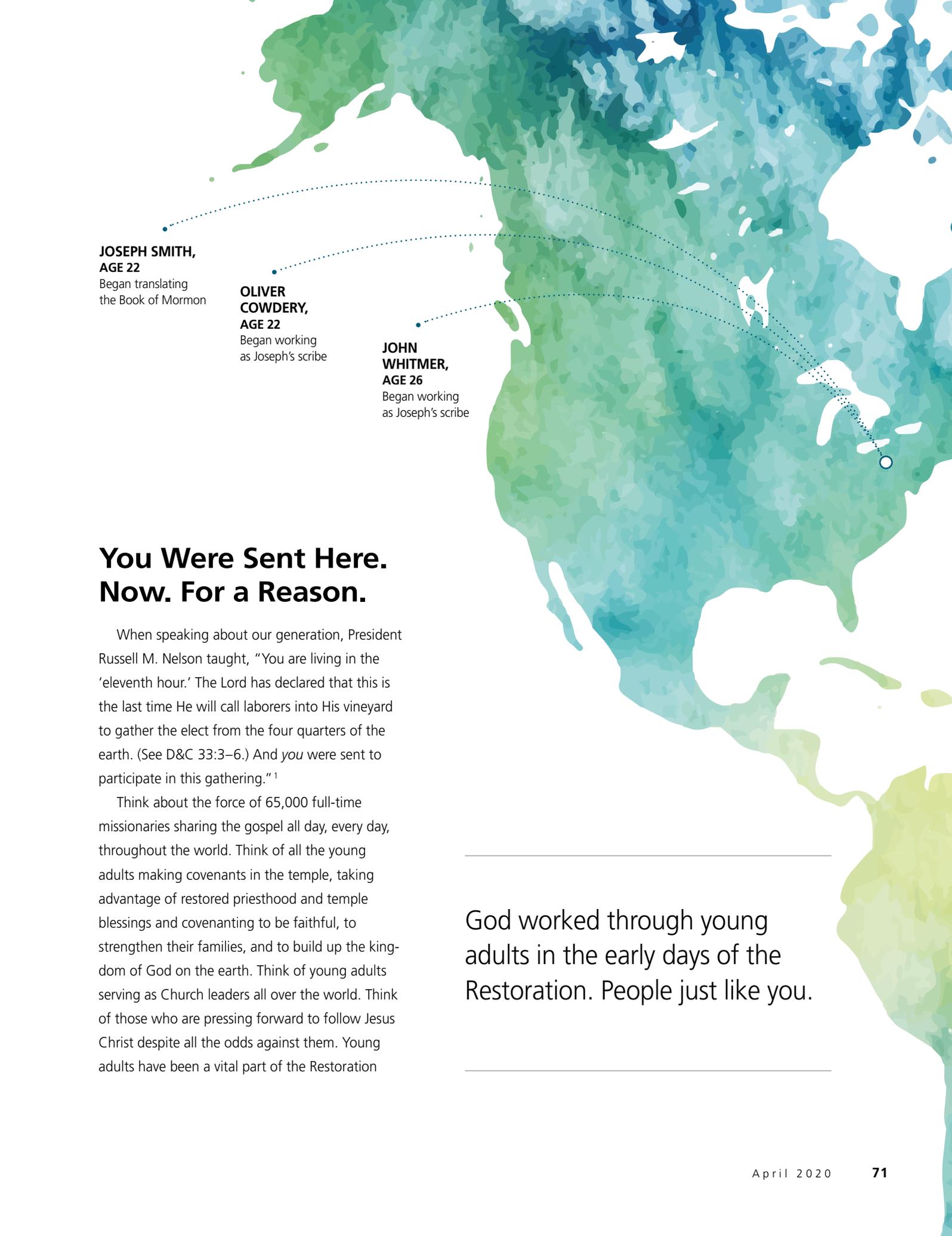
Each of us has those kinds of thoughts cross our minds from time to time. But try to silence that self-doubt as you read the next few sentences:

- Joseph Smith was only 22 years old when he began translating the Book of Mormon.
- Oliver Cowdery was also 22 and John Whitmer was 26 (and both of them were single!) when they started working as Joseph’s scribes.
- In 1835, when the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was called, they ranged in age from 23 to 35.
- Many of the early Saints who joined the Church and spread the gospel were young adults.

All in all, God worked through young adults in the early days of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. People just like you.

Let that sink in.

The Church would not be spread throughout the earth today if everyone thought they couldn’t make a difference. And you—yes, you!—are part of a chosen generation to continue restoring and leading the Church of Jesus Christ today.



**JOSEPH SMITH,  
AGE 22**  
Began translating  
the Book of Mormon

**OLIVER  
COWDERY,  
AGE 22**  
Began working  
as Joseph's scribe

**JOHN  
WHITMER,  
AGE 26**  
Began working  
as Joseph's scribe

## You Were Sent Here. Now. For a Reason.

When speaking about our generation, President Russell M. Nelson taught, “You are living in the ‘eleventh hour.’ The Lord has declared that this is the last time He will call laborers into His vineyard to gather the elect from the four quarters of the earth. (See D&C 33:3–6.) And *you* were sent to participate in this gathering.”<sup>1</sup>

Think about the force of 65,000 full-time missionaries sharing the gospel all day, every day, throughout the world. Think of all the young adults making covenants in the temple, taking advantage of restored priesthood and temple blessings and covenanting to be faithful, to strengthen their families, and to build up the kingdom of God on the earth. Think of young adults serving as Church leaders all over the world. Think of those who are pressing forward to follow Jesus Christ despite all the odds against them. Young adults have been a vital part of the Restoration

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God worked through young  
adults in the early days of the  
Restoration. People just like you.

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The Restoration is about seeking revelation.

**VENNELA VAKAPALLI,**  
AGE 22, INDIA

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from the beginning. And the ongoing Restoration has been a vital part of the lives of countless young adult members of the Church.

## What the Restoration Means to Us

For many of us, our participation in the Restoration stems from what it has taught us. For Vennela Vakapalli, a young adult convert from Andhra Pradesh, India, “the Restoration is about seeking revelation. Joseph Smith sought revelation in the woods. He counseled with the Lord, he waited for the answer, he was patient. That’s what I love.” Vennela explains, “Before I heard about the Restoration, I did not know much about seeking revelation. One of the greatest things that amazes me is how much he spent his time to obtain revelation from God. That’s what I learned from the Restoration.”

Emma and Jacob Roberts, a young couple from Utah, USA, agree that the Restoration is

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So much knowledge that comes with the Restoration makes my life easier and less stressful.



**JACOB ROBERTS,**  
AGE 29, UNITED STATES

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about “ongoing revelation”—for ourselves and for the world—“that we can have a prophet, a spokesman here on earth from God, making sure whatever challenges the world brings, we have somebody who is working and praying and conversing with God to make sure that we are prepared and able to face whatever challenges the world brings as it changes.”

“So much knowledge that comes with the Restoration makes my life easier and less stressful,” says Jacob. It all comes with a surety “that there is a God who loves us and watches over us,” Emma says. “His intent is our happiness. As young adults, we can totally trust and follow Him because we know His goal is our happiness. We know that we are eternal beings, and that gives me a lot of hope and faith, that whatever I do now and whatever mistakes I make now, I can still repent and I have this time to progress and learn.”

That type of reassurance also helped Ramona Morris, a young adult from Barbados, when she first learned about the Restoration. Among other things, she gained a testimony that “Heavenly Father is there for us. The Restoration just brings



The Restoration brings peace to those who question their life and God’s plan for them.

**RAMONA MORRIS,  
AGE 28, BARBADOS**

peace to those who question their life and question God’s plan for them.”

But even though understanding the Restoration has brought clarity in her life, she also admits that “being so far away from Church headquarters, it’s hard to connect with the gospel, but because I’ve had a strong testimony of the restored gospel, I know that as far away as I am, I can still feel like a part of the Restoration, that I’m not alone.”

And she isn’t. Young adults around the world are participating in the Restoration through temple service, family history, and missionary work. With the understanding of personal revelation that we gain from learning about Joseph Smith’s First Vision and the Restoration, we can all continue to seek to know God’s will and what part we can play in the ongoing Restoration.

## Young Adults Leading the Church

We might be young adults, but we can be leaders in the Church now. Despite being the only member of the Church in her family, Janka Toronyi from Győr, Hungary, is strengthened by her fellow young adults’ participation in other aspects of the Restoration: “A bunch of my friends have gone on missions, and it’s been so great to see their progress and then they return and they grow up so much through all their experiences. It’s a great experience for all of us. And it’s always marvelous to see my young single adult friends serve in their callings and sometimes even opportunities they make themselves, like volunteering to be counselors at FSJ (For the Strength of Youth) conferences. I feel like the Restoration isn’t always about teaching people about the gospel—it’s about strengthening the members that we have.”

The Restoration is about strengthening the members that we have.

**JANKA TORONYI,  
AGE 24, HUNGARY**



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For me, participating in the Restoration is helping future generations understand how the gospel can help them and others in their lives.

**STEFANY JOSEPH,**  
AGE 28, AUSTRALIA

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The young adults in Hungary understand that they are the future leaders of the Church. “We are needed and we need to measure up to the task, which is sometimes overwhelming,” Janka admits. “The Lord is hastening the work and we are part of it. Sometimes we think, ‘How am I supposed to do this?’ But it’s great to see that our leaders have so much trust in us. It is motivating for those who do love the Church and have a strong testimony, because we know that one day we are going to be responsible. We have to take responsibility for our own spiritual progression.”

Sean and Stefany Joseph from Western Australia participate in the Restoration by mentoring the youth in their ward. “For me, participating in the Restoration is helping future generations understand what the gospel is and how it can help them and others in their lives,” Stefany says. “We can help create a stronger foundation for the Church in our country later on.”

“We want to help the youth get a testimony of the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith and realize that they are actually children of God for themselves,” Sean explains. “We don’t want it to be something they just sang about in Primary—we want them to actually know it’s true.”

As for Vennela, living the gospel in India isn’t always easy, but she knows the strength of the young adult members there will inspire others and help the Restoration progress. “Here, all the young adults are very faithful. They look for opportunities to share their testimonies,” she says. “We are like pioneers in India. We move from different places and some of us even leave our families. Life can be challenging here, but we still choose to live the gospel. The scriptures give me a lot of hope, strength, and courage.”

No matter where we are, as young adults, we can continue to have a powerful influence on the ongoing Restoration through our faith and commitment to the gospel.

## The Future of the Church: It's Up to Us

We are the future of the Church. We are in the final battle. Heavenly Father depends on us to help Him do His work—His eternally life-changing work. He knows we are strong enough to keep pressing forward and fighting against everything the adversary has up his sleeve. And Satan is getting desperate. He knows he's fighting a losing battle because the Lord's work will prevail.

"We know that the Lord is hastening the work and nobody can stop that," Janka says. "We know it's going to happen no matter what. But we have to decide if we are going to be part of it and help it forward or watch from the sidelines. We have the agency to be a part of it, and we have the testimony to be able to choose right and choose to follow Christ. We have to be a part of it."

So it's up to us to choose whose side we are on.

It's up to us to have courage to stand up for what we believe in.

It's up to us to seek personal revelation for our lives.

It's up to us to allow the difficult challenges we face to strengthen our faith in the Savior.

It's up to us to follow Him and do all we can to bring others unto Him.

It's up to us to endure to the end in the best way we can.

We really are in the last days. And leading the Church in what President Nelson calls the "most compelling dispensation in the history of the world"<sup>2</sup> sounds like a really daunting responsibility. But think about it—Heavenly Father trusted us enough and reserved us to be on this earth at this specific point in time, this time when we are faced with countless temptations and distractions and so many opposing opinions.

By sending us here in the most pivotal dispensation, Heavenly Father wasn't setting us up for failure. He knows our potential, our strength, our courage, and ultimately, He knows we can make a difference in the Restoration of the Church, regardless of our age or marital status. No matter how impossible our trials, or how impossible leading and sharing the gospel across the earth may seem, with Him on our side, who can possibly fight against us? He will help us accomplish the impossible. ■

### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Stand as True Millennials," *Ensign*, Oct. 2016, 26.
2. Russell M. Nelson, "Stand as True Millennials," *Ensign*, 24.

*You can find more stories of young adults from around the world participating in the Restoration in the digital-only article "Finding Joy in Doing the Lord's Work."*





# When You Have No Idea What You're Doing

**By Chakell Wardleigh**  
Church Magazines

“I have no idea what I'm doing.”

If you ever say this to yourself, then we have a lot in common!

To me, being a young adult feels like I'm constantly being flung headfirst into a tangled web of decisions, mistakes, financial stress, success, growth, failure, anxiety, joy, family matters, opportunities, and honestly, just plain confusion—along with nausea at times when these hit me all at once. Perhaps you can relate.

Figuring everything out in our lives can seem impossible when we're surrounded by chaos. But hold on to this truth: every beautiful creation in this universe began with a state of chaos, or unorganized matter. Chaos that eventually became organized and put into order through the power of God (see Genesis 1). And this is the point in time when we are beginning to organize our chaotic lives to create the kind of life we want to have—hopefully a life of service, discipleship, and joy. Here are a few tips that can help us create something beautiful out of the mess.

## Realize who you truly are

This is your first step—realizing your importance and your true identity,<sup>1</sup> because the world makes it really easy to forget who you truly are.

You are a child of God.

It's the only label that truly matters. You were sent to earth during this specific moment in time. The final dispensation. Do you realize how significant that is? Think about it. God reserved you for one of the most tempestuous times the world has ever known. He knows you are strong enough to withstand the temptations of the world. He knows you and your capacity for good.

Unfortunately, Satan also knows how strong our generation is. So he's desperately throwing his last attacks to drag us down (see Helaman 5:12). But remember, no matter the challenges you might face, adversity can help you grow closer to the Savior and find healing through His Atonement when you seek His help—which in turn can help you progress to become even more than you are now (see 2 Corinthians 5:17–18).

So, if you're ever feeling a little lost in this time of life, it's normal! You're a spiritual being having a

mortal experience. This is something you've never done before—it's no wonder everything is confusing at times. Have patience with yourself. With Heavenly Father's help, you can fully realize your eternal identity, your worth, your plan, and what this means for you in your journey to beautify and organize the chaos.

## Embrace what makes you, you

You've been blessed with individual spiritual gifts and qualities (see Doctrine and Covenants 46:11–12) to help you not only progress on your personal journey but also lead others to the truth. You are uniquely set apart from everyone else because you have your own special brand of pizzazz only you can offer the world! And your pizzazz can come in many different forms.

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## Hold on to this truth: every beautiful creation in this universe began with a state of chaos.

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Perhaps you're a natural-born leader; or maybe you're musically inclined; or it could be you have the gift of being a good listener or showing compassion to others.

You're here at this time for a reason. Reading your patriarchal blessing is one key to unlock your understanding of your individual strengths and discover how they can help you throughout your life. And if you put in effort and faith, the Lord can help you tap into your strengths, develop even more gifts and qualities, create power from your weaknesses (see Ether 12:27), and ultimately succeed in creating something beautiful.

## Know you can find answers

When trying to figure out young adulthood, the questions you have seem to triple in number. And when answers aren't coming, it can feel like everything you're trying to build and put into order might collapse at any moment.

While speaking specifically to young adults, President Russell M. Nelson taught:

"At this very moment some of you are struggling to know what you should be doing with your life. Others of you may wonder if you have been forgiven of your sins. . . .

"Some may question why the Church does some of the things it does. . . .

"Our Heavenly Father and His Son stand ready to respond to your questions through the ministering of the Holy Ghost. But it is up to you to learn how to qualify for and receive those answers."<sup>2</sup>

President Nelson went on to say that we can receive answers to our most pressing questions and find strength to keep moving forward through prayer, asking Heavenly Father for the gift of discernment, serving others, and spending more time with the Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

- **Pray.** For me, Satan can twist the simplicity of prayer into something that's hard to do. But prayer is as easy as sending a text (and more fulfilling)—and praying to Heavenly Father is something we should be doing just as often as texting. When we pray with real intent and with a sincere heart (see Moroni 10:4), we can pray for help, for strength, for direction, for comfort, and to know what changes to make in our lives.
- **Plead with Heavenly Father for the gift of discernment.** This spiritual gift in particular is one we all need and should strive to be worthy of receiving. Discernment will allow you to know clearly good from evil and right from wrong without question.



- **Serve others.** When in doubt, serve. Serving with love opens the door to receiving personal revelation and brings us closer to the Savior.
- **Seek to have the companionship of the Spirit.** Surround yourself with friends who have the Spirit with them, read your scriptures more often, and spend more time in holy places like the temple and Church meetings. When I'm inviting the Spirit into my life, I always feel more peace—even in the storm of uncertainty.

And through it all, there's one other thing that is vital: patience. When you're doing your best to follow Jesus Christ, know that you will find answers in Heavenly Father's perfect timing. These are the two truths I always hold on to: everything will be revealed one day (see Doctrine and Covenants 101:32–33), and many answers don't come until after your faith has been tested (see Ether 12:6). Just hold on. You will find your way.



## Seek to have an eternal perspective

When life feels like a lot to handle, remember what Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“Sometimes our lives are like neo-impressionistic art. The dots of color that make up the moments and events of our days can appear unconnected and chaotic at times. We can’t see any order to them. We can’t imagine that they have a purpose at all.

“However, when we step back and take an eternal perspective, when we look at our lives in the frame of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can begin to see how the various dots in our lives interconnect. We may not be able to see the entire picture just yet, but with patience we can see enough to trust that there is a beautiful, grand design.

And as we strive to trust God and follow His Son, Jesus Christ, one day we will see the finished product, and we will know that the very hand of God was directing and guiding our steps.”<sup>4</sup>

So, when I’m trapped in that jumbled mess of dots, I take comfort in knowing that through what looks like chaos, I’m creating a beautiful masterpiece with Heavenly Father’s help.

## Keep going

Regardless of where you are in life—whether you’re going to school, figuring out parenthood, or in any other circumstances—just remember you don’t have to have everything figured out right now. Yes, there’s going to be a lot of trial and error. There will be times when we temporarily forget who we truly are. There will be moments when we have to readjust plans or change our perspectives. But instead of wallowing in confusion and chaos, let’s use this crazy time of young adulthood to learn, grow, and start creating something beautiful. We won’t always know exactly what we’re doing, and that’s OK. Heavenly Father knows—He can see the masterpieces we are currently creating. With Him, we can accomplish all we’re meant to do, and everything will come together in a beautiful design in the end. ■

### NOTES

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Stand as True Millennials,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2016, 26–27.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Stand as True Millennials,” 28, 29.
3. See Russell M. Nelson, “Stand as True Millennials,” 29.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Your Adventure through Mortality,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2019, 19.

*Chakell Wardleigh is a writer for the Ensign. You can usually find her smelling flowers, taking a long time to tell stories because she keeps getting sidetracked, getting sucked into books and podcasts, or being distracted by cute dogs. In fact, she’s just easily distracted by the beautiful things in life.*

# INSIGHTS

from YOUNG ADULTS

## *on the Restoration of the Church*



“I’ve come to realize that **it is an ongoing process** and there’s still more to be restored!”

—Ashlin Eddington, California, USA

“Our goal should be to **prepare ourselves** for the Savior’s Second Coming.”

—Kevin Bergmann, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

“The ongoing Restoration means that **God still speaks to His children**. He lives and is active in these days, not absent. He is mindful of us, and the prophet would have us as young adults know that He loves us. So be an example and show that love to others. Be patient and kind and reach out to help others find the greater peace, happiness, and purpose found in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.”

—Parker Smith, Oregon, USA

## from CHURCH LEADERS

“When our time in mortality is complete, what experiences will we be able to share about our own contribution to this significant period of our lives and to the furthering of the Lord’s work? Will we be able to say that we rolled up our sleeves and labored with all our heart, might, mind, and strength? Or will we have to admit that our role was mostly that of an observer?”

**Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Are You Sleeping through the Restoration?” *Ensign*, May 2014, 59.**

### SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS

How can **people who have been affected by addiction find hope and healing?**

Send us your response at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) by April 30, 2020.

# Come, Follow Me Shareable Scriptures

Download these picture quotes from April's *Come, Follow Me* readings and share them on social media—or send them to those you minister to, your Sunday School class, or your family: [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42081](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42081).

MARCH 30–APRIL 12

APRIL 13–19



APRIL 20–26

APRIL 27–MAY 3

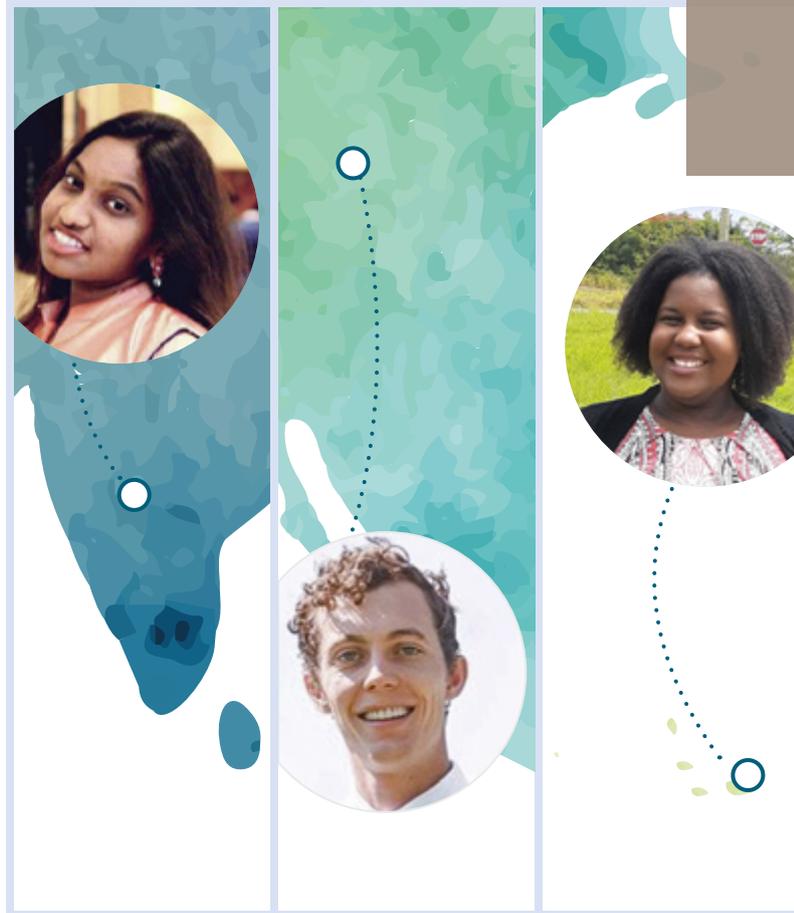


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