

# 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?”

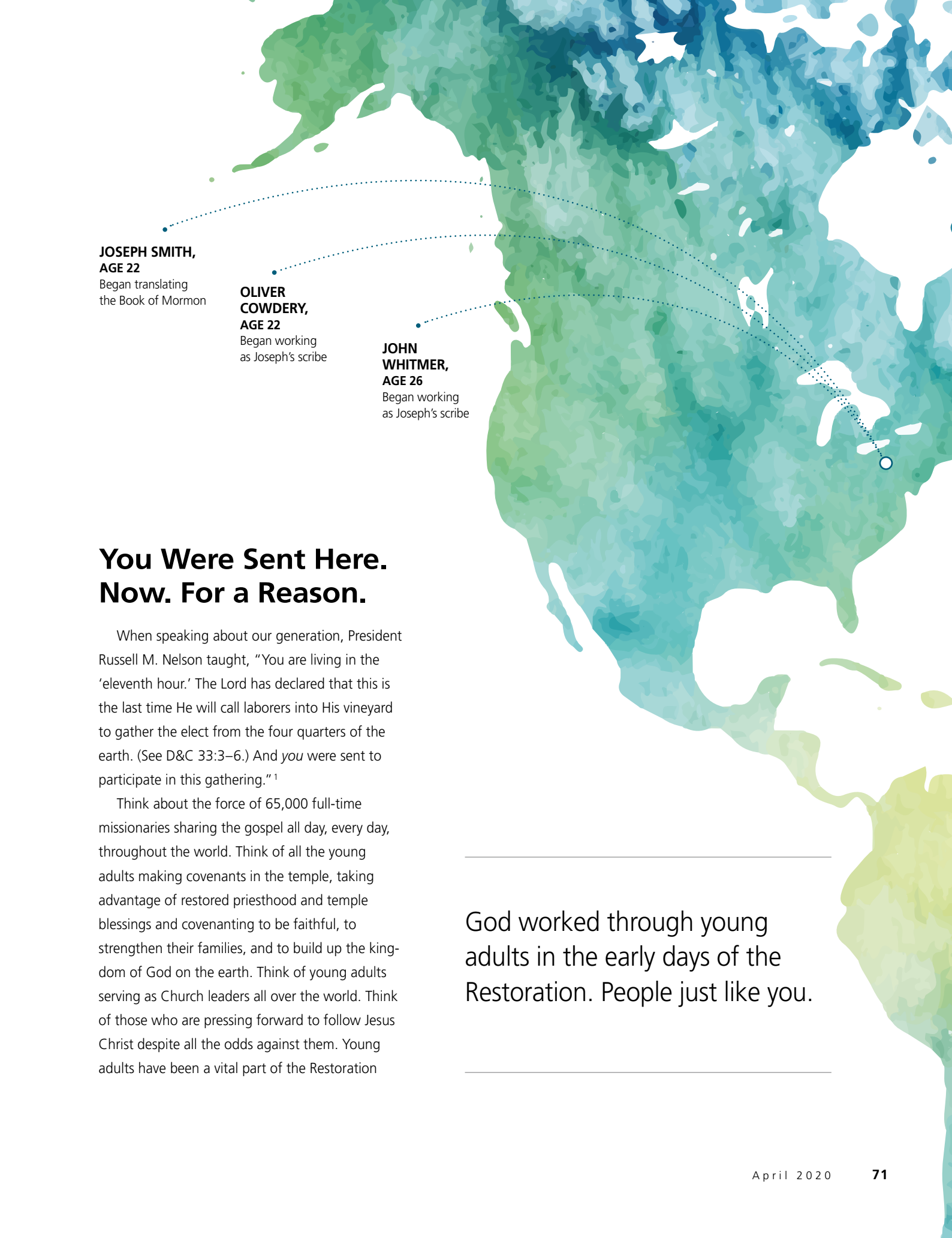
Each of us has those kinds of thoughts cross our minds from time to time. But try to silence that self-doubt as you read the next few sentences:

- 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

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**JOHN  
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## 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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The Restoration is about seeking revelation.

**VENNELA VAKAPALLI,**  
AGE 22, INDIA

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

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



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

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.”

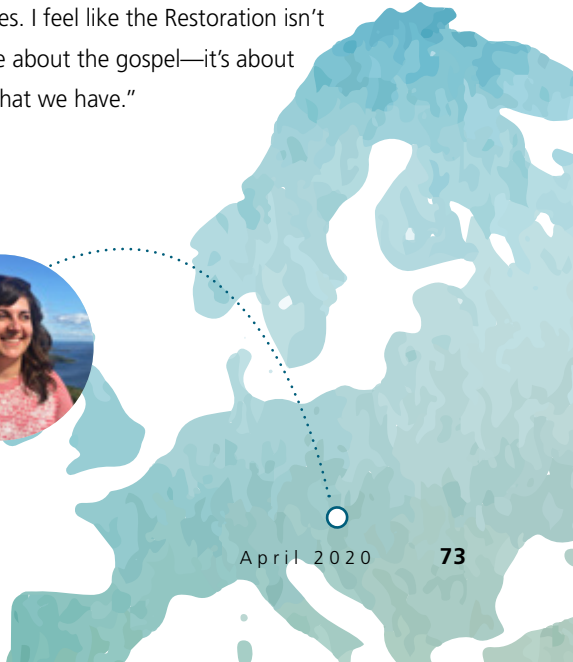
And she isn’t. Young adults around the world are participating in the Restoration through temple service, family history, and missionary work. With the understanding of personal revelation that we gain from learning about Joseph Smith’s First Vision and the Restoration, we can all continue to seek to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

