

ABOUT THEIR FATHER'S BUSINESS



“They were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who



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Jesus was 12 years old when he traveled with his parents to Jerusalem. On the way back to Nazareth, Joseph and Mary noticed that Jesus was not “among his kindred and acquaintance.” They returned to Jerusalem, and “after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, and they were hearing him, and asking him questions” (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 2:44–46).

Asked about His absence, Jesus answered, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” He truly had been about the work of His Father. Upon His return to Nazareth, we learn that He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:49, 52).

Many of our Aaronic Priesthood young men today are also committed to their “Father’s business.” They are becoming favored of the Lord through studying the scriptures, living the commandments, and preparing themselves to be worthy of the temple and of missions.

The Book of Mormon teaches us of other young men who were favored of the Lord because of their faith and obedience (see Alma 56:19). These were Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors.

were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

“Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him” (Alma 53:20–21).

The parents of these young men, known as Anti-Nephi-Lehies or the people of Ammon (see Alma 23:16–17; 27:26), had covenanted with God to lay down their weapons of war. But their sons felt an urgency and responsibility to defend their families and freedom (see Alma 53:16–18). Like Jesus, they increased in favor with the Lord because of their faith and obedience.

They “were firm and undaunted. Yea, and they did obey and observe to perform every word of command with exactness; yea, and even according to their faith it was done unto them” (Alma 57:20–21).

Reflecting on the protection they received in battle, Helaman declared, “We do justly ascribe it to the miraculous power of God, because of their exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe” (Alma 57:26).

As mothers and fathers in Zion, we also have a responsibility to teach our children to believe,

Our children will increase “in favour with God and man” if we teach them to be obedient and “to walk uprightly” before the Lord.



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obey, and prepare to make and keep sacred covenants (see D&C 68:25). We would do well to remember Lehi's counsel to his children: "I know that if ye are brought up in the way ye should go ye will not depart from it" (2 Nephi 4:5).

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) taught: "Teaching is done by precept and example, and by word and deed. A good model is the best teacher. Therefore, a father's [and mother's] first responsibility is to set the proper example."¹ In a worldwide leadership training meeting, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, quoting President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), said, "Never let your faith be difficult to detect."² As parents and grandparents, we need to strive to make our faith and testimony easy for our children to detect! Elder Holland added, "Parents have to seize the teaching moment because it may not come again."³

My father taught and lived the principles of the gospel. I have been blessed throughout my life by his faith and example. He taught me eternal principles along with the importance of work and responsibility as I grew up working in our small family business and on our farm.

After high school I was preparing to leave home to attend college. I was eager to find employment so I could finance

my college expenses, but I became anxious when the weeks of summer began to pass and I still had no job. My father also became concerned. One day I asked him what he thought I should do to solve my problem. He suggested that we pray, fast, and make sure all of our tithes and offerings were current with the Lord.

"Let's do our part and then turn it over to the Lord," he said.

Immediately the business and farm accounts were balanced and tithing was paid. I learned a great lesson that day from my father to always "seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). My father and I were united in purpose as we offered tithes and fervent prayers together. I have never forgotten my father's wise counsel and testimony: "Just pay your tithing, and everything will work out" (see Malachi 3:7–12).

A few days later as my father was working in the family store, a man approached him and asked, "Do you know of a boy who needs a summer job? I own a construction company, and I'm looking for a good laborer." Our

prayers had been answered, and I had been taught a valuable lesson: "Just pay your tithing." Throughout my life, paying tithing has been a blessing for me and my family.

We have been richly blessed as we have continued to teach from this experience. This blessing of an answered prayer, like the blessing bestowed upon the stripling warriors, "we do justly ascribe . . . to the miraculous power of God" (Alma 57:26).

I am grateful for a father who recognized the opportunity to teach a son to act on an eternal principle. I know today, as I learned then, that our children will increase "in favour with God and man" if we teach them to be obedient and "to walk uprightly" before the Lord. ■

NOTES

1. Ezra Taft Benson, "Worthy Fathers, Worthy Sons," *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 35.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, "Teaching and Learning in the Church," *Ensign*, June 2007, 104.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, "Teaching and Learning in the Church," 98.