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Faith, Hope, and Charity: Interlacing Virtues

Though the book of Moroni in the Book of Mormon is relatively short, with only 10 chapters, it provides a great deal of wonderful counsel. Moroni and Mormon both teach valuable principles of the gospel. As Moroni is completing his father's abridgment of the Book of Mormon, he repeatedly recalls his father's teachings about the links among faith, hope, and charity. Mormon and Moroni clearly wanted to emphasize the importance of these three principles.

In my earlier studies of the Book of Mormon, I usually considered these three principles to be like building blocks. Faith would come first, then hope, and then charity. It seemed a logical progression. As our faith grows, we increase our study and knowledge, and we begin to apply the principle of hope. Faith and hope together mold us and guide us in

the paths that the Savior walked, and we start to embrace the qualities of charity.

However, in more recent studies, I have come to understand faith, hope, and charity in a different way. I now think of them more as interlacing virtues, each playing a critical part in developing and defining our testimonies.

Our daughter, Joy, likes to create animals and objects by twisting balloons together. As I watched her do this one day, I thought of how a rope is formed by twisting several strands together. This helped me visualize my newfound understanding of faith, hope, and charity as strands combining with each other to form a sturdy rope.

Faith: "Ye Shall Have Power"

Faith in Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is foundational not

As we weave together faith, hope, and charity into our daily lives, we become true followers of the Savior Jesus Christ.

only to obtaining eternal life but also to our lives on earth. "And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me" (Moroni 7:33). I have applied this power through faith many times in my life. And I have relied on faith to carry me through some difficult moments.



While studying at Brigham Young University–Hawaii, I was in a new environment and English was my second language. It was challenging, and I knew I needed academic help if I was to retain my scholarship. Without it, I would not be able to stay in school. In addition, I had made the commitment that I would not study on Sundays.

One day while I was reading in the Doctrine and Covenants, a particular verse made a big impression on me. As I read in section 109, verse 7, I came across this line: “Seek learning even by study and also by faith.” That verse became the key to my academic success. With faith and diligent study six days out of the week, I was blessed in my studies. Some in my classes wondered how I could do so well without studying on Sunday, as they did. What I learned is that learning by faith can overcome many challenges.

A similar experience occurred as I was pursuing my career in business. I was offered an excellent job opportunity, but it would have likely required me to work on Sunday. I had committed not to work on the Sabbath day. Ultimately, I had to turn down the offer. I could not compromise my commitment to keep the Sabbath day holy. As with my college commitment, I was later blessed with many other business opportunities that did not require me to compromise and that allowed me to devote Sundays to the worship of the Lord.

As we create our imaginary rope that connects us to divine blessings, let’s start with a strong strand of faith.

Hope: “To Be Raised unto Life Eternal”

We hope for many things: that we might advance in our careers; that our children will do well; that we will meet the expectations of our Church service;

that we will remain healthy; that we will have what we need to sustain life and provide for our families. But where does the highest form of hope come from, and where can it lead us?

Mormon said, “I would speak unto you that are of the church, that are the peaceable followers of Christ, and that have obtained a sufficient hope by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord” (Moroni 7:3).

As Mormon continues his invitation to us to become true followers of Christ, he once again returns to the topic of hope when he asks, “And what is it that ye shall hope for?” Then he answers this all-important question: “Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise” (Moroni 7:41).

This kind of hope is different from ordinary hope. This divine hope comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. It is eternal hope. Without such hope we would come to church each week not knowing that all these marvelous blessings are within our reach. Through Christ our hope can guide us back to our Heavenly Father and to eternal life.

In a recent general conference address, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency,



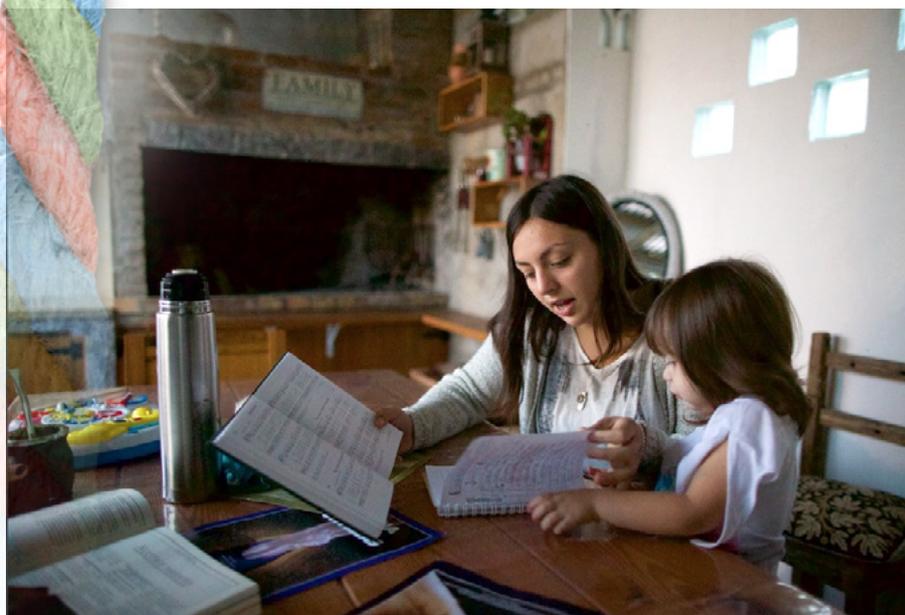
stated, “[The Father] allowed His Son to provide, by His atoning sacrifice, the hope that comforts us no matter how hard the way home to Him may be.”¹ Through hope we can see the blessings and opportunities that await us as we stay true to the gospel of Jesus Christ and serve Him with all our heart, might, mind, and strength.

With that understanding, let’s add the next strand to our rope, which is hope.

Charity: Bestowed upon True Followers

The third virtue to further strengthen our rope is charity. We begin to develop the gift of charity through our sincere efforts to emulate the Savior. However, the full measure of this gift is bestowed upon us by God as we earnestly seek it in prayer. As we follow Him who gave us life, we begin to learn the true meaning of charity, which is “the pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47).

As Mormon teaches, “Pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God” (Moroni 7:48). As *peaceable* followers, we may have obtained sufficient hope, but in order to be bestowed with charity, we need to



become *true* followers. If we are *true* followers, we will become more like Him, which is the purpose of life.

By implanting in our hearts the pure love of Christ, we are more likely to embrace the godlike attribute of charity—to serve both our fellowman and God. “If a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity” (Moroni 7:44).

We now have three essential strands of our rope. Let’s see how they work together.

All Three Work Together

“Wherefore, there must be faith; and if there must be faith there must

also be hope; and if there must be hope there must also be charity.

“And except ye have charity ye can in nowise be saved in the kingdom of God; neither can ye be saved in the kingdom of God if ye have not faith; neither can ye if ye have no hope” (Moroni 10:20–21).

When combined, faith, hope, and charity are not like building blocks for me anymore; instead they are intertwined with one another. We don’t finish building faith, and then have hope, or after having hope, finally develop charity. They all work together. And as they become interlaced, they collectively help form our characters and testimonies. ■

NOTE

1. Henry B. Eyring, “The Comforter,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 20.