

BE OF Good Cheer





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We can still find joy, even when things don't seem to be working out for us.

Ever since I was six or seven, I have loved to draw. My mother was talented that way, and she encouraged me to improve my skills. I don't have as much time now, but I still love to sketch and paint. When I'm stressed out, I look for a piece of paper so I can relax by drawing. I do it for the joy of doing it—it makes me happy to create beauty.

There is another who loves to create—our Father in Heaven. He created the perfect plan for us to be happy. His great plan of happiness allows us to come to earth from our pre-mortal life, obtain a body, use agency to make choices, walk the covenant path, and return to live with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ, eternally.

Unfortunately, sometimes we have to face hard things along the way. But we can still find joy, even when things don't seem to be working out for us. We can find happiness in our relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Remember, the Savior overcame the world for us. He invites us to be of good cheer and to live without fear, even though our crazy world is full of uncertainty, wars, rumors of wars, crime, terrorism, tragedies, and disappointments.

Fortunately, the world is also full of beautiful creations and inspiring individuals who are determined to serve, keep the commandments, and live with joy through adversity. We have temples, the priesthood, a living prophet who communicates with God, scriptures, repentance, and gratitude. And we must always remember that blessings continue to pour from heaven even when we're suffering through times that take us to our knees.

President Russell M. Nelson said, "When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives."¹

Let us take comfort in this promise from the Lord: "Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come" (Doctrine and Covenants 68:6).

Simply having fun is not lasting happiness. Living the gospel brings happiness. So does being a good neighbor, a devoted parent or child, and a valiant disciple of Christ. That is how we create living art that colors our lives for good and brings us eternal joy. ■

NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 82.