

Inspirational Thoughts



Each of you has the responsibility of standing as a witness of the everlasting truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your responsibility is to open the eyes of others “and to turn them from darkness to light.”

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Testimony

“I want to give you my testimony. I know that God our Eternal Father lives, that He is the great Governor of the universe, and that we are His children, and that somehow He hears and answers the prayers of His children. I want you to know that I know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that He left His royal home on high and came down among men—hated and abused of men—and that He went about doing good [see Acts 10:38]. He was crucified out of the hatred of the people; He rose the third day—‘the firstfruits of them that slept’ (1 Corinthians 15:20). I want you to know that the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Joseph Smith and ushered in this marvelous dispensation—the greatest dispensation in the history of the entire world” (member meeting, Seoul, South Korea, July 31, 2005).

His Sacrifice in Our Behalf

“I am so profoundly grateful for the gospel of Jesus Christ, for a testimony of the Atonement of the Savior. I believe in it with

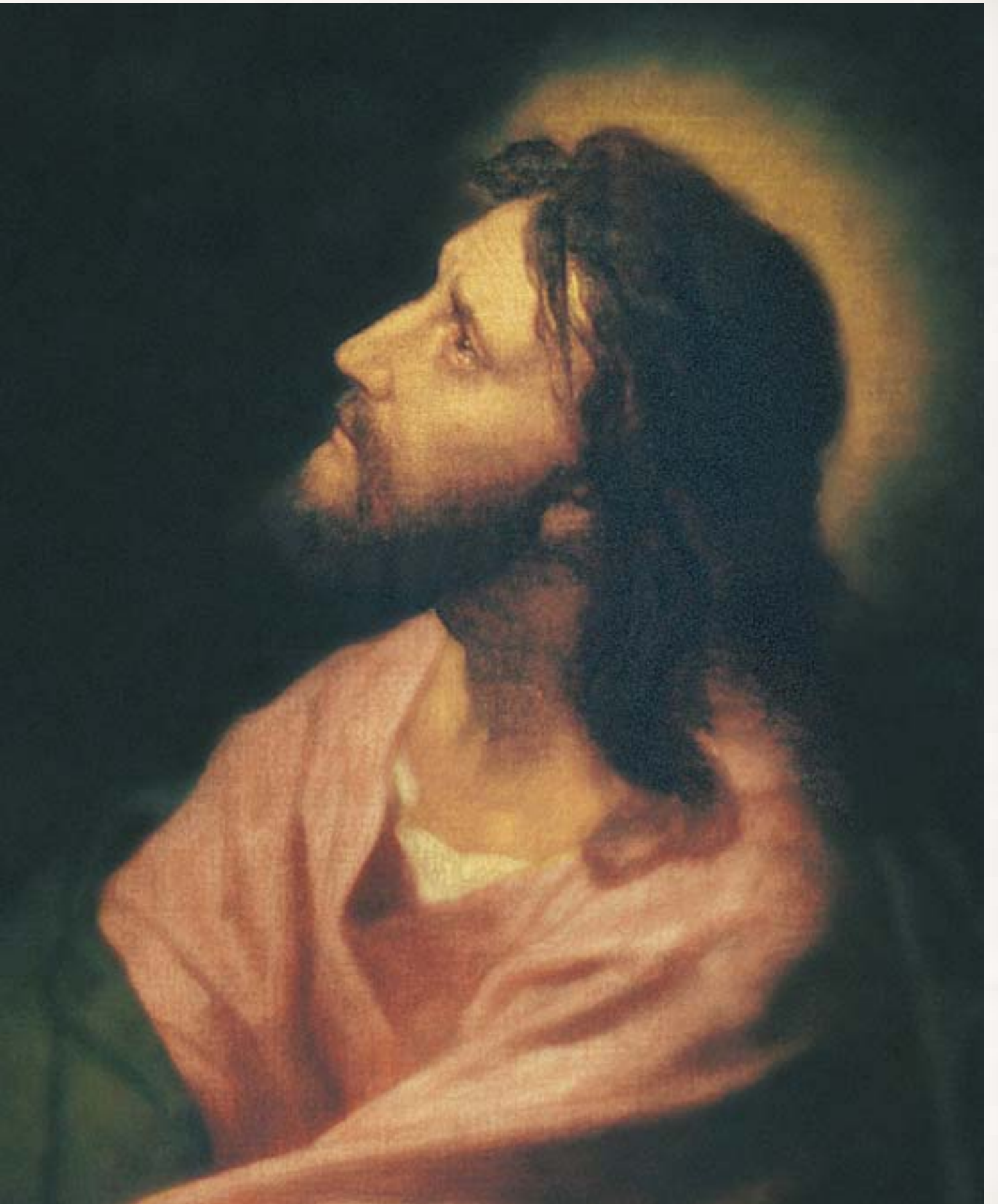
all my heart, and I live for it, and I bear witness of it this day. Of all of the events of human history, none other approaches the Atonement of the Savior in its meaning and in its results. God be thanked for the gift of His precious Son, to whom we all owe thanks for His sacrifice in our behalf” (member meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark, May 22, 2004).

Divine Mission of Jesus Christ

“We are a great family bound together in a unity of love and faith. Our blessing is great, as a people and as individuals. We carry in our hearts a firm and unshakeable conviction of the divine mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“He was the great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Creator who, under the direction of His Father, made all things, ‘and without him was not any thing made that was made’ (John 1:3). He was the promised Messiah, who came ‘with healing in his wings’ (Malachi 4:2). He was the worker of miracles, the great healer, the Resurrection and the Life. His is the only name under heaven whereby we must be saved [see Acts 4:12]. . . .

“He came as a gift of His Eternal Father. ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his



only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John 3:16).

"He condescended to leave His throne on high and come to earth to be born in a stable, in a conquered nation. He walked the dusty roads of Palestine, healing the sick, teaching the doctrine, blessing all who would accept Him. . . .

"On Calvary's hill He gave His life for each of us. That is the greatest gift that any of us can ever receive. It is the gift of the Resurrection and eternal life [see D&C 14:7].

"We honor His birth. But without His death that birth would have been but one more birth. It was the Redemption, which He worked out in the Garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary, which made His gift immortal, universal, and everlasting. His was a great atonement for the sins of all mankind. He is the Resurrection and the Life, 'the firstfruits of them that slept' (1 Corinthians 15:20). Because of Him all men will be raised from the grave.

"We love Him. We honor Him. We thank Him. We worship Him. He has done for each of us and for all mankind that which none other could have done. God be thanked for the gift of His Beloved Son—our Savior, the Redeemer of the world, the Lamb without blemish who was offered as a sacrifice for all mankind" (missionary devotional, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, Dec. 15, 2002).



W*e live in terribly complex times. Our refuge, our peace, our well-being lie in walking in the way of the Lord.*

a witness of the everlasting truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your responsibility is to open the eyes of others 'and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God'" (member meeting, Nairobi, Kenya, Aug. 4, 2005).

Our Refuge, Our Peace

"We live in terribly complex times. We are confronted by very serious problems. Some of us are faced with sickness, with economic difficulties, with worry and concern over

Stand as a Witness

"I think tonight of the great occasion when Paul describes his experience on the road to Damascus. He saw a light from heaven and heard a voice speaking unto him. And he fell to the ground and said, 'Who art thou, Lord?'

"And Jesus said, 'Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee . . . to make thee a minister and a witness . . . ,

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God' (Acts 26:15–16, 18).

"Now, I believe that same injunction given by the Lord to Paul applies to each of us. 'Rise,' He says, 'and stand upon [your] feet: for I have appeared unto thee . . . to make thee a minister and a witness.'

"Each of you has the responsibility of standing as

many matters. Our refuge, our peace, our well-being lie in walking in the way of the Lord” (Australia stake conference satellite broadcast, Feb. 12, 2005).

Worthy to Attend the Temple

“I challenge every father and husband to see that he is worthy to take his wife and children to the temple. There is nothing in all this world that will substitute for it. It is the greatest blessing that can come to any couple. Don’t put it off. If you need to repent, begin today and qualify to receive a temple recommend” (member meeting, Santiago, Chile, Mar. 11, 2006).

Example of Righteous Living

“We’re coming to be recognized as a good people, a people of kindness, of love and willingness to reach out and help and bless those all around us. Heaven is smiling upon us, and it behooves every one of us to reciprocate with the living of a righteous life and doing the will of the Lord” (stake conference, St. George, Utah, USA, Feb. 27, 2005).

Stand Taller

“We live in a world of filth and immorality and trouble. Rise above it, stand taller, leave the world behind you, and walk as the Lord would have you walk. . . .

W*e’re coming
to be
recognized
as a good people,
willing to reach out
and help.*



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY; PHOTOGRAPHS POSED BY MODELS

“We have so much to offer. Just think of what we have to offer. Other people do not understand the true nature of God. They are still bound by the old Nicene Creed of the fourth century, which I cannot understand. But we have a perfect knowledge of the nature of God that has come through the First Vision of the Prophet Joseph. He saw God.

He heard Him speak. He saw His Son. He heard Him speak, and he could speak to Them. There was no question in his mind about the true nature of God. What a tremendous thing that is. The scripture says, ‘This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent’ (John 17:3).

“That is a great and marvelous gift, which we have to give to the world—a true understanding of God. We are His children. It does not matter our nationality. It does not matter where we were born. It does not matter whether our hair is light or dark. It does not matter the shape of our eyes. Each of us is a child of God. He is the great God of the universe, but He is also our Father, to whom we may go in prayer. We know, I know, you know, that He hears and answers our prayers. . . . What a wonderful and marvelous thing that is” (member meeting, Vladivostok, Russia, July 31, 2005).

Preach the Gospel

“Go out and preach the work. The first obligation laid upon this Church, even before it was organized, was the obligation to go out and teach the gospel. That obligation has never been lifted. It has been with us ever since” (missionary meeting, Columbia, South Carolina, USA, Nov. 20, 2004).

This Last Dispensation

“How wonderful it is that [God] has smiled with favor in this the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness

THE FIRST VISION, BY GARY KAPP



of times, when He has restored His work with all of its powers, with all of its glory and all of the truth and all of the authority of all previous dispensations in this great and final period of time. . . .

“I know that God our Eternal Father lives and loves us; that Jesus is His Beloved Son, our Redeemer, our Savior, our Lord,

our Friend; that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet; that this Church is true; that it is Their work restored to the earth for our blessing and our happiness” (regional conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, May 4, 2003). ■

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples:

1. Have a family member read aloud one or two paragraphs about the Savior from each of the first three sections. Invite family members to share their feelings about the Lord, His sacrifice, and His mission. Also share your own testimony.
2. Share with family members the selections that contain a challenge from President Hinckley. Have family members listen for and identify each challenge given from the prophet. Invite the family to choose one challenge to work on together.
3. Show the family one picture from the article. Ask them what is happening in the picture, why it is important, and what we can learn from it. Read the words from President Hinckley that relate to the picture. Conclude with your testimony.