



By Elder Michael T.  
Ringwood  
Of the Seventy

# YOU CAN KNOW for Yourself

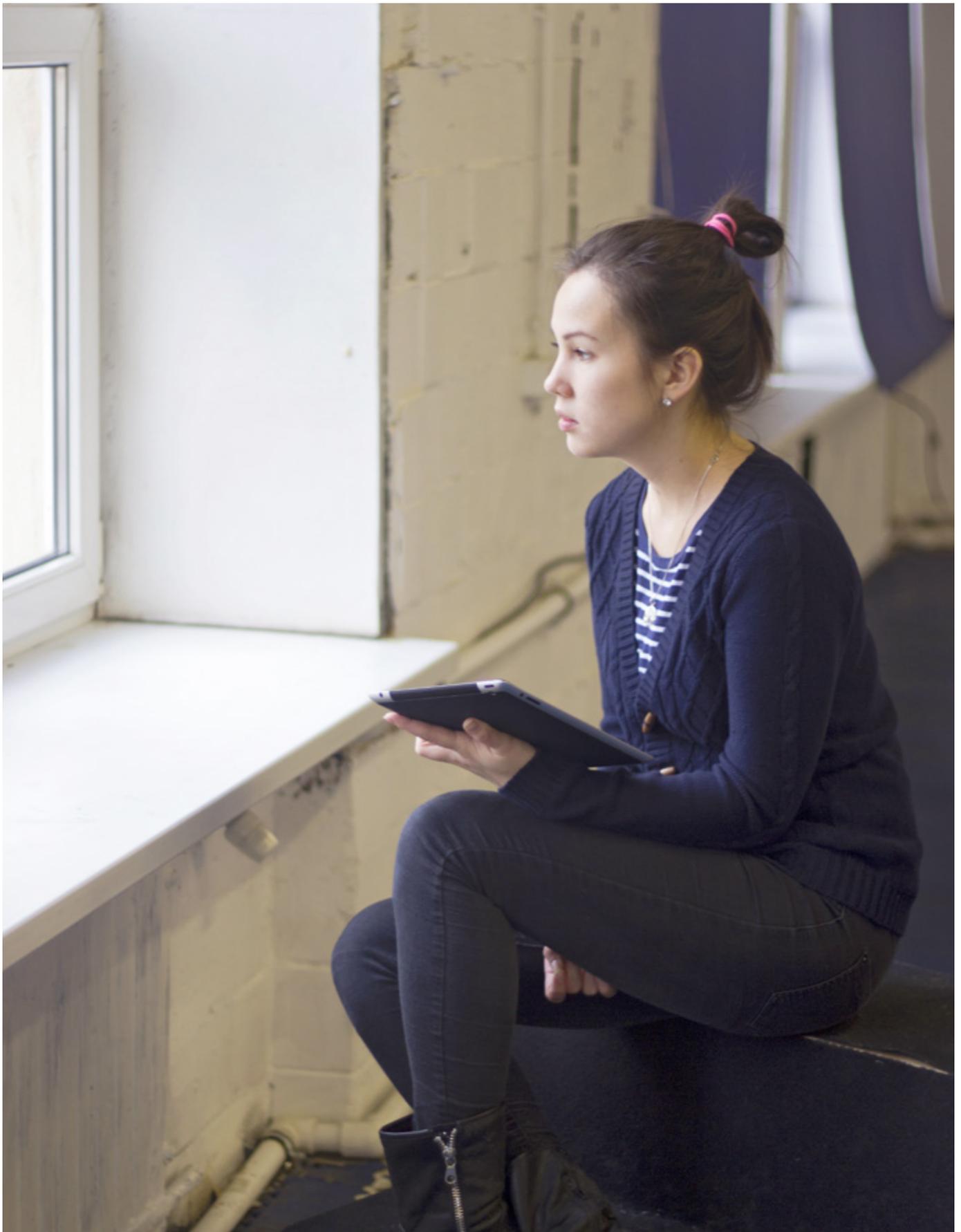
*Read the Book of Mormon. Experience it personally.  
It is the word of God.*

I desire to impress upon your minds the power the Book of Mormon can provide in the journey to your promised land. I testify that because the Book of Mormon is the word of God, it was worth the sacrifices that were made to write it, preserve it, and bring it forth in our day. We can know it is true, and we must pass our testimony of it on to future generations.

In our day, it is so easy to go to the internet and read what everyone else thinks or feels about the Book of Mormon. We might be tempted to spend more time reading what is written there than reading the book itself. The Book of Mormon is one of those books that must be read and experienced by each of us. It is one of those books that can't be understood through another person. It is a book, after all, that comes with a promise:

“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.





“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:3–5).

Millions of people have put this promise to the test and have gained a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. I am one of those millions. For some, their testimony may have come easily and quickly, but for most of us, it takes time and effort to gain the promised testimony.

For me, it really did require me to remember how merciful Heavenly Father has been to His children from the days of Adam to our time. It required me to read with believing eyes and a believing heart and then to pray with real intent. That means I had to let God know that I was willing to live in accordance with a witness if I received one. It required me to have the commitment to make changes in my life if the answer did come. I did ask of God, and I did receive that witness.

### **Do Not Give Up**

If you have not yet received that witness for yourself, do not be discouraged. Lean on my witness. Follow the same pattern I followed. It took time for me. It will take time for you. Do not give up.

I find it interesting that we tend to value only what comes at a cost and a price of intent and intensity. It is so important to know for ourselves. We must read from the pages of the Book of Mormon and search its words personally. What is written in the pages of this book is so much more important than what is written about it by others.

For those who have already been given a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, remember that it can be lost so

*The Savior invited each person present to approach Him and feel the nail prints in His hands and feet. There were about 2,500 people there that day.*

quickly. Keep reading, studying, and nurturing your testimony. Remember how it felt to receive your witness. Share that witness with others often.

The Savior taught the importance of having a personal witness when He appeared to the Nephites after His Resurrection. After introducing Himself, He invited each person present to approach Him and feel the nail prints in His hands and feet. There were about 2,500 people there that day (see 3 Nephi 17:25). Have you ever wondered how long it took for them to come forward and feel for themselves? If it took five seconds for each person to experience this, Jesus stood there for three and a half hours. If it took 10 seconds, He was there for seven hours. Yet He was willing to do that because He knows that each of us has to know for ourselves. As the 2,500 came forward, we read:

“And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come.

“And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying:

“Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him” (3 Nephi 11:15–17).

Christ could have asked Nephi to come forth and feel the nail marks in His hands and feet and then to let everyone else know about it via Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook, so to speak,

but He didn't. Some things are not to be experienced vicariously.

We must know for ourselves that Jesus is the Christ. The Book of Mormon can teach us that. We also must know for ourselves that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. We need to experience it for ourselves, not through anyone else.

### **“Most Worth Knowing”**

If you have a testimony of this book, no matter how easy or difficult it was to obtain it, I promise that if you continue a serious study of it, your testimony will become stronger. You will never lose it. If you don't have a testimony now, I promise that if you begin a serious study of this book, you will come to know by the power of the Holy Ghost that it is true.

Remember these words from President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “What is taught in the scriptures is most worth knowing.”<sup>1</sup> And of no book is that more true than the Book of Mormon.

Moroni promised that those who receive the record and condemn it not will know of even greater things (see Mormon 8:12). This is a promise of revelation as we study this book!

My love of the scriptures, including the Book of Mormon, started while I served a mission in Seoul, Korea. When it really became a part of me, however, was after my mission.

I am most grateful today for a wise mission president, F. Ray Hawkins, who committed me to do 14 things as I finished my mission. One of those things was to continue to love the scriptures and to read from them daily. It was that commitment that kept me from missing scripture study too many days in a row. It was that commitment that helped me reintroduce structure into my life similar to the structure I had in the mission field so I could study every day.

For most of my married life, I was diligent from Monday to Friday. I always knew when I needed to wake up so I could exercise and study before I needed to be at school and later at work. Saturday belonged to my children, and I didn't always read on that day because I was constantly

going and coming from sports, dance, and lessons. The point is that even if I didn't keep my commitment to read daily, I did read regularly. I established a positive pattern and habit. When I missed a day or two, I got right back on track quickly.

When my oldest son was speaking in church before beginning his mission, he made a statement that helped me understand how grateful I was for my mission president. My son reported that each morning when he would come upstairs to read the Book of Mormon with the family prior to going to school, he always knew he would find his father at his desk reading the scriptures. I am indebted to a wise mission president for helping me have a generational impact on my son.

### **Commit to Study**

If you have not begun a lifelong commitment to study daily from the scriptures, I invite you to begin today. If you are already doing so, I invite you to continue. I am sure that many of you returned missionaries made a commitment to your mission president similar to my commitment. I invite you to be truly committed to do just what you were challenged to do. I plead with you to make the Book of Mormon a large part of that daily commitment.

When you slip, start again. Don't let one missed day turn into two and then three or four. This will be a blessing to you, and it will also bless your children. One day your own son or daughter may stand to speak in church and say, “I remember always seeing my dad and my mom reading the Book of Mormon.”

I encourage you to read the Book of Mormon. I encourage you to experience it personally. It is the word of God. It will lead you to do good. You can know it is true, and you can pass that testimony on to future generations. ■

*From a devotional address, “The Power of the Book of Mormon,” given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on March 15, 2016. For the full address, visit [web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches](http://web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches).*

#### **NOTE**

1. Boyd K. Packer, General Authority training, Mar. 31, 2011; see also Mormon 8:14.