

# Ensign



**Learn of Him and  
Listen to His Words,  
pp. 14, 42, 50**

**40th Anniversary of the  
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**Successful Family Home Evenings  
with Teens, p. 18**

**Three Scripture Stories That  
Give Me Hope, p. 30**



MAY NOT BE COPIED

*Eunice Teaching Her Son, Timothy, the Holy Scriptures, by Sandy Freckleton Gagon*

*The Apostle Paul praised Timothy for “the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice” (2 Timothy 1:5). Timothy*

*was a “fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ” (1 Thessalonians 3:2) and a faithful assistant to Paul, who called Timothy “my own son in the faith” (1 Timothy 1:2).*

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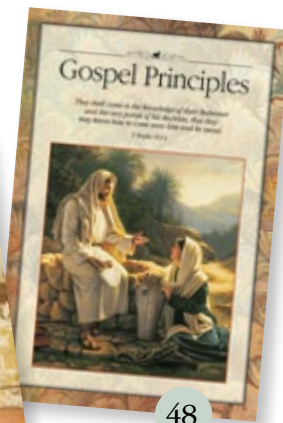
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In addition to the usual search results, the [lds.org](http://lds.org) Web site offers recommended results. This means that when you type in a word, carefully chosen results on that topic will appear in the search result page.

The links suggested are drawn from across all Church Web sites (including [mormon.org](http://mormon.org), [providentliving.org](http://providentliving.org), [JosephSmith.net](http://JosephSmith.net), and many others). Church-service missionaries and volunteers have researched and identified about 10 resources for each of the 1,000 most-searched terms on [lds.org](http://lds.org).

In addition to the recommended results, the new search engine offers improved automated results, which are especially helpful when you are looking for a specific article or resource.

## ADOPTION RESOURCE

Are you single and pregnant, or do you know someone facing an unwed pregnancy? Looking to adopt a child? Are you a Church leader working with someone in one of these situations? Visit the LDS Family Services at [itsaboutlove.org](http://itsaboutlove.org) to see what options are available to help you. Hear birth parents share their experiences, and read stories written by adoptive families. Contact counselors and find answers to your questions about adoption and unwed pregnancy.



## ONLINE STORE

Have you seen the Church's new online store, [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org)? It makes gospel teachings, resources, and services directly and globally accessible in a self-service and affordable way to help strengthen leaders and members of the Church worldwide. The online store features items sold in distribution stores, including scriptures and other gospel study aids, music, media, art, temple clothing, instructional manuals, and other teaching resources.

## DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

The *Ensign* is interested in hearing about your meaningful experiences with giving service—in your family, in the Church, and in your community. Was the act of service a spur-of-the-moment decision? A long-term volunteer commitment? Tell us about what you did and particularly what the act of serving *did for you*. Please label your article "Meaningful Service" and submit it online at [ensign.lds.org](http://ensign.lds.org) by January 31.

We welcome submissions on this and other topics showing the gospel of Jesus

Christ at work in your life. On each submission, please include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and the name of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

Please submit articles through [ensign.lds.org](http://ensign.lds.org), or send them to Ensign Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. We regret that we cannot acknowledge receipt or return manuscripts. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified.

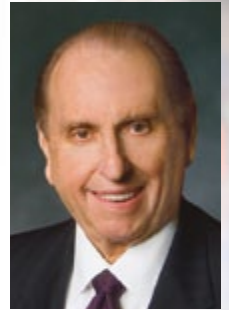
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By President  
Thomas S. Monson



# THE LORD NEEDS MISSIONARIES

Last October in general conference I called for more missionaries. Every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Such service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary. Keep yourselves clean and pure and worthy to represent the Lord. Maintain your health and strength. Study the scriptures. Where such is available, participate in seminary and institute. Familiarize yourself with the missionary handbook *Preach My Gospel*.

Sisters, while you do not have the same priesthood responsibility as do the young men to serve as full-time missionaries, you also make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome your service.

To the mature brothers and sisters of the Church, I remind you that the Lord needs many, many more of you to serve as full-time missionaries. If

you are not yet at the season of life to serve a couples mission, I urge you to prepare now for the day when, as your circumstances allow, you and your spouse might do so. There are few times in your lives when you will enjoy the sweet spirit and satisfaction that come from giving full-time service together in the work of the Master.

Now, some of you may be shy by nature or consider yourselves inadequate to respond affirmatively to the call to serve. Remember that this is the Lord's work, and when we are on the Lord's errand, we are entitled to the Lord's help. The Lord will shape the back to bear the burden placed upon it.

Others, though worthy to serve, may feel they have more important priorities. Well do I remember the Lord's promise: "For them that honour me I will honour" (1 Samuel 2:30). None of us will honor our Heavenly Father and our Savior more than by serving as a devoted, compassionate missionary.

An example of such service was the missionary experience of Julius and Dorothy Fussek, who were called to fill a mission in Poland. Brother Fussek was born in Poland. He spoke the language. He loved the people. Sister Fussek was born in England and knew little of Poland and nothing of its people. Trusting in the Lord, they embarked on their assignment. The work was lonely, their task immense. A mission had not at that time been established in Poland. The assignment given the Fussesks was to prepare the way so that a mission could be established.

Did Elder and Sister Fussek despair because of the enormity of their assignment? Not for a moment. They knew their calling was from God. They prayed for His divine help, and they devoted themselves wholeheartedly to their work.

In time Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Elder Hans B. Ringger, then of the



Seventy; and I, accompanied by Elder Fussek, met with the religious affairs minister, Adam Wopatka, of the Polish government. We heard him say, “Your church is welcome here. You may build your buildings; you may send your missionaries. This man,” pointing to Juliusz Fussek, “has served your church well. You can be grateful for his example and his work.”

Like the Fusseks, let us do what we should do in the work of the Lord. Then we can, with Juliusz and Dorothy Fussek, echo the Psalm:

“My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

“ . . . He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:2–4). ■

#### TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

**T**eaching, *No Greater Call* states: “Share a personal experience about how living a gospel principle has blessed your life. Invite those you teach to briefly share their own experiences” ([1999], 159). Read this message and then ask family members whom President Monson has said should serve a mission. Share personal experiences that you or others have had serving as full-time missionaries. Or share your plans to serve as a missionary in the future. Ask family members to share their plans and positive experiences.

## YOUTH



### Bike to the Future

By Peter Evans and Richard M. Romney

**L**ots of young men prepare financially to serve a mission. In Africa part of that preparation is earning enough money for a passport. Sedrick Tshiambine earned what he needed in an enterprising way: by selling bananas from the back of a bicycle.

Sedrick lives in Luputa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He's one of 45 young men in the Luputa district who is working to save money for a passport to go on a mission. In DR Congo a passport costs \$250, which is about two-thirds the cost of building a house.

But Sedrick was undaunted. He earned his mission money by cycling 15–30 kilometers (9–19 miles) from Luputa to small villages, where he purchased bananas, then cycling back across the hot African savanna, his bike heavily laden with fruit to sell in the city. Each week he traveled about 180 kilometers (112 miles) along the sandy roads, and only once did an unbalanced load cause a tumble.

For his efforts Sedrick earned about \$1.25 a week, or \$65.00 a year. It took him four years to save enough to purchase his passport, but now he knows his future will include a full-time mission because he is financially ready to answer the call to serve.

## CHILDREN

### I'll Prepare While I Am Young

**T**o help children remember President Monson's call to prepare to serve a mission, photocopy this certificate, print it from LDS.org, or make a certificate of your own for your children to sign and keep as a reminder, perhaps on their wall or in their journal.



### I WILL PREPARE

President Thomas S. Monson called me to prepare to serve a mission. I will:

- Keep myself clean and pure and worthy to represent the Lord.
- Maintain my health and strength.
- Pray and study the scriptures.

I will prepare to serve a mission.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)





Faith • Family • Relief

## The History and Heritage of Relief Society

*Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and make Relief Society an active part of your own life.*

Eliza R. Snow recalled the Prophet Joseph Smith teaching that “although the name [Relief Society] may be of modern date, the institution is of ancient origin.”<sup>1</sup>

Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, visited Joseph Smith and, through him, restored the fulness of the gospel to the earth. Relief Society was part of that restoration. The organization of the Church was not complete until the sisters were organized.<sup>2</sup>

In the coming months, each Visiting Teaching Message will give us the opportunity to learn more about the history of Relief Society and its part in the restored gospel. For many reasons, understanding our history is not only important but *essential*.

First, an understanding of our history inspires us to be the women of God we need to be. By following the examples of noble Latter-day Saint women, we can learn from the past how to face the future.<sup>3</sup>

Second, our history teaches that the same principles that existed in the early Church are our foundational principles today. This knowledge and our purposes—to increase faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families and homes, and help those in need—draw a connection between our past and our present.

Third, as we value our history, we can better share our spiritual heritage. President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “You pass the heritage along as you help others receive the gift of charity. . . . The history of Relief Society is recorded in words and numbers, but the heritage is passed heart to heart.”<sup>4</sup>

Finally, understanding our history helps make us an effective part of the future of Relief Society. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) explained, “We know that women who have deep appreciation for the past will be concerned about shaping a righteous future.”<sup>5</sup>

*Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.*

### What Can I Do?

1. What can I do to help the sisters I visit receive the gift of charity?
2. What can I begin to do this month to help shape a righteous future for myself? for my family? for others?

For more information, go to [www.reliefsociety.lds.org](http://www.reliefsociety.lds.org).

### From Our History

“Relief Society is the Lord’s organization for women.”<sup>6</sup> In his capacity as a prophet, Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society on March 17, 1842. The small, diverse group at that first meeting were dedicated women, similar to Relief Society sisters today. “The youngest were three teenagers, and the oldest, a woman in her fifties. Eleven of the women were married, two were widows, six were unmarried, and the marital status of one is unknown. Their education and backgrounds varied greatly, as did their economic circumstances. Their diversity would be magnified many times as the organization’s membership continued to grow, but they were and would continue to be one.”<sup>7</sup>

#### NOTES

1. Eliza R. Snow, “Female Relief Society,” *Deseret News*, Apr. 22, 1868, 81.
2. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 451.
3. See L. Tom Perry, “The Past Way of Facing the Future,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 73–76.
4. Henry B. Eyring, “The Enduring Legacy of Relief Society,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 124–25.
5. Spencer W. Kimball, “Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 104.
6. Spencer W. Kimball, “Relief Society—Its Promise and Potential,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 4.
7. Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant* (1992), 28.

### From the Scriptures

Esther 9:28–29;  
Romans 16:1–2;  
Alma 37:8;  
Moroni 7:45–47



# 40 MY Favorite Ensign ARTICLES YEARS

*The Ensign is turning 40! Members share some of their favorite articles.*



It was a year of significant launches: the Apollo 14 and 15 moon landings by American astronauts, the first microprocessor on a single chip, the first video arcade game. And in January of that year—1971—the first issue of the *Ensign* magazine appeared in the homes of Latter-day Saints.

It was also a turbulent year, with a hot war in Vietnam, a cold war between East and West, and terrorism and sectarian violence in many places. At the same time, a counterculture movement that mocked God's laws continued its sweep across much of the globe.

In the 40 years since, the world's battlegrounds have simply shifted locations. Defiance of God and His laws has acquired a cloak of respectability. And although advancing communication technology brings us into instant contact with each other, it also threatens to scatter our attention, dilute our relationships, and bring decadence into our homes.

The world has become a more challenging place in which to be a Latter-day Saint, which is why the *Ensign's* purposes haven't changed. The *Ensign* continues to carry the prophetic voice with its sure

guidance. We help Latter-day Saints see how to apply the gospel in their lives and provide a place where they can testify of the blessings that come from doing so. And we're using technological advances to lengthen our reach through the Internet, Facebook, and other electronic media.

Recently we invited readers to talk about some of the *Ensign* articles that have blessed their lives during the past 40 years. In the following pages we share some of those responses. We invite you to visit [LDS.org](http://LDS.org) to read the original articles and to study the current issues of the *Ensign* magazine throughout the year.

## Deciding to Serve a Mission

Shortly after I joined the Church, my bishop would always ask, "Have you thought more about serving a mission?"

I'd always respond, "Yes, but I don't think it's the right thing for me right now." The truth

was I had already decided—I didn't

want to go. I had my entire

life planned out, and a

mission wasn't part of it.

Even though I knew what

I wanted, I had been praying

to know what the Lord wanted.

Did God want me to serve a mis-

sion? My answer came while reading

"Planning for a Full and Abundant Life"





(May 1974), by President Spencer W. Kimball. A line caught my attention: "Should every young man fill a mission? And the answer of the Church is yes, and the answer of the Lord is yes." Reading this article changed my life, for I almost missed out on the inexplicable blessing of serving a mission. The Lord answered my prayer through a prophet of God and the accessibility to his words. The Spirit has spoken to me time and again while reading the *Ensign*. The Church magazines bring the words of the Lord directly to our door. I am very grateful for the *Ensign* and hope to never miss an issue.  
Robert Smith, North Carolina, USA

### Healing Power of the Atonement

I remember sitting in my living room one evening over 20 years ago flipping through the pages of the *Ensign* when I came to "Sage's Song" (August 1989), by R. Val Johnson. This article was about a young girl named Sage who had been badly burned in a fire a few years earlier. Her story strengthened my testimony of the reality of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of a perfected body for all of Heavenly Father's children. Each of us faces difficult challenges in life. Some, like Sage's, are more visible. Thankfully, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can all experience the healing and enabling powers that help us overcome challenging times.  
Betsy Hollingshead, Utah, USA

### Making Marriage Great

My favorite, most memorable article was "Twenty Ways to Make a Good Marriage Great" (December 1983), by Richard W. Linford. The art made the two-page article so appealing, and the message was amazing. I have given copies of this article to many friends celebrating marriages and anniversaries and have framed it and hung it in our home for my husband and me to refer to and for our children to see what is expected when they are grown and ready to marry. The advice is timeless and sweet.  
Christina Parks, Washington, USA

### Mealtime Nurturing

"Powerful Nurturing" (December 2005), by Julie B. Beck, then serving as a counselor in the Young Women general presidency, gave me great insight into my role as a mother. As I read, my heart was touched by the powerful imagery of a mother nurturing and strengthening her family daily through mealtime food and conversation. I realized the influence I could have in my children's lives by establishing mealtime rituals that feed both their bodies and spirits. Since then, I have worked to make our mealtimes more nutritious, peaceful, and enjoyable and to direct conversations to gospel topics. I was grateful to be reminded of the value of my work as a mother and to be given specific ideas on how to improve. Sister Beck's message was truly inspired: her



words validated me as a mother and taught me that the daily work I do really does have eternal significance.  
Priscilla Finlayson, Utah, USA

**Listening to the Spirit**

“Fresh Crab and French Bread” (June 1985), by Garnee Faulkner, had a profound impact on me, and I’ve never forgotten it. It taught me a lesson on listening to the Spirit and following spiritual promptings: it is often through others that our prayers are answered, and if we don’t listen to the Spirit, we might miss the opportunity to bless another’s life. After reading this article, I have tried to pay careful attention to the whisperings of the Spirit and to act on those promptings. A gift, an act of service, a phone call, or a handwritten note is often the result of a spiritual prompting. I hope that by following Sister Faulkner’s example I can be better at listening to the still, small voice.  
Sharlene T. Barber, Tennessee, USA

**Joseph Smith: A Prophet of God**

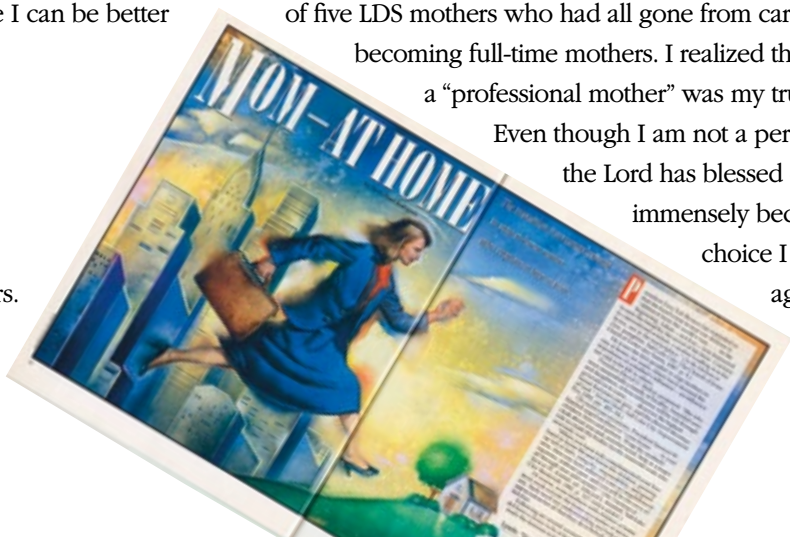
My favorite *Ensign* article was “Two Significant Sites of the Restoration” (September 1998), by Donald L. Enders. This article discusses the rebuilding of the Smith log home, where the

angel Moroni first visited Joseph Smith. As I read the article and viewed the pictures of the home and the upstairs bedroom where the visions occurred, I had a strong feeling that Joseph’s testimony concerning the visions was true and that Moroni truly appeared to him. This article strengthened my testimony of Joseph Smith, his prophetic calling, and the Book of Mormon. I am grateful for the testimony-building experience the *Ensign* gives to me.  
Alex Demutskiy, California, USA

**Being a Full-Time Mother**

“Mom—at Home” (October 1989), by Darin Head Rodriguez, changed the way I looked at being a mother. My husband and I had been married for almost five years and had two small daughters, but I still hadn’t adjusted to being home full time. I felt that the time had come for me to find employment. One day while flipping through a stack of old magazines, I came across this article that presented the stories of five LDS mothers who had all gone from careers to becoming full-time mothers. I realized that becoming a “professional mother” was my true desire!

Even though I am not a perfect mother, the Lord has blessed our family immensely because of the choice I made years ago to stay at home.





## THE ENSIGN MAGAZINE

- **What is the magazine's purpose?** To convey the witness of the prophets and the apostles of the divine mission of Jesus Christ and proclaim to the Church and the world that His gospel has been restored.
- **How do you pronounce *Ensign*?** The correct pronunciation is N'sine, not N'sun.
- **What is the history?** The word 'ensign' refers to a flag, standard, or sign. In battle, an ensign would be held up to give guidance to soldiers so they would know where to go. If the standard was lost, or its bearer killed, then the soldiers would be like sheep without a shepherd and at the mercy of their enemies. The term also refers to a battle cry or a watchword. Scripturally, the term often looks forward to the restoration. The magazine draws its name from several passages in Isaiah. For example: "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:12). In July 1847, President Brigham Young, Elder Wilford Woodruff, and several others climbed a peak north of what is now Temple Square in Salt Lake City. There, it is believed, Elder Wilford Woodruff took out a bandana and waved it as an ensign to the nations. The peak is now called Ensign Peak. (See President Gordon B. Hinckley, "An Ensign to the Nations," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 51–52.)

This article taught our family volumes about sacrifice, faith, and love.

Cynthia Allton, Utah, USA

### Teaching with Questions

"Questions, the Heart of Learning and Teaching" (January 2008), by Brian Gudmundson, is a practical guide to becoming a more effective teacher. Even though I had earned my degree as a teacher, I still felt ineffective and was searching for help, especially in my home as I tried teaching my three young children. This article teaches different types of questions you can ask to help the learner and teacher engage and internalize the topic. The guidelines in this article allowed the Spirit to work through me as never before and gave me the confidence I needed. The questions presented in the article apply to all of us. I have truly learned a new way of teaching from the *Ensign*. I tried it, and it proved true!

Heather Hassell, Kentucky, USA

### Preparing Spiritually for Trials

"When Do the Angels Come?" (April 1992), by Elder Bruce C. Hafen, taught me that the Savior gives us opportunities to prepare spiritually for challenges that may come in our lives. Since reading this article, I have observed this truth in my life and in the

lives of others. When I have great spiritual experiences, I treasure them and recognize them as a blessing from the Lord. During difficult times I can often look back and see how those experiences helped prepare and strengthen me for the trials I am facing.

Pam Voelker, California, USA

### FamilySearch

As a result of "FamilySearch Indexing" (August 2007), by Constance Palmer Lewis, we had a 30 percent increase in indexers in the Mesa Arizona North Stake. And I have used it extensively to explain the program to new indexers. Our Church is well organized and inspired by the Lord.

Janice Shaw, Arizona, USA

### Testimony of the Savior

"The Purifying Power of Gethsemane" (May 1985), by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, has made such an indelible impression on me. Elder McConkie, a witness of the Savior, reminds us of His atoning sacrifice and the impact the Atonement can have in our lives. The Savior's love in providing His Atonement so that I can repent and share the blessings of eternity with my eternal companion is the greatest gift that can be given. ■

W. Mack Park, South Africa

AUDIENCE FAVORITE 40 YEARS

# THE Grapefruit SYNDROME

By Lola B. Walters

*As a young wife, I learned that the taste of marriage could be sweeter if I didn't focus on my husband's faults.*

My husband and I had been married about two years—just long enough for me to realize that he was a normal man rather than a knight on a white charger—when I read a magazine article recommending that married couples schedule regular talks to discuss, truthfully and candidly, the habits or mannerisms they find annoying in each other. The theory was that if the partners knew of such annoyances, they could correct them before resentful feelings developed.

It made sense to me. I talked with my husband about the idea. After some hesitation, he agreed to give it a try.

As I recall, we were to name five things we found annoying, and I started off. After more than 50 years, I remember only my first complaint: grapefruit. I told him that I didn't like the way he ate grapefruit. He peeled it and ate it like an orange! Nobody else I knew ate grapefruit like that. Could a girl be expected to spend a lifetime, and even eternity, watching her husband eat grapefruit like an orange? Although I have forgotten them, I'm sure the rest of my complaints were similar.

After I finished, it was his turn to tell the things he disliked about me. Though it has

been more than half a century, I still carry a mental image of my husband's handsome young face as he gathered his brows together in a thoughtful, puzzled frown and then looked at me with his large blue-gray eyes and said, "Well, to tell the truth, I can't think of anything I don't like about you, Honey."

Gasp.

I quickly turned my back, because I didn't know how to explain the tears that had filled my eyes and were running down my face. I had found fault with him over such trivial things as the way he ate grapefruit, while he hadn't even noticed any of my peculiar, and no doubt annoying, ways.

I wish I could say that this experience completely cured me of fault finding. It didn't. But it did make me aware early in my marriage that husbands and wives need to keep in perspective, and usually ignore, the small differences in their habits and personalities. Whenever I hear of married couples being incompatible, I always wonder if they are suffering from what I now call the Grapefruit Syndrome. ■

*"The Grapefruit Syndrome," originally published in April 1993, has consistently been an Ensign audience favorite. See also "My Favorite Ensign Article" on page 8 of this issue.*



# THE SCRIPTURES

## TEACH AND TESTIFY OF JESUS CHRIST

**T**he scriptures contain counsel from prophets, inspired accounts of God's dealings with people, and revelations from God to His prophets. Scriptures teach that we are children of our Heavenly Father, who loves us. As part of His plan for our eternal happiness, we have come to earth. While we are here, the scriptures are a spiritual lifeline to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

The main purpose of the scriptures is to testify of Christ, helping us come unto Him and receive eternal life (see John 5:39). Thus Latter-day prophets counsel us to study the scriptures every day, both individually and with our families. President Thomas S. Monson said: "Participate in daily scripture study. Crash courses are not nearly so effective as the day-to-day reading and application of the scriptures in our lives. Become acquainted with the lessons the scriptures teach. . . . Study them as though they were speaking to you, for such is the truth."<sup>1</sup>

Through the words of the scriptures, we can come to know and love our Heavenly Father and the Savior Jesus Christ. We can read Their commandments and, as a result, learn to see the difference between right and wrong. We gain strength to resist the temptation to sin. We increase our desire to obey God's laws. The scriptures comfort us and teach us while we are on earth, and they show us the way back to our heavenly home.

#### NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Be Your Best Self," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 68.

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 45–49; and *True to the Faith* (2004), 155–59.

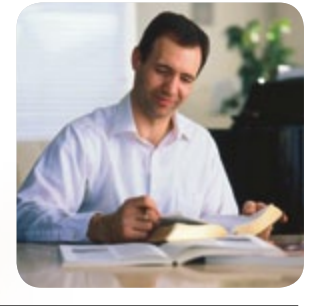
**T**he central purpose of all scripture is to fill our souls with faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ. . . .

". . . Faith comes by the witness of the Holy Spirit to our souls, Spirit to spirit, as we hear or read the word of God. And faith matures as we continue to feast upon the word. . . .

". . . Study the scriptures carefully, deliberately. Ponder and pray over them. Scriptures are revelation, and they will bring added revelation."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Blessing of Scripture," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2010, 34, 35.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accept the following as scripture:



*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).*



1. The Bible is a collection of sacred writings containing God's revelations to ancient prophets in the Holy Land. Our eighth article of faith states, "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly."



2. The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ contains God's revelations to ancient prophets in the Americas. It contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see D&C 20:9).



3. The Doctrine and Covenants is a book of revelations regarding the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, given to modern prophets beginning with Joseph Smith.



4. The Pearl of Great Price contains additional revelations from God to Moses, Abraham, and Joseph Smith.



5. God continues to reveal truths to living prophets through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. These truths are considered scripture (see D&C 68:4). They come to us primarily through general conference, held the first weekend in April and October, when members throughout the world hear addresses from our prophet and other Church leaders. ■

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DEREK ISRAELSEN © 2002; CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE, BY HARRY ANDERSON © IRI; THREE NEPHITES, BY GARY KAPP © 1996 IRI; JESUS CHRIST APPEARS TO THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH AND OLIVER COWDERY, BY WALTER RANE, COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM; THE FIRST VISION, BY DEL PARSON © 1987 IRI; PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND © IRI; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA SMITH © IRI

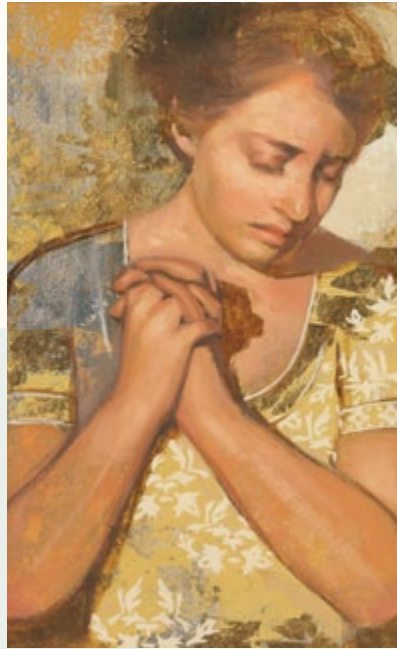
# MY ROLE WAS TO Lead Them To Him

By Jill B. Johnson

I was called as the Relief Society president of my student ward during the most emotionally and spiritually challenging time of my life. I had just been hired to take over a class of hardened, streetwise teenagers with special needs at the local high school. I struggled to maintain even a portion of the Spirit in an environment that might best be described as hostile. Beyond that, my family was in the middle of a crisis, and the pain and anguish created a hard knot deep in my stomach.

Arriving home after a meeting with the former Relief Society president, I dropped to my knees and sobbed. I felt overwhelmed, and I couldn't understand how Heavenly Father expected me to care for so many sisters when I didn't have it together myself. I pleaded with Heavenly Father for strength, specifically asking for inspiration to help the sisters of our Relief Society overcome their trials and challenges. I longed to do something for them. I ached to take away their pain, build their testimonies, and fix all their complaints.

As I ended my prayer, my eyes opened to see the picture of the Savior on my bedside table. Immediately, a peace came to my heart as I realized that He was the One who could provide for those struggling sisters. He was the One who could heal their wounds, take their bitterness away, and give them peace.



*I pleaded with Heavenly Father for strength, specifically asking for inspiration to help the sisters of our Relief Society overcome their trials and challenges.*

From that moment on, my goal wasn't to fix the problems of the sisters but to do everything I could to help them come to know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ so that *They* could help them. In all our lessons, activities, and meetings, my supportive

counselors and I worked hard to think of what the Savior would do. The Spirit guided us in many ways.

Months later I was surprised to realize that the knot in my stomach had disappeared. Losing myself in the service of those sisters helped melt away the pain and disappointment of family tragedy and begin the journey of healing.

I am grateful that Heavenly Father called me to serve even when I did not feel capable. Even more, I am grateful to have learned an important lesson about our Savior. He is the One who could meet the needs of the sisters in that Relief Society and who can meet the needs that all of us have. He invites everyone:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29). ■

# THE RESTORING POWER OF PRAYER

By Marcos A. Walker

I can still remember my feelings the time I saw tears of repentance streaming down the face of my 10-year-old son, Arián.

He had been playing with his older brother, Joel, who was 12, in the

bedroom, when all of a sudden an argument broke out, and I had to intervene and reestablish order. Perhaps because of their ages, fighting had

become frequent between the boys. In response, Arián, who was visibly shaken and crying after his altercation with his brother, responded to me in an unacceptable manner. I corrected him twice (now his argument was

with me), but the situation just got worse. He was out of control, red in the face, and shaking. My nerves were getting to me, but I knew that there had to be a solution without my starting to shout.

The principle of prayer quickly came to mind. Yes, that was the answer, and so I took him into my room, closed the door, and said, “Arián, let’s kneel down, and I’m going to offer a prayer to Heavenly Father.”

We both knelt down as his cries of fury continued. I prayed with the objective of trying to help my son. In the middle of the prayer I noticed that his sobs

were dying down. The tears rolling down his cheeks were now tears of repentance.

As we concluded our prayer, Arián



## THE GIFT OF PRAYER

“Prayer is a supernatural gift of our Father in Heaven to every soul. Think of it: the absolute

Supreme Being, the most all-knowing, all-seeing, all-powerful personage, encourages you and me, as insignificant as we are, to converse with Him as our Father. . . .

“It matters not our circumstance, be we humble or arrogant, poor or rich, free or enslaved, learned or ignorant, loved or forsaken, we can address Him. We need no appointment. Our supplication can be brief or can occupy all the time needed. It can be an extended expression of love and gratitude or an urgent plea for help. He has created numberless cosmos and populated them with worlds, yet you and I can talk with Him personally, and He will ever answer.”

**Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2007, 8.**

raised his eyes and asked, “Dad, can you forgive me?” We embraced, and I was not able to contain my own tears. Feelings of peace and love filled my soul. Arián said nothing more, but I knew that he had experienced the restoring power of prayer and that the Holy Ghost had penetrated his heart.

Now he not only knew about the power of prayer, but he had gained a testimony of it. ■



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# SUCCESSFUL FAMILY HOME EVENINGS WITH

# TEENS



*Here are ideas for keeping teens enthusiastic about family home evening.*

## Keep It Simple

Some of our best family night lessons with older children have been when we opened up the lesson for discussion. They could ask any question and share any concern. These discussions often led to testimony bearing, searching the scriptures, father's blessings, and such.

As our children became teenagers, this format created a wonderful opportunity to get to know them as their testimonies grew and their experiences varied. Often they would share what they were learning in seminary or Sunday School. Sometimes they just asked for family stories and experiences from our lives.

These family home evenings were gospel centered and created a great bond among us. Half of my children are adults now and they all cherish memories of our family home evenings. Denise Ferrin, Utah, USA

## Be Consistent

We try to keep to a regular format for our family home evenings: songs, prayers, lesson, activity, and treats. Some things that we have found that work great for our teens is to have a more in-depth lesson with them after

our little ones are in bed. We've also found it very effective to choose lessons or activities that are good for any age. For instance, we have had fun with a game we call scripture charades. Sometimes we make specific rules (which book of scripture to focus on, etc.), but other times, anything goes (while making sure to show proper respect for sacred events). Our younger children get help or suggestions from the older ones or us as parents, and they act out a scripture story or a segment of Church history. The others have to guess what story they are depicting. We then talk about those verses in the scriptures, so this game often serves as a lesson and an activity. The teens try to choose more obscure scripture stories. It can be quite a challenge to figure out what they are doing. We've found this is fun for everyone.

We have also found many games that all of us enjoy. During the Olympics, we held a family Olympic challenge. It consisted of somersaults, cartwheels, headstands, balancing on

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DILLEN MARSH



## CONSISTENCY IS THE KEY



“Each family prayer, each episode of family scripture study, and each family home evening is a brushstroke on the canvas of our souls. No one event may appear to be very impressive or memorable. But just as the yellow and gold and brown strokes of paint complement each other and produce an impressive masterpiece, so our consistency in doing seemingly small things can lead to significant spiritual results. ‘Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great’ (D&C 64:33). Consistency is a key principle as we lay the foundation of a great work in our individual lives and as we become more diligent and concerned in our own homes.”

Elder David A. Bednar, “More Diligent and Concerned at Home,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 19–20.





one foot, and so forth. The rest of the family judged the performances. Our children got a kick out of watching Mom and Dad trying to do cartwheels—all ages loved it!

Sometimes we combine the treats portion of the evening with the activity. Making “banana men” is a family favorite. We cut a banana in half and decorate it with chocolate chips (eyes, nose, mouth), chocolate or butterscotch syrup, whipped cream (hair, beard, etc.), candy sprinkles, and anything else “fun” and see what creations we make. All the children enjoy the creative outlet, especially because when we are finished, we eat the banana men!

Above all, consistency is the key in our family—keeping the same format, week after week.

Greg Williams, Oregon, USA

### Plan Ahead and Seek Guidance

One way to plan ahead for family home evening is to allow time for a brief family scheduling



council. We take a few minutes and let our teens write their commitments on the family calendar—sports practices, scouting, Mutual, piano lessons, etc. This lets them know that their activities are important, and helps them plan for Monday night family home evening.

The most important assistance we have, though, is praying for Heavenly Father’s help. Before planning any lesson, we ask Heavenly Father to bless our efforts in touching our children’s hearts and spirits.

Jane McBride Choate, Colorado, USA

### Customize Lessons for Your Family

I ordered the Mormonad posters, which are in the *New Era*, and the frame designed to hold them. Every week as each person took a turn to give the lesson, he or she chose a poster, talked about it, read the scripture reference, and told why it was important. The poster was then framed and displayed by the kitchen table for a week. These home evening lessons weren’t long. Still, they allowed us to feel the Spirit and be together. As we ate our meals during the week, we would talk about the message on the poster and why it was important, and as a family, we could continue to grow and learn spiritually.

Elaine Fort, Arizona, USA





### Give Them A Chance to Teach Younger Children

**W**e have had consistent family nights since joining the Church in 1994, but not all of them have been a success.

This year, however, we found a family home evening resource that helps our older children prepare meaningful and fun lessons that our younger children can enjoy. Best of all, they can put these lessons together in less than five minutes the night before family night. The “miracle” resource: *Behold Your Little Ones* (item number 37108000), is the new nursery manual produced by the Church and approved for use at church and at home. We access the manual on the Church Web site (LDS.org) where links are available to the scripture references, pictures in the lesson, and other resource materials (like coloring pages). We even use the interactive music player on the site to provide accompaniment for the songs in the lessons.

We have found, after a few tries at using this book, that the nursery lessons are just as meaningful for the older children as they are for the younger. Our teens like reliving their Primary years, relearning basic principles, and seeing the enthusiasm of their younger siblings.

Elizabeth S. Stiles, Pennsylvania, USA

### Teach from Your Own Experiences

**L**ike many families, we rotate family home evening teaching assignments. My teens are generally willing to take their turn; however, they are reluctant to sit through lessons taught by my husband or me.

I stumbled upon an answer to this situation when we were waiting for our oldest son’s mission call. One night I decided to read excerpts from my journal that covered that same time in my life. I selected entries about my excitement to serve the Lord and my missionary preparations, including insights I received during my interviews with my bishop and stake president. I read my joyful reaction to being called by a prophet of God to serve in Indiana. I ended by sharing letters I had sent home to my parents from the Missionary Training Center (MTC). All of these experiences were sprinkled with adventures with my family and friends. My teens were

### NOW IS THE TIME



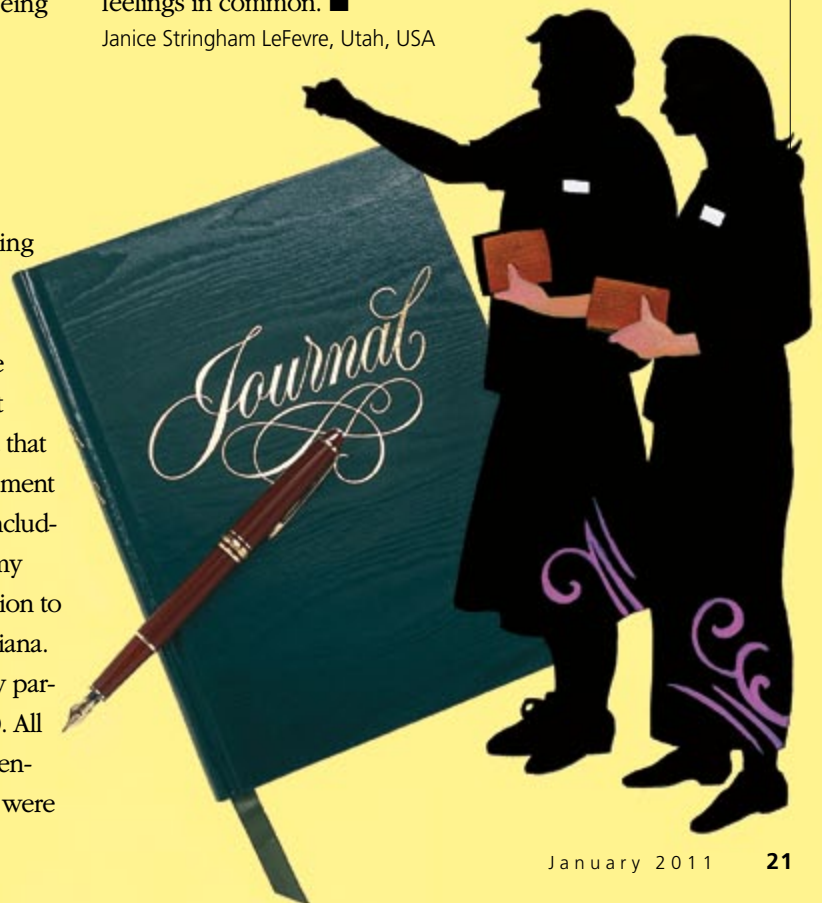
“Now is the time to have meaningful family home evenings, to read the word of God, and to speak to our Heavenly Father in earnest prayer. Now is the time to fill our hearts with gratitude for the Restoration of His Church, for living prophets, the Book of Mormon, and the priesthood power that blesses our lives. Now is the time to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, become His disciples, and walk in His way.”

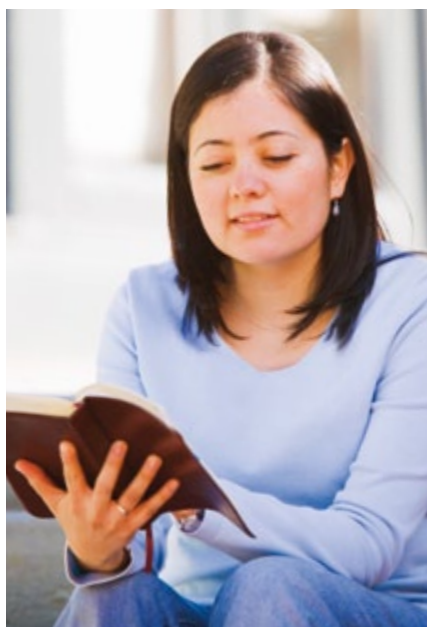
President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Way of the Disciple,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 75–78.

listening, laughing, and asking questions for over an hour.

I discovered that reading real-life experiences is a powerful way to testify of Christ and show the blessings that come through living the gospel. Sharing my stories has also helped bridge the generation gap between me and my children because it helps my teens discover that we have had many feelings in common. ■

Janice Stringham LeFevre, Utah, USA





*This article is excerpted from an address given to the faculty and students of Harvard Law School on February 26, 2010.*

**W**e Latter-day Saints know that our doctrines and values are not widely understood by those not of our faith. This was demonstrated by Gary C. Lawrence's nationwide study published in his recent book, *How Americans View Mormonism*. Three-quarters of those surveyed associated our Church with high moral standards, but about half thought we were secretive and mysterious and had "weird beliefs."<sup>1</sup> When asked to select various words they thought described Latter-day Saints in general, 87 percent checked "strong family values," 78 percent checked "honest," and 45 percent checked "blind followers."<sup>2</sup>

When Lawrence's interviewers asked, "To the best of your understanding, what is the main claim of

# FUNDAMENTAL

## TO OUR FAITH

**By Elder  
Dallin H. Oaks**  
Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

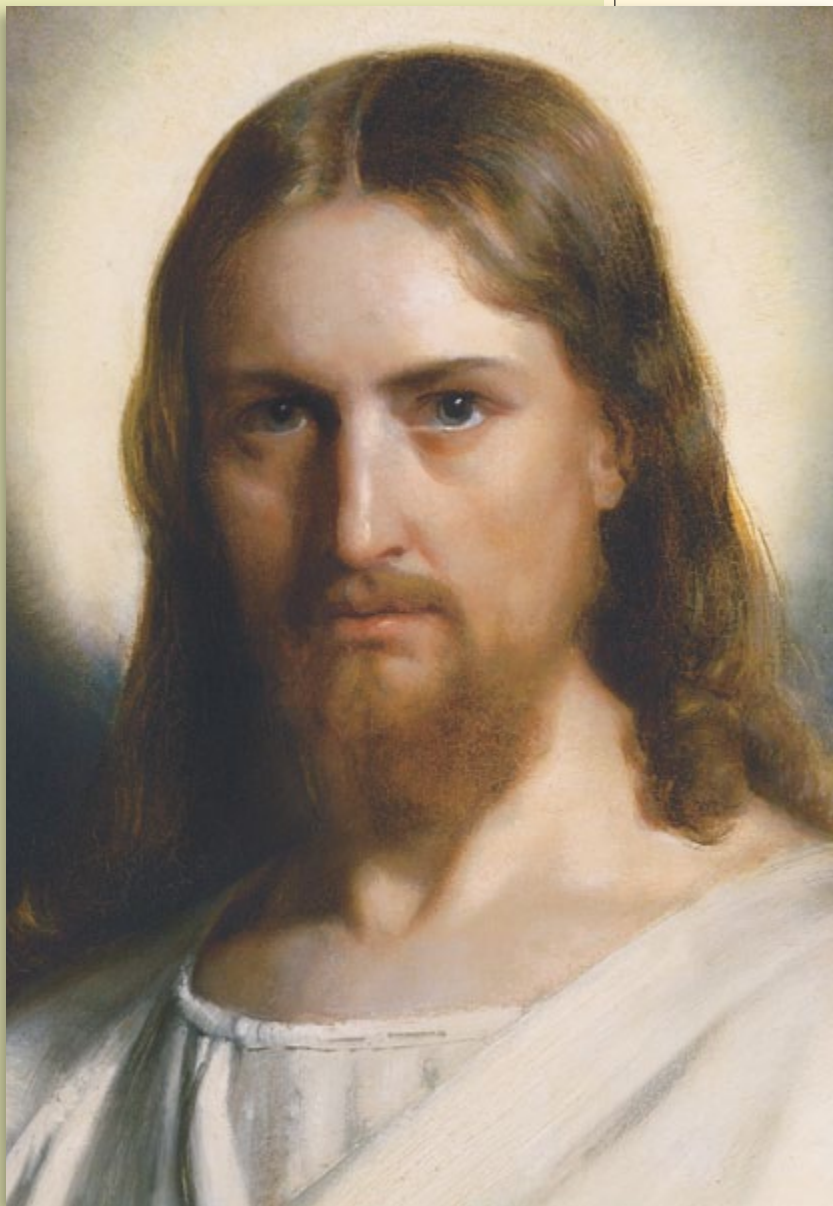


Mormonism?" only 14 percent could describe anything close to the idea of restoration or reestablishment of the original Christian faith. Similarly, when another national survey asked respondents what one word best described their impression of the Mormon religion, not one person suggested the words or ideas of original or restoration Christianity.<sup>3</sup>

My disappointment with these findings is only slightly reduced by Lawrence's other findings and observation



*As an Apostle I am called to be a witness of the doctrine, work, and authority of Christ in all the world. In that capacity I bear witness of the truth of these premises of our faith.*



that on the subject of religion Americans in general are “deeply religious” but “profoundly ignorant.” For example, 68 percent said they prayed at least several times a week, and 44 percent said they attended religious services almost every week. At the same time, only half could name even one of the four Gospels, most could not name the first book of the Bible, and 10 percent thought Joan of Arc was Noah’s wife.<sup>4</sup>

Many factors contribute to the predominant shallowness on the subject of religion, but one of them is surely higher education’s general hostility or indifference to religion. With but few exceptions, colleges and universities have become value-free places where attitudes toward religion are neutral at best. Students and other religious people who believe in the living reality of God and moral absolutes are being marginalized.

It seems unrealistic to expect higher education as a whole to resume a major role in teaching moral values. That will remain the domain of homes, churches, and church-related colleges and universities. All should hope for success in this vital task. The academy can pretend to neutrality on questions of right and wrong, but society cannot survive on such neutrality.

I have chosen three clusters of truths to present as fundamental premises of the faith of Latter-day Saints:

1. The nature of God, including the role of the three members of the Godhead and the corollary truth that there are moral absolutes.
2. The purpose of life.
3. The threefold sources of truth about

man and the universe: science, the scriptures, and continuing revelation—and how we can know them.

## 1. The Nature of God

My first fundamental premise of our faith is that God is real and so are eternal truths and values not provable by current scientific methods. These ideas are inevitably linked. Like other believers, we proclaim the existence of the ultimate lawgiver, God our Eternal Father, and the existence of moral absolutes. We reject the moral relativism that is becoming the unofficial creed of much of modern culture.

For us the truth about the nature of God and our relationship to Him is the key to everything else. Significantly, our belief in the nature of God is what distinguishes us from the formal creeds of most Christian denominations. Our Articles of Faith begin as follows: “We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost” (verse 1).

We have this belief in the Godhead in common with the rest of Christianity, but to us it means something different than to most. We maintain that these three members of the Godhead are three separate and distinct beings and that God the Father is not a spirit but a glorified Being with a tangible body, as is His resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. Though separate in identity, They are one in purpose. We maintain that Jesus referred to this relationship when He prayed to His Father that His disciples would “be one” even as Jesus and His Father are one (John 17:11)—united in purpose but not in identity. Our unique belief that “the Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit” (D&C 130:22) is vital to us. But, as Gary Lawrence’s interviews demonstrate, we have not effectively conveyed this belief to others.<sup>5</sup>

**W**e maintain that the three members of the Godhead are three separate and distinct beings and that God the Father is not a spirit but a glorified Being with a tangible body, as is His resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. Though separate in identity, They are one in purpose.



Our belief in the nature of God comes from what we call the First Vision, which began the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith, an unschooled boy of 14 seeking to know which church he should join, was given a vision in which he saw “two Personages” of indescribable “brightness and glory.” One of Them pointed to the other and said, “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17). God the Son told the young prophet that all the “creeds” of the churches of that day “were an abomination in his sight” (Joseph Smith—History 1:19). This divine declaration condemned the creeds, not the faithful seekers who believed them.

Joseph Smith’s First Vision showed that the prevailing concepts of the nature of God and the Godhead were untrue and could not lead their adherents to the destiny God desired for them. A subsequent outpouring of modern scripture revealed the significance of this fundamental truth and gave us the Book of Mormon. This new book of scripture is a second witness of Jesus Christ. It affirms the biblical prophecies and teachings of the nature and mission of Christ. It enlarges our understanding of His gospel and His teachings during His earthly ministry. It also provides many teachings and illustrations of the revelations by which we may know the truth of these things.

These teachings explain our testimony of Christ. We are not grounded in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies of men—however traditional or respected they may be. Our testimony of Jesus Christ is based on the revelations of God to His prophets and to us individually.

What does our testimony of Jesus Christ cause us to affirm? Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God the Eternal Father. He is the Creator. Through His incomparable mortal ministry, He is our teacher. Because of His Resurrection, all who have ever lived will be raised from the dead. He is the Savior, whose atoning sacrifice opens the door for us to be forgiven of our personal sins so that we can be cleansed to return to the presence of God our Eternal Father. This is the central message of the prophets of all ages. Joseph Smith stated this great truth in our third

article of faith: “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we testify with the Book of Mormon prophet King Benjamin “that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent” (Mosiah 3:17).

Why is Christ the only way? How could He break the bands of death? How was it possible for Him to take upon Himself the sins of all mankind? How can our soiled and sinful selves be cleansed and our bodies be resurrected by His Atonement? These are mysteries I do not fully understand. To me the miracle of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is incomprehensible, but the Holy Ghost has given me a witness of its truthfulness, and I rejoice that I can spend my life in proclaiming it.

## **2. The Purpose of Mortal Life**

My second fundamental premise concerns the purpose of mortal life. This follows from our understanding of the purposes of God the Eternal Father and concerns our destiny as His children. Our theology begins with the assurance that we lived as spirits before we came to this earth. It affirms that this mortal life has a purpose. And it teaches that our highest aspiration is to become like our heavenly parents, which will empower us to perpetuate our family relationships throughout eternity. We were placed on earth to acquire a physical body and—through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by obedience to the laws and ordinances of His gospel—to qualify for the glorified celestial condition and relationships that are called exaltation or eternal life.

We are properly known as a family-centered Church, but what is not well understood is that our family-centeredness is not just focused on mortal relationships but is also a matter of fundamental theology. Under the great plan of the loving Creator, the mission of His Church is to help us achieve exaltation in the celestial kingdom, and that can be

accomplished only through an eternal marriage between a man and a woman (see D&C 131:1–3).

My faithful widowed mother had no confusion about the eternal nature of the family relationship. She always honored the position of our faithful deceased father. She made him a presence in our home. She spoke of the eternal duration of their temple marriage and of our destiny to be together as a family in the next life. She often reminded us of what our father would like us to do so we could qualify for the Savior's promise that we could be a family forever. She never referred to herself as a widow, and it never occurred to me that she was. To me, as a boy growing up, she wasn't a widow. She had a husband, and we had a father. He was just away for a while.

We affirm that marriage is necessary for the accomplishment of God's plan to provide the approved setting for mortal birth and to prepare family members for eternal life. Knowledge of God's plan gives Latter-day Saints a unique perspective on marriage and children. We look on the bearing and nurturing of children as part of God's plan and a sacred duty of those given the power to participate in it. We believe that the ultimate treasures on earth and in heaven are our children and our posterity. And we believe that we must contend for the kind of mortal families that provide the best conditions for the development and happiness of children—all children.

The power to create mortal life is the most exalted power God has given His children. The use of this creative power was mandated in the first commandment to "be fruitful, and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Another important commandment forbade its misuse: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14), and

**2** *Our theology affirms that this mortal life has a purpose. And it teaches that our highest aspiration is to become like our heavenly parents, which will empower us to perpetuate our family relationships throughout eternity.*

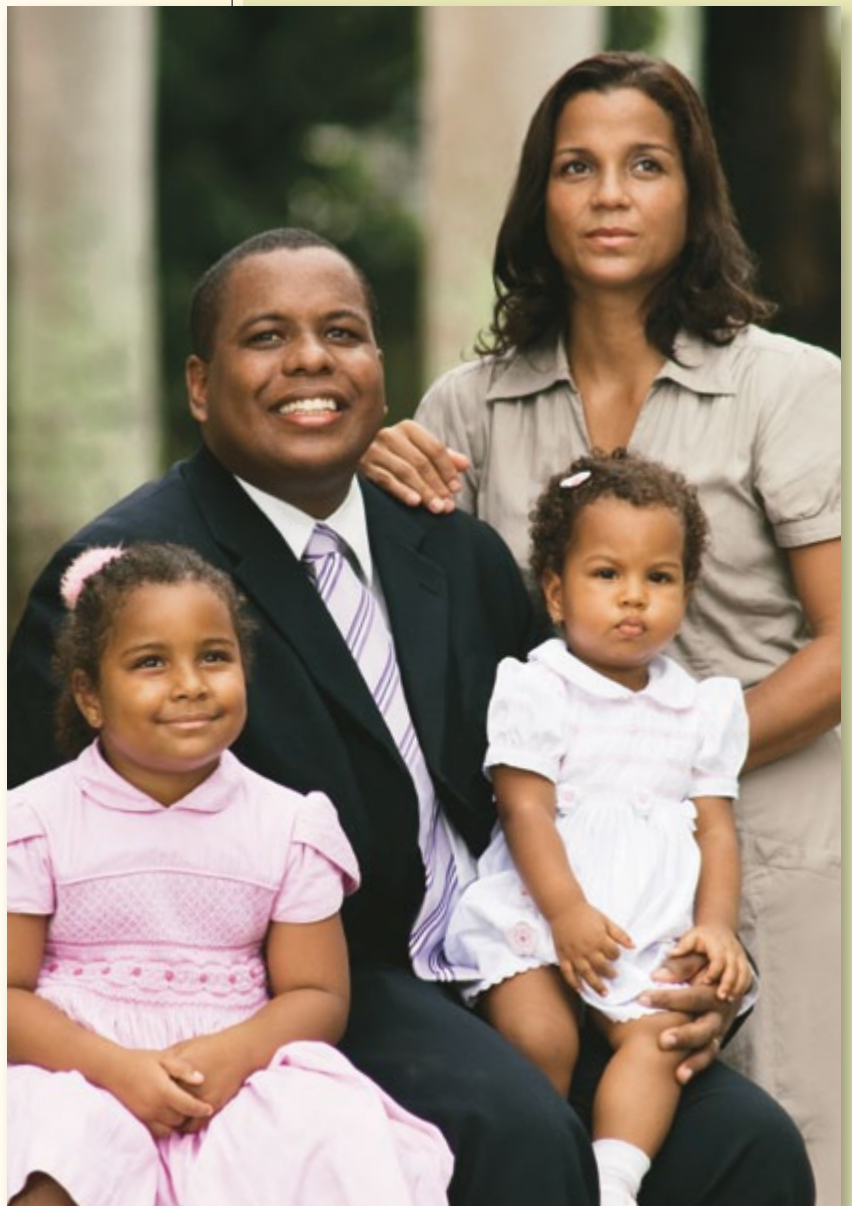


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENI FOCHEITO

“ye should abstain from fornication” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). The emphasis we place on this law of chastity is explained by our understanding of the purpose of our procreative powers in the accomplishment of God’s plan.

There are many political, legal, and social pressures for changes that confuse gender, deemphasize the importance of marriage or change its definition, or homogenize the differences between men and women that are essential to accomplish God’s great plan of happiness. Our eternal perspective sets us against such changes.

Finally, our understanding of the purpose of mortal life includes some unique doctrines about what follows mortality. Like other Christians, we believe that when we leave this life, we go to a heaven (paradise) or a hell. But to us this two-part division of the righteous and the wicked is merely temporary while the spirits of the dead await their resurrection and Final Judgment (see Alma 40:11–14). The destinations that follow the Final Judgment are much more diverse, and they stand as evidence of the magnitude of God’s love for His children—all of them.

God’s love is so great that He requires His children to obey His laws because only through that obedience can they progress toward the eternal destiny He desires for them. Thus, in the Final Judgment we will all be assigned to the kingdom of glory that is commensurate with our obedience to His law. In his second letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul told of a vision of a man “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Corinthians 12:2). Speaking of the resurrection of the dead, he described “bodies” with different glories, like the respective glories of the sun, moon, and stars. He referred to the first two of these as “celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial” (see 1 Corinthians 15:40–42). For us, eternal life in the celestial, the highest, glory is not a mystical union with an incomprehensible spirit-god. Rather, eternal life is family life with a loving Father in Heaven and with our progenitors and our posterity.

The theology of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is comprehensive, universal, merciful, and true. Following the necessary experience of mortal life, all sons and

daughters of God will ultimately be resurrected and go to a kingdom of glory more wonderful than any mortal can comprehend. With only a few exceptions, even the very wicked will ultimately go to a marvelous—though lesser—kingdom of glory. All of this will occur because of God’s great love for His children, and it is all made possible because of the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, “who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands” (D&C 76:43).

### 3. Sources of Truth

Latter-day Saints have a great interest in pursuing knowledge. Brigham Young (1801–77) said it best: “[Our] religion . . . prompts [us] to search diligently after knowledge. There is no other people in existence more eager to see, hear, learn, and understand truth.”<sup>6</sup>

On another occasion he explained that we encourage our members “to increase [their] knowledge . . . in every branch of [learning], for all wisdom, and all the arts and sciences in the world are from God, and are designed for the good of his people.”<sup>7</sup>

We seek after knowledge, but we do so in a special way because we believe there are two dimensions of knowledge: material and spiritual. We seek knowledge in the material dimension by scientific inquiry and in the spiritual dimension by revelation. Revelation is God’s communication to man—to prophets and to every one of us if we seek it.

Revelation is clearly one of the distinctive characteristics of our faith. The Prophet Joseph Smith was directed and edified by a continuing flow of revelation throughout his life. The immense quantity of his published revelations, including the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, carried forward his unique calling as the Prophet of this last dispensation of time. In this *prophetic revelation*—to Joseph Smith and to his successors as Presidents of the Church—God has revealed truths and commandments to His prophet-leaders for the enlightenment of His people and for the governance and direction of His Church.

This is the kind of revelation described in the Old Testament teaching that “the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Joseph Smith declared, “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded upon direct revelation, as the true Church of God has ever been.”<sup>8</sup> He asked, “Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion?” He answered, “We have none.”<sup>9</sup>

Joseph Smith also taught that because revelation did not cease with the early Apostles but continues in these modern times, each person can receive *personal revelation* for his or her conversion, understanding, and decision making. “It is the privilege of the children of God to come to God and get revelation,” he said. “God is not a respecter of persons; we all have the same privilege.”<sup>10</sup>

The New Testament describes such personal revelation. For example, when Peter affirmed his conviction that Jesus was the divine Son of God, the Savior declared, “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

Personal revelation—sometimes called “inspiration”—comes in many forms. Most often it is by words or thoughts communicated to the mind by sudden enlightenment or by positive or negative feelings about proposed courses of action. Usually it comes in response to earnest and prayerful seeking. Jesus taught, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7). Revelation comes when we keep the commandments of God and thus qualify for the companionship and communication of the Holy Spirit.

**3** We seek knowledge in the material dimension by scientific inquiry and in the spiritual dimension by revelation. Revelation is God’s communication to man—to prophets and to every one of us if we seek it.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY RUTH SIPUS

Some wonder how members of the Church accept a modern prophet's teachings to guide their personal lives, something that is unusual in most religious traditions. Our answer to the charge that Latter-day Saints follow their leaders out of "blind obedience" is this same personal revelation. We respect our leaders and presume inspiration in their leadership of the Church and in their teachings. But we are all privileged and encouraged to confirm their teachings by prayerfully seeking and receiving revelatory confirmation directly from God.

Most Christians believe that God closed the scriptural canon—the authoritative collection of sacred books used as scriptures—shortly after the death of Christ and that there have been no comparable revelations since that time. Joseph Smith taught and demonstrated that the scriptural canon is open.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the canon of scripture is open in two ways, and the idea of continuing revelation is crucial to both of these.

First, Joseph Smith taught that God will guide His children by giving new additions to the canon of scriptures. The Book of Mormon is such an addition. So are the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. Continuing revelation is necessary for us to receive what the Lord would have us understand and do in our own time and circumstances.

Second, continuing revelation opens the canon as readers of scripture, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, find new scriptural meaning and direction for their personal circumstances. The Apostle Paul wrote that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16; see also 2 Peter 1:21) and that "the things of God knoweth

no man, [except he has] the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11; see footnote c, from Joseph Smith Translation). This means that in order to understand scripture, we need personal inspiration from the Spirit of the Lord to enlighten our minds. Consequently, we encourage our members to

study the scriptures and prayerfully seek inspiration to know their meanings for themselves. The ultimate knowledge comes by personal revelation through the Holy Ghost.

Jesus taught, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20). To me, to countless other believers, and to many observers, the fruits are good—good for the members, good for their families, good for their communities, and good for their nations. The millions of dollars worth of supplies and services The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members quietly and efficiently provide in response to tragedies such as the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010 are evidence of that fact.

As an Apostle I am called to be a witness of the doctrine, work, and authority of Christ in all the

world. In that capacity I bear witness of the truth of these premises of our faith. ■

*For the full text in English, visit [www.lds.org/fundamental-premises-of-our-faith](http://www.lds.org/fundamental-premises-of-our-faith).*

#### NOTES

1. Gary C. Lawrence, *How Americans View Mormonism* (2008), 32.
2. *How Americans View Mormonism*, 34.
3. See *How Americans View Mormonism*, 42.
4. See *How Americans View Mormonism*, 40.
5. See *How Americans View Mormonism*, 49.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 194.
7. *Teachings: Brigham Young*, 193.
8. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 195.
9. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 196.
10. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 132.
11. See *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 193–216, 265–66.

#### SHARING THIS ARTICLE

The following ideas may help you share Elder Oaks's article:

- Prayerfully think of a friend who could benefit from reading this article. As you visit that friend, consider sharing in simple terms how the gospel has blessed your life.
- Consider sharing this article electronically. Visit [www.liahona.lds.org](http://www.liahona.lds.org), find the article in the January issue, and click "Share." In the message you send with the article, you could comment on how the basic doctrines Elder Oaks shares are meaningful to you.

# Ancient Examples, Modern Promises

*Dating has never come easily to me, but I draw strength from scriptural examples of faithfulness.*

## Name withheld

Although I find most social situations enjoyable, I've struggled in the dating scene. I never dated before my mission, and when I returned home after two years, I felt particularly inexperienced.

In the decade since then, I've tried seemingly "all [I] can do" (2 Nephi 25:23) to marry—something I've been promised in my patriarchal blessing—but have had no success. Sometimes I have felt tempted to despair that I might ever find someone, and in particularly dark moments, I have cried out in prayer: "Please help me. I don't know what I'm doing."

Recently, I have found substantial comfort in examples from the scriptures. The following three stories have been especially powerful in helping me trust in Heavenly Father and His plan.

### Joseph of Egypt: Maintain Faith and Hope in God

Joseph was forcefully taken from home at 17 and thrust into a foreign land where few shared his religious beliefs. Despite this severe trial, he kept a good attitude and remained faithful

to his masters and to God (see Genesis 37; 39–41). Even so, for 13 years he experienced one undesirable situation after another. His hard work appeared to do little but land him in prison, where he remained until age 30.

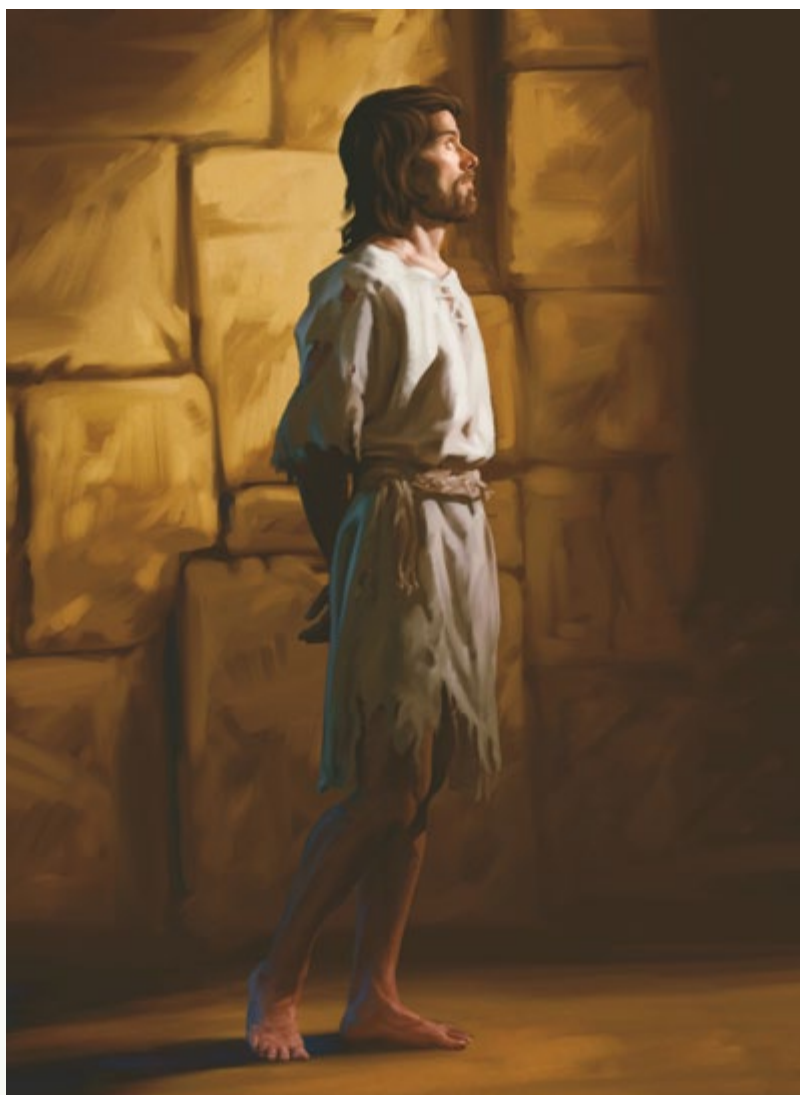
I sometimes wonder if Joseph ever thought that God had somehow forgotten him or if Joseph questioned how long he would be in prison or whether he would ever be released. I wonder if the dreams Joseph had dreamed earlier in his life (see Genesis 37:5–11) gave him hope for a brighter future.

Of course, God *did* remember Joseph, as He had Joseph's mother, Rachel (see Genesis 30:22). Joseph was blessed to prosper even in unpleasant situations. Instead of choosing to rebel, pout, or curse God, Joseph exercised remarkable faith. As a result, he was tremendously blessed.

We may be tempted to bemoan our own afflictions, possibly blinding ourselves from the blessings God has already granted us. But maintaining faith and hope can bring about great blessings, as they did for Joseph. And even when our faith isn't rewarded how we







would like, maintaining that faith can still help us live happier lives.

Joseph's experience is also a testament of the superiority of the power and wisdom of God. For years Joseph's efforts seemed to get him nowhere, but through the hand of God, Joseph was released from prison and exalted just below Pharaoh (see Genesis 41:41–43). Could Joseph have foreseen or anticipated such tremendous opportunities?

Sometimes we try hard to achieve something, but our own efforts, however great, are insufficient for the task. I know Heavenly Father can bless us for our faith and obedience with even greater blessings than we hoped for initially. I trust that if I have a good attitude and make the most of difficult

*Maintaining faith and hope can bring about great blessings, as they did for Joseph. And even when our faith isn't rewarded how we would like, maintaining that faith can still help us live happier lives.*

situations, as Joseph did, in time—the Lord's time—He will “[make] bare his holy arm” (Isaiah 52:10). My toil will not have been in vain. He *will* remember us; in fact, He is constantly aware of and has good things in store for each of us if we remain faithful.

### **Abraham: Love God above All Else**

Some time ago a dating relationship with someone I cared a great deal about ended. Already anxious about being unmarried, I doubted whether I could find another person with whom I was as compatible.

Not long after, I was reminded of the story of Abraham being commanded to sacrifice Isaac (see Genesis 22:1–14). I realized that both of us were asked to give up someone we loved. Of course, my experience pales in comparison to Abraham's, but I discovered that his experience taught patterns I could follow.

Abraham waited a long time for a son to be born to him and Sarah. Isaac's birth was a miracle, and Abraham was told, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called” (Hebrews 11:18). Yet the Lord commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. How would Abraham's seed “be called” in Isaac if Isaac was sacrificed?

Knowing that—but not necessarily *how*—God would keep His promises, Abraham was obedient. His love for his son was great, but his response showed that he loved the Lord above all else. We are asked to demonstrate the same thing (see D&C 101:4–5), and we too have the promise of great reward upon our faithful endurance (see Matthew 24:13). When my relationship ended,



it was difficult to move on. Having received the promise that I will marry, moving on seemed to be unaligned with the fulfillment of that promise. But the promise gave me hope, which helped me to try again and to show Heavenly Father that I love Him above all else.

Abraham's faithfulness was rewarded not only with the life of his son but also with innumerable posterity and other blessings (see Genesis 22:15–18). We too will be rewarded for making the sacrifices God asks of us and for demonstrating our love for Him. That is the essence of the trial of our faith.

### **Zacharias: Believe That God's Promises Are Real**

Sometimes we don't know how the promises the Lord gives us could ever be fulfilled—

*Knowing that God would keep His promises, Abraham was obedient. His love for his son was great, but his response showed that he loved the Lord above all else.*

like the promise that if we desire it and remain faithful, we'll be blessed with an eternal marriage. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught about this paradox, "There may be times when we must make a courageous decision to hope even when everything around us contradicts [our] hope."<sup>1</sup>

Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, prayed faithfully and waited for a child all their lives. Finally, Zacharias was promised by an angel that his elderly wife would conceive and bear a child who would prepare the way for the Savior. So great was the blessing that it was incomprehensible to Zacharias. Though an angel had declared it, Zacharias asked, "Whereby shall I know this?" (Luke 1:18).

As with Zacharias, we may become so used to feeling disappointed in our desires—or the promised blessings seem so unbelievable—we forget that "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). Zacharias's experience has reminded me that Heavenly Father's greatest promises are real and that He always keeps them.

The stories of Joseph, Abraham, and Zacharias are not the only ones that have bolstered my faith and given me hope. There are scores of scriptural accounts of people whose faith has reminded me to have faith regarding what the Lord has promised *me*. I can hardly read a chapter of scripture nowadays without being reminded that the Lord always keeps His promises. This understanding gives me great hope for the future. ■

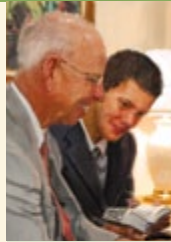
#### **NOTE**

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Infinite Power of Hope," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 23.

# Home Teachers

The Lord admonished early priesthood holders to “teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church; . . . and visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray . . . and attend to all family duties” (D&C 20:42, 47). At least in part, the home teaching program of the Church fulfills this divine direction.

“Home teaching is one of our most urgent and most rewarding opportunities to nurture and inspire, to counsel and direct our Father’s children,” taught President David O. McKay (1873–1970), ninth President of the Church. It “is a divine service, a divine call. It is our duty as home teachers to carry the divine spirit into every home and heart.”<sup>1</sup> As home teachers listen to the inspiration they receive through the Holy Ghost, Heavenly Father can direct them to provide individual, personalized guidance and service to each of His children. In return, President McKay promised that “to love the work and do our best will bring unbounded peace, joy and satisfaction to us as dedicated teachers of God’s children.”<sup>2</sup>



## WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

Here, members of the Church share how their lives have been blessed by home teachers who have answered the “divine call” to nurture and inspire God’s children.

### Helping at a Moment’s Notice

Our now 15-year-old son, Juke, has developmental disabilities, including autism and profound cognitive disabilities, that sometimes cause him to be aggressive toward himself and others. In August 2005, Juke took a sudden turn for the worse, and his doctors admitted him to a hospital far from our home.

The next morning, I looked for someone to assist me in giving our son a priesthood blessing. We had just been assigned new home teachers, and I could remember only one of them by name: John Zimmerman.

**We will never forget the quiet act of selfless service that Brother Zimmerman provided us in our time of need.**



Brother Zimmerman had a young family and was just starting his career in a high-intensity Washington, D.C. job. I called him at work, explained what had happened, and asked if he could go with me to give our son a blessing. Our visit would most likely take all day. I told Brother Zimmerman I was sure I could find someone else if he could not do it. He checked with his employer, and then told me that he could go right then.

When we arrived, Juke was less aggressive but certainly

bewildered. Brother Zimmerman anointed Juke with consecrated oil, and I sealed the anointing and gave him a blessing. After the blessing, Juke immediately became less agitated. My wife and I felt the Comforter, and as we observed Juke's calmed behavior, we knew that he did too.

We thanked Brother Zimmerman and said good-bye. But when we left a couple hours later, we found him sitting in the lobby, waiting to make sure everything was all right. We were amazed by this additional act of selflessness.

Shortly after my wife and I arrived home, Brother Zimmerman knocked on our door. He said he had felt prompted to visit us. He gave me a powerful blessing and assisted me as I blessed my wife. Finally, he told us to call him if he could do anything else. We knew he meant it.

Brother Zimmerman was our family's home teacher for less than a month, but we will never forget the Christlike act of selfless service that he provided us in our time of need.

Paul F. Wight, Virginia, USA

### Teaching by Example

**M**y husband was a member of the Church when we married, but I was not. I was content with my Christian beliefs and had no intention of joining any particular church. Still,

I wanted to support my husband in his religion since it was a significant element of his life. So when our new home teacher set up an appointment, I was prepared to join in the visit and learn more about my husband's beliefs, despite my nervousness.

Brother Wagner, our home teacher, visited consistently. My knowledge of the scriptures was limited, and I often felt intimidated by the large volume of gospel materials available to members, but Brother Wagner had a way of teaching that was never condescending; he simply supported and strengthened my understanding as though we were sharing the pursuit of knowledge together. By relating

his personal experiences and honest feelings, he motivated me to be more consistent in my scripture study and more diligent in my prayers. And it was my personal scripture study and prayers that helped me know that I should be baptized. It was a special moment for me when Brother Wagner said the opening prayer at my baptism.

Brother Wagner has continued to serve faithfully as our home teacher for more than two years. He brings the Spirit with him on every visit and shares his testimony, which helps me increase my own. He has been a true blessing in our lives.

Holly Graham, Arizona, USA



## “Even a Bishop Needs a Home Teacher”

Several years ago my wife, our four young children, and I moved to Hawaii. Although we had felt prompted to move, we struggled with the adjustment to life on an island, the distance from our extended family, and the travel required for my new assignment.

A few months after we arrived, I was called to be the bishop of our ward. During one of our first ward Priesthood Executive Council meetings, in an effort to ease the heavy home teaching burdens of our priesthood brethren, I opted not to have home teachers for our family. Despite our family’s challenges, we were fairly consistent in our scripture study and family home evening efforts, as well as in spending one-on-one time with our children. So I felt we would be fine.

I remember the rainy evening when the doorbell rang and there stood Brother Kanaile, an 85-year-old Hawaiian brother from my high priest group. He announced that his priesthood leader had assigned him to be our home teacher. I explained our lack of needs, assuring him we were fine. He responded



**Above: Brother Kanaile’s faithful visits with his Aaronic priesthood companion became a much-anticipated event for our children.**

**Left: Brother Wagner was never condescending; he simply strengthened my understanding as though we were pursuing knowledge together.**

emphatically: “Even a bishop needs a home teacher.”

It wasn’t long before I was very grateful for his assignment. Brother Kanaile’s regular visits with his Aaronic priesthood companion became a much-anticipated event for our children. He always shared a spiritual lesson, remembered birthdays or special events, and often brought a Hawaiian treat for our children. He became our children’s Hawaiian *tutu kane*, or “grandpa.”

Do I remember the specifics of each lesson he taught us? Not really, but I know he brought us the gospel message and taught our family the doctrine. I also don’t remember all of the special foods he shared or things he did. But I remember his prayers and the encouragement I felt as a young bishop. I am grateful for this dedicated home teacher and what he did to help our family. He was right: even a bishop needs a home teacher.

Jan Felix, Utah, USA

## Making Time

My father was baptized in his 20s but soon after fell away from the Church. Although he taught me much over the years, the one thing he was unable to teach me was how to be a priesthood holder. That fell to our home teacher, Brother Logan.

Brother Logan was one of the most Christlike people I’d ever known, and he was sincere in fulfilling his priesthood



## BE A REAL SHEPHERD

“Home teaching is not to be undertaken casually. A home teaching call is to be

accepted as if extended to you personally by the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

“Know well those you are to home teach. . . .

“Above all, be a genuine friend to the individuals and families you teach. . . . A friend makes more than a dutiful visit each month. A friend is more concerned about helping people than getting credit. A friend cares. A friend loves. A friend listens, and a friend reaches out. . . .

“Do not settle for mediocrity in this great priesthood program of home teaching. Be an excellent home teacher in every facet of the work. Be a real shepherd of your flock.”

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), “To the Home Teachers of the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 48, 50–51.

## Being Steadfast

When I was growing up, home teachers and priesthood leaders regularly visited my mother, Eleonore, a divorced and less-active mother raising two often-disobedient boys. Many in our ward probably viewed their efforts as a lost cause. But even though they saw virtually no progress in nearly a decade of faithful service, they were “steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works” (Mosiah 5:15) toward my family.

When I needed some summer work, I helped Bishop Mingus, one of our home teachers, install an irrigation system on his property. Brother Bray, another of our home

responsibilities. Each month for seven years, he called my father and set up an appointment to visit with our family and share a spiritual message. He established a good friendship with my father. His dedication to serving, loving, and teaching our family never wavered, even when my father turned down his invitations to come to church.

At age eight, I was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church by Brother Logan, and he was present when I received the priesthood.

teachers, told us stories about trips he took and news from his family. I still have the F-15 fighter jet belt buckle Brother Bray gave me from one of his trips to a museum. He was a quiet man, but I knew he cared.

Their commitment to their priesthood duty changed my life; our early interactions paved the way to my reactivation, my mission, my temple marriage, and now my role as a priesthood holder, father, and husband. Through years of visits, they took me from one path that led to unhappiness and tribulation and gently eased me onto the straight and narrow

When I turned 14, my first assigned home teaching companion was Brother Logan. Every month he arranged his busy schedule to accommodate our home teaching. He continued to guide me in the ways of a priesthood holder and gave me opportunities to call and set up appointments, prepare lessons for the families we taught, and bear testimony of the truths of the gospel.

Years later, I served a full-time mission. About four months into my mission, I was shocked and



saddened to receive the news of Brother Logan's death. Now, when I look back, I realize that as a missionary I used many of the attributes and skills I developed as a home teacher. I am grateful to Brother Logan for that. However, the most important thing he gave me was the example of Christian discipleship he showed by the way he lived and carried out his priesthood responsibilities.

Trevor Alan Robertson, Utah, USA

way that has brought me happiness.

My experiences help me keep an eternal perspective about home teaching families that are struggling. I realize that it might take several years for us to see the fruits of our labors, but that doesn't make our efforts any less urgent. It takes time to prepare people for their reactivation in the Church. It is worth the effort, especially to the one it affects for all eternity—the lost sheep. I rejoice daily for the blessing of being brought back into the fold, in part through loyal home teachers.

Kristian Allee, Michigan, USA



**Above: Our needs and desires had been in our home teacher's thoughts for several months. His thoughtfulness touched our family.**

**Left: Even though our home teachers saw virtually no progress in a decade of faithful service, they were "steadfast and immovable."**

## Remembering Our Needs

When we moved across the country with our two-month-old son, my husband and I needed all the help we could get. One of our biggest challenges was moving from a partially furnished apartment into an unfurnished one.

We were hard-pressed to find any affordable furniture, even at garage sales. We let our new home teachers and ward leaders know we were looking for furniture, and they helped us find inexpensive or free bookshelves, dressers, desks, and other furniture to fill our empty spaces and organize the clutter. We still needed a kitchen table, so we spent a little bit of money to buy an inexpensive card table and folding chairs. In our minds this was a temporary solution, but as time passed, it became permanent.

One day, out of the blue, our home teacher and his friend knocked on our door. They had brought us a sturdier table with four accompanying chairs. The table was a step up in size and stability from our little card table and folding chairs, and it fit just right in our apartment. They had found the set for free, so it didn't cost them or us anything.

Several months had passed since our home teacher said he would keep an eye out for a table for us, and he knew we had temporarily fixed the problem. Yet apparently our needs and desires had been in his thoughts the whole time. His thoughtfulness and vigilance in looking for months for a table brought more comfort to our home and touched our family. ■

Alysa Stewart, Illinois, USA

### NOTES

1. President David O. McKay, *Priesthood Home Teaching Handbook*, rev. ed. (1967), ii–iii.
2. McKay, *Priesthood Home Teaching Handbook*, iii.



By Elder  
Paul V. Johnson  
Of the Seventy

# MAKE YOURS A GREAT LIFE

*Your future is not determined by the conditions around you. It is determined by your faith, your choices, and your efforts.*

**T**he world today seems to be on an economic roller coaster. We see businesses and governments trying to stabilize the situation. There is conflict and war in the world. Many are abandoning morals and eternal truths in favor of the deceptions of the adversary. More and more, we see evil being called good and good evil (see Isaiah 5:20). These are challenging times.

## The Example of Faithful Parents

However, there have *always* been challenging times. My parents grew up during the Great Depression. They didn't have much in the way of worldly goods, but they had the gospel of Jesus Christ, their bodies and their minds, and a bright future.

When my father received his mission call, Europe was engaged in war, and about a week after his call came in late 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked. He left for his mission in early 1942. By the time he returned, the war had escalated to a world war that many thought would be the end of civilization, one in which

about 22–25 million military personnel and about 32–49 million civilians were killed. In addition, nearly 6 million Jews perished in the Holocaust. The amount of property damage is impossible to accurately estimate, but the earth still bears physical scars from Europe to the islands of the Pacific, even though the war ended more than 60 years ago.

Can you imagine what my father thought about his future as the whole world seemed to be spiraling downward? I don't know what his exact thoughts were, but I do know what his actions were. He joined the military on a track that would train him as a dentist, and he continued his education.

My mother came from poor immigrant parents but was able to finish college during wartime, when the ratio of women to men on campuses was skewed since so many of the young men were at war. She went on to raise eight children and lived a faithful life.

I am grateful that my parents pushed forward with faith during challenging times. Their actions were





instrumental in their personal development, and our family was blessed because of the type of people my parents became.

### Historical Accounts of Faith in Challenging Times

There are many historical figures with whom we are all familiar who went forward with faith in challenging times. One such person lived in a country occupied by the Romans. She was from humble beginnings and probably wondered about her future. Her espoused husband couldn't find a decent place for her to give birth to her son, and later, because people wanted to kill her baby, the young family had to flee to another country. It seems like such a difficult way to start out in life, yet Mary went forward and helped raise the Savior of the world. Most people who looked at her early life might have thought she didn't have much of a future, but because of her faith and willingness to do the right things, she was truly "blessed . . . among women" (Luke 1:42).

Moroni grew up in a time when his society was crumbling. (See Mormon 1–8; Moroni 1, 9.) The people rejected God and were on their way to destruction. It was a time of slippery

*Yes, we live in challenging times, but so did Mary, Moroni, and Joseph Smith. We don't have to be carried along in the current of the times.*

riches, great violence, sexual immorality, and war. Moroni's father, Mormon, almost single-handedly staved off the destruction of his people for a time. Both Mormon and Moroni lived in extremely difficult times but fulfilled their destinies.

Joseph Smith did not start out in a promising position for success as far as the world was concerned. His family was poor. As a young man he faced tremendous opposition, which continued throughout his life. Yet he persevered and overcame the obstacles in his path.

None of these people allowed the challenges they faced or the conditions of their world to determine the trajectory of their lives. They went forward with faith, and through the blessings of the Lord, they all became what they were meant to become.

### A Bright Future for You

Your future is not determined by the conditions around you. It is determined by your faith, your choices, and your efforts. Yes, you live in challenging times, but so did Mary, Moroni, and Joseph Smith. You don't have to be carried along in the current of the times. The Lord can and will help you set your own course. The challenges you face will serve to strengthen you as you move forward with your life. Each of you has a bright future, a future you cannot now fully comprehend.

How will you face your challenges? Some people complain and blame circumstances or other people for their problems. They won't let go of bad feelings. They portray themselves as victims and become bitter. They seem to spend so much time and energy justifying themselves and pushing off responsibility to others that there is no energy left to go forward with their lives.

Others seem to live in the past and dwell on how things used to be. They are so unwilling to leave the past that they don't turn around to face a future that would be bright if they approached it properly.

Some people dream about the future but don't do much to move into it with power. They don't realize that what they do—or don't do—now will profoundly affect their future.

People who go to work with faith, knowing the Lord will bless them if they do what's right, are the ones with a bright future. The title of the last conference address given by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve, (1917–2008) explained how these people handle challenges: "Come What May, and Love It." Elder Wirthlin said: "If we approach adversities wisely, our hardest times can be times of greatest growth, which in turn can lead toward times of greatest happiness."<sup>1</sup>

Your individual future is either bright or cloudy, depending on you.

I guarantee that you will face challenges. That is part of mortality. It is expected. It is OK. In fact, it is necessary. But remember, your future is bright.

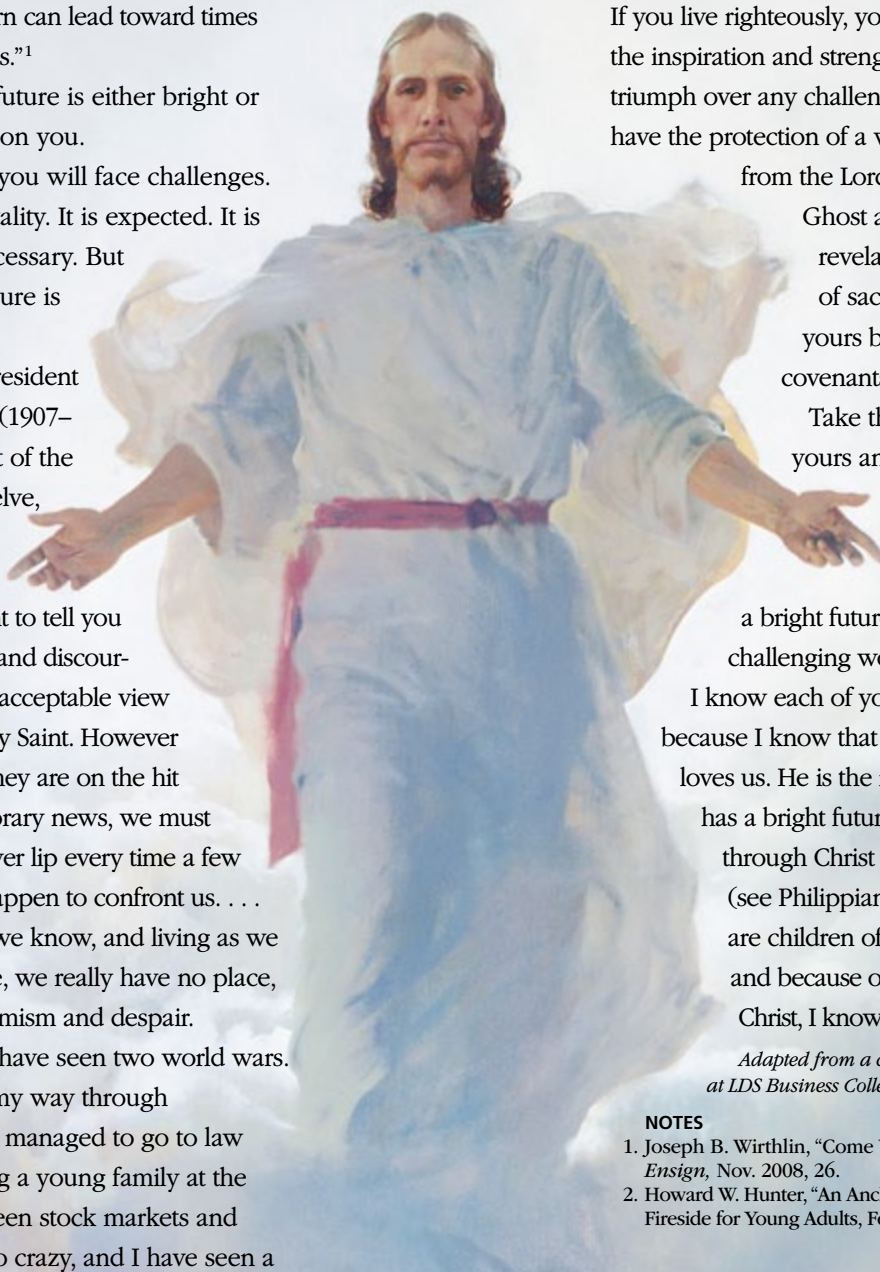
In 1993, when President Howard W. Hunter (1907–1995) was president of the Quorum of the Twelve, he told young adults:

"I am here tonight to tell you that despair, doom, and discouragement are not an acceptable view of life for a Latter-day Saint. However high on the charts they are on the hit parade of contemporary news, we must not walk on our lower lip every time a few difficult moments happen to confront us. . . .

"Knowing what we know, and living as we are supposed to live, we really have no place, no excuse, for pessimism and despair.

"In my lifetime I have seen two world wars. . . . I have worked my way through the Depression and managed to go to law school while starting a young family at the same time. I have seen stock markets and world economics go crazy, and I have seen a

*I know that the Lord lives and loves us. He is the real reason each of us has a bright future.*



few despots and tyrants go crazy, all of which causes quite a bit of trouble around the world in the process.

"So I am frank to say tonight that I hope you won't believe all the world's difficulties have been wedged into your decade, or that things have never been worse than they are for you personally, or that they will never get better."<sup>2</sup>

There are no better days than these days, because "these are [your] days" (Helaman 7:9). You are here on earth at this time for a reason. You have what it takes. You have skills, knowledge, and natural talents given to you from God. If you live righteously, you will have access to the inspiration and strength you will need to triumph over any challenge you face. You will have the protection of a worthy life; guidance

from the Lord through the Holy Ghost and prophets, seers, and revelators; and the power of sacred promises that are yours because you keep your covenants.

Take these things that are yours and have a great life!

The reason I am so confident about your ability to find a bright future in the midst of a challenging world isn't because

I know each of you individually, but because I know that the Lord lives and loves us. He is the real reason each of us has a bright future. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (see Philippians 4:13). Because we are children of our Heavenly Father and because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I know our futures are bright. ■

*Adapted from a commencement address given at LDS Business College on April 9, 2009.*

#### NOTES

1. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Come What May, and Love It," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 26.
2. Howard W. Hunter, "An Anchor to the Souls of Men," CES Fireside for Young Adults, Feb. 7, 1993.

# From Believing to KNOWING

By Chiao-yi Lin

I first met Latter-day Saint missionaries at a train station when I was 19. I could tell that there was something special about these young women, and I felt an urge to talk to them. So I approached and asked what they were doing in Taiwan. They told me they were missionaries and began to talk about the gospel. Over the course of several meetings, I learned about Jesus Christ, His restored gospel, and the Book of Mormon. It was the last of these topics—the Book of Mormon—that caused me to join the Church.

I can still remember my experience praying about the book. After reading from it one night, I closed the book, knelt down, and asked my Heavenly Father if it were true. I felt a blanket of warmth surround me, something I had never felt in the Buddhist temples I had attended all my life. This feeling was different. I knew someone was listening. In that moment I went from believing the Church was true to knowing it was true, and I decided to be baptized.



*Believing  
the Book of  
Mormon  
is true was  
only the  
beginning.*

The Book of Mormon has continued to bless my life since then. It blessed me when I served as a missionary.

It has also blessed me in my callings. While serving as an institute teacher, I learned that the Book of Mormon was written for our day.<sup>1</sup> But in preparing my lessons, I found that statement is not only generally true, but it's true for specific people in specific situations at specific times. For instance, sometimes as I prepared to teach, one of my student's faces would come into my mind, and I would recognize something particular I needed to teach for that person's benefit. Such promptings occurred frequently and were confirmed when a student would talk to me after class to let me know the lesson was exactly what he or she needed.

Finally, and perhaps most meaningfully, the Book of Mormon has guided my personal life. I remember turning to the scriptures when I was about to

end a dating relationship. I felt a great deal of anguish. But a verse I read, 2 Nephi 10:20, spoke directly to my heart and gave me a calm feeling: "Now, my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things, let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea."

Remembering the Lord, as that verse suggests, gave me courage and hope. I could rely on the "great knowledge" of the gospel that God had given me, and I could be assured that I was not "cast off." There were good things ahead.

It was a great blessing to believe the missionaries' words as I investigated the Church. It is far greater to know the truthfulness of the gospel, particularly the validity of the Book of Mormon, for myself. I know that God lives and that He teaches us directly and personally through the scriptures. ■

#### NOTE

1. See Ezra Taft Benson, "The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God," *Tambuli*, May 1988, 2; *Ensign*, Jan. 1988, 3.



**By Elder Jay E. Jensen**  
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

# THE SAVIOR

## THE MASTER TEACHER

*We are to feast upon the words of Christ—the scriptures—and, as He did, use them to teach and strengthen others.*

**U**nder the direction of His Father, Jesus Christ created worlds without number. He was the great Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament. He was born of a mortal mother, Mary, and of God the Eternal Father. He was the greatest being to live on earth. He said He came “to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34).

His message and ministry were declarations without equivocation that He is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the promised Messiah.

In His teachings He often cited Old Testament scriptures. He used the scriptures to prepare for His ministry, to resist evil and temptation, to honor and affirm the validity of past prophets, and to strengthen others. From His example we may learn to use the scriptures more effectively in our responsibilities as parents,

leaders, and teachers—He having set a perfect example in all things, including as the master teacher.

### Preparing for His Ministry

When the Lord came to earth, He had a veil of forgetfulness placed over His mind, as we do, but He, like us, progressed from grace to grace (see D&C 93:11–17). He was taught by His Heavenly Father (see John 8:28; 12:49) and by mortal teachers. As Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles pointed out: “Our knowledge of Jewish life in that age

justifies the inference that the Boy was well taught in the law and the scriptures, for such was the rule. He garnered knowledge by study, and gained wisdom by prayer, thought, and effort.”<sup>1</sup>

**“I am the bread of life:**  
he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”





His growing in knowledge before He began His ministry exemplifies the counsel He gave to Hyrum Smith in 1829: “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21).

We too can search the scriptures for instruction and inspiration as we begin our ministries, whether that ministry be a new calling, a new responsibility (such as parenthood), or simply a family home evening lesson.

### Resisting Evil and Temptation

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus was tempted by the devil. Two of the three temptations began with a barb of doubt: “If thou be the Son of God” (Matthew 4:3, 6). To resist Satan, the Savior cited three Old Testament scriptures, saying, “It is written . . .” (verses 4, 7, 10).

The Savior also taught His followers through scriptural examples how to overcome evil. Teaching people to resist evil or face dire consequences, the Master Teacher cited an Old Testament account: “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than

From His early childhood until He began His public ministry, the only story we have of Him is in a teaching role in the temple at age 12, demonstrating an unusual command of wisdom and knowledge: “After three days [Joseph and Mary] found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors [or teachers], both hearing them, and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46). The Joseph Smith Translation clarifies this verse and indicates that the teachers were listening to Jesus and asking *Him* questions.

“After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors [or teachers], both hearing them, and asking them questions.”

for that city [those who rejected His gospel]" (Matthew 10:15).

If we obey it, the word of God has an inherent protective power: "Whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them" (1 Nephi 15:24).

One of my favorite scriptures to resist Satan today is this verse: "Mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst" (D&C 38:7). It dispels forever the lie "no one will know."

### Honoring Past Prophets

The Savior acknowledged the ancient prophets and quoted what they said. In this dispensation, He commanded Sidney Rigdon to "call on the holy prophets to prove [Joseph Smith's] words" (D&C 35:23).

To give testimony of and reverence to Old Testament prophets, the Savior referred to Noah (spelled "Noe" in the New Testament; see Matthew 24:37–38); Abraham (see Luke 16:22–31; John 8:56–58); Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Matthew 8:11); Moses (see John 5:46); David (see Luke 6:3); Elijah (spelled "Elias" in the New Testament; see Luke 4:25–26); and Isaiah (spelled "Esaias" in the New Testament; see Luke 4:16–21; John 1:23). He also honored and supported His contemporary, John the Baptist (see Matthew 11:7–11).

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Savior made important connections to Old Testament prophets and their teachings concerning Him. This is illustrated by the close correlations between phrases from the Beatitudes (see Matthew 5:3–11) and from Isaiah 61:1–3.<sup>2</sup>

We too can honor past and current prophets by considering their teachings for what they are: the word and the will of the Lord

(see D&C 68:4). As we prepare to teach from the scriptures, we must prayerfully search for principles we can liken to those we teach.

### Strengthening Others

A singularly significant message in the life of the Master is "the bread of life" sermon (see John 6). It illustrates His command and use of the scriptures as well as their relevance to us.

The day before He gave this message, the Lord had worked the miracle of feeding the 5,000, gaining more followers (see John 6:5–14). If this and other miracles were not enough to help lead others to believe in Him, He openly declared in the bread of life sermon who He is. This sermon served to train His Apostles, especially Peter, whose testimony was strengthened (see verses 63–71).

The Master Teacher referred to an Old Testament event to introduce the bread of life sermon:

"Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.



### THE MASTER TEACHER

"The Savior is the master teacher. The teaching of Jesus Christ constitutes a treatise on teaching technique surpassed by none. Jesus has been described as a philosopher, an economist, a social reformer, and many other things. But more than these, the Savior was a teacher. If you were to ask, 'What did Jesus have as an occupation?' There is only one answer: He was a teacher. It is He who should be our ideal. It is He who is the master teacher."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *Mine Errand from the Lord* (2008), 336.



bread and water in the sacrament: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you” (John 6:53).

We know this sermon strengthened Peter, for he testified, “We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the son of the living God” (John 6:69). The bread of life sermon is relevant to us, for we too will believe and be certain that Jesus is the Christ when we read, study, and cite—not paraphrase—holy writ to strengthen ourselves and others.

### **Fulfilling Scripture: The Triumphal Entry**

The Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem was a tacit affirmation of His knowledge and use of scriptures: “Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Psalm 118:26; see also Mark 11:9–10). He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: . . . thy King cometh unto thee: . . . riding upon an ass” (Zechariah 9:9; see also Matthew 21:4–5).

From the beginning of His mortal ministry to the Garden of Gethsemane, the cross, and the empty tomb, Jesus the Christ had established—through ancient scripture and His ministry, miracles, and messages—that He was the promised Messiah.

“For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world” (John 6:32–33; see also Exodus 16).

To which they said, “Evermore give us this bread” (John 6:34).

His answer revealed to the spiritually endowed His divine identity as the Son of God, the promised Messiah and Savior: “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (John 6:35).

The Savior then declared the divine doctrine uniting the Atonement and the emblems of the

**“Rejoice greatly,  
O daughter of Zion:  
. . . thy King cometh  
unto thee: . . . riding  
upon an ass.”**





## Sharing the Bread of Life

By Carlos Roberto Fusco, as told to Maiby Márcia Bastos Fusco

It was a hot day in Foz do Iguaçu, Paraná, Brazil. I had traveled several hours and was tired. As a leader in the Church Educational System, I had matters to address with the bishop, who was meeting me at the church. However, he was unavailable for a few minutes when I arrived.

While I waited, a lady entered the church. She approached me and humbly asked for a small amount of money to buy bread. She explained that she and her husband were hungry, and despite being embarrassed for asking, she said she didn't have any other choice. "Just for a little bread is all," she added.

I was moved, and I took a little money from my pocket. She thought it was a lot. I told her, "Buy bread, milk, and some meat."

She was grateful and told me that her husband had been promised a job for the next Tuesday. She wanted to pay me back as soon as he received his payment.

I told her that she didn't need to. She insisted.

I told her, "Instead of paying me, you can come back to this chapel on Sunday morning. When you get here, tell anyone you see that you want to talk with the missionaries. OK?" She agreed.

The woman left. I resolved what had to be discussed with the bishop and continued traveling through Paraná, doing my work.

Many months passed, and another opportunity took me to that same meetinghouse in Foz do Iguaçu for a conference. The choir was beautiful and performed sweetly. When the conference ended, one of the members of the choir approached me. She stretched forth her hand, greeting me with a beautiful smile, and said with emotion, "Thank you, brother. You gave me not only bread to satisfy my hunger and my husband's; you also gave me the bread of life. Thank you."

I felt an immense joy as I recognized the woman as the one who had asked me for a little money several months earlier. I realized that the gospel of Jesus Christ—who declared Himself to be the Bread of Life—transforms the life of whoever accepts it.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). This declaration of His submissiveness and His accomplishment of the infinite atoning sacrifice testifies that He is the Son of God, the greatest teacher who has ever or will ever live.

The scriptures testify and teach of Jesus Christ. When we immerse ourselves in them, we will come to know Him and His voice: "These words are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man" (D&C 18:34). I have found that when I immerse myself in the scriptures first at home with my wife and family, I am more effective in my service in the Church.

I love the scriptures. I testify that they are the word of God. May we teach from them, as the Savior did, in our homes and in our callings, that "the virtue of the word of God" might have a "powerful effect" upon those we teach (Alma 31:5). ■

### NOTES

1. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 112.
2. See Thomas A. Wayment, "Jesus' Uses of the Psalms in Matthew," in Frank F. Judd and Gaye Strathearn, eds., *Sperry Symposium Classics: The New Testament* (2006), 137–49.



# Getting the Most Out of **Gospel Principles**

*Seven ways to improve  
your teaching.*



**By Joshua J. Perkey**

Church Magazines

**O**ne year ago the Church introduced the newly revised *Gospel Principles* manual as the curriculum for Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes and for the Sunday School class for new members, investigators, and members returning to activity. Teachers, class members, and recent converts alike have found the revised book a blessing. One recent convert from Argentina gave thanks for the book because it strengthened his testimony that our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, live. He read all of it in one month and it changed his life. Another

member appreciated the updating and republishing of the *Gospel Principles* manual. She loves the new images and format, but for her the best part was getting back to basics.

Helping members worldwide focus on the fundamental doctrines of the gospel is one of the key purposes of the current program of study. As Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: "All Church members will benefit by a return to the basics. A careful study of core doctrines as presented in the new and improved *Gospel Principles* manual will help members strengthen their understanding of the fundamental teachings of the gospel."<sup>1</sup>

The following ideas will help teachers make the most of this manual.



**1. Prepare in advance.** Your lessons will be more successful if you carefully read the chapter materials, including all the scripture references, several days in advance and then prayerfully consider which ideas will best address the needs of class members. Many teachers are realizing that they can't just walk into class and expect to be able to teach without preparing. The materials require them to think about their classes before they start teaching. Of course, lessons also tend to be more effective when members come to class having studied the chapter and related scriptures as well.

**2. Regularly review the introduction on pages 1–3.** This section provides specific suggestions: love those you teach, teach by the Spirit, teach the doctrine, and invite diligent learning. Remember that the best teaching will encourage class members to see how gospel principles apply to daily living.

**3. Read the “For Teachers” suggestions in each chapter.** They are drawn from *Teaching, No Greater Call* and may apply to any chapter or teaching situation, not just the chapter in which they are printed.

**4. Read from the materials in the text and the accompanying scriptures—in class.** The text is wonderfully concise, direct, and easy to

understand. And it contains the core doctrines of the gospel. This clarity will invite the Spirit and facilitate learning and discussion.

**5. Do not substitute outside materials, however interesting they may be.** Although some additional materials may add to the lesson, the manual cautions: “Stay true to the scriptures and the words in the book. As appropriate, use personal experiences and articles from Church magazines to supplement the lessons.”<sup>2</sup> There is a difference between supplementing material and substituting material. Appropriate supplemental materials include the scriptures, Church magazines, and uplifting personal experiences (see D&C 42:12–13).

**6. Use questions to inspire discussion.** Class members can learn from one another when they share insights and uplifting experiences. “Use questions at the beginning of a section in a chapter to start a discussion and send class members . . . to the text to find more information. Use questions at the end of a section to help class members . . . ponder and discuss the meaning of what they have read and apply it in their lives.”<sup>3</sup>

**7. Testify of the truths you teach and invite class members to ponder the lesson.** As you prayerfully prepare your lessons and ponder what would be best for your



### ABOVE ALL, TESTIFY

“Don’t try to dazzle everyone with how brilliant you are. Dazzle them with how brilliant

the gospel is. Don’t worry about the location of the lost tribes or the Three Nephites. Worry a little more about the location of your student, what’s going on in his heart, what’s going on in her soul, the hunger, sometimes the near-desperate spiritual needs of our people. Teach them. And, above all, testify to them. Love them. Bear your witness from the depths of your soul. It will be the most important thing you say to them in the entire hour, and it may save someone’s spiritual life.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Teaching and Learning in the Church,” *Liahona*, June 2007, 72; *Ensign*, June 2007, 104.

class, you will find this promise to be true: “Then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21). You will then rejoice with those you teach, for you will both be edified by the Spirit in truth and virtue (see D&C 50:22). ■

#### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “The New *Gospel Principles* Manual,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2010, 23–24; *Ensign*, Jan. 2010, 29–30.
2. *Gospel Principles* (2009), 2.
3. *Gospel Principles*, 5.

# The Historical Context of the New Testament

**By Thomas A. Wayment**

Associate Professor of Ancient Scripture,  
Brigham Young University

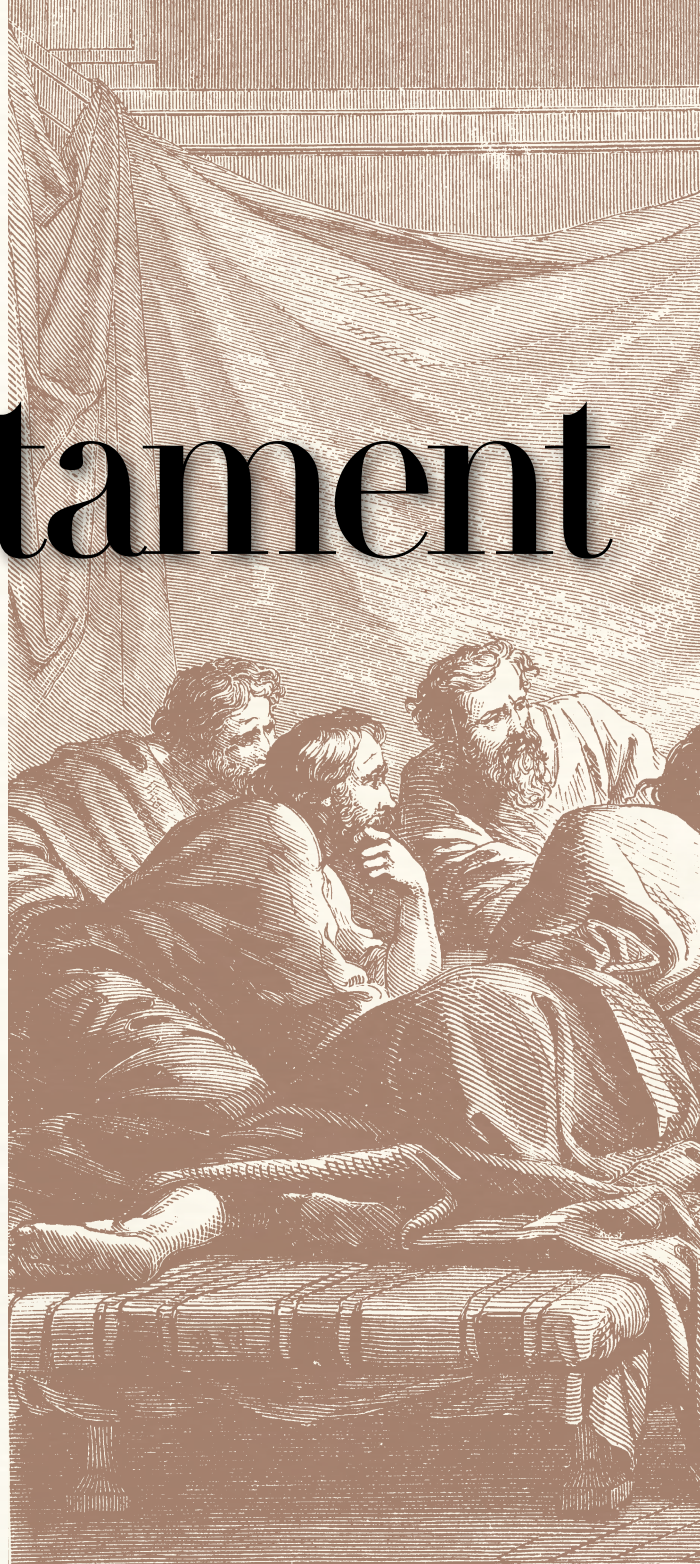
Each volume of sacred scripture has its own unique history and bears testimony to the gospel of salvation in its own distinct way. The New Testament has the distinction of being the volume of scripture that preserves the words of individuals who knew Jesus personally or who followed Him shortly after His Resurrection—making the New Testament an invaluable resource to help us come closer to the Savior and gain a glimpse of His mortal ministry. An understanding of the history of the New Testament, how it has been passed down to us, and who wrote it can increase our appreciation of this remarkable book of scripture and in turn give us greater spiritual strength as we, like the early followers of Jesus Christ, face our own trials.

## **What Is the New Testament?**

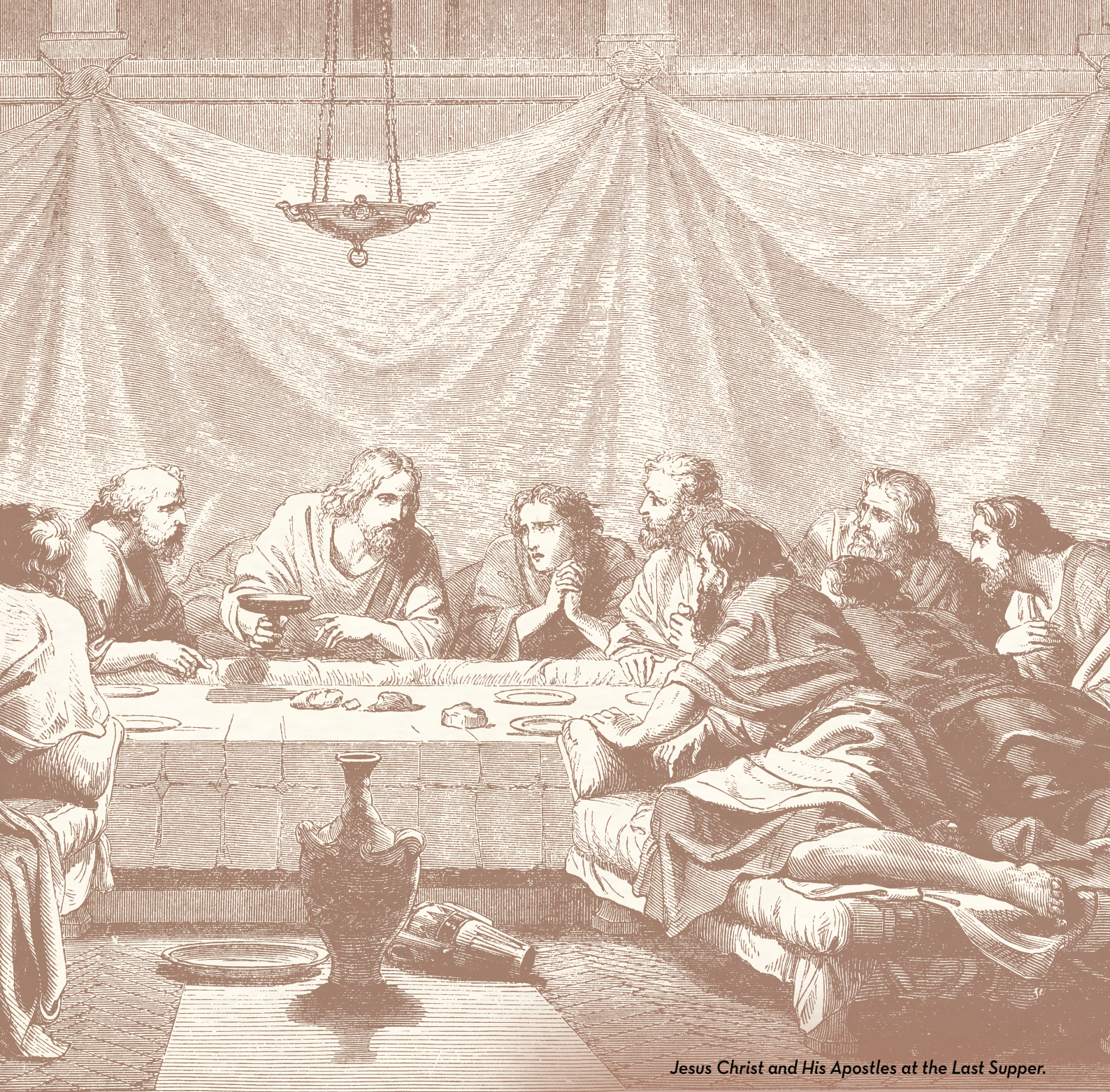
In the years shortly after Jesus died, the term “New Testament”

would not have referred to a collection of books about the Lord’s life and death but more precisely to something He said to His disciples on the night of the Last Supper: “This is my blood of the *new testament*, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28; emphasis added). The Greek words translated as “new testament” actually refer to a covenant, the new covenant the Savior extends to us through the Atonement. The writings recorded in the Bible and referred to as the New Testament describe, document, and teach about that new covenant between the Lord and His people.

The writings preserved in the New Testament focus upon different aspects of the Savior’s ministry. The New Testament begins with the Gospels, a term that means the “good news,” referring to the life, ministry, and divine role of Jesus Christ. The New Testament also contains a



*Understanding the origins of this remarkable book of scripture can inspire our study.*



*Jesus Christ and His Apostles at the Last Supper.*

history of the first missionary efforts of the Church (the book of Acts); letters from early leaders, such as Peter and Paul, that admonish the early Christians (who were also called Saints) to remain true to the faith; a

testimony (Hebrews); and an apocalypse (Revelation) that promises the return of the Lord in the latter days. Each of the writers has a different perspective to offer, and each wrote with a specific audience in mind rather

than attempting to fill in perceived gaps in the historical record. In the middle of the fourth century A.D., the 27 books that record the new covenant of the Lord were gathered together and ordered as they appear today.



The early Saints hearing one of Paul's epistles.

## How Was the New Testament Passed Down to Us?

From the larger group of disciples, Jesus called 12 men as Apostles. Those men followed Him throughout His ministry, suffered with Him, and also enjoyed triumphs and Spirit-filled experiences. After Jesus died, the Apostles, along with other faithful followers, began to record their experiences. Two events may have triggered their desire to preserve their records about the life of Jesus: first, Jerusalem and the temple fell to a Roman army in A.D. 70. Second, the forces of

apostasy were already at work (see Acts 20:29–30). Therefore, many of the writings in the New Testament were recorded to help the faithful see their way through the calamity and controversy of their day.

Looking back on their experiences, we can learn how they faced troubling times and how the good news of the gospel became a steadying power in the struggle against the forces of apostasy.

Toward the end of the first century,

all of the writings now preserved in the New Testament were completed and circulated widely among the branches of the Church. Scribes made copies of the texts on papyrus and then later on parchment,

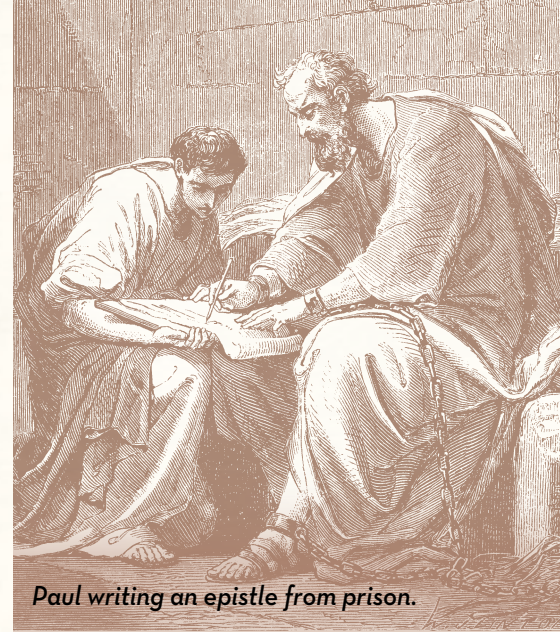
*Many of the writings in the New Testament were recorded to help the faithful see their way through the calamities of their day.*

but there were relatively few copies available. Church members gathered the books that were available to them and read and studied the words of the Lord and the Apostles. One notable setback to the circulation of the scriptures was the persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor Diocletian in A.D. 303. He ordered that the Christian scriptures be burned and forced Christians to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. Many faithful individuals hid the sacred texts during those years of persecution. Later, when the first Christian emperor, Constantine, ordered new copies of the scriptures to be made, his scholars were able to recover books that had been used in the branches prior to Diocletian's edict. Our modern printed editions of the New Testament trace their ancestry to the copies of the Bible made during Constantine's day and therefore back to those individuals who sacrificed their safety to preserve the new covenant of the Lord.

Not long after Constantine had directed the New Testament to be copied and circulated anew, the books that compose our current Bible came to be organized in their present order. This order follows a pattern set by the Old Testament. The New Testament contains the Law (the Gospels), the history of Christianity (Acts), and the Prophets (Romans through Revelation). Both the Old and New Testaments end with a promise of the Lord's return (Malachi and Revelation). The placement of these prophetic works also emphasizes a forward-looking hope of salvation and future revelation.

### Who Wrote the New Testament?

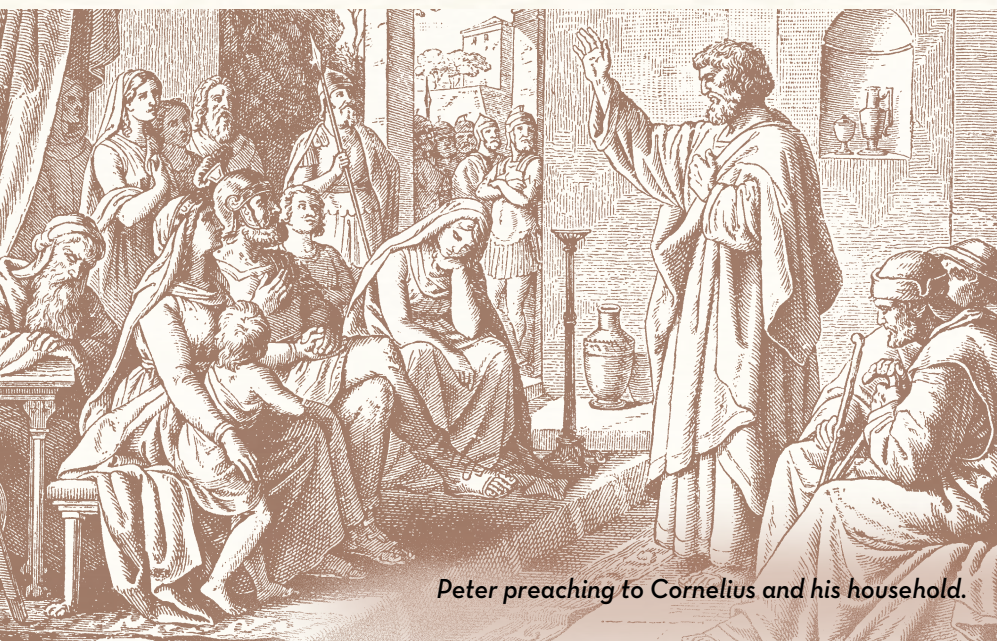
Each author of the New Testament wrote with a distinct perspective on the saving mission of Jesus Christ. Two of the Gospels were written by Apostles: Matthew and John. These apostolic witnesses provide an eyewitness testimony to the life of Jesus. Two later followers of the Lord also



*Paul writing an epistle from prison.*

wrote Gospels: Mark and Luke, who testified to what they had felt and heard. Both of these men were at one time companions of Paul (see Acts 12:25; 2 Timothy 4:11) and reflect in part the interests of the growing number of Saints who lived outside of Judea and who had never known the Lord in His lifetime. Instead, their accounts provide a vivid testimony of Him in whom they believed.

Paul's letters are likely the earliest writings in the New Testament, although they were not all written at the same time. His testimony was borne of experience as a missionary, from several powerful visions (see Acts 9:1-6; 2 Corinthians 12:1-7), and through personal association with Peter and others (see Galatians 1:18-19). He wrote largely to settle disputes within the branches, but at other times he wrote to his personal friends (Timothy and Titus). In one letter Paul asks that a slave owner accept the return of a runaway slave whom Paul had met while they were in prison (Philemon). Traditionally, the book of Hebrews is ascribed to Paul, although the usual introduction wherein he identifies himself as the



*Peter preaching to Cornelius and his household.*



*Peter and John preaching and healing.*

author is not present. Regardless, the book testifies of how we can boldly come to the Lord through faith. Included in the New Testament after Paul's letters, Hebrews is a treatise on having faith in the face of adversity.

The short Epistle of James was also written quite early and contains references to Jesus's teachings from the Sermon on the Mount that were transmitted orally and separately from the written Gospel of Matthew (see James 1:13; 4:12; 5:12). James, the Lord's younger brother, is the probable author of this epistle. He was privileged to know and see the resurrected Savior (see 1 Corinthians 15:7) and played an important role in many events in the Church's history (see Acts 15:13–29).

The New Testament also contains two letters by the Apostle Peter and three by the Apostle John. Both urged Christians to be faithful; Peter in particular was concerned about fidelity during times of trial.

Jude is one of the latest books written in the New Testament. Like James, this book was also probably written by

one of the Lord's brothers ("Juda" in Mark 6:3). Jude wrote in an attempt to quell growing apostasy in the branches.

Finally, the New Testament ends with the revelation to the Apostle John, who recorded a vision of the Lord's return in glory to usher in His millennial reign. That vision describes in vivid detail the struggle between good and evil. Most of the chapters deal with events that were in the future



#### **EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS**

"I love the New Testament's apostolic travels and miracles and the letters of Paul. Most of all, I love its eyewitness accounts of the words and the example and the Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ. I love the perspective and peace that come from reading the Bible."

**Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Miracle of the Holy Bible," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 81.**

for John, including events in the latter days—our day.

#### **For Whom Was the New Testament Written?**

Because the New Testament is properly a new covenant between the Lord and those who have faith in Him, the books are intended for all those who seek to know Him, whether in this dispensation or in previous dispensations. Originally, the authors of the New Testament wrote texts that could be of immediate use in the branches of the Church in their day, with an understanding that they were recording the most important events in the history of humankind. John, for example, viewed his writings as a testimony: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). Others, such as Luke, wrote with the intent to document the history:

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a



## CHILDREN

### Where Is It in the Scriptures?

Listed below are eight stories from the scriptures. Find which book of scripture each story comes from. If you're not sure, look up the subject of the story in the index, Topical Guide, or Guide to the Scriptures.

- Nephi breaks his hunting bow. (1)
- Noah builds the ark. (2)
- The Word of Wisdom is given. (3)
- Esther saves her people. (4)
- The prodigal son returns home. (5)
- Captain Moroni makes the title of liberty. (6)
- Jesus teaches the Sermon on the Mount. (7)
- The Kirtland Temple is dedicated. (8)

Now find the numbers in the puzzle that match the number in parentheses. Color those spaces the color listed below for that book of scripture.

Old Testament=blue

Book of Mormon=yellow

New Testament=red

Doctrine and Covenants=brown

declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

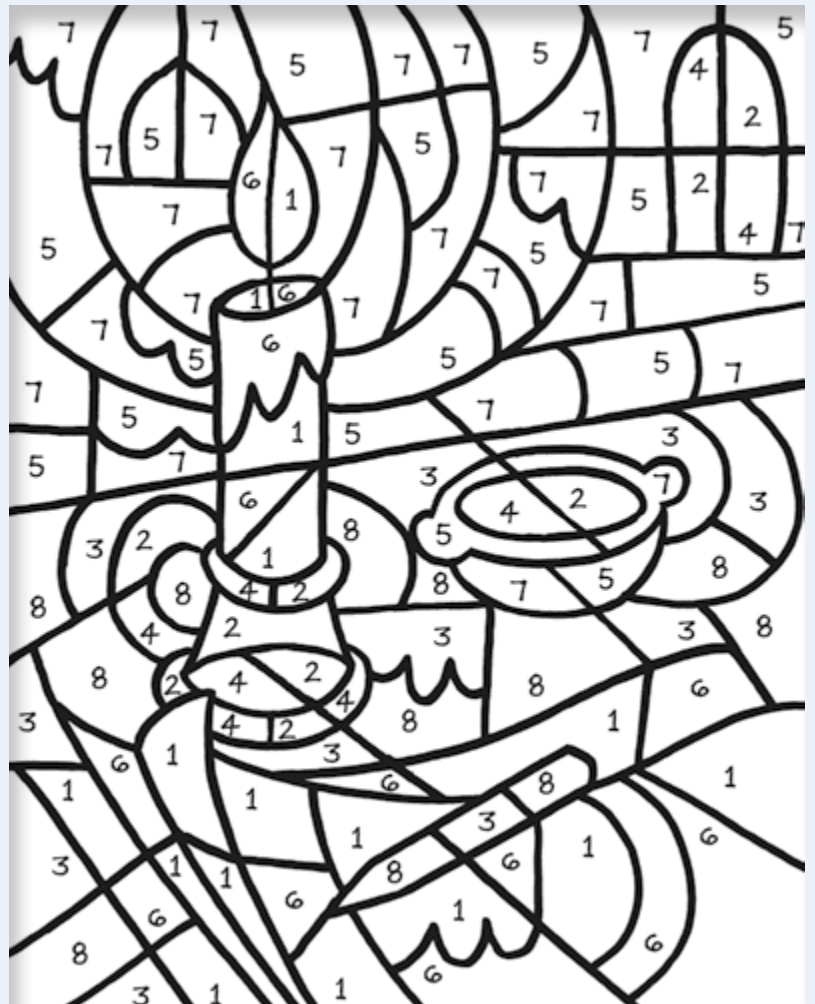
“Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

“It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order” (Luke 1:1–3).

Early Christians were diverse, some coming from Jewish families, while others had been raised in Gentile homes, while still others likely had very little formal religion in their lives prior to being baptized. They were, in effect, a mirror of today's diverse group of Saints. Therefore, their struggles can reveal to us powerful lessons on how to overcome wickedness and remain faithful despite trial and temptation. They also show us how the branches struggled when they were very small and how there was safety in the words of the apostles and prophets.

#### A Testimony for Today

The New Testament reveals that during uncertain times, when some would not hearken to the call of the gospel, there was safety for those who “continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). Other examples teach us how even the righteous are tried (see 1 Corinthians 10:13) and how the heart of the gospel message is as simple today as it was 2,000 years ago: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). Like the Doctrine and Covenants, in which the Prophet Joseph Smith bore the testimony “that he lives!” (D&C 76:22), the New Testament bears a similar testimony that the tomb was empty on Easter morning: “He is not here: for he is risen” (Matthew 28:6). ■



So They Will Know

# Their Heritage

By Don L. Searle

Church Magazines

**R**angi Parker didn't start out to be a historian. She was a well-known entertainer in her native New Zealand. But an unrelenting feeling that she needed to help preserve the history of her Maori people led her to develop a historical archive of great value to her country—a work for which the Queen of England has honored her.

Sister Parker has spent the past 20-plus years gathering the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints among the Maori because, she says, “our generation of young people need to know who they are.”

She was concerned that younger members of the Church might not know about or understand the depth of faith shown by Maori great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents in accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The history she has been permitted to collect “is very sacred, and very special for the whole of the country,” Sister



PHOTO OF RANGHI PARKER BY DON SEARLE; ALL OTHER PHOTOS ARE FROM THE RANGHI PARKER COLLECTION



Parker says. “I see the positive things it will help the people of this generation to know about their ancestors.”

While Maori transmitted their history orally, missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who worked among them wrote things down and took photographs. What Rangi Parker has collected is the story of the work of LDS missionaries among the Maori, as told in the missionaries’ journal accounts and letters. She has also made audio and video recordings



of memories from many former missionaries who are still living.

Some of those recordings made an important cultural contribution because the former missionaries were able to speak and bear their testimonies in classic Maori—a more formal language that is no longer taught. The missionaries had learned it from older Maori decades ago while working in New Zealand.

Rangi Parker’s interest in the history of her Maori people began in the early 1970s, when she still had young children at home. But she turned to historical research in earnest in the mid-1980s, after her children were grown and after a serious automobile accident left her with time to contemplate this history’s importance.

The items she collected include journals, correspondence, other documents, photographs, and a bit of amateur movie film. There are audiotapes of talks by important individuals and of music by local choirs, as well as the videotaped reminiscences by former missionaries. There are also a number of

**Photos in Rangi Parker’s collection help sketch out history of the Church in New Zealand, including the influence of leaders like Elder Matthew Cowley (top left, with two New Zealanders). The Maori knew him as a missionary, as a mission president, and as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.**





College of New Zealand.

Many of the items Sister Parker collected are tied to Elder Matthew Cowley (1897–1953) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who spent many years among the Maori and was beloved by them and by Sister Parker. As a baby, she was given a name and a blessing by Elder Cowley.

She has made several trips to the United States in connection with her historical work, and almost every time someone has approached her offering to donate a historical item of some kind to her archive.

In 2008, Sister Parker donated a one-terabyte computer hard drive full of information she had collected to the Church History Department. She also has donated copies of original documents from her archive to the Church History Department, and in turn the department has given

her copies of other documents for her archive in New Zealand.

artifacts—hand-decorated or hand-woven ceremonial items—that may have been given as gifts to missionaries decades ago and that have now been donated to Sister Parker’s archive by their families.

Much of the material she has gathered was produced by missionaries before 1950. Some of the valuable items also came from labor missionaries who helped build the temple in Hamilton, New Zealand, and the nearby institution that became the Church





## GATHERING CHURCH HISTORY IN YOUR AREA

Steve Olsen, senior historic sites curator in the Church History Department, says it would be helpful to have Church members all over the world helping locate Church history documents, photographs, or artifacts for the department. Such local and regional efforts could become a major part of the gathering of Church history in the future.

Chad Orton, an archivist in the Church History Department, says, “We really can’t do what we have been asked to do in the scriptures—document the history of the Church—without the members letting us know what they have.”

If you have or know of items that help establish the history of the Church in your area, contact the Church History Department at [lds.org/churchhistory/donations](https://www.lds.org/churchhistory/donations) to make them aware of the items. Church history staff will be glad to visit with you about the best way to document and preserve, or to donate historical items, Brother Orton says. The participation of local members is vital because they know the people, events, and items that are significant to the history of the Church in their area.

Sister Parker’s work is “extraordinary. It is one of the finest collections in the world on local Church history, and she’s done it largely by herself,” says Steve Olsen, senior historic sites curator in the Church History Department. “What I’d love to do is stimulate similar initiatives by Latter-day Saints all over the world.” (See accompanying article above.)

Others outside the Church also recognize the value of her work. A national television network in New Zealand has aired three documentaries drawing on the history Sister Parker has collected. In 2008, she was awarded the Queen’s Service Medal; she was among those included on the annual Queen’s Birthday Honours List. She was nominated for the award by the member of the New Zealand parliament

representing her area, and the nomination was supported by an executive of the television production company with which she worked.

“The history that the missionaries have kept is amazing with these photographs and journal entries,” she says. “It’s something that has excited me since I started 20 years ago, and still excites me because of the historical value of it all.” ■



# THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

*If we, like clay, are malleable in the hands of the Lord, we will find happiness.*



*Heber C. Kimball was born on June 14, 1801, in Sheldon, Vermont. He was ordained an Apostle on February 14, 1835, and later sustained as first counselor to President Brigham Young on December 27, 1847. President Kimball died on June 22, 1868, in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the age of 67. President Kimball was a potter by trade, and he frequently referred to the Saints as “clay in the hands of the potter.” He delivered this discourse on April 2, 1854.*

## By President Heber C. Kimball (1801–1868)

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Ask you, brethren and sisters, if you expect to go into heaven, if you do not do His will on earth as it is done in heaven? Can those persons who pursue a course of carelessness, neglect of duty, and disobedience, when they depart from this life, expect that their spirits will associate with the spirits of the righteous in the spirit world? I do not expect it, and when you depart from this state of existence, you will find it out for yourselves. . . .

That man or woman who will not learn the principle of subjection, and become like clay in the hands of the potter, will be led astray. . . .

The Saints are receiving their endowment, and preparing for that which is in the future; to dwell in the heavens, and sit upon thrones, and reign over kingdoms and dominions, principalities and powers; and as this work progresses, the works of Satan will increase, and he will continue to present one thing after another, following up the work of God, and increasing means of deception, to lead astray such men and women,

***“I would like to see all this people do right, and keep the commandments of God.”***—Heber C. Kimball



and take them captive. As the work of God increases in power and extent upon the earth, so will the works of Satan increase. I expect that tribulation will be upon the wicked, and continue from this time until they are swept off from the earth. I just as much expect these things as I do to see the sun rise and set tomorrow.

I would like to see all this people do right, and keep the commandments of God. I would like to see them fulfil their covenants, and live up to their vows and promises, and fulfil their obligations, for they have obligated themselves before God, and before angels, and before earthly witnesses, that they would do this. . . .

Comparing us to clay that is in the hands of the potter, if that clay is passive, I have power as a potter to mold it and make it into a vessel unto honor. Who is to mold these vessels? Is it God Himself in person, or is it His servants, His potters, or journeymen, in company with those He has placed to oversee the work? The Great Master Potter dictates His servants, and it is for them to carry out His purposes, and make vessels according to His designs; and when they have done the work, they deliver it up to the Master for His acceptance; and if their works are not



good, He does not accept them; the only works He accepts, are those that are prepared according to the design He gave. God will not be trifled with; neither will His servants; their words have got to be fulfilled, and they are the men that are to mold you, and tell you what shape to move in. . . .

Now suppose I subject myself enough, in the hands of the potter, to be shaped according as he was dictated by the Great Master potter, that rules over all things in heaven and on earth, He would make me into a vessel of honor.

There are many vessels that are destroyed after they have been molded and shaped. Why? Because they are not contented

with the shape the potter has given them, but straightway put themselves into a shape to please themselves; therefore they are beyond understanding what God designs, and they destroy themselves by the power of their own agency, for this is given to every man and woman, to do just as they please. . . .

If we are united, and the Priesthood is united, and the families of this Church, with their husbands at their head, are united, we stand, and all hell, with the devil at their head, have nothing to do with us; they cannot move us. But if we are divided we fall.

What do you say to our being one, and clinging together? . . . Would we not

be a happy company? It is that alone that will make you truly happy; and to be perfectly limber in the hands of the potter like clay. What makes the clay snap? Because it wants its own way; and you cannot be happy unless you submit to the law of God, and to the principles of His government.

When a person is miserable, wretched, and unhappy in himself, put him in what circumstances you please, and he is wretched still. If a person is poor, and composes his mind, and calmly submits to the providences of God, he will feel cheerful and happy in all circumstances, if he continues to keep the commandments of God. ■

*“Now suppose I subject myself enough, in the hands of the potter, . . . He would make me into a vessel of honor.”*—Heber C. Kimball

# Carrying Others

## TO THE POOL OF BETHESDA

By Ann E. Tanner



*There are many in the Church today who “wait by the pool of Bethesda,” hoping to be carried into the healing waters. Who will help them?*

In the fifth chapter of John, the Savior goes to Jerusalem during the “feast of the Jews,” or Passover (see verse 1). He decides to visit the pool of Bethesda. Tradition had it that when the waters of the pool moved, or were troubled by an angel (verse 4), the first person immersed in the water

would be completely healed.

We know that the pool attracted the “blind, halt, withered,” and others who were sick or had disabilities (verse 3). The day the Savior visited was no different.

“And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.





“When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?”

“The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

“Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked” (verses 5–9).

There are many in the Church today who wait, metaphorically speaking, by the pool of Bethesda hoping to be carried into the healing waters. War veterans might suffer from horrific memories and broken bodies. Other Saints might suffer from the isolation of depression or addiction. Widows live alone or face failing health; families feel devastated by a child’s illness or an unexpected accident; and caregivers work long, lonely hours taking care of a family member. Who will carry these infirm to the pool?

The Savior provided five distinctive examples during His visit to the pool that can serve as guidelines to us in ministering to the sick and afflicted:

1. He looked for one in need.
2. He listened without criticism.
3. He often gave anonymously.
4. He understood and acknowledged grief or disease.
5. He followed up with the sufferer.

### Look for a Need

Isn’t it interesting that Jesus Christ made it a point to visit the pool of Bethesda during Passover? At a time when He could have focused solely on the rituals and activities of the Jewish holy days, He looked to help those who were in need.

As a first responder for the American Red Cross, I worked with victims of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. A week after the hurricane hit, a man walked into my office. His legs were grotesquely swollen, and I asked him what had happened. He told me that after the floods destroyed his neighborhood, he found himself alone in chest-deep water. Many of his neighbors were stranded in their attics or on rooftops. He immediately looked for a skiff or small dinghy to bring his friends to higher ground. For hours he sloshed through filthy, polluted water that was full of debris to obtain that boat. (During that time, he sustained numerous cuts that caused his legs to become infected, endangering his life.) Finally, after almost a full day, he located a dinghy. For the next 24 hours straight he rescued dozens of people from their flooded homes. Here was a man who had looked for a need and used his courage and skills to fill it.

Not all needs are so obvious. When a relative of mine was swept from a jetty in Northern California and lost her husband in the same accident, many family members rushed to her side. My brother-in-law very quietly and without fanfare used his skills as an attorney to gather the evidence and legal documents necessary to help this relative obtain a death certificate for her husband, whose body was not recovered. Having the death certificate allowed my relative to access finances for her medical care and daily living. We can all use our specific talents and skills to fill a need.

### Listen without Criticism

In John 5:6 we learn that the Savior saw the infirm man “and knew that he had been now a long time in that case.” The Savior allowed the man to explain his situation and his need. Because we are not omniscient, we need to first listen—and do so without being critical.

Often, what is needed most is for us to be prayerful and to listen without giving advice or platitudes. People who are suffering don’t need our explanations for their

*Learning about grief can increase your empathy and compassion and improve your ability to look for needs.*



condition. Our well-meaning attempts to put the situation in perspective (our perspective) can unintentionally come across as demeaning or insensitive. In preparing this article and conduct-

ing research, I asked numerous individuals what had been most helpful in returning to health and functionality. Every person said they needed someone to listen to their story or situation without being critical.

I was taken aback by some of the comments that others had made to these individuals in their sorrow or illness. Statements such as “Don’t worry, you still have your other children,” “I know how you feel, and it’s not that bad,” “You’ll find another husband,” “You must have done something wrong in your previous life,” “I don’t want to catch your cancer,” or “Now tell me again how your child died,” increase hurt, isolation, and suffering. Even if such comments are said with the best of intentions, they are best left unsaid.

When we are prayerful, the Spirit can help us know what to say. We might think about saying “I’m so sorry for your loss,” or “I don’t know exactly how you feel, but I’m happy to help in any way possible,” or simply give a hug, or talk to the grieving person about a favorite memory of their loved one. In doing so, we are listening and responding in a Christlike way.

### **Serve Anonymously**

After Jesus Christ healed the man at the pool of Bethesda, the man took up his bed and walked. He was stopped by the Jewish elders and asked why he was cured on the Sabbath and who had done this. The man did not know what to tell them, “for Jesus had conveyed himself away” (John 5:13). Jesus did nothing to bring glory to Himself, but in

all things glorified the Father, setting the perfect example.

Many inside and outside the Church give of their time, talents, and other resources anonymously. A family in

my ward, whose daughter suffered from a life-threatening illness, went to Florida for treatment thanks to a charitable foundation. One night the family decided to go out to dinner on their own and splurge a little bit. After a feast of a meal at a popular restaurant, the father asked for the check. The waitress came over to the table and said, “Oh, there’s no charge. Someone here paid your bill.” The family was stunned. As the mother put it: “I instantly teared up and asked who had done it. She said that they wanted to remain anonymous. All I could do was say, ‘Tell them thank you!’ We got up and left, once again humbled by the generosity of others, even a complete stranger! People are so good.”

### **Learn about Grief**

We know from other scripture that Jesus Christ knows intimately all that we suffer and experience. As Isaiah 53:5 teaches, He “was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” Jesus Christ had learned about and experienced what we suffer so that He could “know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12).

We also can learn and study about what typically happens to individuals in time of crisis. Know that people tend

to lose their concentration and ability to think clearly for sustained periods. Know that victims and patients are not always able to maintain normal sleep patterns. Know that many feel a sense of helplessness and numbness.<sup>1</sup> Know



that grief is a normal and natural reaction to loss<sup>2</sup> and that the victim might not have the energy to respond to requests and questions. Be prayerful and as you learn these things, you can increase empathy and compassion for the individual and improve your ability to look for needs.

### Follow Up with the Sufferer

After the Savior healed the man at the pool of Bethesda, the Savior sought him out at the temple (John 5:14). Jesus then forgave the man of his sins; at that point, the healed man finally knew who cured him. Jesus Christ, who had already done so much for this man, made it a point to seek him out again and cure him of an even more serious illness: his sins. As a result, *complete* healing occurred.

Years ago I worked with a woman whose 16-year-old son had committed suicide. The depth of emotional pain was nearly unbearable for her. She told me that the kindest act anyone did for her happened every year on her son's birthday. On that day, a friend of this woman called her, sent her a card, or took her to lunch in celebration of the boy's birthday. "Someone remembered my son," she told me. "I was so afraid that he would be forgotten."

Many with devastating disease, disability, trauma, or grief face years of suffering. Grief follows no set timeline. As time passes, those who grieve learn to make a life for themselves, but it's still common for them to experience sorrow and yearning. One woman told me that even though her son had passed away 21 years earlier, she still had memories of him "come out of the blue," and felt the sadness return.

While help and assistance at the time of a painful event is certainly important, trauma survivors, people who are grieving, or victims of other distressing situations can encounter several difficult times afterward. For instance, increased sensitivity is especially helpful at the three-month and one-year mark after the distressful event.<sup>3</sup> Anniversaries and holidays are delicate times as well.

People might also appreciate consideration or attention during average days. A friend of mine who spent seven years caring for her mother, who had Alzheimer's, told me: "So often I wished someone would just come by and visit



### THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL

"At the final day the Savior will not ask about the nature of our callings. He will not inquire about our material possessions or fame. He will ask if we ministered to the sick, gave food and drink to the hungry, visited those in prison, or gave succor to the weak (see Matthew 25:31–40). When we reach out to assist the least of Heavenly Father's children, we do it unto Him (see Matthew 25:40). That is the essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (1917–2008), "The Great Commandment," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 30.

my mom—or me. Mom was an integral part of this community for over 50 years, and it just felt like people forgot her—and me.

"I still remember in detail when a friend and her daughter just dropped by and took Mom out for ice cream. What a blessing."

Finally, no tragedy happens in a vacuum. Every person experiencing a life-threatening disease, natural disaster, or grief has family members and friends who are directly affected. They too need help and healing.

When my husband was in a serious pedestrian accident some years ago, a mission president drove for more than two hours late at night on the back roads of the Chilean countryside to our missionary son's apartment. The mission president wanted to be with my son personally to give him the news of the accident, to comfort him, and to be with him as he called his dad. This sensitive mission president provided a sense of relief, hope, and love to our anxious son.

The Savior performed many miracles during His earthly ministry, including the one He performed at Bethesda. Ultimately, healing comes from the Savior Himself, but we can help continue His work of making people whole as we minister to those who face sickness, grief, or disabilities. By using the Savior as our guiding light, we too can learn to find a need, listen without criticism, give anonymously, learn about disease and grief, and follow up with the sufferer. ■

#### NOTES:

1. J. William Worden, *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy* (2002), 11–17.
2. John W. James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (1998), 3.
3. J. William Worden, *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy* (1991), 49.

## COULD I LEAVE MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER?

**W**hen I turned 21, I wanted to serve a mission. My great-grandmother, Margarita Sippo de Lallana, supported my decision even though that meant she would be alone. She had reared me since I was small, and I was concerned about who would care for her while I served.

We had been baptized in 1978, when I was 11 and my great-grandmother was 73. We soon quit attending our meetings, but concerned brothers and sisters from the Church came looking for us.

I became active again, and ward members looked forward to my ordination. “We’re going to have a deacon!” they would say excitedly. At that time our ward had no Aaronic Priesthood holders. I became the president of the deacons quorum because there weren’t any other deacons. I wondered why

they would give me such a calling, but I came to understand that ward leaders were training me in priesthood responsibilities. As a result, I tried to be faithful.

My grandmother, however, remained less active, attending meetings only occasionally. But she supported my decision to serve because she knew in her heart the gospel is true.

When I turned in my missionary papers in 1990, most full-time missionaries called from Córdoba served in the Argentina Buenos Aires North or South Missions. I was sure I would be called to one of those two missions and not be too far away from my great-grandmother.

Later, when my stake president called, he told me that I needed

a passport because I was going to Colombia instead! Despite my on-going concerns, my great-grandmother encouraged me to go. Just before I left, she promised that she would return to church the very next Sunday and go to the temple before I returned. This was difficult to believe but made it easier for me to leave her.

While I was on my mission, she did exactly what she had promised. Although in her 80s, she not only attended all of her meetings but also arrived on time. And she prepared for and went to the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple.

After a 12-hour, all-night bus ride returning from that first trip to the temple, my great-grandmother arrived at our ward meetinghouse on Sunday morning at 8:30, shortly before

Church meetings began. Our stake president, Rúben Spitale, told her, “Let me take you home so you can rest.”

“No,” she replied. “I’m going to church.” And she did.

After I returned from my mission, we attended the temple together three times before she passed away in 2000. Because of my mission, we were both blessed. Had I stayed home, I’m confident none of these blessings would have occurred. ■

Hugo Fabián Lallana, Córdoba, Argentina

***Just before I left on my mission, my less-active great-grandmother promised that she would return to church the very next Sunday and go to the temple before I returned.***

## WE LISTENED TO THE SPIRIT

One morning my missionary companion and I decided to go tracting in a small community in our assigned area in the southern Philippines. While we were busy knocking on doors, a man approached us and asked what we were doing. We could tell that he had been drinking.

Thinking that he was not really interested in our message, we handed him a pamphlet about the purpose of life. We then told him that if he would read the pamphlet and not drink that evening, we would come to his home to explain the purpose of life. He nodded and said he would wait for us. We hurriedly went on our way to a scheduled teaching appointment.

We really had no intention of returning to teach him that night, but every day afterward as we passed his house, I felt an impression to stop. I would immediately disregard the feeling, however, and justify my decision by telling myself that he was probably too drunk to listen.

After a few days the prompting became so strong that I could no longer resist it. As we knocked on his door, we were met by a startled lady who asked us why we had not returned earlier, as we had promised. She said her husband had waited for us that night and that for the first time in their married life, he had not been drinking.

We were embarrassed and apologized profusely. We set an appointment to return that night to teach her and her husband. Soon afterward Brother Gumabay (name has been changed) repented of all his worldly vices, was baptized, and became a pillar in the community.

A few days after his baptism, I was transferred to another area and lost contact with the family. All I could do was hope and pray that they would stay active in the Church.


Later I learned that the small community where the Gumabay family lived had a branch and then a ward. Brother Gumabay was called to be the bishop of that ward. I also learned that most of

his relatives had joined the Church.

When I eventually returned to visit my old missionary area, I learned that many people had joined the Church there because of the good example of Bishop Gumabay, who had put his life in the hands of the Lord and placed Him at the helm of his family and daily activities.

I am so grateful we listened to the promptings of the Spirit to visit the Gumabay home. Through this experience I came to comprehend what the Lord meant when He said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12). ■

Michael Angelo M. Ramírez,  
New Zealand



**W**e really had no intention of returning to teach the man that night, but every day afterward as we passed his house, I felt an impression to stop.

## CALL YOUR HOME TEACHERS

**M**any years ago when our four children were small, my husband took a job in another state while I stayed behind until our two older children finished school for the year. We had recently been assigned new home teachers, who had the chance to visit only twice before my husband was transferred.

One night after putting the children to bed, I heard our baby girl crying in her room. When I picked her up, I noticed that she was burning with fever. I considered taking her to the hospital, but a quick perusal of our new insurance policy showed that it covered only residents of Idaho—the state where my husband now worked. The rest of us were still residents of the state of Washington.

I grew alarmed when I took our daughter's temperature—105 degrees Fahrenheit (41 degrees C). I immediately knelt in prayer and fervently asked for help. An answer came that I would never have considered: "Call your home teachers."

The hour was growing late, and I knew that the two men, Brothers Halverson and Bird, had undoubtedly retired for the night. But I picked up the phone and called Brother Bird anyway, quickly telling him what was wrong. Within five minutes, at 11:00 p.m., my home teachers were at the front door—in suits and ties.

By this time our baby's cheeks and

eyes were red, and her hair was plastered with sweat. She whimpered with pain, but Brothers Bird and Halverson were calm as they took her. Then, laying their hands on her head, they gave her a blessing and told her in the name of the Savior to be healed.

When I opened my eyes after the blessing, I could hardly believe what I saw. My daughter was giggling and squirming to be let down to play. Her fever was gone!

"I could feel her cool down as we administered to her," Brother Bird

said to me as we all watched my child in amazement. They soon left, after which I was up for several hours with a baby who wanted to stay awake and play. I didn't mind a bit.

Many years have passed since that night when two ministering angels, in the form of home teachers, blessed my child. Soon afterward we moved to Idaho and lost touch with them, but I will always be grateful to two kind home teachers who came at the eleventh hour on the Lord's errand. ■

Diana Loski, Pennsylvania, USA

**I grew alarmed when I took our daughter's temperature. I immediately knelt in prayer and fervently asked for help.**



## WAS MY BISHOP MISTAKEN?

**O**ur ward had just been divided, so when the bishop asked to see me, I was sure I would receive a calling in the new ward. I had been working with the young women and loved them. They were so receptive to the gospel and such a joy to teach. Surely the Lord would allow me to continue teaching them.

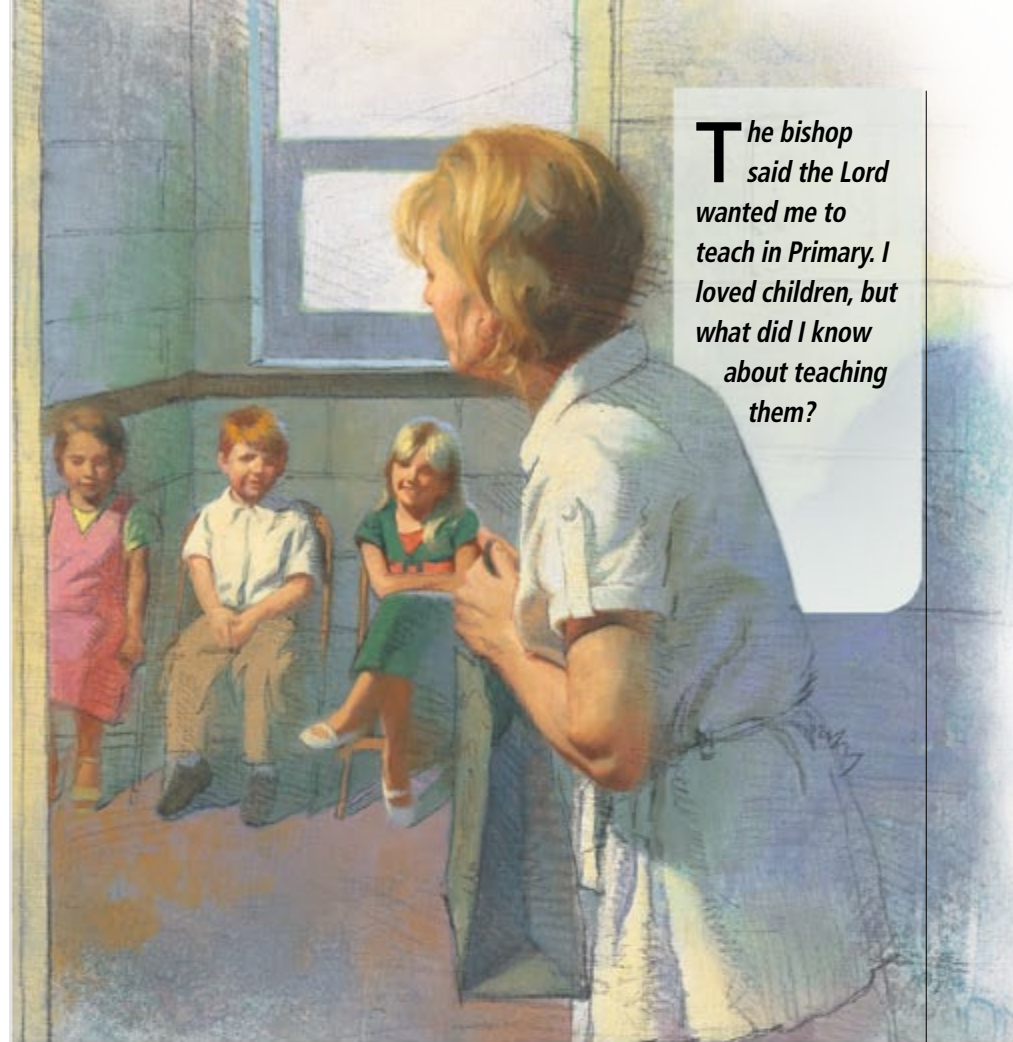
To my surprise, the bishop said the Lord wanted me to teach in Primary instead. Surely he was mistaken! He assured me, however, that he had fasted and prayed and felt strongly about my calling. I loved children, but what did I know about teaching them?

For 15 years of marriage the only sadness my husband and I shared was that the Lord had not blessed us with children. Our efforts to adopt had also been fruitless because of our medical challenges.

Trusting the bishop, I accepted the call to teach in the Primary, but in my heart I struggled. I was angry with the Lord for leaving me childless, and I resented this new calling.

“Why, Lord, art Thou asking this of me?” I wondered. “In Thy wisdom, I have been deprived of children of my own. Why should I be asked to teach other people’s children?”

I prayed and struggled and



**T**he bishop said the Lord wanted me to teach in Primary. I loved children, but what did I know about teaching them?

wrestled with the Lord, pleading through my tears for understanding. Finally I decided that since I had accepted the calling, I had better stop feeling sorry for myself and do the best I could.

That is when the blessings came. I quickly learned to love the children, and they learned to love me. I found that their love was great enough to help me fill the emptiness in my life. Soon I couldn’t go down the hall at church without at least two children holding onto my hands and others stopping for a hug as I passed by. In turn, my husband was called as a Scout leader. Before long our home was full of children and teens.

My husband died at age 47 in November 1986. Once again the Lord knew what I needed better than I.

Within weeks of my husband’s death, I was called to serve a teaching mission in the Primary of the Fresno, California, Laotian branch. The courage of these exceptional people and their children gave me strength to carry on without my husband.

What a special joy it was to see the young people I had taught grow to adulthood, serve missions, marry in the temple, and start families of their own. Dozens of these “adopted” children still stop by to say hello and make my day brighter, and I’m happy when I see them in the Fresno California Temple, where I now serve.

My service in Primary truly has been a lifelong blessing. I am so grateful that our callings are dictated by the Lord and not by us. ■

Jeannie L. Sorensen, California, USA

# Small & Simple Things

*“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).*



## WAYS TO HELP NEW MEMBERS FEEL WELCOME

- Introduce yourself to new ward or branch members and go out of your way to sit by them in classes and sacrament meeting.
- Make an effort to remember their names.
- Priesthood leaders and members of the Sunday School and Relief Society presidencies can invite new members to introduce themselves before the lesson begins.
- Offer to assist newcomers in moving in and becoming familiar with the area.
- Invite them to ward or branch activities.
- Be a friend! Continue to become acquainted with new members in the ensuing weeks and months.

## Engaging in Family History Work

Perhaps you are the only member of the Church in your family and are new to family history work. Or perhaps others in your family have done much of the family history and temple work for your ancestors. Whatever your situation, there are still many ways you can contribute to this important work.

If you're not sure where to start, start with what you know best: yourself. After all, family history isn't just about your loved ones who are deceased. It's also about capturing your personal history as you live it. Here are some ways you might begin:

- Find an archival-safe box and put your important records inside: your birth certificate, diplomas, awards, journals, photographs—anything representative of your life.
- If you have access to scanning equipment, consider scanning old photographs to create digital copies of important photos.
- Keep a journal of inspiring thoughts, feelings, and events in your life.

- Interview your family members to record their life histories. Start with your oldest living relative. Ask questions like these: How did you get your name? What were your family traditions when you were young and later in life? What can you tell me about your family's special talents or characteristics? Compiling others' histories will be a family treasure for generations to come.
- Register for an account at [www.New.FamilySearch.org](http://www.New.FamilySearch.org) and input the genealogical information you gather about yourself and family members. Online tutorials will help you step by step.
- If possible, attend the temple to perform ordinances for your ancestors.

If you have questions about family history work, your ward or branch family history consultant can help.



## TREASURES IN HEAVEN

**“W**hen we research our own lines we become interested in more than just names or the number of names going through the temple. Our interest turns our hearts to our fathers—we seek to find them and to know them and to serve them.

“In doing so we store up treasures in heaven.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Your Family History: Getting Started,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Aug. 2003, 17.





**CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD**



## Hungary

Although the first Latter-day Saint missionary arrived in Hungary in 1885, he had little success and left after about three months. The first Hungarian known to join the Church, Mischa Markow, was baptized in Constantinople in 1887. He subsequently served a mission in Europe, but he was banished from Belgrade and later from Hungary because of his preaching.

For many years the political climate of Hungary limited missionary work there. During the 1980s, publicity about the Church caused many Hungarians to investigate it, and late in 1986, Hungarian government officials agreed to allow missionaries to enter the country.

Since then, missionary efforts have met with great success. The Book of Mormon was published in Hungarian in 1991, and the first stake was created in 2006.

*The Hungarian Parliament Building, completed in 1904, sits on the banks of the Danube River in Budapest.*



THE CHURCH IN HUNGARY	
Membership	4,594
Missions	1
Stakes	1
Districts	2
Wards and Branches	21



### DEALING WITH ADVERSITY

Living the gospel has helped my family and me overcome temptation. I know that through fasting, paying tithing, and daily prayer, combined with hope in the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can overcome temptation.

But that doesn't mean that our lives will be free from adversity. I have also learned that the more obstacles we face, the more we can qualify for blessings and learn from our experiences. I like to think of adversity as the wind that blows a kite. The stronger it blows, the higher the kite can fly.

**Chhoeun Ravuth, Cambodia**



Howard W. Hunter



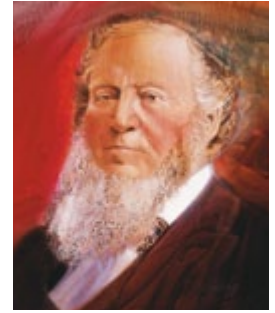
Gordon B. Hinckley



Thomas S. Monson



Joseph Smith



Brigham Young



Ezra Taft Benson



Spencer W. Kimball



Harold B. Lee



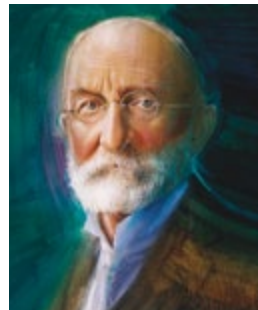
Joseph Fielding Smith



David O. McKay



George Albert Smith



Heber J. Grant

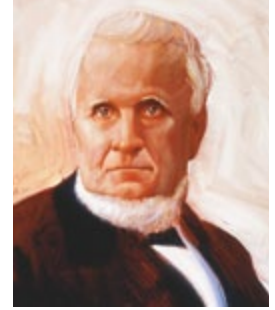


Joseph F. Smith

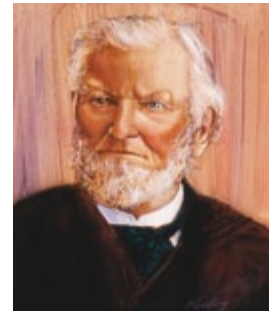
## Presidents of the Church

How well do you know the Presidents of the Church? Take this quiz and find out. Answers are below.

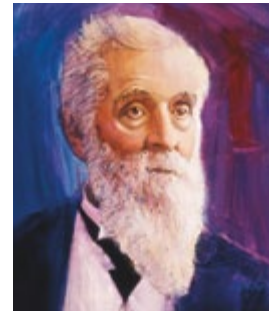
1. After Joseph Smith, who served the shortest time as an Apostle before becoming President of the Church?
2. Who served for the longest total time as a General Authority?
3. Who served the longest time as Church President?
4. Who was the only Church President born outside the United States?
5. Before President Thomas S. Monson, who was the only Church President to have served as a bishop?
6. Who served a mission to what is now the Hawaiian Islands when he was only 15?
7. Who served as the United States Secretary of Agriculture while also serving as an Apostle?
8. Who was the longest-living President of the Church?
9. Who broke bones in his arms and legs, accidentally split his foot with an ax, was bitten by a rabid dog, had his legs crushed by falling trees, nearly died of blood poisoning, nearly drowned, nearly froze to death, and survived the wreck of a speeding train?



John Taylor



Wilford Woodruff



Lorenzo Snow

- Answers:**
1. Brigham Young, 12 years
  2. David O. McKay, nearly 64 years
  3. Brigham Young, 30 years
  4. John Taylor, born in Milnthorpe, England
  5. Howard W. Hunter
  6. Joseph F. Smith
  7. Ezra Taft Benson
  8. Gordon B. Hinckley, age 97
  9. Wilford Woodruff



## Appreciating the Savior's Mission

One of our favorite family home evenings helped us better appreciate the life and mission of the Savior. We asked every family member to find scriptures about the Savior's hands, eyes, feet, or mouth. Then we each shared those scriptures. For example, the Savior's hands healed the leper, His feet walked on water, and His eyes wept at the tomb of Lazarus. We also discussed the wounds in Jesus's body and the perfection of His sacrifice. Our discussion about the life and acts of Jesus Christ invited the Spirit and allowed each family member to bear testimony of our Savior.

David R. Anderson, Utah, USA



ILLUSTRATION BY BETH WHITTAKER

### HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

## Helps for Home Evening

**“Make Yours a Great Life,” page 38:** Family home evening is an excellent time to encourage family members. After sharing this article, consider helping your children create a “life plan.” You could include career choices, educational goals, or personal ambitions. Set a plan of small goals to help reach bigger ones. Conclude by discussing this quote from the article: “Some people dream about the future but don’t do much to move into it with power. They don’t realize that what they do—or don’t do—now will profoundly affect their future.”

**“Home Teachers Who Made a Difference” page 33:** Discuss how home teachers can “nurture and inspire, to counsel and direct our Father’s children.” Share stories from the article and bear your testimony about how home teachers have blessed your life. Encourage the priesthood holders in your family to set a goal to help them magnify this divine call to nurture and inspire God’s children.



Suggest they write down the goal in their journal.

**“Carrying Others to the Pool of Bethesda,” page 62:** Read together the first paragraphs of the article and have your family make a poster of the five guidelines. Refer to the poster as you share some of the stories from the article, discussing which guideline was followed. Discuss how these principles can help you serve others in times of need and make a goal to use them.

# News of the Church

## New Handbooks Introduced During Worldwide Training

President Thomas S. Monson and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles introduced the Church's new handbooks and some of the significant changes they contain during a worldwide leadership training meeting on November 13, 2010.

The leadership training that introduced the new handbooks—*Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops* and *Handbook 2: Administering the Church*—was broadcast in 22 languages to priesthood and auxiliary leaders in 95 countries.

### Importance of the Handbooks

“There is safety in the handbooks,” President Monson said, warning against aberrations that can creep into Church programs when leaders aren't familiar with Church policies and procedures. “They will be a blessing to you and to those you serve as you read them, understand them, and follow them.”

The handbooks provide greater simplification and flexibility to avoid two great dangers, according to President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The first is the danger of regimenting the influence of the Holy Ghost out of Church programs. “It is a spiritual work that we are about,” he said, “and a spiritual work must be guided by the Spirit.”

The second is the danger of “establishing the Church without establishing the gospel,” he said.

“We need to have the Church in the lives of the members and the gospel established in the hearts of the members.”



### Important Changes

Most of the text of *Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops* remains unchanged from the 2006 update to the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1*. Instructions contained in the most recent First Presidency letters have been incorporated, chapters on the duties of the stake president and bishop have been shortened and clarified, and some material has been reorganized for easier reference.

Changes to *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* are more extensive. A principle-based approach is meant to reduce the complexity of

Church programs and allow some local adaptation where necessary without sacrificing the uniformity of policies, procedures, and programs.

Other changes of note include reduction of the bishop's workload by enhancing the role of the ward council and its members, the possible increase in the frequency of ward council meetings, a clarification of the mission of the Church, folding the work of the ward welfare committee into the discussions of the priesthood executive committee (to which the Relief Society president may be invited as necessary) and ward council, eliminating a standing ward activities committee and handling activities through the ward council, and other changes.

### The Mission of the Church

The new handbooks clarify confusion regarding what the First Presidency referred to in 1981 as the three-fold mission of the Church—proclaiming, perfecting, and redeeming.

*Handbook 2*, section 2.2, reaffirms the First Presidency's intent in 1981 that these three applications were part of one great work, stating: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized by God to assist in His work to bring to pass the salvation and



exaltation of His children” (see Moses 1:39).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles warned against giving “excessive attention to definitions and boundaries among these three applications of the Lord’s work” or “excluding other essential elements such as caring for the poor.”

He said, “The general principle, stated in section 2.2, is that ‘the programs and activities of the Church [are intended to] support and strengthen individuals and families.’”

### Uniformity and Adaptation

The principles and doctrines found in the first three chapters of *Handbook 2* “are foundational to the administration of the Church and must undergird everything [leaders] do,” said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. However, the chapters of the book that follow, particularly a new chapter called “Uniformity and Adaptation,” help explain where flexibility exists in Church policies and programs.

This chapter helps “set forth clearly which matters must be uniform everywhere in the Church” and also “contains exceedingly important principles setting forth the conditions that may permit . . . local adaptation,” Elder Cook said.

Examples of where adaptations may be appropriately made include in the staffing and programs of the auxiliaries and in the format and frequency of leadership meetings and activities. Circumstances to be considered include family circumstances, transportation and communication, small numbers of members, and security.

*Elders M. Russell Ballard, Jeffrey R. Holland, and David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles; Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president; and Walter F. González of the Presidency of the Seventy discuss principles in the new Church handbooks during a November 2010 worldwide leadership training.*

“When considering what adaptations may be appropriate, leaders should always seek the guidance of the Spirit and counsel with their immediate presiding authority,” Elder Cook said.

### Moving Forward

In leading a panel discussion, Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggested that studying the instructions one chapter at a time and discussing the principles in council meetings may lead to more meaningful learning.

If leaders have questions regarding policies and programs that cannot be answered by the handbooks, they should discuss them with their presiding priesthood leader, Elder Oaks counselled. If there are unresolved questions, he said, “only the most senior priesthood leaders should be checking with the Office of the First Presidency.”

A second worldwide leadership training meeting will be held in February 2011 to focus in detail on the responsibilities of stake presidents and bishops, the work of quorums and auxiliaries, and the special challenges of units that lack sufficient members and leaders to carry out the full programs of the Church.

Watch the archived broadcast at [www.lds.org/leadership-training](http://www.lds.org/leadership-training). ■

# New LDS.org Now Live

By Breanna Olaveson

Church Magazines

The Internet has changed since the 2006 overhaul of LDS.org, and now LDS.org has been changed to take advantage of the new possibilities.

Launched officially on November 30, 2010, the new LDS.org, also referred to as LDS.org 3.0, emphasizes the teachings of living prophets, facilitates online gospel study, provides ways to share the gospel, makes materials easier to find, and provides content in several languages.

The creation of the new site was also a good time for Church leaders to refocus the site's strategy.

"LDS.org's . . . content has been driven more by what Church departments need than by the audience's needs," said Elder Craig C. Christensen of the Seventy. "In redesigning this site, we asked, 'What do Church members need, and how can the Church help them?'"

## Teachings of Living Prophets

With so many voices on the Internet competing for attention, the new LDS.org focuses on bringing one voice to the forefront—the prophetic voice.

Lee Gibbons, director of LDS.org, said the site's intent is to give the teachings of modern prophets and apostles prominence by focusing on their ministry and what they are teaching today.

The Prophets and Apostles Speak Today section of the site features recent messages and provides personal insights into the lives and ministries of the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

## Tools for Online Gospel Study

The previous version of LDS.org provided access to the scriptures and other Church materials, but

the new site provides tools for online study. Users can highlight and underline passages, take notes, keep a study journal, and organize materials into files for later use. These features are available in the Study area of the site, which includes the scriptures, general conference, lesson manuals, Church magazines, and more.

## CHURCH CREATES OFFICIAL NEWS SITE

Church News and Events at [news.lds.org](http://news.lds.org) makes it easy to find official news of the Church online.

Church News and Events works closely with Newsroom, Public Affairs's official Web site for news media, opinion leaders, and the public in order to cover news and events of interest

to Church members. The site taps into the Church magazines' worldwide network of correspondents to provide global perspective. Church News and Events also collaborates with Mormon Channel, the Church's official radio station, to cover stories from multiple angles. ■

## Sharing the Gospel

Content on the new site is media rich, using video, audio, photography, gospel art, and other graphics to communicate the gospel message. But the content isn't there to benefit only members of the Church. It, like the gospel, is to be shared. Most of the site's content is integrated with popular social networking sites and e-mail so users can easily share content and direct their friends to learn more about the gospel.

## New Search Capability

Another important function that has been improved is the site's search capabilities. The search bar, available at the top of nearly every

page on the site, provides a list of suggested search terms to help form more precise searches. The search leads to a results page that includes recommended results, hand-selected for many frequently searched topics.

### Languages

The new LDS.org is a Web site for the worldwide

Church, and thus will be rolled out in stages in 11 different languages as the translations are finalized and approved. Approximately 90 percent of Church members speak one of these 11 languages: Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. ■

## Hidden Talents Keep Tabernacle Organ in Tune

By Natasia Garrett, Church Magazines

**M**uch praise is given to the organists who perform on the world-class Tabernacle organ on Temple Square, as well as to the organ itself. The organists have earned the attention. Credit for the organ's performance, however, goes not to the organist alone or even to the instrument itself but to two men whose behind-the-scenes efforts have allowed the organ to fulfill its musical potential: the organ technicians.

### A History of Caring

Robert Poll and Lamont Anderson have been working with the Tabernacle organ for more than 25 years. Their job responsibilities cover many other

instruments on and around Temple Square, including 8 pipe organs, 2 harpsichords, 4 electronic organs, and more than 70 pianos. They listen constantly to the instruments, says Brother Poll, especially before events.

Brother Poll divides the work he and Brother Anderson share into three categories: tuning, mechanical maintenance, and renovation. The tuning usually involves individual pipes rather than the organ as a whole; tuning the entire Tabernacle organ takes roughly a month to complete. Mechanical maintenance primarily entails the refurbishment of malfunctioning pieces. Renovation is also focused mainly on smaller projects,

including replacing the felts on pipe shutters so that the shutters seal better and create a greater contrast in volume.

The technicians' methods of caring for the instruments are constantly evolving. This applies most to care involving the large organs. Organs of the size and caliber of the Tabernacle organ are, in some ways, "too customized for standard fixes," says Brother Poll, and require a detailed knowledge of many areas as well as the ability to innovate.

In one case, a high-pressure air regulator in the Conference Center organ kept going into oscillation—setting up resonant frequencies that sounded like the playing of one of the low pipes. Brother Poll used a piece of wire tied between two points to apply sideways pressure on the valve.

The makeshift solution continues to prevent the problem.

Brother Poll credits inspiration for his ability to solve many of the issues that arise in his work.

### A World-Renowned Friend

The technicians know the Tabernacle organ inside and out. As Brother Poll moves through the belly of the organ, he points out pipes and tells when they



were added. Except for the visible pipes and casework, the present organ was basically new in 1948, but among its 11,623 pipes are 122 from the original organ and 95 others from pre-1948 rebuilds.

The pipes come in an astounding array of sizes and shapes, from tiny pipes the width and length of a drinking straw to fat pipes over 30 feet (9 meters) tall. Finished wood, zinc, and a combination of lead and tin are a few of the materials used to make the pipes. Only the largest 10 of the visible gold pipes are “speaking” pipes, while the remaining 41 are simply dummies that mask the body of the organ.

Brother Poll knows the organ as though it were an old friend. He shakes his head with exasperated affection at the instrument’s quirks, such as the way some pipes will never tune properly if tuned together.

He knows, perhaps better than anyone, what a magnificent instrument the Tabernacle organ is—and what it takes to keep it that way. Because of Robert Poll and Lamont Anderson’s care, each of the instruments around Temple Square is an exceptional instrument.

Find this story and its accompanying video and a photo gallery at [news.lds.org/organtechs](http://news.lds.org/organtechs). ■

## TEMPLE NEWS

### President Monson Breaks Ground in Rome

President Thomas S. Monson broke ground for the Rome Italy Temple on October 23, 2010. Announced in 2008, the 40,000-square-foot (3,700 square meter) temple will be the twelfth in Europe and the first in Italy. The 15-acre (6 ha) site will include a meetinghouse, a visitors’ center, a family history center, and patron housing.

### Temple Underway in Córdoba, Argentina

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles broke ground for a temple in Córdoba, Argentina, on October 30, 2010. The site was home to one of the Church’s earliest chapels in Argentina. “How wonderful that its final purpose will be to embrace the house of the Lord,” said Elder Andersen. The temple will be the second in Argentina, with the first in Buenos Aires.

### Ground Broken in Gilbert, Arizona

Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Presidency of the Seventy broke ground for the Gilbert Arizona Temple on November 13, 2010. The Gilbert Arizona Temple will be Arizona’s fourth temple. A fifth has been announced for Phoenix, Arizona. ■

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Simplified Organ Music Available Online

*Manual-Only Hymns for Organ* and *Transformations*, two complementary books, have been produced to help pianists adapt to the organ. *Manual-Only Hymns for Organ* is a compilation of 38 popular hymns arranged to be played without pedals. *Transformations* contains introductions and endings for the same 38 hymns that “transform” them into prelude and postlude music. Download the set free of charge at [music.lds.org](http://music.lds.org). Click on **Learning Materials** then **Accompanying Others** then **Manual-Only Hymns for Organists**.

### Mormon Channel Content Available on Demand

The Church has now been providing content on demand for several months through its official iTunes page, the Mormon Channel, at [itunes.lds.org](http://itunes.lds.org). In addition to content from the Mormon Channel radio station, the page provides content from general conference, CES broadcasts, Church magazines, Mormon Messages, and other Church products. Mormon Channel includes Church materials in American Sign Language, Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Tongan. ■





# In Other Church Magazines

## THE NEW ERA

### Mutual Theme

The January *New Era* announces the 2011 Mutual theme. It is the entire thirteenth article of faith stressing the first two words: We believe. Read messages from both the Young Men and Young Women general presidents. See page 6.

### Snowboarding Lessons

A young man tries to learn to snowboard without taking the advice of those who already know how. He learns a painful lesson about the importance of listening to those who have gone before. See page 24.



### Personal Revelation

Do you want to know how personal revelation works in your life? Helpful discussions are in two articles, "Removing Roadblocks to Revelation," and "Becoming What You Want to Be." See pages 18 and 40.

## THE FRIEND

### New Features

You and your children can look for these features in the *Friend*, new for 2011: Articles of Faith (page 22), stories of Jesus from the New Testament (page 6), and scripture posters (page 49).

### Conference Cards

Help your children remember what they learned from the October 2010 general conference. On page 14 you can find Conference Spotlight Cards to cut out with thoughts from the prophet, apostles, and auxiliary leaders.



## COMMENTS

### Study tools

I really appreciate the "Ten Scripture Study Tools" article in the September 2010 issue of the *Ensign*. It's a convenient, brief reminder of how we can study the scriptures rather than just read them.

I especially appreciate the tip to notice words like "behold," "wherefore," "because," and others. It has made connections much easier for me to see and understand.

When I am reading the word of God consistently and diligently, the Spirit is more fully in my life. My desire to serve God and my fellowman is increased. I appreciate the Atonement more and feel closer to my Savior.

Jennifer Schultz  
Virginia, USA

### Personal Devotional

I read the *Ensign* from cover to cover. In my personal devotional each morning, I first kneel and pray and then read from my scriptures. As I read a statement that speaks to me I underline the passage. I read one article from the current *Ensign*, and one conference address. I am then fortified for the day. In one month I am able to read the current issue of the magazine and read the conference issue multiple times.

When I have finished marking and reading the *Ensign*, I go back through and record all the "to do" and "quotes I loved" in a journal I keep especially for the great nuggets of thought. Doing this has blessed and enriched my life.

I love the *Ensign*.

Dixie B. Conger  
Utah, USA

# Never Forsaken

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

During His ministry the Lord often quoted scripture. So we should not be surprised to find verses in the Old Testament that the Savior quoted in the New. But I was caught off guard one day when I read the first verse of Psalm 22: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

I had never considered that the Savior may have been quoting sacred writings when He spoke those words in His agony on the cross (see Matthew 27:46). That idea led to a profound spiritual realization.

Almost all of us at some time have wondered, “O God, where art thou?” (D&C 121:1). That question has entered my mind most often during moments of spiritual uncertainty or distress.

For that reason the Savior’s words seemed to beg the question: Did His cry also rise from uncertainty—even doubt? Did it mean that there was a question for which my all-powerful, all-knowing Savior had no answer in the very moment my salvation depended on His power to provide all answers and overcome all things?

Reading this psalm taught me that, though these words indeed give soul-wrenching expression to the “paralyzing despair of divine withdrawal,” which He may have anticipated but not fully comprehended, they were *not* an indication of doubt.<sup>1</sup>

The very act of calling out to His Father in His greatest hour of need using words from holy writings was not only an evidence of



*The Savior’s reference to holy writings assured me that we are never forsaken.*

faith but also a profound teaching opportunity. Though Psalm 22 begins with a question, it is an expression of profound trust that God does *not* forsake:

“Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

“They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded” (verses 4–5).

Using the psalmist’s experiences as a foreshadowing of the Savior’s suffering, the psalm foretells the mocking (verses 7–8), the false trial and coming torture (verses 11–13), His pain and suffering (verse 14), His thirst (verse 15), the wounding of His hands and feet (verse 16), and the casting of lots and parting of His garments (verse 18).

Though the Savior quoted only the first verse, the remainder of the psalm stands as another testimony that He is the promised Messiah, that His suffering fulfilled prophecy, and that He trusted in His Father completely.

This understanding brought my soul an overwhelming reassurance that my faith was not misplaced. But even more powerful than learning that Jesus had not doubted and was delivered was the testimony in that psalm for the times when I wonder if God has forsaken *me* or when I worry that He has not heard *my* cry.

“Ye that fear [God], praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

“For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted [Jesus]; neither hath [the Father] hid his face from him; but when [Jesus] cried unto him, *he heard*” (verses 23–24; emphasis added). ■

#### NOTE

1. See Jeffrey R. Holland, “None Were with Him,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 87.



DEL PARSON, © 1983 IRI

*Jesus at the Door*, by Del Parson

*“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

*“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit*

*with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

*“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith” (Revelation 3:20–22).*



*While we can't literally sit at  
the Master's feet as Mary did,  
we can learn of Him and  
listen to His words  
as we study the  
New Testament  
in Sunday  
School this year. Elder Jay E. Jensen of  
the Presidency of the Seventy explains:  
"The scriptures testify and teach of  
Jesus Christ. When we  
immerse ourselves in  
them, we will come  
to know Him and His  
voice." See "The Savior—  
the Master Teacher,"  
page 42.*



*"If you follow the history of the Church, our methodology has always been to go to the town square and to stand and preach the gospel," said Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Today, the town square is the Internet. The advantage to today's town square is the Internet is self-selecting. On mormon.org, people—at their own pace and interest level—can just get to know Mormons, or can dig deeply into doctrine and official statements, history, belief in Christ, and the ways our behavior manifests a belief in Christ. It's not so much what we believe, but what we do because we believe that makes Mormons interesting."*



**Elder M. Russell Ballard** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



**Pass It On**  
The pass-along card campaign is designed to open lines of communication between members of our Church and all interested individuals. New pass-along cards (see sample below) are available so members can support a highly personalized approach to missionary work. Order a box of 500 cards for \$10.00 from your local distribution center by referencing stock number 09428-000.

*"Pass-along cards give us the opportunity to open a conversation with those who don't yet share our faith," said Bishop Richard C. Edgley of the Presiding Bishopric. "The new cards have space for us to share thoughts, doctrinal topics, contact information, or other items that open a personal two-way dialogue. I encourage you to actively use these new tools to share the gospel and to lead people to mormon.org."*



**Bishop Richard C. Edgley** of the Presiding Bishopric

**DIVERSE MORMONS LIVING THEIR FAITH  
FEATURED ON REDESIGNED MORMON.ORG  
AND IN NEW AD CAMPAIGN**



**Hi, I'm Dave**

**I'm Diane**

**Hi, I'm Cyril**

**Hi, I'm Lillian**

**Be one of the many faces of mormon.org**

*"The gospel is changing the lives of more and more people every year as our missionary force seeks out those who are looking for the truths which are found in the gospel of Jesus Christ."*

**President Thomas S. Monson**



## PEOPLE TRUST THE OPINIONS OF THEIR PEERS MORE THAN WHAT AN ORGANIZATION SAYS ABOUT ITSELF

Years of research have shown that the most effective way to understand Mormons is to meet one. With 6 million members of the Church in the United States and 14 million worldwide, it is difficult to coordinate a chance for the world's 6 billion people to each spend time with a member of the Church. The redesigned mormon.org now provides an invitation for people to view profiles of individual Church members online and to chat with missionaries.

A media campaign began in late July 2010 in nine test markets across the United States to help dispel myths and misperceptions about Mormons. The advertising combines elements of traditional and nontraditional media, including online, television and radio spots, and billboards that feature members of the Church talking about their lives and their faith and encouraging people to visit mormon.org to find out more.

Each profile on mormon.org (see "Share your Story" and "How to Create a Profile" below) has stories and testimonies from a member, illustrating that Church members from diverse backgrounds and experiences share a deep commitment to Jesus Christ. The profiles reach an international audience through mormon.org and through digital and social media, Internet ads, and YouTube. All adult members are encouraged to help introduce Mormons to the world by creating their own profile on mormon.org.

Since its launch in 2001, mormon.org has been a resource where people seeking to know more about Mormonism find official information from the Church about our beliefs and practices.

*"There is no limit to the number of people who can follow the example of the Savior," said Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Though we are all imperfect, we can strive to improve as we keep the commandments of God. Our people appearing on mormon.org are all imperfect, yet they are striving to apply the teachings of the Savior in their personal lives."*

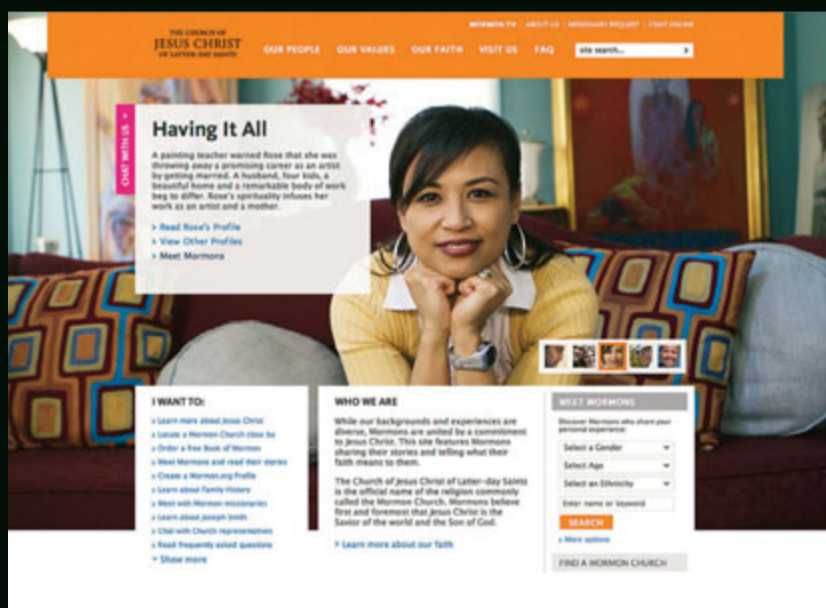


**Elder Russell M. Nelson** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

*"The symbol of our Church has always been the individual lives and good example of our members as we all strive to follow the Savior," said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "We encourage you to stand together as diverse people united in our belief in and loyalty to Jesus Christ."*

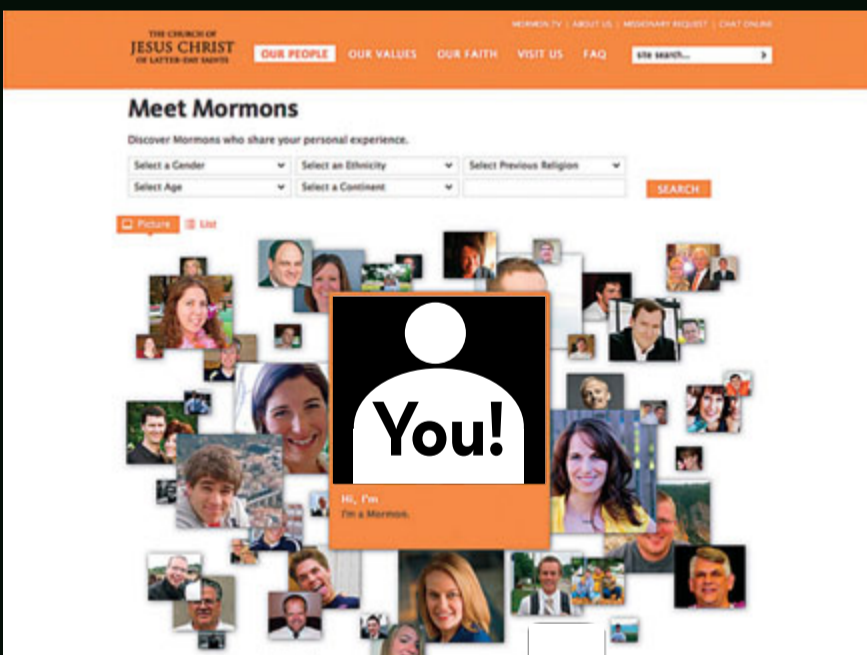


**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



### Share Your Story

There will be over 25,000 member profiles on mormon.org by the end of 2010, with the goal of 100,000 in 2011. As visitors search the thousands of profiles, they will find that although each member looks different and lives a unique life, there is a unified message of the understanding of what they believe. People in their own words are articulating their beliefs in personal ways and allowing their behavior online to align with their faith. As more members use mormon.org to share their beliefs, the messages that we believe in Christ, that we follow Christ, and that we expect our behavior to model this will become increasingly reinforced.



### How to Create a Profile

Any adult member of the Church can create a profile. Visit mormon.org/create and sign in using your LDS account. If you don't have an LDS account, click on the register button and use your Membership Record Number to begin.

When you create a profile, keep in mind that the idea is to share who you are and what you do rather than to try to teach a lesson. We would like to illustrate that members of the Church are a diverse group, but we all follow Jesus Christ.

All profiles are reviewed for doctrinal correctness, but are not edited or modified. You may link your personal blogs and social media pages to your mormon.org profile.

English profiles are now available; other languages will follow.



MORMON.ORG

