

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JULY 2015

Ensign



Pioneer Legacy: Soul-Anchoring Hope, p. 50

Prepare for the Temple, pp. 16, 70, 73

How to Live Righteously in a Wicked World, p. 32

All Is Not Lost: Lessons from the
Prophet Joseph's Life, p. 40



*"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them,
I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and
beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."*

Matthew 7:24–25

Contents July 2015

Volume 45 • Number 7



4

MESSAGES

FIRST PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

- 4 All Is Well**
President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

VISITING TEACHING MESSAGE

- 7 Divine Attributes of Jesus Christ:
Forgiving and Merciful**

ON THE COVER

Front: Illustration by Dan Burr. Inside front cover: Photograph by Robbie George/National Geographic Creative. Inside back cover: Photograph by Cody Bell.



YOUNG ADULT FEATURES

- 16 Preparing to Enter the House of the Lord**
Elder Kent F. Richards
Here are key principles to remember as you ready yourself to receive the greatest blessings your Heavenly Father offers.

- 20 Young Adult Profiles: Pillars of Strength in Hungary**
McKelle George
The gospel of Jesus Christ brings hope, faith, and strength to the young adults of Hungary.

- 22 Filled with Life and Energy**
Randal A. Wright
Implement this one practice in your life and have better health, more energy, and greater inspiration.

- 26 Christ Has Felt My Pain**
James G. Stokes
I felt utterly alone in my trials and sorrow, until I remembered that there was One who knew how I felt.

- 28 God's Plan for Families**
Mark A. Mathews
Marriage and family play a vital role in our Heavenly Father's plan of happiness.

FEATURES

- 32 Reaping the Rewards of Righteousness**
Elder Quentin L. Cook
How can we enjoy the rewards of righteousness in our families?

- 40 The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon**
Matthew S. Holland
Like Joseph Smith, you need not lead a perfect life to be a powerful instrument in God's hands.

- 46 Religion and Government**
Elder Wilford W. Andersen
Latter-day Saints have a responsibility to be good citizens no matter where they live.





50 **Pioneers: An Anchor for Today**

Elder Marcus B. Nash

Learn how the pioneer spirit can become an anchor for us today.

56 **Joy with My Parents' Piano**

Lola Riley Scalley Yale

From generation to generation, a piano and a hymnbook have brought my family joy.

58 **Matthew Cowley's Mission to New Zealand**

Elder Glen L. Rudd

In 1914, a 17-year-old young man with a desire to serve began a remarkable mission among the Maori people.

64 **Vine and Branches**

Find out what grapevines can teach us about our need to abide in Jesus Christ.

66 **One Couple Serving, One Family Learning**

Mindy Anne Leavitt

When Lonnie and Nancy Gubler decided to serve a mission, they didn't know what blessings lay in store.

70 **Teaching Our Children about the Temple**

Graham and Gail Nicholl

Helping our children learn to love the temple can bless generations.

73 **Poem: One Holy Moment**

Don L. Searle

We have a sacred connection to those we serve vicariously in the temple.

74 **Sheet Music: Bread of Life, Living Water**

Annette W. Dickman

New music about the power of the Savior's sacrifice.

75 **Helpful Music Resources**

Marissa Widdison

How to make the most of the Church's music resources.



DEPARTMENTS

3 **Family Home Evening Ideas**

8 **April 2015 Conference Notebook**

10 **What We Believe: Church Organization Is Divine**

12 **News of the Church**

14 **Reflections: Sustained by God's Love** Suzanne Lutz

76 **Latter-day Saint Voices**

80 **Until We Meet Again: Of Lambs and Shepherds** President James E. Faust



Ensign

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
July 2015 Volume 45 • Number 7

The First Presidency: Thomas S. Monson,
Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:
Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry, Russell M. Nelson,
Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard,
Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales,
Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar,
Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson,
Neil L. Andersen

Editor: Craig A. Cardon

Advisers: Mervyn B. Arnold, Christoffel
Golden, Larry R. Lawrence, James B. Martino,
Joseph W. Sitati

Managing Director: David T. Warner

Director of Operations: Vincent A. Vaughn

Director of Church Magazines:

Allan R. Loyborg

Business Manager: Garff Cannon

Managing Editor: R. Val Johnson

Assistant Managing Editor:

LaRene Porter Gaunt

Publications Assistant: Faith S. Watson

Writing and Editing: Ryan Carr, David
Dickson, David A. Edwards, Matthew Flitton,
Lori Fuller, Garrett H. Garff, Jill Hacking,
Charlotte Larcabal, Mindy Anne Leavitt,
Michael R. Morris, Richard M. Romney,
Paul VanDenBerghe

Editorial Interns: Justin Miles Romney,
Amanda Faith Seeley

Managing Art Director: J. Scott Knudsen

Art Director: Tadd R. Peterson

Design: C. Kimball Bott, Colleen Hinckley,
Eric P. Johnsen, Susan Lofgren, Scott Mooy

Intellectual Property Coordinator:
Collette Nebeker Aune

Production Manager: Jane Ann Peters

Production: Connie Bowthorpe Bridge, Julie
Burdett, Katie Duncan, Bryan W. Gygi, Denise
Kirby, Ginny J. Nilson, Gayle Tate Rafferty

Prepress: Joshua Dennis

Printing Director: Craig K. Sedgwick

Distribution Director: Stephen R. Christiansen

© 2015 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All
rights reserved. The Ensign (ISSN 0884-1136)
is published monthly by The Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple
Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.
Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah.

Copyright information: Text and visual
material in the Ensign may be copied for
incidental, noncommercial church or home
use. Visual material may not be copied if
restrictions are indicated in the credit line
with the artwork. Copyright questions should
be addressed to Intellectual Property Office,
50 E. North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT
84150-0018; email: cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org.

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see

DMM 707.4.12.5). **NONPOSTAL AND**

MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address changes
to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O.
Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication
Agreement #40017431.

Family Home Evening Ideas

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are some examples.



"The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon," page 40:

Despite his personal weaknesses, Joseph Smith became an

instrument in the Lord's hands as he strove to follow the Savior. We too can be instruments in the Lord's hands when we strive to improve and become more like Jesus Christ. Think about prayerfully setting some goals individually and as a family. You could discuss the strengths and talents of each family member and discuss how you can use your strengths to help one another accomplish each goal. Talk about how you can each use your strengths to further the work of the Lord, just as the Prophet Joseph did.

"Filled with Life and Energy," page 22:

You might begin by asking the question from page 23: "What one practice, if followed

consistently and with discipline, would help you have better health, energy, and inspiration?" Allow family members to give possible answers, and then share the story about the advice Elder Harold B. Lee gave to Elder Marion G. Romney. You could ask family members to identify and discuss other blessings from going to bed early and getting up early (see pages 24–25 for some ideas). Consider inviting family members to make plans for getting adequate sleep, and discuss how you can help each other accomplish those plans.

TESTIMONY WITHOUT WORDS

Our son Derek has a disability that makes it difficult for him to speak, but he loves preparing lessons for the family. One such lesson was about Lehi's dream. He first had us listen to "I Believe in Christ" (*Hymns*, no. 134) and look at a picture of Lehi's dream. Then we walked along a rope he had strung inside and outside the house, with pictures of the Savior off to one side of the rope, and distractions (such as TV and games) on the other. We knew we had reached the end when we heard Derek's favorite hymn, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" (*Hymns*, no. 136). Finally, we watched a Church film showing Christ's appearance in the Americas. We felt the Spirit strongly as Derek conveyed his testimony of the Savior without using any words.

Wendy Thompson, Utah, USA

SUBSCRIBE TO OR RENEW THE ENSIGN

Online: Visit store.lds.org.

By phone: In the United States and Canada, call 1-800-537-5971.

By mail: Send U.S. \$10 check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

TO CHANGE ADDRESS

Send both old and new address information to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA. Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

LIKE THE ENSIGN ON FACEBOOK



Get Ensign articles and other faith-inspiring content, such as videos and memes, delivered right to your Facebook news feed by liking our page. Visit facebook.com/ensign.magazine.



**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**

Second Counselor in
the First Presidency

ALL IS Well

As I think about our pioneer heritage, one of the most moving things that come to mind is the hymn “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 30). Those who made the long journey to the Salt Lake Valley often sang this hymn during their trek.

I am very much aware that all was not well with these Saints. They were plagued by sickness, heat, fatigue, cold, fear, hunger, pain, doubt, and even death.

But despite having every reason to shout, “All is not well,” they cultivated an attitude we cannot help but admire today. They looked beyond their troubles to eternal blessings. They were grateful in their circumstances. Despite evidence to the contrary, they sang with all the conviction of their souls, “All is well!”

Our praise for the pioneers is empty if it does not cause inner reflection on our part. I mention a few of their attributes that inspire me as I contemplate their sacrifice and commitment.

Compassion

The pioneers cared for each other irrespective of social, economic, or political background. Even when it slowed their progress, caused inconvenience, or meant personal sacrifice and toil, they helped each other.

In our goal-driven and partisan world, individual or party objectives can take precedence over taking care of

others or strengthening the kingdom of God. In today’s society, reaching certain ideological goals can appear to be a measure of our worth.

Setting and achieving goals can be a wonderful thing. But when success in reaching goals comes at the expense of disregarding, ignoring, or hurting others, the cost of that success may be too precious.

The pioneers looked after those in their company, but they also considered those who came after them, planting crops for the wagon trains that followed.

They knew the strength of family and friends. And because they depended on each other, they became strong. Friends became family.

The pioneers serve as a good reminder of why we must break away from the temptation to isolate ourselves and, instead, reach out to help each other and have compassion and love for one another.

Work

“Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear.”

This phrase became an anthem to the weary travelers. It is difficult to imagine how hard these great souls worked. Walking was one of the easiest things they did. They all had to pull together to provide food, repair wagons, tend animals, minister to the sick and feeble, seek and collect water, and protect themselves from the



pressing dangers of the elements and the many hazards of the wilderness.

They woke up each morning with clearly defined purposes and goals that everyone understood: to serve God and their fellowmen and to arrive in the Salt Lake Valley. Every day those purposes and goals were clear to them; they knew what they needed to do and that each day's progress mattered.

In our time—when so much of what we desire is so easily within our reach—it is tempting to turn aside or give up whenever the road ahead seems a little bumpy or the slope tends to rise steeply before us. In those moments, it might inspire us to reflect on those men, women, and children who did not allow sickness, hardship, pain, and even death to deter them from their chosen path.

The pioneers learned that doing hard things deepened and strengthened body, mind, and spirit; magnified their understanding of their divine nature; and heightened their compassion for others. This habit firmed their souls and became a blessing to them long after their trek across the plains and mountains had ended.

Optimism

When the pioneers sang, they voiced a third lesson: “But with joy wend your way.”

It is one of the great ironies of our age that we are blessed with so much and yet we can be so unhappy. The wonders of prosperity and technology overwhelm us and shower us with security, entertainment, instant gratification, and convenience. And yet all around us we see so much unhappiness.

The pioneers, who sacrificed so much, went without and hungered for even the most basic of necessities to survive. They understood that happiness doesn't come as a result of luck or accident. It most certainly doesn't come from having all of our wishes come true. Happiness doesn't come from external circumstances. It comes from the inside—regardless of what is happening around us.

The pioneers knew that, and with that spirit they found happiness in every circumstance and in every trial—even in those trials that reached down and troubled the deep waters of their very souls.

Trials

We sometimes look back on what the pioneers endured and with relief say, “Thank goodness I didn't live in that time.” But I wonder if those courageous pioneers, had they been able to see us today, might not have voiced the same concern.

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

You may want to begin by singing “Come, Come, Ye Saints” (*Hymns*, no. 30) with those you visit. You could share an experience when you or someone you know has applied the principles of compassion, work, or optimism. If prompted, you could testify of the blessings that come from living these principles and promise those you visit that they can receive similar blessings.

Though times and circumstances have changed, the principles for facing trials and successfully living together as a caring and prospering community under God have not changed.

From the pioneers we can learn to have faith and trust in God. We can learn to have compassion for others. We can learn that work and industry bless us not only temporally but also spiritually. We can learn that happiness is available to us no matter our circumstances.

YOUTH

Keeping a Record

President Uchtdorf compares our day to the times of the pioneers. While you may not have crossed the plains, you are more like the pioneers than you may think! You also can show compassion, hard work, and optimism. And just as we know that the pioneers demonstrated these qualities because of the records they kept, your posterity can get to know you through your journal too.

Take a few minutes to record a little about yourself in your journal. You can write about spiritual things, like how you gained your testimony or overcame challenges with Heavenly Father's help. You can also help your great-great-grandchildren (who might read your journal someday!) to know what your daily life was like. What projects are you doing in school? What does your room look like? What's your favorite memory of your family?

As you begin writing a little bit every day, you will not only be able to see more clearly how Heavenly Father helps you through your daily life, just as He guided the pioneers, but you will also be leaving a legacy for your own future posterity.

The best way we can honor and show gratitude to the pioneers is by incorporating into our own lives faithfulness to God's commandments, compassion and love for our fellowmen, and the industry, optimism, and joy the pioneers demonstrated so well in their own lives.

As we do so, we can reach across the decades of time, take the hands of those noble pioneers in ours, and add our own voices to theirs as we sing with them: "All is well! All is well!" ■

CHILDREN

Following the Pioneers' Example

President Uchtdorf shares a few ways that the pioneers showed love for Heavenly Father. You can follow their example. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

COMPASSION

- ☐ Write a kind note or make a treat for someone who is sad.
- ☐ Help a classmate with his or her homework.

WORK

- ☐ Set a goal. Do something every day this month to help you reach your goal.
- ☐ Help your parents make dinner.

OPTIMISM

- ☐ Make a list of 10 happy things in your life.
- ☐ Smile at everyone you see.

Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and roles of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.

Divine Attributes of Jesus Christ: Forgiving and Merciful

This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring divine attributes of the Savior.

Understanding that Jesus Christ has been forgiving and merciful to us can help us forgive and extend mercy to others. “Jesus Christ is our Exemplar,” said President Thomas S. Monson. “His life was a legacy of love. The sick He healed; the downtrodden He lifted; the sinner He saved. At the end the angry mob took His life. And yet there rings from Golgotha’s hill the words: ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do’—a crowning expression in mortality of compassion and love.”¹

If we forgive others their trespasses, our Heavenly Father will also forgive us. Jesus asks us to “be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful” (Luke 6:36). “Forgiveness for *our* sins comes with conditions,” said President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. “We



must repent. . . . Haven’t we all, at one time or another, meekly approached the mercy seat and pleaded for grace? Haven’t we wished with all the energy of our souls for mercy—to be forgiven for the mistakes we have made and the sins we have committed? . . . Allow Christ’s Atonement to change and heal your heart. Love one another. Forgive one another.”²

Additional Scriptures

Matthew 6:14–15; Luke 6:36–37;
Alma 34:14–16

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Love, the Essence of the Gospel,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 91.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Merciful Obtain Mercy,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 70, 75, 77; emphasis in original.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 83.

Faith, Family, Relief



From the Scriptures

“We are to forgive even as we are forgiven,” said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.³ The story of the prodigal son shows us both sides of forgiveness: one son is forgiven and the other son struggles to forgive.

The younger son took his inheritance, quickly spent it, and when a famine arose, he worked feeding swine. The scriptures say “when he came to himself,” he returned home and said to his father he was not worthy to be his son. But his father forgave him and killed a fatted calf for a feast. The older son returned from working in the fields and became angry. He reminded his father that he had served many years, never transgressed the commandments, yet “thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry.” The father replied, “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found” (see Luke 15:11–32).

Consider This

How can forgiveness benefit the one forgiving?

APRIL 2015 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

As you review the April 2015 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.

PROPHETIC PROMISE



Priceless Temple Blessings

“As we go to the temple, as we remember the covenants we make there, we will be better able to overcome [our] temptations and to bear our trials. In the temple we can find peace.

“The blessings of the temple are priceless. One for which I am grateful every day of my life is that which my beloved wife, Frances, and I received as we knelt at a sacred altar and made covenants binding us together for all eternity. There is no blessing

more precious to me than the peace and comfort I receive from the knowledge I have that she and I will be together again.

“May our Heavenly Father bless us that we may have the spirit of temple worship, that we may be obedient to His commandments, and that we may follow carefully the steps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 93.

DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHT



Cornerstones of Religious Liberty

“As we walk the path of spiritual liberty in these last days, we must understand that the faithful use of our agency depends upon our having religious freedom. . . .

“There are four cornerstones of religious freedom that we as Latter-day Saints must rely upon and protect.

“The first is freedom to believe. No one should be criticized, persecuted, or attacked by individuals, or governments either, for what he or she believes about God. . . .

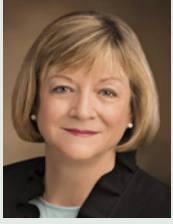
“The second . . . is the freedom to share our faith and our beliefs with others. . . .

“The third . . . is the freedom to form a religious organization, a church, to worship peacefully with others. . . .

“The fourth . . . is the freedom to live our faith—free exercise of faith not just in the home and chapel but also in public places.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Preserving Agency, Protecting Religious Freedom,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 112.

"THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD"



"There are three principles taught in the proclamation which I think are especially in need of steadfast defenders. . . .

" . . . Let us help build the kingdom of God by standing up boldly and being defenders of marriage, parenthood, and the home. The Lord needs us to be brave, steadfast, and immovable warriors who will defend His plan and teach the upcoming generations His truths."

Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president, "Defenders of the Family Proclamation," *Ensign*, May 2015, 15, 16.

For more articles on marriage and family from the general women's session of the April 2015 conference, see Cheryl A. Esplin, "Filling Our Homes with Light and Truth," 8, and Carole M. Stephens, "The Family Is of God," 11.



1. Marriage between a man and a woman.



2. The roles of mothers and fathers.



3. The sanctity of the home.



GREAT STORIES FROM CONFERENCE

What catches our attention better than a great story?

Following are three of many stories shared during conference:

- In the parable of the sower, which type of soil are you? How can recognizing that change your life? —See Dallin H. Oaks, "The Parable of the Sower," 32.
- What poignant experiences helped one young mother return to the gospel of Jesus Christ? —See Rosemary M. Wixom, "Returning to Faith," 93.
- How does the dramatic story of two brothers who become stranded on a sheer canyon wall enhance our understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ? —See Jeffrey R. Holland, "Where Justice, Love, and Mercy Meet," 104.

To read, watch, or listen to general conference addresses, visit conference.lds.org.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION IS DIVINE

New members of the Church often hear terms they have not heard before: priesthood keys, setting apart, laying on of hands, baptisms for the dead, Mutual, Relief Society, and so on. And they hear familiar terms used in unfamiliar ways: deacon, patriarch, bishop, counselors, sacrament, calling, release, testimony, ordinance, and many others.

If you find yourself in that situation, don't worry. The more you attend church, study the scriptures and lesson materials, and interact with Church members, the better you will

come to understand these terms. In the meantime, don't hesitate to ask members of your ward or branch; they would be glad to explain anything that doesn't make sense to you.

Terms like these are important because they reflect Church doctrine, policies, practices, and organization, which come from the scriptures and by revelation to modern prophets. The Savior leads His Church today by revealing His will to the First Presidency (the President of the Church and his two counselors) and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Church is organized today essentially the same way the Lord organized it when He was on the earth (see Articles of Faith 1:6). Just as in biblical times, we have prophets,

apostles, members of the Seventy, missionaries who go out two by two, and bishops and other local leaders.

All who serve in the Church are volunteers. They are called (asked to serve) by inspiration of their leaders. In time you will be given a calling—a responsibility, an opportunity to serve. As you accept it willingly and fulfill it to the best of your ability, the Lord will bless your efforts to serve His children. No matter your background, you can contribute valuable spiritual gifts. As a Church member, you are part of the “body of Christ” (see 1 Corinthians 12). Your contribution is important to the functioning of the Church. ■

For more information, see Moroni 6; Doctrine and Covenants 20; and “Church Organization” at [lds.org/topics](https://www.lds.org/topics).

FOUNDATION OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

“Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

Ephesians 2:19–20

Leaders in your ward serve in a presidency (a president and two counselors):



The bishop and his two counselors form the bishopric and preside over the ward.



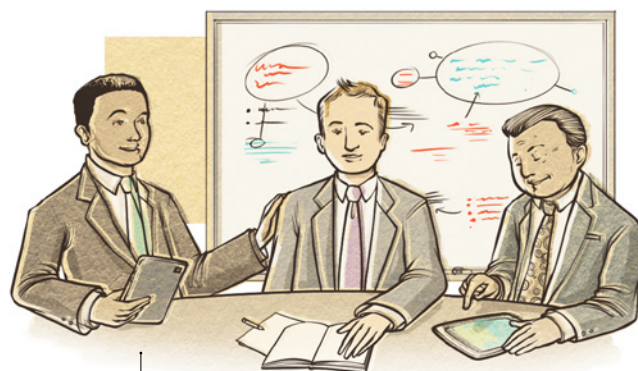
The Relief Society presidency serves the women in the ward and helps strengthen their families.



The elders quorum presidency and the high priests group leaders serve the men in the ward and help strengthen their families.



The Primary presidency serves the children, and the Young Men and Young Women presidencies serve the youth ages 12–18.



The Sunday School presidency oversees Sunday School classes and helps improve gospel learning and teaching in the ward.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

Visit news.lds.org for more Church news and events.



LDS Charities: 30 Years of Service

The principle of serving our fellowmen is not new. In all dispensations, the Church has been dedicated to helping the poor and needy.

Thirty years ago, on January 27, 1985, that dedication was exemplified during a special fast where Church members donated U.S. \$6 million to help famine victims in Ethiopia. This marked the beginning of what would become LDS Charities. That same year, a fast in November raised another \$5 million for hunger relief. Those two fasts greatly accelerated the work in our time.

In the 30 years since those fasts, the Church has delivered \$1.2 billion in assistance to people who are suffering. That includes food, shelter,

medical supplies, clothing, and relief items. In addition, LDS Charities has offered long-term aid through initiatives that provide wheelchairs, immunizations, clean water, family nutrition, vision care, and maternal and newborn care. The Church partners with other reputable humanitarian organizations to make the most of all donations.

President Thomas S. Monson has often taught that, as members of the Church, we have a responsibility to help the hungry, homeless, and downtrodden. Members of the Church have risen to the challenge. Without much fanfare or formal thanks, they have quietly contributed millions of hours of service and hundreds of millions of dollars.

In addition to contributing to the humanitarian fund on the donation slip, members have given to LDS Philanthropies, served missions, been good friends and neighbors, volunteered labor in welfare facilities or communities, and given their time and love to hundreds of thousands of trustworthy local organizations.

As they do so, they begin to fulfill what the Savior taught about taking care of the poor and needy:

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: . . .

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:35, 40). ■



Temples Offer Family Time

In order to help families attend the temple together, there is now a specific time set aside each week in temple baptistries for families to schedule proxy baptisms without a long wait. Call your local temple to find out times and to make appointments. ■

Help for Families

Family home evening lessons are now available to help parents teach their children about dealing with pornography.

The lessons, found at overcomingpornography.org/resources, include “My body is from God,” “The Spirit can help me choose good media,” “What should I do if I see pornography?” “The Savior desires to forgive and heal the wounds of pornography,” and “Sexual intimacy is sacred and beautiful.”

These resources provide ideas for discussion and do not need to be taught in any particular order. ■

LDS.org Improves Functions

In addition to a new white background and blue menus, LDS.org initiated functional improvements earlier this year.

A country and language selector replaced the language selector, making it easier for members to find local content on their country communication pages.

Country communication pages now feature the same navigation menus found on LDS.org: Scriptures, Teachings, Resources, and News. This will allow members to access local content and Church resources without opening LDS.org and to choose between local content and LDS.org content when searching. ■



Family Home Evening Milestones

Family home evening celebrates two major events in its history in 2015.

One hundred years ago, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) and his counselors urged members of the Church to set aside an evening to grow and learn together. They promised that those who did would witness greater love at home and increased obedience to parents. The concept of home evening was not entirely new, but this encouragement from the First Presidency on April 27, 1915, helped the practice to become more widespread.

Fifty years ago, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) renewed emphasis on family home evening. In January 1965, he commissioned the first family home evening manual, with weekly lessons to be taught in each home. In 1970 Monday night became the suggested night for family home evening.

Today, 100 years after its implementation and 50 years after its importance was emphasized again, family home evening remains important in the lives of Church members. ■

SUSTAINED BY GOD'S LOVE

By Suzanne Lutz

As we grieved over our son's suicide, Heavenly Father blessed our family with an outpouring of His love.

Because of a history of clinical depression, poor self-esteem, and difficult circumstances, I had always struggled with feeling God's love for me. I had a strong testimony of the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith, but when it came to knowing that my Heavenly Father knew me personally and loved me, I felt a void.

One Sunday morning I left church early, feeling discouraged, and arrived home to discover that our 18-year-old son had chosen to take his life. It was a shock but not a surprise, as he had struggled for several years with an extreme chemical imbalance that distorted his thoughts and stole his hope.

As news of our loss reached our ward family, our home teachers and Relief Society presidency were the first to arrive at our home. Other ward and family members followed with loving embraces and compassionate hearts. Throughout the month, we were surrounded by loving friends who brought us gifts of food, flowers,

money, music, and a beautiful painting of the Savior embracing a young man. The young men and their leaders cleaned up our yard, trimmed bushes, and even finished a project my son had started on our deck. Some anonymous young women brought cookies.

We greatly appreciated the gifts of service and substance, but it was the less tangible gifts that touched our hearts the most. We heard not one word of judgment, not one insensitive comment. Those who extended their sweet love to us truly exemplified Alma's charge to his people at the Waters of Mormon: bearing our burdens with us, mourning with us, and comforting us (see Mosiah 18:8–9). I know that Heavenly Father heard the many prayers offered for our family and that He poured out His love and blessings upon us abundantly.

I felt His love most poignantly on the morning we made the funeral arrangements. I awoke with the lyrics of a hymn running through my mind:



“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous to fall. He is at thy right hand” (“Cast Thy Burden upon the Lord,” *Hymns*, no. 110). Those words strengthened me through the long hours of that difficult day.

Over the years since my son's death, the concern of our dear ward family has been constant, especially at anniversaries. Notes of encouragement and love are frequent.



GOD LOVES US COMPLETELY

“Though we are incomplete, God loves us

completely. Though we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly. Though we may feel lost and without compass, God’s love encompasses us completely. . . .

“What this means is that, regardless of our current state, there is hope for us. No matter our distress, no matter our sorrow, no matter our mistakes, our infinitely compassionate Heavenly Father desires that we draw near to Him so that He can draw near to us [see D&C 88:63].”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Love of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 22, 23.

I no longer have doubts about being loved by Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I feel wrapped in arms of divine compassion. This assurance carried me through the most difficult experience of my life and continues to carry me. God’s love is so real that it has changed who I am. I now have the confidence and strength to endure.

The birth and death of Jesus Christ are so much more meaningful

to me now, and I worship Him for His gifts of Atonement and Resurrection. Relying on the strength of the Lord and feeling His love has filled me with faith and blessed me with hope. At times when sorrow seems unbearable, He helps me bear the burden. His love came as an unexpected gift, and it continues to bless me in the most wonderful ways. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Note: Because of the anguish and uncertainty caused by the suicide of a loved one, prophets have provided needed insights. See, for example, M. Russell Ballard, “Suicide: Some Things We Know, and Some We Do Not,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 6–9. See also the video “Sitting on the Bench: Thoughts on Suicide Prevention,” [lds.org/go/benchE715](https://www.lds.org/go/benchE715).



By Elder
Kent F. Richards
Of the Seventy and
Executive Director
of the Temple
Department

Preparing to Enter the House of the Lord

At a temple open house, I noticed some girls file behind their parents through the temple.

They smiled as they found their reflections in brides' room mirrors. "Remember," their grandmother whispered, "how special you are and how much Heavenly Father loves you." Each girl imagined the time when she would return to the temple as a woman of faith, with maturing loveliness and capacity, ready to fulfill her mission on the earth. Boys who attended the open house also had glimpses of their future blessings and responsibilities.

What these children felt in the temple was right. Heavenly Father wants to bless you. His greatest blessings come as you enter the temple to receive sacred ordinances and to

make and keep sacred covenants. You are responsible to prepare and be ready.

The temple is important in your life, especially when you're young: "The young man needs his place in the temple even more than his father and his grandfather, who are steadied by a life of experience; and the young girl just entering life, needs the spirit, influence and direction that come from participation in the temple ordinances."¹ Begin now to prepare your heart and mind to be able to fully *receive* and *understand* these blessings (see Matthew 13:23; Mark 4:20).

Receiving the Fulness of the Gospel

If you will prepare yourself to enter the temple, you will be "*ready*

**Smile when
you think of the
temple. It is a place
of power and
blessing.**

to receive the fulness of [His] gospel" in the temple (D&C 35:12; emphasis added). The temple is a place of power and blessing. The Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith and the early Saints to gather to Kirtland, Ohio, where they would eventually build a temple. "There you shall be *endowed with power* from on high" (D&C 38:32; emphasis added).



HOLINESS TO THE LORD
THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

At a recent temple open house, an Apostle gathered his family around the holy altar in a sealing room. He taught them that everything we do in the Church—classes, activities, programs, and meetings—prepares us to come to the temple altar to receive the sealing ordinance. The temple represents the very essence of your Heavenly Father's plan for your eternal happiness and progression.

Preparing to Make Covenants with God

Your preparation to enter the temple and make covenants doesn't happen quickly. It began with your baptism and the confirming gift of the Holy Ghost and then grows with prayer, scripture study, obedience, and service. It invites cleanliness weekly as you participate in the sacrament. It happens as you learn to seek forgiveness through repentance, as you keep standards, and as you worthily carry a limited-use temple recommend. Church programs will help you, but your preparation is personal; you are developing *your* worthiness, *your* testimony, *your* conversion. The Savior's Atonement applies to you personally.

As you increase your spiritual maturity, you will desire to prepare for and enter the temple. There you will receive ordinances and make covenants, which are necessary steps to draw closer to your Heavenly Father. Temple ordinances are “the most

exalted . . . ordinances that have been revealed to mankind.”²

As you receive temple ordinances, you make solemn covenants with your Father only one time for yourself, and then you will strive to abide by them throughout your life. Each time you enter the temple, you can feel of His Spirit and receive additional revelation and understanding while providing the necessary ordinances for others. You will understand and receive assurance of your eternal existence and the unending power of your covenants. If we were not eternal beings, the temple would have no significance. You enter the temple and make covenants *because* you will exist eternally and want to be with your Heavenly Father and your family in “never-ending happiness” (Mosiah 2:41). This assurance grows in your own soul and is confirmed by the Holy Ghost.

Being Worthy

The role of the Holy Ghost is real. He teaches you, purifies you, and

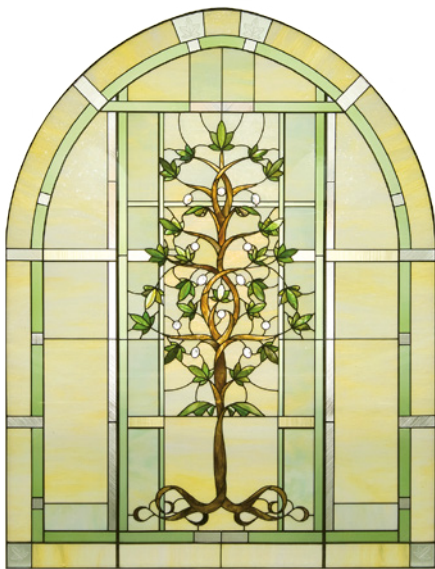
conveys the Father's love (see Romans 5:5). The Holy Spirit of Promise is the ratifying power of the Holy Ghost, which validates each covenant eternally.

In order to receive the Spirit, you must enter the temple clean and pure, free from any unforgiven transgression. If the adversary could succeed in any way to overcome you, it would be to keep you from the temple or to entice you to go there unworthily.

For this reason, you will be invited to sit in a personal interview with your bishop or branch president, to consider your worthiness and readiness to receive a recommend to enter the temple. Be honest and trust him to help you. In reality, you are determining your own standing before the Lord (see D&C 109:24). You will sign your own recommend first. You are witnessing your worthiness before the Lord.³

To be worthy does not mean you are perfect yet. It means that your heart is right, that you are living the commandments, and that you desire to be better each day.





Learning from Symbols

In the temple, as in the scriptures, the Lord teaches using symbols. You can find many symbols in the scriptures, such as the rock, the seed, the fruit, the tree of life, and the bread and water of the sacrament (see, for example, 1 Nephi 11; Alma 32; Helaman 5:12). Baptism by immersion symbolizes new life, rebirth, and cleanliness (see Romans 6:3–5). In the temple we all wear white, symbolizing purity, holiness, light, and equality.

Some symbols in the temple are both physical and spiritual. For example, wearing the garment is a physical daily reminder of the temple covenants and the promised blessings. If respected and honored, the garment protects us from temptations and unrighteous influences.

Each of the temple ordinances is symbolic. “In a sacred ceremony,

an individual may be washed and anointed,”⁴ reminiscent of the kings and priests of ancient Israel being prepared to take their positions (see 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13). The instruction and covenants in the endowment signify being clothed or invested with additional power and promises from God (see Luke 24:49). Perhaps the most beautiful symbol is the sealing ordinance, in which a couple is united in an unbreakable bond, which can last through all eternity.

The promises in the temple are rich and noble. They are the “great favors” and “great blessings” (3 Nephi 10:18) that our Father has reserved for you personally. So smile when you think of the temple.

No matter your age, do whatever is necessary to be ready to receive the greatest blessings your Father in Heaven offers to you. Trust how it felt when you were a child and sang, “I love to see the temple. I’m going there someday. I’ll prepare myself while I am young. This is my sacred duty.”⁵ It can be true for you. ■

NOTES

1. John A. Widtsoe, “Temple Worship,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Apr. 1921, 91–92.
2. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (booklet, 2002), 1.
3. See Joshua 24:22, 27: “Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him. And they said, we are witnesses.” Then Joshua took a large stone and placed it beneath an oak, saying, “This stone [like our personal temple recommend] shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words.”
4. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, 1.
5. “I Love to See the Temple,” *Children’s Songbook*, 95.

WHY DO WE BUILD TEMPLES?

“We must gain some feeling for why we build temples, and why the ordinances are required of us. Thereafter we are continually instructed and enlightened on matters of spiritual importance. It comes line upon line, precept upon precept, until we gain a fullness of light and knowledge. This becomes a great protection to us—to each of us personally. . . .

“ . . . No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.

“Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection. . . .

“ . . . If we will enter into our covenants without reservation or apology, the Lord will protect us. We will receive inspiration sufficient for the challenges of life. . . .

“So come to the temple—come and claim your blessings.”

Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple (booklet, 2002), 37.

KEY POINTS

- In the temple you receive ordinances essential to your salvation.
- You must enter the temple clean and pure, free from any unforgiven transgression.
- As in the scriptures, many of the teachings and ordinances in the temple are symbolic, allowing you to learn more and more each time you return to the temple.

Pillars of Strength in Hungary

By McKelle George

Hungarian young adult Krisztian Eszther* says the gospel strengthens her faith—not only in God but also in an optimistic and fulfilling life. “Hungarians tend to think of our dark past instead of our bright future,” she says. The past Eszther refers to is a period of time in Hungary’s history (1949–56) when the words of the national anthem—*Isten, áldd meg a magyart*, which means “God bless the Hungarians”—were never sung.

The Gospel Comes to Hungary

Hungary officially recognized the Church in 1988, one year after Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave a dedicatory prayer atop Mt. Gellért, overlooking Budapest. In 1990 a mission was opened in Budapest, in a country emerging from 40 years without religious freedom. Now God’s influence is strong, particularly in the hearts of its Latter-day Saint young adults.

Institute Outreach Centers

Outreach centers are a big part of helping young adults in Central and Eastern Europe. The night before Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles visited Central Europe, he awoke to a powerful revelation. He felt that the strength of the Church in that part of the world would be among the young adults. Now outreach centers are a welcoming place where young adults can find classes, activities, and friends with the same beliefs. “Here we can have fun without worrying about having our standards challenged,” Eszther says.

Eszther met the missionaries in her hometown of Újfehértó and attended their free weekly English class. Soon the missionaries invited her to branch activities. “From the beginning I attended every game night, family home evening, and dance,” she says. “I was baptized three weeks before I turned 18. Now I know I’m a daughter of God, and Heavenly Father would never leave His daughter alone.”

Hungary has been ravaged by war and oppression, but the young single adults of the Church are filled with hope.

Young Adult Activities

Eszther still goes to young adult activities in her branch in Nyíregyháza. There are no young adult wards or branches yet in Hungary, but “we still get together,” Eszther says. “We’ve gone to the Flower Festival, a frog festival, and the zoo.”

As Elder Perry predicted, the young adult members in Hungary offer a source of light to all. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

** In Hungary, family names come before given names.*



MORE ABOUT ESZTHER

What is dating like in Hungary?

Young adult members create occasions to meet each other, but it's hard because they could live on two different sides of the country.

How often do you go to the temple?

I'm one of the luckiest members because I can visit the Freiberg Germany Temple once a year.

Is education important in Hungary?

Yes, but it was hard to believe because my parents have several diplomas and our family still struggled. Now I see the advantages, and I started college in January 2014.

HUNGARY BY THE NUMBERS

9,877,365 people (as of 2014)

35,919 square miles (93,030 km²)
of land

Known for its thermal springs, Hungary
has 450 public baths

14 vowels in the Hungarian language

THE CHURCH IN HUNGARY

5,050 Latter-day Saints

22 wards and branches

1 stake (formed in 2006)

6 family history centers

1 mission (Budapest)

FACTS ABOUT HUNGARY

Capital: Budapest

Language: Hungarian (*Magyar*)



FILLED WITH LIFE & ENERGY



By Randal A. Wright

Imagine for a moment that a friend comes to you seeking advice on ways to receive personal revelation. If you could offer only one idea, what would it be?

As a new General Authority, Elder Marion G. Romney (1897–1988) felt inadequate in fulfilling his important calling, so he sought advice from his friend Elder Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The counsel offered that day both surprised and motivated Elder Romney. Elder Lee said: “If you are to be successful as a General Authority, you will need to be inspired. You will need to receive revelation. I will give you one piece of advice: *Go to bed early and get up early*. If you do, your body and mind will become rested and then in the quiet of those early morning hours, you will receive more flashes of inspiration and insight than at any other time of the day.”

Years later, reflecting back on that experience, then-President Romney said: “From that day on, I put that counsel into practice, and I know it works. Whenever I have a serious problem, or some assignment of a creative nature with which I hope to receive the influence of the Spirit, I always receive more assistance in the early morning hours than at any other time of the day.”¹

**What one practice,
if followed consistently
and with discipline,
would help you have
better health, energy,
and inspiration?**

• • • • •

When I first read this account, I too was surprised by the advice Elder Lee gave. I would never have connected an early daily schedule with revelation. However, I now know that there is a direct correlation. I have also learned that actions traditionally associated with receiving revelation like prayer, scripture study, fasting, temple attendance, and service are greatly enhanced when I go to bed early and get up early.

Scriptural Examples

Inspired men and women of all ages have followed this divine counsel concerning sleep. “Abraham *got up early in the morning* to the place where he stood before the Lord” (Genesis 19:27; emphasis added). “Moses *rose up early in the morning*, and went up unto mount Sinai, *as the Lord had commanded him*, and took in his hand the two tables of stone” (Exodus 34:4; emphasis added). “And Joshua *rose early in the morning*, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord” (Joshua 6:12; emphasis added).

How did the Lord begin His day during His mortal ministry? Mark records, “In the morning, *rising up a great while before day*, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). Mary, a devoted



disciple, followed His example and in doing so taught us a powerful lesson: “The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene *early, when it was yet dark*, unto the sepulchre” (John 20:1). In the early morning she became the first mortal to see the resurrected Lord.

Blessings of Arising Early

Great leaders in our day also use the early-morning hours to receive revelation. Some time ago I heard a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy mention in a stake conference talk that he was an early riser. After the meeting, I spoke to him briefly about his early-morning ritual, then asked how many of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve kept a similar schedule. He replied, “They all do!” It was a powerful moment, and the Spirit testified to me that going to bed early and getting up early can be indeed connected to receiving revelation.

Additional blessings are pledged to those who follow the Lord’s counsel on sleep. Consider these incredible promises: “Cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may *not be weary*; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be *invigorated*” (D&C 88:124; emphasis added). *Invigorate* means “to fill with life and energy.”

The ancient philosopher Aristotle suggested other benefits to those who keep an early schedule: “It is well to be up before day-break, for such a habit contributes to health, wealth and wisdom.”² Early U.S. statesman Benjamin Franklin later put that thought into his well-known maxim: “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”³ Most people put health, wealth, and wisdom toward the top of things most desired in life.

Health

The average age of a chief executive officer in America is 55 years old.⁴ Would it surprise you to discover that the

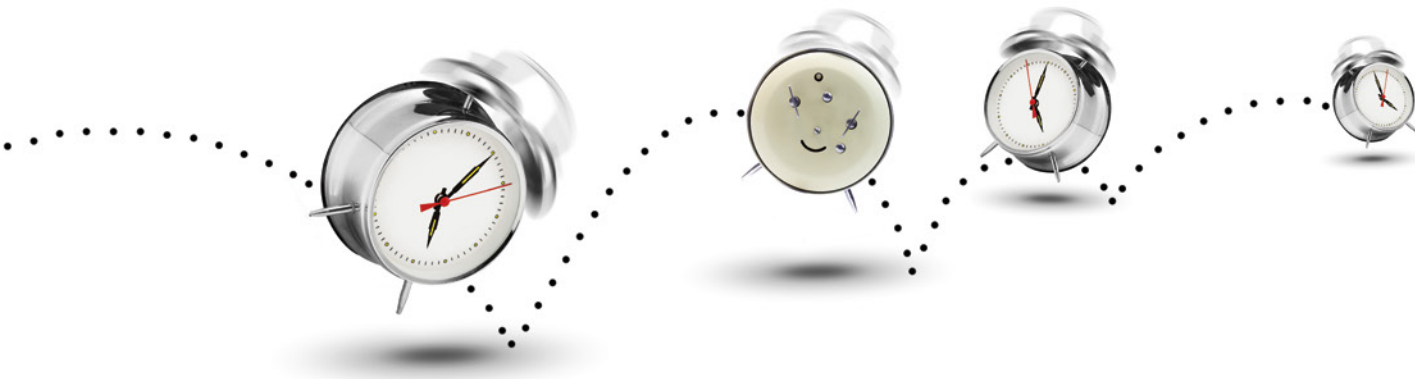
CEO of an international organization was a 97-year-old man? What if you also learned that he still traveled the world giving speeches, training leaders, meeting with government officials, and being interviewed by major media organizations at this advanced age? What if his two top VPs were very active 79- and 87-year-olds? And yet that was exactly the situation toward the end of the administration of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) as President of the Church. It seems likely that an early schedule, while not the only contributor, is among the factors leading to the longevity of our Church leaders.

Former Brigham Young University president Ernest L. Wilkinson suggested that keeping an early schedule is associated with health benefits. Referring to President David O. McKay (1873–1970), President of the Church at the time, he said: “One of the great reasons, I am sure, why President McKay has lived to such a good, ripe, and vigorous old age has been the fact that as a young man he developed habits of retiring to bed early, arising early, generally before sun up, when his mind was clear and his body vigorous, to do the day’s work.”⁵

Connections have also been made between keeping an early schedule and mental and emotional health. Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “To those who feel defeated and downtrodden, look to the early hours of the day for your rescue.”⁶

Wisdom

The connection between sleep patterns and wisdom is not just a theory. A study conducted by researchers at Brigham Young University looked at the effect of several variables—such as exercise, nutrition, and sleep habits—on students’ grade point average (GPA). The researchers found that of all the variables, “weekday and weekend wake-up times had the largest relative effects on semester



GPA. For each hour of delay in reported average weekday wake-up time, the predicted GPA decreased by 0.132 on a standard 0.00 to 4.00 grading scale. . . . Each hour of delay in average weekend wake-up time corresponded to a decrease in predicted GPA of 0.115.”⁷

Not long ago I surveyed 203 Latter-day Saint college students about their sleep patterns. On average these students awoke at 7:30 a.m. on school days and 9:15 a.m. on weekends. Their average bedtime was midnight on school nights and 1:00 a.m. on weekends. These students are going directly against the research connecting an early schedule with knowledge acquisition. Perhaps the finding that a higher GPA is the result of an early schedule is too simple to believe. Have we become like the children of Israel, who refused to follow the Lord’s antidote for snakebites “because of the simpleness of the way”? (1 Nephi 17:41; see also Helaman 8:14–15).

Consider the counsel President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, gave related to gaining wisdom: “I counsel our children to do their critical studying in the early hours of the morning when they’re fresh and alert, rather than to fight physical weariness and mental exhaustion at night. I’ve learned the power of the dictum, ‘Early to bed, early to rise.’”⁸ Perhaps this is one reason full-time missionaries follow an early-to-bed and early-to-rise schedule.

Other Blessings

Writing with his wife, Barbara, Elder Joe J. Christensen, emeritus member of the Seventy, suggested even more blessings to those who follow the Lord’s counsel on sleep: “There must be an excellent reason for the injunction to retire and arise early [see D&C 88:124]. . . . The world is a more beautiful place early in the morning. Life is so much more calm. Much more can be accomplished in a shorter

amount of time.”⁹ During a fireside address at Brigham Young University, Elder Christensen further stated: “Some of you are not getting the rest that you need. Some are habituated to going to bed late and sleeping much longer than your system really needs, thus missing out on some of the personal inspiration you could be receiving.”¹⁰

President Hinckley added another promise to the obedient: “If you go to bed at 10:00 and get up by 6:00 a.m., things will work out for you.”¹¹

Following the Lord’s counsel on sleep may seem like a small thing, yet “by small means the Lord can bring about great things” (1 Nephi 16:29). I have a testimony that following an early schedule brings many blessings into our lives, including revelation. It’s amazing how much more I get accomplished in a day when I retire early and arise early. The benefits of this self-discipline far exceed the effort required. When we win the first battle of the day against the mattress, we are far more likely to win more battles during the day. We are also more likely to be filled with life and energy. ■

The author lives in Texas, USA.

NOTES

1. See Joe J. Christensen, *To Grow in Spirit: A Ten-Point Plan for Becoming More Spiritual* (1989), 27–28.
2. Aristotle, in *Wit and Wisdom of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle*, ed. N. B. Sen (1967), 100.
3. *Selections from the Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. U. Waldo Cutler (1905), 16.
4. See *Forbes* magazine, “Emerging Culture, Worldwide Success,” Oct. 25, 2012.
5. Ernest L. Wilkinson, *Lifting One’s Sights*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year (Oct. 1, 1963), 4.
6. Russell M. Nelson, “Joy Cometh in the Morning,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 70.
7. *Journal of American College Health*, vol. 49, no. 3 (Nov. 2000), 128.
8. Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* (1975), 205.
9. Joe J. and Barbara K. Christensen, *Making Your Home a Missionary Training Center* (1985), 33.
10. Joe J. Christensen, “Resolutions” (Brigham Young University fireside, Jan. 9, 1994), 5, speeches.byu.edu.
11. Gordon B. Hinckley, in Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1996), 166–67.

CHRIST HAS FELT MY PAIN

A gentle reminder about an aspect of the Atonement I had forgotten led to a change in attitude and perspective.

By James G. Stokes

I sighed heavily but quietly in the darkness of my hospital room. I felt frustrated, but I didn't want to disturb my mother, asleep on a couch not far from my bed. I was recovering from my fourth unexpected surgery in three weeks, with another operation planned in two months during the summer. That later operation, we had been told, would last about five hours, with four to six weeks afterward for recovery in the hospital.

I was born in 1986. Soon after birth, I was diagnosed with cerebral palsy secondary to congenital hydrocephalus. Hydrocephalus, called "water on the brain," is a condition in which an individual has either too much or too little cerebrospinal fluid. In my now 28 years of life I have had

more than 50 surgical procedures for these conditions.

Nevertheless, the Lord has richly blessed me. One of my first doctors

counseled my parents, "Take him home and simply love him. He will never be anything more than a limp noodle on the sofa." Thankfully, my



parents didn't listen. Throughout my life, they have encouraged me to do and accomplish many things. They never treated me any differently than they did my siblings. Thanks to them, in spite of my disability, I lead the fullest life that I can.

I Heard My Name

Nevertheless, on what felt like the darkest and most dismal night I had ever faced, I forgot the many blessings I had received from the Lord. I thought only of the sorry state of my life. My negativity engulfed me, and I began to doubt all I had been taught about my Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. A loving God, I rationalized, would not have left me alone to face this nightmarish reality. Worst of all, no one knew what I was going through. My family felt a portion, but they did not fully understand how painful my experiences had been. No one did.

I was about to voice these thoughts in prayer when I heard my name. Through my anguish I recognized the voice of the Spirit, carrying a message to my soul from my Savior reminding me I was not alone. Jesus Christ knew what I was going through. He had felt my pain.

As the message resonated in me, doubt was replaced by shame. In my self-pity, I had forgotten about Jesus Christ. I had been taught much about how the Savior suffered for our sins. I had forgotten that in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, the Lord had also borne my grief and carried my pain (see Isaiah 53:4; Alma 7:11). This reminder forever changed the way I look at the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Inwardly, I resolved that I would never again forget. This reminder would govern my thoughts, words, and deeds in this life and in the life to come.

This change in perspective also brought a change in attitude. Remembering that I am not alone, I have been more positive about my situation. I believe that this allowed me to recover more quickly from the surgeries. It also helped me to come through the extensive surgery in the summer within three hours and cut my hospital stay (originally projected to be four to six weeks) to only three weeks.

Taking Courage

My disabilities and the trials that accompany them have not been easy to bear. But because I know that my Savior completely understands what

I am going through, even if no one else does, I know He will always be there for me. All I have to do is “drop my burden[s] at his feet and bear a song away” (“How Gentle God’s Commands,” *Hymns*, no. 125).

I will be forever grateful to a Savior who not only carried my sins, sorrows, and afflictions but also took the time to remind me that He has done so. I hope that my experiences can help others to take courage, bear up under their burdens, remember that they are not alone, and be blessed to endure to the end. ■

The author (pictured left) lives in Utah, USA.



WE ARE NOT ALONE

“There is no physical pain, no spiritual wound, no anguish of soul or heartache, no infirmity or weak-

ness you or I ever confront in mortality that the Savior did not experience first. In a moment of weakness we may cry out, ‘No one knows what it is like. No one understands.’ But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He has felt and borne our individual burdens.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 90.

Gaining a knowledge of our Heavenly Father's plan of happiness can help us understand the central role of marriage and family in that plan.

◀ PRE-EARTH LIFE

▶ VEIL

▶ EARTH LIFE

FAITH

REPENTANCE

BAPTISM

GIFT of the HOLY GHOST

ENDURE to the END

GOD'S PLAN

for FAMILIES

By Mark A. Mathews
Seminaries and Institutes

The scriptures and modern prophets teach us that one of the fundamental purposes for the Creation of this earth was to foster marriage and family life. “Marriage is ordained of God,” the Lord explained, so “that the earth might answer the end of its creation” (D&C 49:15–16). “Simply summarized,” added Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “the earth was created that families might be.”¹

Despite the plainness of these teachings, I have encountered many seminary and institute students who did not seem to fully understand how central a role marriage and family play in our Heavenly Father’s plan. As a result, these students sometimes adopt some of the thinking of the world on these important topics, which affects the way they plan for, seek, and support eternal marriage and family relationships.

I believe that understanding the doctrines of God’s plan of salvation has the power to change our attitudes and behaviors to align more faithfully with the teachings of the Lord and his prophets.² The following is a brief review of

the plan of salvation as it relates to marriage and family. These principles can help us understand why “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God” and why “the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”³

The Family in Premortal Life

In our premortal life, each of us was born as “a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents.”⁴ As such, we were all brothers and sisters and lived as members of God’s family. Although all of us were part of this eternal family of God, the only ones who enjoyed the blessings of eternal marriage were our heavenly parents. Only they could have children and be called father and mother.

As Apostles of the Lord have explained, “The title *father* is sacred and eternal. It is significant that of all the titles of respect and honor and admiration that are given to Deity, He has asked us to address Him as Father.”⁵

Our Heavenly Father prepared a plan whereby we could progress and become like Him. A central feature of this plan includes the opportunity to be married eternally and enjoy eternal posterity of our own.

The Family through the Creation, Fall, and Atonement

Three foundational events in God’s plan combine to make marriage and family relationships possible for time and eternity.

These events are the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. The scriptural account of the Creation culminates not just with the creation of man but with the establishment of marriage. A brief summary of Adam and Eve’s eternal marriage in Eden is found in Genesis 1:28, including the charge to “multiply, and replenish the earth.”

CREATION

FALL

ATONEMENT

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) explained: “Marriage as established in the beginning was an eternal covenant. The first man and the first woman were not married until death should part them, for at that time death had not come into the world. The ceremony on that occasion was performed by the Eternal Father himself whose work endures forever.”⁶

Thus, the crowning event of the Creation was not just when Adam and Eve were created in the image of their heavenly parents⁷ but when they were sealed in eternal marriage like their heavenly parents. From the beginning, marriage between a man and a woman was ordained of God and established as the ultimate purpose of our creation.

Although Adam and Eve enjoyed eternal marriage like our heavenly parents, they could not yet enjoy the full blessings of family life. As the prophet Lehi explained, they were originally created in a state where “they would have had no children” (2 Nephi 2:23). One reason they chose to partake of the forbidden fruit and fall to mortality was so that they would have children. “Adam fell that men might be,” Lehi explained (2 Nephi 2:25).

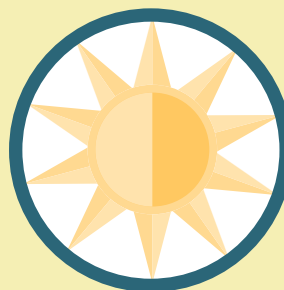
Marriage and family relationships, made possible by the Creation and the Fall, are made eternal through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As Sister Julie B. Beck, former Relief Society general president, taught: “The Atonement allows for the family to be sealed together eternally. It allows for families to have eternal growth and perfection. The plan of happiness, also called the plan of salvation, was a plan created for families.”⁸

The Family in Time and Eternity

For these marriage and family relationships to endure forever, they must be sealed through holy ordinances and covenants available only in the temple, with all the promised blessings being dependent on the participants’ faithfulness. The importance of these ordinances to our salvation was explained by the Lord:

“In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

“And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];



Celestial



Terrestrial



Telestial



FINAL JUDGMENT

RESURRECTION



Paradise



Spirit Prison

SPirit WORLD

DEATH

“And if he does not, he cannot obtain it” (D&C 131:1–3).

In other words, just as the ordinance and covenant of baptism are the gate to enter the celestial kingdom, so temple marriage is the gate to enter the highest degree of that kingdom. Those who marry in the temple and remain faithful to their covenants are promised that they shall become like God because they will enjoy the continuation of the family unit forever, just like our heavenly parents (see D&C 132:19–20).

The Family and Alternative Lifestyles

It is true that not everyone has the opportunity to marry in this life, nor is every couple blessed with children in mortality. Latter-day prophets have assured us that those who are faithful will eventually be given these blessings, either in this life or the next.⁹ Nevertheless, just because not everyone achieves the ideal does not mean we should stop holding it up as the standard to seek. Eternal marriage and family relationships should be a desire and priority for every Latter-day Saint, regardless of circumstances.

As has always been the case, Satan proposes alternatives to our Heavenly Father's plan, and nowhere is this more apparent than with the family. In contrast to our Heavenly Father's plan of happiness through righteousness in marriage and family life, Satan proposes alternative lifestyles that are rooted in sinfulness and selfishness. He is cursed to never marry or have a family, and he entices us to live like him instead of like our Heavenly Father. He lies to us, telling us that marriage and family are an inconvenience and a bondage. He promises us that we will find greater joy and fulfillment in some other way or through some other arrangement. He tempts us not to marry and, if we do marry, to not have children.

The deviations the adversary proposes include premarital sexual relations, pornography, abuse of spouse and children, elective abortion for personal or social convenience, marital infidelity, unjustified divorce, cohabitation, homosexual relations, and unwarranted sterilization.¹⁰ If he cannot convince us to do these things, he tempts us to support and encourage others to do them. But these alternative lifestyles will not bring the true happiness we seek in this life, nor will they bring the full blessings of salvation in

the next. Out of loyalty to our Heavenly Father's plan and out of love for mankind, we must discourage and oppose measures that are not designed to maintain and strengthen marriage between a man and a woman and “the family as the fundamental unit of society.”¹¹

Conclusion

These doctrines of the plan of salvation lay a foundation for our understanding of the importance of marriage and family relationships. They teach us that marriage and family are not outmoded institutions but vital elements in our quest to become like our heavenly parents.

The relationships we thus form can also bring some of our greatest joys in time and eternity (see 2 Nephi 2:22–25). I was reminded of this once when my three-year-old daughter asked to trace my outline on our driveway with chalk. Willing to oblige, I lay down on the driveway. As she drew with the chalk, I smiled at her childlike coordination and was suddenly struck with an overwhelming sense of love for her. I looked up to heaven, and our Heavenly Father seemed to whisper to me, “This is just a taste of the love I feel for all of my children and the joy that exists in heaven, where families are forever.” What I felt was indescribable.

These relationships are all part of God's plan of happiness. It is a family plan. It is the plan of salvation of families. May we all choose to support and follow that plan and not its alternatives. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “The Creation,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 85.
2. “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior” (Boyd K. Packer, “Little Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17).
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
4. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 129.
5. Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Father, Consider Your Ways,” *Ensign*, June 2002, 12.
6. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 2:71.
7. “All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity” (First Presidency of the Church, “The Origin of Man,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2002, 29). See also Abraham 4:27.
8. Julie B. Beck, “Teaching the Doctrine of the Family,” *Ensign*, March 2011, 12.
9. See, for example, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 130–31; *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Fielding Smith* (2013), 197–98.
10. For counsel against these practices, see *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 21.4.
11. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 129.



Reaping

THE REWARDS OF

Righteousness



By Elder
Quentin L. Cook
Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

*No good thing will be withheld from them
that walk uprightly.*

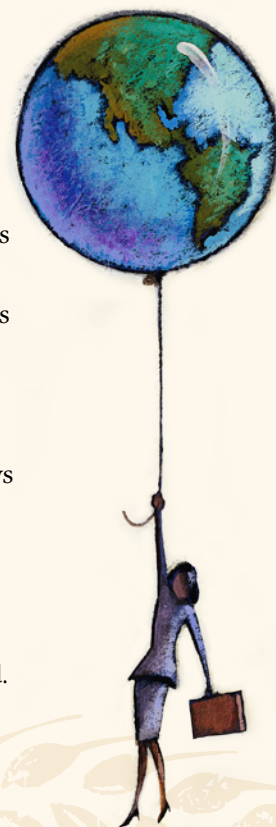
The world is literally in commotion (see D&C 45:26). Many of our challenges are in the spiritual realm. They are societal issues we as individuals cannot necessarily resolve. Nevertheless, there are practical rewards we *can* achieve as individuals, even at a time when righteousness across the world is in decline.

The very idea of “rewards of righteousness” is a concept that is under siege in today’s world. Convincing people to choose righteousness is an age-old challenge. “The natural man is an enemy to God” (Mosiah 3:19). There has always been “opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11).

The difference today is that the “great and spacious building” (1 Nephi 8:31) skeptics are louder, more contentious, and less tolerant than at any time during my life. They evidence their diminished faith when, on many issues, they are more concerned with being on the wrong side of history than on the wrong side of God. There was a time when the vast majority of people understood that they would be judged by God’s commandments, not by the prevailing views or dominant philosophies of the day. Some are more concerned about being mocked by others than they are about being judged by God.

The battle between good and evil is not new. But today a much higher percentage of people mistakenly concludes that there is not a moral, righteous standard to which all people should adhere.

Nevertheless, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has never had more faithful members. Members of the Church, together with others who have similar moral values, represent an island of faith in a sea of doubt and disbelief. We know, as the prophet Alma declared, that “wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10) and that the Father’s plan for His children is a “plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8, 16).



***If we're not
careful, the
world can cause
us to focus on
things that pull
us away from
deep spiritual
commitment.***

My desire is to offer some suggestions that may help you individually and your families collectively to better understand and achieve the rewards of righteousness.

The Reward of Spirituality

“How do I put material concerns in proper perspective as I attempt to achieve spiritual progress?”

We are so much a part of this world. The material aspects of day-to-day living are a specific challenge. Society tends to look at everything through the lens of worldly rewards.

The preface to the Doctrine and Covenants highlights this very problem to warn us of dangers, give us guidance to prepare and protect ourselves now and in the future, and provide significant insight on this subject: “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol” (see D&C 1:16).

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught that idols can include credentials, degrees, property, homes, furnishings, and other material objects. He said that when we elevate these otherwise worthy objectives in a way that diminishes our worship of

the Lord and weakens our efforts to establish His righteousness and perform the work of salvation among Father in Heaven’s children, we have created idols.¹

Sometimes the lens of the world causes us to focus on issues not quite as dramatic as aspiring to great wealth but that nonetheless take us away from deep spiritual commitment.

Many years ago I was made aware of an interesting display that had several unique scenes. The different scenes appeared underneath a large banner that read, “If Christ came tonight, to whom would He come?” If I remember the depictions correctly, they contained the following scenes:

- An ill, elderly woman in bed being attended by a nurse.
- A joyful young mother with a newborn baby.
- A family with hungry, crying children.
- A wealthy family.
- A sweet but humble family with many children joyously singing together.

We know that when the Savior comes again, we will not know the day or the hour. We also know that as Christians, we care for the poor and the needy and for the widow and the orphan. Nevertheless, the banner would have been more accurate had it read, “If Christ came tonight, who would be prepared to greet Him?”

My second thought was that the scenes told us everything about the physical condition of the people but nothing about their spiritual condition and commitment to Christ.

The starting point for reviewing our life and commitment to the Savior and His gospel is baptism. Except for new converts and the very young, our baptisms occurred years ago.

The great prophet Alma speaks eloquently to us when he states: “And now behold, I say unto you,

The world is focused on temporal day-to-day economic issues, but our focus needs to be on spiritual matters.





We need to focus our lives and increase our emphasis on spiritual matters.

my brethren, if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?" (Alma 5:26).

Alma then continues with his profound message, which is relevant to our day. He essentially asks the Saints, were they to die, if they would be prepared to meet God. Alma then emphasizes four qualities we need in order to be blameless before God:

First, "have [we] been sufficiently humble?" In a sense, this is a return to the requirement for baptism—humbling ourselves and having broken hearts and contrite spirits.

Second, "are [we] stripped of pride?" Alma warns against trampling the Holy One under our feet and being puffed up in pride—setting our hearts upon the vain things of the world and supposing we are better than others.

Third, are we "stripped of envy?" For those who have great blessings but do not feel gratitude because they focus only on what others have, envy can be most pernicious. "Lifestyle envy"² has increased as fame and fortune have replaced faith and family as core aspirations for much of society.

Fourth, do we mock or persecute our brothers and sisters? In today's world we would probably call this bullying (see Alma 5:27–30, 53–54).

Could anything be more relevant to the issues of our own day than this message about humility, pride, envy, and persecution? The great debate across much of the world is about temporal day-to-day economic issues. Yet there is little discussion about returning to Christlike principles

focused on preparation to meet God and on the condition of our spirits. We need to focus our lives and increase our emphasis on spiritual matters.

The Reward of Righteous Families

"Should we be raising our families in areas where there are few members of the Church and we are surrounded by much evil, contention, and opposition to righteousness?"

My wife, Mary, and I had these concerns as we were beginning to raise our children in the San Francisco Bay Area in California, USA, in the late 1960s. The Latter-day Saint population was relatively small. But while the vast majority of people were wonderful, the Bay Area had become a magnet for drug usage and all manner of promiscuous and sinful conduct.

The change in society was significant enough that a concerned stake president asked the leadership of the Church if he should encourage Church members to remain in the Bay Area. Elder Harold B. Lee (1899–1973), then a senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was assigned to address the issue. He explained that the Lord had not inspired the construction of a temple in our area only to have the members leave. His counsel to us was simple but profound:

1. Create Zion in our hearts and homes.
2. Be a light to those among whom we live.
3. Focus on the ordinances of the temple and the principles taught there.

We cherished Elder Lee's counsel and tried to follow it in our family.

In building Zion in our hearts and homes, we need to emphasize religious observance in the home by having daily family prayer and scripture study and by holding weekly family home evening. In this context we can teach and train our children. We do this with love and kindness, avoiding undue criticism of our children and our spouse.

Regardless of where we live and even if we do everything right, some children may make unwise choices that lead to forbidden paths. Accordingly, it is important to help our young people determine in advance what they will say or do when others propose improper or immoral conduct.

Our children attended schools where there were only two or three LDS children. At the beginning of each school year and before school activities, we discussed in family home evening appropriate responses if they found themselves in compromising situations. We asked them what they would say to friends who might tell them, "Don't be

silly; everyone does it," "Your parents won't know," or "Just once won't matter."

We talked about our accountability to the Lord.

We pointed out that we follow Christ's example when we dress modestly, use clean and appropriate language, and avoid pornography, which now needs to be taught to Primary-age children so that they can have pure lives.

We talked about Joseph of Egypt, who fled when confronted with inappropriate attention from Potiphar's wife (see Genesis 39:7–12).

Each of our children had at least one experience in which this preparation was essential, but most of the time their friends protected them because they knew their standards and beliefs.

When our daughter, Kathryn, called her mother after going away to college, Mary would tell her things she loved about the Savior. Mary constantly used His example and character to help with the problem Kathryn had called to discuss.

*We can raise
righteous chil-
dren in almost
any part of the
world if they
have a firm
foundation in
Jesus Christ and
His gospel.*



I believe we can raise righteous children in almost any part of the world if they have a firm foundation in Jesus Christ and His gospel. Nephi described teaching his family and people, saying, “We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26).

If we do this, when our children make unwise choices, they will know that all is not lost and that they can find their way home. I want to assure you that you and your family will be blessed as you strive to strengthen each member of your family through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we follow Elder Lee’s counsel to be a light to those among whom we live, we cannot be in camouflage as to who we are. Our conduct should reflect our values and beliefs. Where appropriate, we should participate in the public square.

Living worthy of a temple recommend, receiving temple ordinances, and being true to our covenants gives us the focus and vision to stay on the covenant path. When our youth live worthy to perform baptisms for the dead, their lives will be in order.

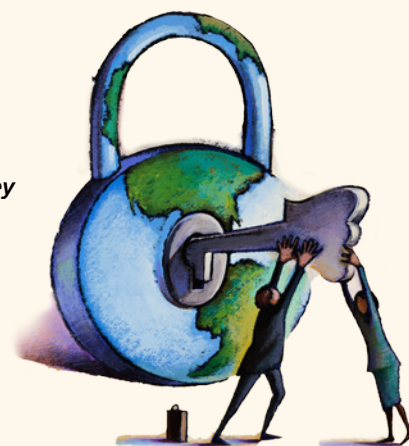
We need to focus our energy on strengthening our families by talking, rejoicing, preaching, and prophesying of Christ so that we may enjoy the reward of righteous families and become eternal families.

For those who are single but living righteous lives, our doctrine is reassuring: “Faithful members whose circumstances do not allow them to receive the blessings of eternal marriage and parenthood in this life will receive all promised blessings in the eternities, provided they keep the covenants they have made with God.”³

The Reward of Happiness

“What advantages should I provide for my children to be happy and successful in life?”

Love is the key ingredient to happiness in this world.



Lucifer has created a counterfeit or illusion of happiness that is inconsistent with righteousness and will mislead us if we are not vigilant. Many of our problems today occur because the secular world has been pursuing an incorrect definition of happiness. We know from the Book of Mormon that this problem has existed throughout all generations. We also know the blessings that come from living the commandments.

King Benjamin states, “I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it” (Mosiah 2:41).

Over many years I have followed a research project that commenced in the 1930s. Initially, the study involved 268 men at a premier university who were periodically studied over their entire lives. Later, women became part of the study. The study covered approximately 70 years. The goal of the original study was to find out as much as possible about success and happiness.

The study showed that college entrance scores and grade averages did not predict either success or happiness in later life. But one area where there was a high correlation was childhood family happiness. Happy, successful adults usually reported that

their mother in particular verbally expressed love and affection and did not use severe discipline. Both of their parents were demonstratively affectionate with each other and available and accessible to their children, with whom they had warm and emotionally expressive relationships. The parents created a stable family environment and were believed to have respected the autonomy of their children.

A concluding book on the study published in 2012 reports: “Many measures of success throughout life are predicted less reliably by early financial and social advantage than by a loved and loving childhood.” A warm childhood correlates with achievement more than intelligence, social class, or athleticism. The study also found that “what goes right in childhood predicts the future far better than what goes wrong.”⁴

The study as a whole indicates that even when there are significant challenges and some things go very wrong, most children are resilient, and the trust that is built by loving relationships with parents, especially the mother, can result in lasting, lifetime happiness. What was interesting to me, but not surprising, was that the study was completely in line with what the scriptures and the Church teach about

the family. The Church emphasizes family home evening, family prayer, expressions of love, family togetherness, and family traditions, which are the very kinds of activities that the study indicated would produce happy, successful adults.

Nephi begins the Book of Mormon expressing gratitude for “goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1), but the real lesson is that we each determine what kind of parent we will be so that our posterity can happily report that they too were born of goodly parents.

The most important thing you can do is to make sure your children and those you nurture know that you love them. Love is the key ingredient to happiness.

The Reward of Prospering in the Land

“Our family is not achieving significant material success. Is that because we are not righteous enough?”

The scriptures are clear that living the commandments allows us to prosper in the land. But let me assure you that prospering in the land is not defined by the size of your bank account. It has a much fuller meaning than that.


Speaking to his son Helaman, the prophet Alma teaches, “Inasmuch as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land; and ye ought to know also, that inasmuch as ye will not keep the commandments of God ye shall be cut off from his presence” (Alma 36:30).

Accordingly, having the Spirit in our lives is the primary ingredient in prospering in the land.

If we keep the commandments, we also have certain specific promises (see Ephesians 6:1–3). Doctrine and Covenants section 89, for example, promises that by living the Word of Wisdom, we will enjoy health blessings and great treasures of knowledge.

Isolating one element of the Word of Wisdom, avoiding alcohol, is instructional. The longitudinal





The ultimate reward of righteousness is “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.”

study I mentioned earlier found that alcohol abuse touches one American family in three, is involved in a quarter of all admissions to general hospitals, and plays a major role in death, divorce, bad health, and diminished accomplishment.

A long-term study of active Church members in California found that women live on average 5.6 years and men 9.8 years longer than comparable U.S. females and males. The physicians conducting the study indicated at least one reason was adherence to the Word of Wisdom. Living the Word of Wisdom allows us to prosper in the land.⁵

In a conversation I had with President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) on a flight to a temple dedication, he joyfully reported that the Church had funds to increase the number of temples because Latter-day Saints had prospered in the land. As faithful tithe payers, they had provided the resources to build temples.

Prospering and being wealthy are not necessarily synonymous. A much better gospel definition of prospering in the land is having sufficient for our needs while having the abundant blessing of the Spirit in our lives. When we provide for our families and love and serve the Savior, we will enjoy the reward of having the Spirit and prospering in the land.

The Reward of Peace

The ultimate promised reward of righteousness is set forth clearly in Doctrine and Covenants 59:23: “But learn that he [or she] who doeth the works of righteousness shall

receive his [or her] reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.”

More than 35 years ago, President Kimball taught that major growth would occur in the Church because many “good women . . . will be drawn to the Church in large numbers.” He declared, “This will happen to the degree that the women of the Church reflect righteousness and articulateness in their lives and . . . are seen as distinct and different—in happy ways—from the women of the world.”⁶

This has truly happened and will continue to do so in the future.

The Lord God is indeed a sun and shield and will give grace and glory. No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly (see Psalm 84:11). My prayer is that you may reap the rewards of righteousness as you faithfully follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ■

From an address, “The Rewards of Righteousness,” delivered at BYU Women’s Conference on May 2, 2014.

NOTES

1. See Spencer W. Kimball, “The False Gods We Worship,” *Ensign*, June 1976, 2–6.
2. See Lane Anderson, *Deseret News*, “The Instagram Effect: How the Psychology of Envy Drives Consumerism,” Apr. 15, 2014, C7.
3. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 1.3.3. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, reaffirmed this in his April 2014 general conference talk, “The Witness,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 94–97.
4. George E. Vaillant, *Triumphs of Experience: The Men of the Harvard Grant Study* (2012), 108–9.
5. See James E. Enstrom and Lester Breslow, “Lifestyle and Reduced Mortality among Active California Mormons, 1980–2004,” *Preventive Medicine* 46 (2008), 135.
6. See Spencer W. Kimball, “The Role of Righteous Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 103–4; see also *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 223.

The Coming Forth of the

BOOK OF MORMON



*Like Joseph Smith, you need not lead
a perfect life in order to be a powerful
instrument in God's hands.*



By Matthew S. Holland

This is the second article in a two-part series about the Prophet Joseph Smith. The first article, "The Path to Palmyra," appeared in the June 2015 issue of the Ensign.

Just as Joseph Smith's path to Palmyra was strewn with trials and grief and testing, so too was his effort to bring forth the Book of Mormon—a process that, at one point, took him to one of his deepest troughs of despair.

On the night of September 21, 1823, Joseph was restless. It had been three years since his grand theophany, seeing God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, face to face in response to his heartfelt plea to know which church was right. Since that day, he had "frequently [fallen] into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth, and the foibles of human nature" (Joseph Smith—History 1:28).

Conscious of these shortcomings, 17-year-old Joseph pleaded "for forgiveness of all [his] sins and follies" (Joseph Smith—History 1:29). In response, an angel appeared at his bedside, Joseph reported, "and he said the Lord had forgiven me my sins."¹

The angel, who called himself Moroni, told Joseph that a book "written upon gold plates" and containing "the fulness of the everlasting Gospel" had been deposited in a hill near his home in Palmyra, New York. With that book "were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim," which "God had prepared . . . for the purpose of translating the book" (Joseph Smith—History 1:34, 35).

Two more times that night Moroni visited the increasingly astonished young man, carefully repeating all he had said before. Each time, he added a caution, "telling me," Joseph said, "that Satan would try to tempt me (in consequence of the indigent circumstances of my father's family), to get the plates for the purpose of getting rich. This he forbade me, saying that I must have no other object in view in getting the plates but to glorify God, and must not be influenced by any other motive than that of building his kingdom; otherwise I could not get them" (Joseph Smith—History 1:46).

The next day Joseph was exhausted from the experiences of the night before. His father excused him from farm work, and as Joseph headed home to rest, Moroni visited him a fourth time. The angel instructed Joseph to return to his

father and tell him of the vision, which Joseph did. Then he headed for the nearby hill (see Joseph Smith—History 1:49–50).

After arriving at the hill, Joseph pried open a buried stone box in which the plates lay and reached in to take them. As he did so, a strong shock threw him backward and sapped him of his strength. When he cried out, asking why he could not obtain the plates, Moroni told him, “Because you have not kept the commandments of the Lord.”²

Despite the angel’s explicit warning, Joseph harbored thoughts that the plates might solve his family’s financial woes.³ Consequently, Moroni established a four-year probationary period for Joseph to mature and prepare his heart and mind to approach his calling with the purity of purpose required for such a sacred work.

Obstacles to Translation

Four years later Joseph was finally ready. Obstacles to translating the plates, however, were immense. Newly

married, Joseph needed to work to provide for Emma and himself, as well as for his extended family members, who still relied heavily on his contribution. Perhaps even more distracting, Joseph faced sweeping community opposition and avarice that threatened exposure and loss of the plates.

When a Palmyra mob demanded that Joseph show them the plates or be tarred and feathered, he knew he had to leave.⁴ So, in late 1827, Joseph placed the plates in a barrel of beans, packed up some belongings, borrowed \$50 from his friend and early believer Martin Harris, and took his pregnant wife more than 100 miles (161 km) south to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to live with Emma’s parents. He hoped the change would ease their daily labors and free them of the cauldron of greed and animosity that gripped Palmyra.

Conditions improved enough that winter that Joseph was able to translate a few Book of Mormon characters. In April, Martin Harris moved to Harmony to assist Joseph as scribe, and the work of translation began in earnest. By the middle of June—roughly five years since the fateful day Joseph had first been directed to the Hill Cumorah to obtain the plates—they had produced 116 manuscript pages of translation.⁵

At this point Martin pleaded with Joseph for permission to take the manuscript to Palmyra to show his wife, Lucy, who quite understandably wanted to see some evidence of what was taking up so much of her husband’s time and treasure. Yet, after inquiring of the Lord, Joseph was told twice not to let Martin take the manuscript.⁶

Desperate to placate the skepticism and increasingly shrill demands of his wife, Martin badgered Joseph again. In agony, Joseph went to the Lord a third time. In response, the Lord told Joseph that Martin could take the manuscript if he would show it only to five designated people and then promptly return it. Reluctantly, Joseph gave the manuscript to him, but only after Martin signed a written covenant to do as the Lord had instructed.⁷

This began a cascade of events that would bring Joseph as low as anything that would ever happen to him. Shortly after Martin departed, Emma gave birth to a baby boy. She



As Joseph headed home to rest from his farm work, Moroni visited him a fourth time.

Martin Harris stopped at the gate to the Smith home, got on the fence, pulled his hat over his eyes, and just sat there.



and Joseph named their first child Alvin, a comforting tribute to Joseph's dearly departed brother, who had died five years earlier. Tragically, rather than fill a void, young Alvin enlarged it when he passed away the day of his birth, June 15, 1828.

As if that were not enough to bear, between the exhaustion of a long and intense labor and the emotional distress of losing her child, Emma moved perilously close to death herself. For two weeks Joseph worried over Emma, nursing her back to health even as he worked through his own grief over baby Alvin. When Emma finally showed signs of

After Joseph arrived and finally took a little nourishment, Martin was summoned. He was to join the Smiths for breakfast but did not show up until noon. Walking slowly, he stopped at the gate to the home, got on the fence, pulled his hat over his eyes, and just sat there.¹⁰

"All Is Lost!"

Finally, Martin made his way into the home. Without speaking a word, he took up his utensils to eat. But before taking a bite, he cried out, "Oh, I have lost my soul!"¹¹

With this, Joseph jumped up and burst out: "Martin, have you lost that manuscript? [H]ave you broken your oath, and brought down condemnation upon my head, as well as your own?"

Martin somberly replied, "Yes, it is gone, and I know not where."¹² (Martin had shown the manuscript pages to others besides the five, "and by stratagem," Joseph later recounted, "they were taken from him."¹³)

Joseph exploded into a wail, crying out: "All is lost! [A]ll is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned—it is I who tempted the wrath of God." With this, "sobs and groans, and the most bitter lamentations filled the house," Joseph showing the greatest distress of them all.¹⁴

The translation work ceased for a season, and the plates and interpreters were taken from Joseph until September 22—a poignant reminder of his earlier probational period. He also suffered this stern rebuke from the Lord:

"And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.

"For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—

"Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble" (D&C 3:6–8).

Imagine the difficulty of receiving such a revelation. Joseph had just lost his firstborn son. He had nearly lost his



stabilizing health, Joseph's thoughts turned to Martin and the manuscript.⁸

Sensing Joseph's anxiety, Emma encouraged him to return to Palmyra to check on Martin and the manuscript. With a visible gloom, he took a stagecoach north. Unable to eat or sleep on the journey, Joseph made it to his parents' home—still a good 20-mile (32 km) walk through the dead of night from where the stage let him off—only by the steadying hand of a worried fellow passenger (a "stranger") who took pity on him.⁹

wife. And his decision to give Martin the manuscript was driven by an earnest desire to help a friend who was helping him in a sacred work. Yes, however distraught Joseph was, and however dependent upon Martin Harris he thought he was, he had missed one thing God fully expects of His disciples: always trust in the arm of the Lord and not in the arm of the flesh. To Joseph's everlasting credit, he learned this lesson in such a deep and profound way that he never made the mistake again, and not long after again receiving the plates and interpreters, he began a pace of religious contribution the likes of which the world had not seen since



In the midst of translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph and Oliver preached sermons, received and recorded revelations, and got baptized.

the personal ministry of Jesus Christ. Starting in the spring of 1829, now with Oliver Cowdery at his side, Joseph translated an astonishing 588 pages of the Book of Mormon in what was, at most, 65 working days.¹⁵ This is truly blinding speed when compared with his previous efforts. It is also instructive to note that the translation of the King James Bible took 47 trained scholars, working in languages they already knew, seven years to complete.¹⁶

Furthermore, in the midst of this monumental production, Joseph and Oliver also preached sermons, received and recorded revelations, participated in the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, got baptized, attended to home duties, and moved to Fayette, New York, to get the manuscript published. But the greatest miracle in all of this is not found in how fast things were accomplished but in the complexity of what was produced in that highly demanding time frame.

A Remarkable, Complex Book

According to one recent scholarly summary, here is what Joseph effectively produced in those 65 working days of translation: “Not only are there more than a thousand years of history [in the Book of Mormon] involving some two hundred named individuals and nearly a hundred distinct places, but the narrative itself is presented as the work of three primary editor/historians—Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni. These figures, in turn, claim to have based their accounts on dozens of preexisting records. The result is a complex mix that incorporates multiple genres ranging from straightforward narration to inserted sermons and letters to scriptural commentary and poetry. It requires considerable patience to work out all the details of chronology, geography, genealogy, and source records, but the Book of Mormon is remarkably consistent on all this. The chronology is handled virtually without glitches, despite several flashbacks and temporally overlapping narratives; . . . and the narrators keep straight both the order and family connections among the twenty-six Nephite record keepers and forty-one Jaredite kings (including rival lines). The complexity is such that one would assume the author worked from charts and maps, though Joseph Smith’s wife . . . explicitly denied that he had written something out beforehand that he either had memorized or consulted as he translated, and indeed she claimed that Joseph began sessions of dictation without looking at the manuscript or having the last passage read back to him.”¹⁷

Joseph and Oliver participated in the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood in the Susquehanna Valley in the spring of 1829.



And this is to say nothing of the presence of highly sophisticated literary structures and striking parallels with ancient customs and forms of communication, among other things, associated with the book and its translation.¹⁸

In the face of this, one simply has to ask, how did a man—especially one with practically no formal education—accomplish such a feat? To my mind, at least, Joseph Smith did not make up the Book of Mormon because he could not have made it up. But this logic, as strong as it may seem, is not, finally, decisive proof of the book’s veracity; nor does it stand as the foundation of my testimony. What it does do is give added weight to that which the Spirit taught me not so long ago as a full-time missionary. In the hallowed halls of the Provo Missionary Training Center and in the verdant hills and valleys of Scotland, I experienced spiritual witness after spiritual witness that Joseph Smith was called of God, that he was His instrument in these latter days, and that he brought forth a book that existed long before he was born, a book that is true and without peer—the unparalleled keystone of a godly life of happiness.

I also declare that Joseph Smith’s life is a searing testimony of what may be the unifying message of the book itself. As the Book of Mormon opens, Nephi declares, “Behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender *mercies* of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith” (1 Nephi 1:20; emphasis added). As the book closes, Moroni pleads, “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things . . . that ye would remember how *merciful* the Lord hath been unto the children of men,

from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things” (Moroni 10:3; emphasis added).¹⁹

From beginning to end, Book of Mormon testimony and history show that God is anxiously willing to work with, heal, and bless those who—despite their sins and imperfections—turn to Him in genuine contrition and faith.

Put Your Trust in God

Like Joseph Smith, you need not lead a perfect life in order to be a powerful instrument in God’s hands. Mistakes, failure, and confusion were part of Joseph’s life and mission, and they are going to be part of yours too. But do not despair. Do not be tempted to think that “all is lost.” All is not lost and will never be lost for those who look to the God of mercy and live. You have a Brother who watches over you, ready to rescue you and advance your service with arms far stronger than your arms—far stronger, in fact, than all other arms of the flesh combined. Those arms are there to sustain and bless you, “in every time of trouble” (D&C 3:8), no matter how alone and discouraged you may feel. Therefore, as you move forward with your life, trust in those arms and “be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid . . . for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee” (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Joseph discovered this and changed the world. You can too. ■

From a devotional address, “The Making of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, and You,” delivered at the Provo Missionary Training Center on February 15, 2014. The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. In *Histories, Volume 1: 1832–1844*, vol. 1 of the Histories series of *The Joseph Smith Papers* (2012), 14; see also josephsmithpapers.org.
2. In *Histories, Vol. 1: 1832–44*, 83.
3. See Oliver Cowdery, “A Remarkable Vision,” *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, Nov. 1840, 175.
4. See Martin Harris, in *Tiffany’s Monthly*, June 1859, 170.
5. See *Histories, Vol. 1: 1832–44*, 244; see also Gospel Topics, “Book of Mormon Translation,” lds.org/topics.
6. See *Histories, Vol. 1: 1832–44*, 245.
7. See *Histories, Vol. 1: 1832–44*, 245–46.
8. See Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (1853), 118.
9. See Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 119–20.
10. See Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 120.
11. In Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 121.
12. In Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 121.
13. In *Histories, Vol. 1: 1832–44*, 247.
14. In Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 121–22.
15. See John W. Welch, “How Long Did It Take Joseph Smith to Translate the Book of Mormon?” *Ensign*, Jan. 1988, 47.
16. See “King James I of England,” kingjamesbibleonline.org/King-James.php.
17. Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide* (2010), 6–7.
18. See Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture That Launched a New World Religion* (2002), 156.
19. See Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon*, 8.



*Religion and government travel
different but parallel tracks.
They are most successful and
most effective when they protect
and encourage one another.*

By Elder
Wilford W. Andersen
Of the Seventy



Religion & Government

Religion and government are like a couple who sometimes have a hard time living together but who find they simply cannot live apart. Religion and government both need their independence in order to flourish, but history has shown that a complete divorce is healthy for neither. They travel different but parallel tracks. They are most successful and most effective when they protect and encourage one another.

Governments play an essential role in protecting and maintaining religious freedom and in fostering the role of churches in society. Fortunately, most governments in the world today recognize at least some degree of religious freedom and ensure to their citizens the right to worship and to practice their religion according to the dictates of their own conscience. That has not always been the case.

Many generations have seen the stifling loss of freedom that results when government imposes a state religion. Others have experienced the moral collapse that accompanies governmental prohibition of religion altogether. We are thankful that a growing majority of the constitutions of countries in today's world envision a society where religious belief and observance, though separate from government, should be protected and safeguarded against persecution.¹

The heaven-inspired government described in the Book of Mormon afforded this freedom of religious belief and practice to its people:

“Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; or rather, if he believed in God it was his privilege to serve him; but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him. . . .

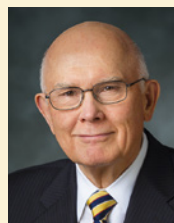
“For there was a law that men should be judged according to their crimes. Nevertheless, there was no law against a man’s belief” (Alma 30:9, 11).

As people of faith we should be thankful for governmental protections that allow us to embrace and practice our religious beliefs as we desire.

The Essential Role of Religion

It is perhaps less obvious to some that religion and morality play an essential role in maintaining and promoting good and effective government. The only real solutions to many of the serious problems facing our world today are spiritual, not political or economic. Racism, violence, and hate crimes, for example, are spiritual problems, and their only real solution is spiritual. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught:

“Many of the most significant moral advances in Western society have been motivated by religious principles and persuaded to official adoption by pulpit preaching. Examples include the abolition of the slave trade in England and the Emancipation Proclamation in [the United States]. The same is true of the Civil Rights movement of the last half-century.”²



THE VITAL INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

“Our society is not held together primarily by law and its enforcement, but most importantly by those who voluntarily obey the unenforceable because of their internalized norms

of righteous or correct behavior. Religious belief in right and wrong is a vital influence to produce such voluntary compliance by a large number of our citizens.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Strengthening the Free Exercise of Religion,” address given at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty Canterbury Medal Dinner, New York City, May 16, 2013, 1; available at mormonnewsroom.org.

Societies depend in large part upon religion and churches to establish moral order. Government can never build enough jails to house the criminals produced by a society lacking in morality, character, and faith. These attributes are better encouraged by religious observance than by legislative decree or police force. It is impossible for government to control the attitudes, desires, and hopes that spring from the human heart. And yet these are the seeds that grow into the conduct government must regulate.

French historian and statesman Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, “Despotism may govern without faith, but liberty cannot.”³ And even despotism cannot govern indefinitely without faith. For as Boris Yeltsin, first president of the Russian Federation, observed, “You can build a throne with bayonets, but it’s difficult to sit on it.”⁴

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus contrasted the law written on the books with the law written in the heart.

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

“But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment” (Matthew 5:21–22).

While governments enforce the law written on the books, religion teaches and encourages adherence to the law written in the heart. Those who abide the latter will seldom if ever violate the former. As we read in the Doctrine and Covenants, “He that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land” (58:21).

But where matters of the heart are ignored, the black letter law and the legal machinery of government will eventually bog down. Civility in society is achieved when the majority of people do what is moral because they believe they should, not because they are compelled by law or by police force.

Government oversees the conduct of its citizens. It tries to get them to behave in a decent and moral way. Religion, on the other hand, tries to get them to *desire* to behave in a decent and moral way. President Ezra



Taft Benson (1899–1994), a cabinet member under U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, taught this most important distinction:

“The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. The world would take people out of the slums. Christ takes the slums out of people, and then they take themselves out of the slums. The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature.”⁵

Over time all free governments must ultimately depend on the voluntary goodness and support of their citizens. As legendary statesman and political philosopher Edmund Burke said, “It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.”⁶

To that end, good government protects religion and fosters religious freedom. And good religion encourages good citizenship and adherence to the law of the land.

Good government need not take sides. It should not foster or favor one religion over another. Its representatives must be free to believe and practice according to

We are encouraged to study issues and candidates carefully and to vote for individuals who we believe will act with integrity.

the dictates of their own conscience. By the same token, good religion should neither endorse nor oppose any political party or candidate. And its believers must be free and even encouraged to participate in the political process and to support whichever party or candidate they think best.

Make Your Voice Heard

While the Church, as an institution, has repeatedly affirmed its political neutrality, Latter-day Saints are encouraged to engage in the political process and to add their voices to the public debate. It is part of our religion to be good citizens wherever we live.

Handbook 2: Administering the Church states, “In accordance with the laws of their respective governments, members are encouraged to register to vote, to study issues and candidates carefully, and to vote for individuals who they believe will act with integrity and sound judgment. Latter-day Saints have a special obligation to seek out, vote for, and uphold leaders who are honest, good, and wise (see D&C 98:10).”⁷

One day the Savior will come again. It is His right to rule and to reign as the King of kings *and* as our great High Priest. Then the scepter of government and the power of the priesthood will be combined into one.

Until that great day, religion and government must walk down the path of human history hand in hand—each respecting the other’s independence, each appreciating the other’s essential contribution. ■

NOTES

1. See W. Cole Durham Jr., Silvio Ferrari, Cristiana Cianitto, Donlu Thayer, eds., *Law, Religion, Constitution: Freedom of Religion, Equal Treatment, and the Law* (2013), 3–5.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, “Strengthening the Free Exercise of Religion,” address given at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty Canterbury Medal Dinner, New York City, May 16, 2013, 1; available at mormonnewsroom.org.
3. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols. (1835–40), 1:306.
4. Boris Yeltsin, in Donald Murray, *A Democracy of Despots* (1995), 8.
5. Ezra Taft Benson, “Born of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 6.
6. Edmund Burke, *A Letter from Mr. Burke, to a Member of the National Assembly; in Answer to Some Objections to His Book on French Affairs*, 2nd ed. (1791), 69.
7. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 21.1.29.



By Elder
Marcus B. Nash
Of the Seventy

Pioneers

AN ANCHOR FOR TODAY

Remember the pioneers, their stories, and the sustaining, saving, delivering power of God that came as a result of their faith and hope.



Moved by the power of his faith in God, Isaac Bartlett Nash (photo above and painting at right) left his Welsh homeland, sailed the Atlantic Ocean, and crossed the plains to join the Saints in Salt Lake City.

In 1832, Weltha Bradford Hatch—an ancestor of my wife, Shelley—and her husband, Ira, lived in the tiny town of Farmersville, New York, USA, near Lake Seneca. When missionaries Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt called at the Hatch home, Weltha purchased a Book of Mormon and read it right away. Convinced of its truthfulness, she asked for baptism.

Her husband, however, cautioned her to wait due to mounting persecutions and an approaching baby. Shortly after the delivery, Weltha was baptized—but only after a hole was cut in the ice on the river in which the ordinance was performed!¹

Ira was intrigued by the gospel message. He wanted to know more and also felt impressed to make a contribution to the building of the Kirtland Temple. So he and Weltha traveled by buggy to Kirtland, Ohio, USA, to meet the Prophet Joseph Smith. Upon arriving, they were told the Prophet could be found with a group of men cutting trees in a nearby grove.

After they reached the grove, one of the men set his axe into a tree, strode over to them, and said, “Brother Hatch, I have been expecting you for three days; the money which you have brought will be used to help build the pulpit in the temple.”

This man was Joseph Smith. Needless to say, Ira was baptized, and he and Weltha returned to their home, gathered their belongings, and joined the Saints in Kirtland.²

One of my ancestors, Isaac Bartlett Nash, joined the Church in Wales and crossed the Atlantic and the plains before joining the Saints in Salt Lake City. After his arrival he heard one of the presiding elders of the Church denounce the use of tobacco in these words: “There are Elders in this assembly who now have tobacco in their mouths, though even a hog would not chew the vile weed.” Isaac, with a chew of tobacco in his mouth, quietly slipped it out, dropped it to the ground, and said to the tobacco, “Now stay there until I come for you.” He never did.³

What drove Weltha to seek baptism in a frozen-over river rather than wait until summer? What motivated Ira to travel from New York to Ohio and then to donate money for a temple to be built by a church of which he was not yet a member? What enabled Isaac to abandon his homeland, sail the Atlantic Ocean, cross the plains, and then add chewing tobacco to the list of things he had given up?

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) observed: “The power that moved our gospel forebears was the power of faith in God. It





Convinced of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, Weltha Bradford Hatch asked for baptism in a frozen-over river rather than wait until summer.

was the same power which made possible the exodus from Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the long journey through the wilderness, and the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land.”⁴

Faith is both a principle of action and of power.⁵ It “is not to have a perfect knowledge of things” (Alma 32:21). Rather, it is an “assurance” of the Spirit (see Hebrews 11:1, footnote *b*) that moves us to act (see James 2:17–26; 2 Nephi 25:23; Alma 34:15–17), to follow the Savior, and to keep all of His commandments, even through times of sacrifice and trial (see Ether 12:4–6).⁶ As surely as the sun rises in the morning, faith produces hope—the expectation of good things to come (see Moroni 7:40–42)—and brings us the power of the Lord to sustain us.⁷

If faith was the power that moved our pioneer forebears, it was the hope produced by their faith that anchored them. Moroni wrote: “By faith all things are fulfilled—
“Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might

with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God” (Ether 12:3–4).

The pioneers’ bedrock faith in Christ moved them to act with the hope, the expectation of better things to come—not only for themselves but also for their posterity. Because of this hope, they were sure and steadfast, led to glorify God through any privation. For those who were steadfastly faithful, the power of God was manifest in miraculous ways.

How can those pioneers become an anchor for us today? I have three suggestions.

Remember the Pioneers

Remember the pioneers, their stories, and the sustaining, saving, delivering power of God that came as a result of their faith and hope. Our pioneer fathers and mothers help us know who we are as a covenant people

and confirm that our God—with whom we have covenanted and who “changeth not” (Mormon 9:19)—will bless us in times of difficulty and trial, just as He did our pioneer fathers and mothers.

Alma taught that God “will fulfil all his promises which he shall make unto [us], for he has fulfilled his promises which he has made unto our fathers” (Alma 37:17). Knowing this, we will be inspired by the pioneers to likewise act in faith and be anchored by hope.

This is the anchor we seek in our morally, spiritually, and temporally tumultuous world: living, moving faith in Christ and the hope that anchors us in His ways.

The story of the Willie and Martin handcart companies has become symbolic of the faith and hope of the early pioneers. It is a miracle that only about 200 of approximately 1,000 company members died.⁸ The faith-filled and hope-filled effort of their rescuers, accompanied by divine assistance, saved the handcart companies.⁹

After leaving the Salt Lake Valley, the rescuers were hit by the same early, severe, and unrelenting winter storms that engulfed the handcart companies. In the face of nature’s ferocity, some of the rescuers faltered in their faith, lost hope, and turned back.

In contrast, Reddick Allred steadfastly manned a rescue station for three weeks in hazardous winter weather. When another rescuer tried to persuade Brother Allred to join him in turning back, Reddick refused:

“I declined his proposition, and . . . advised him to stay, for the lives of the company depended up[on] us,” he wrote in his journal. “He then . . . moved that as I was president of the station, they center their faith in me, that I

should get the word of the Lord to know what we must do. To this I objected as [the Lord] already said what he would [have us] do.”¹⁰

Such unwavering faith in times of trial creates steadfast men and women and gives sure, steady direction when potentially disorienting storms rage. One of the fruits of such faith is that those who possess it will be in a position to nurture, rescue, and bless others. Imagine the warmth Reddick Allred felt as he saw the handcart company come into his station. Imagine the joy the company felt when they saw him!

Remember Their Unity

Remember that the pioneers, in general, were unified. Historians have observed that the western migration of the Latter-day Saints was different from other migrations of the American West.

“They were literally villages on the march, villages of a sobriety, solidarity, and discipline unheard of anywhere else on the western trails. . . .

“Few California or Oregon emigrants gave a thought to people coming after them. . . . Not so the Mormons. The first thought of the pioneer company was to note good campgrounds, wood, water, grass, to measure distances and set up mileposts. They and succeeding companies bent their backs to build bridges and dig down the steep approaches of fords. They made rafts and ferry boats and left them for the use of later companies.”¹¹

The reason for this difference was that members of the Church came to build up Zion. In practical terms, Zion is “every man esteem[ing] his brother as himself, and practic[ing] virtue and holiness before [the



THE WORLD NEEDS PIONEERS

“Can we somehow muster the courage and steadfastness of purpose that characterized the pioneers of a former generation? Can you and I, in actual fact, be pioneers? I know we can be. Oh, how the world needs pioneers today!”

President Thomas S. Monson,
“The World Needs Pioneers
Today,” *Ensign*, July 2013, 5.



“The money which you have brought will be used to help build the pulpit in the temple,” the Prophet Joseph Smith told Ira Hatch upon their first meeting. Impressed by the Prophet, Ira was baptized and moved with his wife from New York to Kirtland, Ohio.

Lord]” (D&C 38:24). Zion—a society with people of one heart and one mind, dwelling in righteousness, with no poor among them (see Moses 7:18)—was and is to be the result of “every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 82:19).

This sense of community and mutually shared responsibility produced a unified effort to follow God’s prophet. That is a major reason the pioneers succeeded as they did, and it is an important part of the legacy they pass to us. They whisper that we too will prosper through the Lord’s power only to the degree we act as one with a sense of community and mutual responsibility in following the Lord’s prophet.

Pass On the Pioneer Spirit

We are responsible to instill in our children and grandchildren the same spirit that drove the footsteps of the pioneers. A simple lesson of how this is done can be seen in the Muñoz family of Otavalo, Ecuador. In March 2013,

I met with Brother Juan José Muñoz Otavalo, his wife, Laura, and one of their sons, Juan Amado, to learn about their time in the Church. I learned that Brother Muñoz was one of the earliest converts in Otavalo.

When he was a boy, Brother Muñoz was given a copy of the Book of Mormon in Spanish. He could not read it, but he felt a profound power and spirit when he held it. He hid it in his home, for he knew that his brothers would destroy it.

From time to time he would take the book from its hiding place, just to hold it and feel its power. Enduring significant adversity and opposition, he joined the Church and became one of the very first missionaries called from the village of Otavalo. Later he married a returned sister missionary, and together they raised a faithful, gospel-centered family. He served faithfully as a leader in the Church and helped translate the Book of Mormon and the temple ordinances into his native language of Quichua.



Pioneers like Juan José Muñoz Otavalo and his wife, Laura, of Otavalo, Ecuador, teach us that we pass along a pioneer legacy by opening, showing, and living the gospel way for others to follow.

Juan Amado, a returned missionary, wept as we listened to Brother Muñoz recount his story of faith. When his father concluded, this good son said: “I have always appreciated the early pioneers who crossed the plains with their handcarts in North America. Their faith and devotion and dedication have inspired me and touched me deeply throughout my life. But until today, I did not realize that there are also pioneers here in Otavalo, and they are my parents! This fills me with joy.”

Brother and Sister Muñoz teach us that we pass along a pioneer legacy of faith by *being* a pioneer—by opening, showing, and living the gospel way for others to follow. When we consistently exercise faith in the Lord and anchor our souls with hope in Him, we become “sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God” (Ether 12:4). Then, like Reddick Allred, we will minister to those lost on the trail of life, and they—including future generations—will learn from us the power and peace of such a life.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has observed:

“Packing a few belongings into wagons or handcarts and walking 1,300 miles (2,090 km) isn’t the way most of us will be asked to demonstrate our faith and courage. We face different challenges today—different mountains to climb, different rivers to ford, different valleys to make ‘blossom as the rose’ (Isaiah 35:1). . . .

“Our struggle is found in living in a world steeped in sin and spiritual indifference, where self-indulgence, dishonesty, and greed seem to be present everywhere.

Today’s wilderness is one of confusion and conflicting messages.”

We must not be casual regarding God’s commandments, Elder Ballard added. “Avoiding the temptations and evils of the world requires the faith and fortitude of a real modern-day pioneer.”¹²

May each of us likewise resolve to be a pioneer and to go before and open the way for others who are buffeted by a world steeped in sin, confusion, and doubt. May we remember the pioneers and their stories, remember that they came to build Zion in a united effort, and then accept the responsibility to instill such faith

in all we meet—especially in the rising generation—and to do so through offering our own “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1) of a life moved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and anchored by the hope of good things to come through Him.

To be a pioneer means that we “be not weary in well-doing” (D&C 64:33). Weltha Hatch doubtless felt no special significance in being baptized in an icy river. Nor did Isaac Nash think it all that momentous to throw a chew of tobacco to the ground. And as for Reddick Allred, he simply did what the Lord said he should do.

From all of these small and simple things has come something great! So let us remember that there are no small things in great endeavors. As we live the gospel, follow the prophet, choose faith over doubt, and do the little things that grow faith and produce soul-anchoring hope, each of us will be a pioneer, preparing the way for others to follow. ■

From an address, “Pioneers—Anchors for the Future,” delivered in Salt Lake City at the Sons of Utah Pioneers Sunrise Service on July 24, 2013.

NOTES

1. See *Wandering Home: Stories and Memories of the Hatch Family* (1988), 3.
2. See *Wandering Home*, 3.
3. Isaac Bartlett Nash, *The Life-Story of Isaac B. Nash* [nd], 2.

4. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Faith of the Pioneers,” *Ensign*, July 1984, 5.
5. See *Lectures on Faith* (1985); Hebrews 11:4–40; Jacob 4:6; Ether 12:7–22.
6. See also *Lectures on*

- Faith* (1985), 69.
7. See Bible Dictionary, “Faith”; see also Alma 57:19–27; 58:10–13; Mormon 9:8–21; Moroni 7:33–37; Doctrine and Covenants 27:17.
8. See Andrew D. Olsen,

- The Price We Paid: The Extraordinary Story of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers* (2006), 470.
9. See Olsen, *The Price We Paid*, 473–74.
10. In Olsen, *The Price We Paid*, 160.

11. Wallace Stegner, *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (1964), 11.
12. M. Russell Ballard, “Pioneer Faith and Fortitude Then and Now,” *Ensign*, July 2013, 28, 29.

A piano and a hymnbook have brought my family lasting joy.

By Lola Riley Scalley Yale

Music has been an important part of my life since childhood. Many evenings, after our farm chores were completed, we gathered as a family around the piano. With Mother at the piano, the seven of us children either sang along with our father or joined in with our instruments. At age eight, I had been given a trumpet, a B-flat instrument, and I had learned how to transpose music. We were not members of the Church, but we regularly had our own version of family nights together.

We'd sing and play all the songs of the late 1800s up to the current tunes, and we'd sing *every* hymn under the sun. Beginning at age 13, I faithfully went with my father to Thursday evening church choir rehearsals. While I was in college, I was in a trumpet trio and played the fanfare measures of "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand" while the Methodist church choir marched into the chapel singing. Thus began my great love of the hymns.

A New Church, and a New Home for My Parents' Piano

I was first introduced to the Church shortly after I married. My husband suggested that we attend the church he had gone to for Boy Scouts (the LDS Church), and then the following Sunday we could attend the church of my youth. That first Sunday I recognized the Spirit and the gospel plan; I felt I had returned home. We never attended another church.

At the birth of my third child, my parents surprised me by giving me their piano, which they had purchased shortly after their marriage in 1929. They had loaded this heavy instrument into their station wagon and made the long drive from Walla Walla, Washington, to where I lived in Garland, Utah. They knew I had a music calling in the new church I had joined.

As the years passed, hymns of joy resounded through my home as I taught my seven children the songs that had made an impression on me. Words from the great hymn "Lead, Kindly Light" and beautiful phrases from "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" were forever locked in my soul. And in powerful visual hymns like "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" were unforgettable lyrics that spoke of "life's tempestuous sea."¹

Widowhood and cancer came early in my life as a young mother, and it was music, mainly the hymns,

JOY WITH MY PARENTS' PIANO



that lifted my spirits and kept my heart rejoicing. On our eighth wedding anniversary, my second husband's surprise gift to me was to clean the inside of the piano. Decades of accumulated treasures were found that had deadened the sounding board and keys—old photos of my youth, coins of varied amounts, and assorted objects that tiny fingers had stuck inside. Later, even after the piano had been moved 14 times, the piano tuner commented that it had held its tone beautifully.

Gratitude for the Restored Gospel

Not long ago, while recovering from surgery, I was listening to *Music and the Spoken Word* and joined in singing a familiar hymn with the Tabernacle Choir. I could almost hear my father's booming bass voice from childhood singing the triumphant ending. I soon realized the words I was singing were not the same as those sung by the choir but were words recalled from my youth. Searching my LDS hymnbook, I could not locate the hymn by the name I knew. Then I turned to the section at the back listing hymns alphabetically. When I reached the letter *J*, there it was: "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth." The old hymn name and lyrics

were completely different; only the *tune* was the same. I remembered, with a smile, that this common hymn tune could be used for singing 26 different hymns in the book.

As I compared the lyrics, gratitude filled my heart for the restored gospel. I am thankful that the 90-plus hymns in our hymnbook that are also found in other church hymnals have been arranged for us to sing with words of correct doctrine from the Restoration. What a joy to sing hymns based on our scriptures and our testimonies!

The old piano's next move will be to the home of my fifth daughter. From one family to another, I pray the piano and the beautiful hymns of the Lord will continue to bless our family for generations.

*One general chorus then shall rise
From men of ev'ry tongue,
And songs of joy salute the skies,
By ev'ry nation sung.² ■*

The author lived in Washington, USA, but passed away before this issue was completed.

NOTES

1. "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me," *Hymns*, no. 104.
2. "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," *Hymns*, no. 269.





Matthew Cowley (right), with his older brother Hyde Cowley, prior to Matthew's departure to New Zealand



Matthew Cowley's Mission TO NEW ZEALAND

By Elder Glen L. Rudd

Served as a member of the Seventy from 1987 to 1992

Matthew Cowley left home at age 17. It was 1914, and deeply moved by the missionary accounts of his older brother Moses, Matthew had requested to serve a mission. He hungered to take up the cause and wished especially to serve in Hawaii, as his brother had.¹

Soon after making his request, Matthew received a letter from President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) calling him to serve in Hawaii. But the Lord's will for the young elder had not yet been fully revealed. One evening, President Anthon H. Lund, First Counselor to President Smith and next-door neighbor to the Cowleys, came to see Matthew.

*The missionary and
translation work of young
Matthew Cowley greatly
blessed the Maori people.*

“You know,” President Lund joked, “that Hawaiian Mission isn’t too far away. The farther we can get you away from this neighborhood the better it is going to be for all of us, and [Hawaii] isn’t far enough. I think we had better get you way down there in New Zealand. That’s right down there at the uttermost bounds of the earth, the jumping off place for the

South Pole. If we had a mission at that South Pole, that’s where you ought to go.”

Having had his joke with Matthew, who had a reputation as a neighborhood prankster,² President Lund became serious and said, “I was having dinner tonight, and the Spirit told me you should go to New Zealand. I don’t know why. That’s the way I feel. If it is all right with you, I will tell President Smith in the morning, and you will be changed to New Zealand.”³

So Elder Matthew Cowley left to serve in New Zealand, where he mainly served the Maori people, the backbone of Church membership in many communities there. During what turned out to be nearly a five-year mission, Elder Cowley learned why the Lord wanted him to serve in New Zealand.

Lessons in Language

As Elder Cowley and his father waited in the railroad station for the train that would carry the young missionary toward far-off New Zealand, Father Cowley gave his son some advice.

"My boy," he said, "you will go out on that mission; you will study; you will try to prepare your sermons; and sometimes when you are called upon, you will think you are wonderfully prepared, but when you stand up, your mind will go completely blank."

"What do you do when your mind goes blank?" Elder Cowley asked.

Father Cowley replied, "You stand up there and with all the fervor of your soul, you bear witness that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God, and thoughts will flood into your mind and words to your mouth."⁴

Applying this guidance as his missionary labors unfolded, Elder Matthew Cowley became a constant and able witness of the gospel in New Zealand. Elder Cowley would later joke, "My mind, being mostly blank during my five years in the mission field, gave me the opportunity to bear testimony to the greatest event in the history of the world since the crucifixion of the Master."⁵

During the early months of his missionary service, Elder Cowley strongly felt the need to learn the Maori language.

The first family he stayed with in New Zealand, the Halls, schooled him. He later expressed thanks to Lizzie Hall Kohu, a daughter of the Halls. "The few months I lived at your home I always regard as the most important period of my mission, as it was here I began to learn the Maori language," he wrote to her. "I owe more to the people [there] for my knowledge of the Maori language than to anyone else. Your mother was always such a wonderful help and inspiration to me in my work."⁶

Though for several weeks he had no companion, Elder Cowley worked hard every day. "I would go into the grove every morning at six o'clock and study for eleven hours and fast and pray," he later said. Then came a critical moment: "I had the audacity to

stand up before a group of natives and preach the gospel in their own tongue. I was using words I had never read or heard, and there was a burning in my bosom the like of which I have never felt before nor since in my life. . . . The power of God was speaking through me as a youngster, seventeen years of age."⁷

During the next two years, Matthew Cowley continued to pursue the Maori language, preach the gospel, and develop a great love for the people.

"I look forward with dread to the day when I will be released from

this work among the Maoris," he wrote in a 1917 letter to his father. "My love for this people has reached such a degree that I fear that I will be robbed of contentment after my return. . . . If it was not for the tie which binds me to my father, mother, brothers and sisters I would like to devote my whole life to the interest of the Pacific Islanders, not only the Maoris but the Hawaiians, Tahitians, Samoans, etc."⁸

Fortunately for Elder Cowley, he was about to be offered the opportunity to continue serving in New Zealand.





Left: Elder Matthew Cowley in New Zealand, 1914. Above right: A group of Maori Saints with Elder Cowley. His mission to New Zealand lasted nearly five years.



A Bit of an Extension

World War I began in Europe almost four months before Elder Cowley arrived in New Zealand at the end of November 1914. New Zealand, as a loyal part of the British Empire, was deeply involved in the war. Weighing national needs, in mid-1917 the New Zealand government began to restrict the number of new foreign missionaries of the Church allowed into New Zealand. It was clear there would soon not be enough to replace departing missionaries who had completed their service.⁹

Instead of sending Matthew home to be released, President James N. Lambert, the mission president, requested from the First Presidency and the Cowley family that Matthew's mission be extended, partly so he could help cover the impending shortage of missionaries but above all so he could assist in the projected publication of a revised version of the 1889 Maori edition of the Book of Mormon. Everyone agreed, and in 1917, Elder Cowley began assisting the mission

president in preparing the new edition of the sacred record, changing the translation of some 2,500 verses with the help of several Maori members.¹⁰

During the spring of 1918, three and a half years into his mission, this work was finished, and Elder Cowley arranged to have the book printed in Auckland. If he expected that his mission was nearing an end, there is no indication in his correspondence. Instead, he came away from the April 1918 mission conference with a spate of new assignments, not the least of which was appointment to a translation committee chaired by President Lambert. Elder Cowley was to join two prominent Maori brethren (Wi Duncan and Stuart Meha) in preparing authorized translations of the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price in Maori. The new assignment prompted Matthew to quip in a letter to his parents, "With all this work before me . . . , you can expect me home sometime during the millennium."¹¹



Above right: A post-card photograph, which Elder Cowley captioned: “Myself and other dignitaries of fair Maoriland, taken at Picton, South Island, May 1918.” **Far right:** Elder Cowley with his mission companion and the Whotere family, North Auckland.



The Work of Translation

The story of the translation work comes to us from a 1932 letter Elder Cowley wrote to his sister Laura. “The work was extremely interesting and was comparatively easy when I had the spirit of it,” he said. “At intervals, however, I would lose the spirit, and this would cause me to spend hours over one short verse. Sometimes I could not work at all.

“When I found myself in this predicament I would lock myself in my room, fast and pray, until I felt the urge to continue.”

Matthew also testified that the work of translation was a work of inspiration, performed through the grace of the Lord: “I can say in all sincerity that I experienced, during this work, the feeling of a helping power outside and beyond my own. . . . This was the great experience of my life and it will always

remind me that God can and will accomplish his purposes through the human mind.”¹²

In June 1919, President Lambert notified missionaries and district presidents that the Saints could purchase leather-bound Maori copies of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. For the first time, the Maori people could own copies of these books in which they could read the word of the Lord in their own tongue.¹³

A Missionary’s Farewell

Elder Cowley was released from missionary service in May 1919. When his ship steamed out of the harbor, it left both Matthew and New Zealand changed.

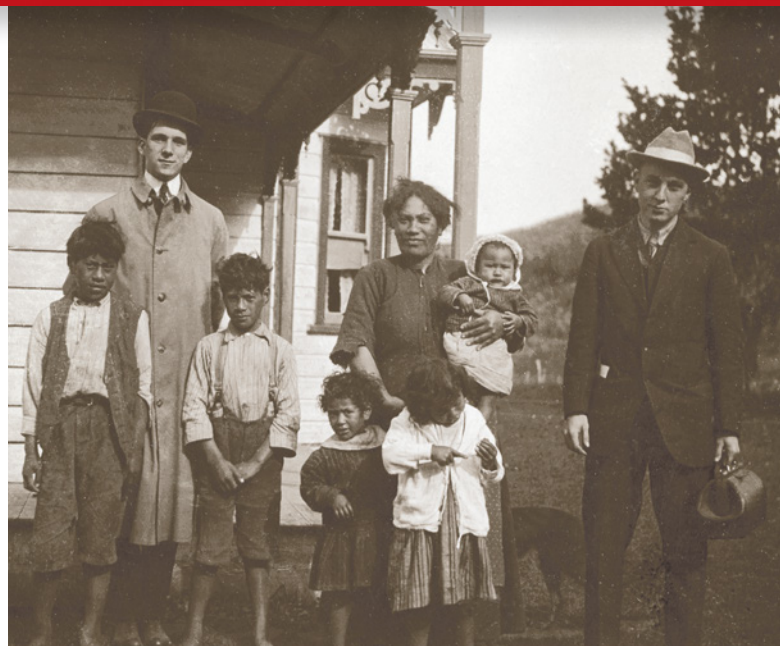
“To me those five years were years of great development and edification,” he wrote in a 1924 letter to friends in New Zealand. “To

you people and my many other good friends and benefactors of New Zealand, I owe a debt of gratitude which is not within human power to repay.”¹⁴

As for the love of the people of New Zealand for Elder Cowley, in the letter of release written to Matthew’s parents, President Lambert wrote: “I was down in Hawkes Bay last week—where Elder Cowley spent much of his time while working on the translation of the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price—when a farewell entertainment was given him and could you have seen the many expressions of love and appreciation that were bestowed upon him, I know you would have rejoiced and thanked the Lord. Never before have I seen such love to an elder.”¹⁵

In a letter to Matthew, President Lambert pronounced a benediction on the young missionary’s efforts. “If you only knew of the influence you have had on [the men at the printing business] and on numerous others, you would indeed be happy,” he wrote. “You will never be forgotten by the Saints [here].”¹⁶

Matthew Cowley eventually returned to New Zealand as a mission president, and he later became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He began this lifelong ministry as a young man who prayed, studied, and fasted to serve the Lord to the best of his ability. His story serves as a witness of what the Lord can and will do through those He has called to His work. ■



NOTES

1. See *Matthew Cowley Speaks* (1954), 418; Henry A. Smith, *Matthew Cowley: Man of Faith* (1954), 41.
2. See Smith, *Man of Faith*, 33–36.
3. See *Matthew Cowley Speaks*, 418–19.
4. See *Matthew Cowley Speaks*, 298.
5. *Matthew Cowley Speaks*, 298.
6. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 49.
7. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 48.
8. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 55, 56.
9. See James N. Lambert, *New Zealand Mission Bulletin*, Nov. 1917, MS 13850, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
10. See Smith, *Man of Faith*, 53.
11. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 57.
12. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 54.
13. See Lambert, *New Zealand Mission Bulletin*, June 1919.
14. In Smith, *Man of Faith*, 59.
15. James N. Lambert, in Smith, *Man of Faith*, 59.
16. James N. Lambert, letter to Matthew Cowley, Oct. 3, 1919, MS 13850, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.



EVERY MEMBER A DISCIPLE

“We are all missionaries in the Church. Every man and woman has the responsibility of being a missionary. Our slogan, our theme in the MIA [for 1947] is, ‘Let every man know for himself that this work is true.’ Just ponder for a moment. . . .

Everyone should know for himself and herself that this work is true. It is the only way. What good is a man’s religion if

he can’t give a good reason for the hope that he has within himself? . . . Sometimes . . . we think it is a fine thing if we can talk about the philosophies of men and what we have read and all that, but that is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. What we are to preach and what the world needs is faith, repentance, baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost.”

Elder Matthew Cowley (1897–1953) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *Matthew Cowley Speaks* (1954), 159, 160.



Vine & Branches

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

John 15:5

Find out what grapevines can teach us about our need to abide in Jesus Christ.

GRAPEVINE

Plant name: *Vitis vinifera*

Plant type: perennial, dicotyledonous angiosperm

Like other flowering angiosperms, a grapevine has a solid, woody stem, which supports the plant and carries water and nutrients from the anchoring roots.

The use of stakes and trellises for training the growth of grapevines has been practiced for over 2,000 years. This allows farmers to make sure the plants receive the right amount of sunlight and aeration, as well as to make sure that the branches don't lie on the ground, where the grapes are more likely to become spoiled.

Anciently, grapevines were pruned at two main times of the year: in the autumn after the harvest (a major purge) and in the spring before and after blooming (minor trimming to control growth and ensure a fruitful crop).

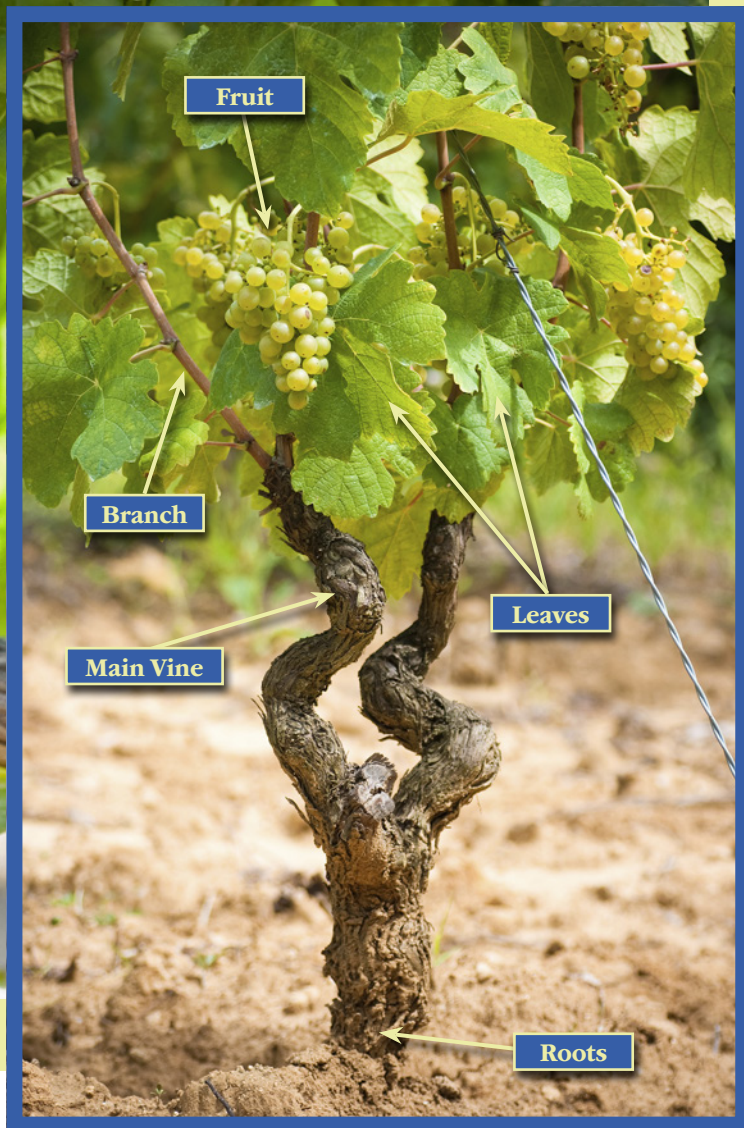
WHAT WE CAN LEARN

A grapevine:

Feeds the branches. Our spiritual nourishment comes to us through the Savior. Both individually and as a church, if we do not abide in Him, we can do nothing—nothing, that is, that would be fruitful for us or the world in terms of helping people return to Heavenly Father and become what He desires us to become.

Gives water to the branches. Jesus Christ is the living water. Our souls are refreshed and enlivened by Him. Without Him, we would wither spiritually.

Lifts, supports, and anchors the plant. Our heavenly growth is made possible only through Jesus Christ, whose grace holds us up when we are weak. He is also our source of hope, which "maketh an anchor to the souls of men" (Ether 12:4).



Branches of a grapevine:

Bear fruit. As we abide in Christ, we bring forth the fruits of the gospel—Christlike attributes in our lives, service to our fellowmen, peace and joy in our hearts, the preaching of the gospel, repentance and conversion in ourselves and others, sacred covenants with God, happiness in our families and communities, and much more.

Bear more fruit if they are carefully pruned. When grapevines are properly tended and pruned, the bunches that form on the branches have large and numerous grapes. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” (Hebrews 12:6). If we are teachable and will endure correction, we will bring forth fruit abundantly. But if we are willful, prideful, and “grow wild,” we no longer abide in Christ and will not be as fruitful.



OUR TRUE SOURCE OF STRENGTH

“Jesus said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing’ [John 15:5]. I testify that that is God’s truth. Christ is everything to us and we are to ‘abide’ in Him permanently, unyieldingly, steadfastly, forever. For the fruit of the gospel to blossom and bless our lives, we must be firmly attached to Him, the Savior of us all, and to this His Church, which bears His holy name. He is the vine that is our true source of strength and the only source of eternal life. In Him we not only will endure but also will prevail and triumph in this holy cause that will never fail us.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Abide in Me,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 32.

BIBLE FACTS

The house of Israel was sometimes compared to a vineyard (see Isaiah 5:7).

When the Savior taught, “I am the vine, ye are the branches” (John 15:5), it was in the early spring, around the time when grapevines would be trimmed to improve the crop yield.



FUN FACT

Because of its importance as a fruit crop, the grapevine was one of the first plants to have its entire genome mapped.

Are trained to grow off the ground so they’ll be most healthy and fruitful. Christ’s gospel and His Church help us overcome the tendency of the natural man to sag in sin and selfishness and to wallow in worldly things that harm us spiritually. By living the gospel and keeping covenants, we are lifted up to greater joy, peace, and service. ■

One Couple Serving, ONE FAMILY LEARNING

*Recipe for a miracle: two couples, two inspired leaders,
one question, and one knock on the door.*

By Mindy Anne Leavitt

Church Magazines

Lonne and Nancy Gubler of Santa Clara, Utah, sat in their stake president's office, stunned. The stake president had just told them that he felt inspired that they needed to serve a mission and wanted them to submit their mission papers as soon as possible. While the Gublers had considered serving a full-time mission together—in 10 years or so—they felt unprepared to do so at age 48.

Their stake president had been trying to ignore the prompting that they should be called to serve, knowing how young they were. When the feeling wouldn't be quelled, he finally went to Lonne's father, a former stake president himself, and asked if it would even be feasible for his son and daughter-in-law to serve. "We'll do whatever it takes to make it possible," he replied. Satisfied with that answer, the stake president called the Gublers in for a meeting, where he expressed his feeling that they should serve a mission.

The Gublers exercised their faith and responded to their stake president's charge.

They received a call to serve in the New Zealand Auckland Mission. Their call didn't specify what they would be doing, and as neither of them had ever left home or served a mission in their youth, they were understandably nervous.

Through a series of miracles, they were able to get their finances in order for the time they'd be serving. All three of the Gublers' children were grown and married, their two daughters living nearby. Lonne's father, a self-employed rancher like his son, agreed to oversee the Gublers' own farm and ranch, with their sons-in-law taking over the work, allowing the Gublers to leave for 18 months.

Sister Gubler explains, "Leaving our children and grandchildren was probably the hardest thing we have ever done, but we knew the Lord had a plan for us and we were ready to serve Him with all we had!"

"We felt very inadequate in the MTC, placed in a district with former mission presidents, stake presidents, and a patriarch. We







TRUST IN THE LORD'S PLAN FOR US

"The Lord knows what He wants to accomplish with each one of us. He knows the kind of reform He wants to achieve in our lives, and we do not have the right to counsel Him. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts [see Isaiah 55:8–9]."

Elder Rafael E. Pino of the Seventy, "The Eternal Perspective of the Gospel," *Ensign*, May 2015, 119.

were just a small-town couple who had always served in the Church, but never to that degree. We didn't know our scriptures as well as we should have, so we studied hard and gave it the best we had!"

Armed with that preparation and the assurance they felt regarding the Lord's plan for them, they set off on their missionary service.

An Unexpected Question

Meanwhile, halfway around the world sat another stunned couple, Reuben and Nara Hayward of Gisborne, New Zealand. They had not been active in the Church for over 11 years and hadn't taught their two sons anything about the gospel, when one day their eight-year-old son, Hikurangi, asked about the meaning of life. "It came out of nowhere," Reuben recalls. "There was no reason for him to want to know about that."

Still, the Haywards knew they had to give their son an answer, and they didn't want to withhold from him their knowledge of the gospel. "We both felt an overwhelming sense of responsibility to teach him the truth," Nara explains. "Even though we weren't active, we never denied the truthfulness of the gospel. We just didn't think the Church was something we needed in our lives at that time."

In the days following their son's unexpected question, the Haywards considered what to tell him. The couple discussed contacting the bishop and getting in touch with the missionaries, but didn't.

A few days later there was a knock on the Haywards' door. There, scared to death and fresh off the plane from the United States, stood the Gublers. They had been sent by the Haywards' bishop, who knew the family—and also knew they were obstinately opposed to receiving missionaries. For more than a decade, Reuben had been chasing missionaries and any other Church-related visitors off their doorstep. "Reuben was ruthless to anybody that came to their home," Sister Gubler explains.

But for Nara, it was a sign. "When the Gublers came to our home it was kind of another wake-up call for us. We didn't call them, but there they were. It was the first time in a long time that I allowed myself to feel the Spirit testify of our Heavenly Father's love for us. It was no coincidence that they called on us that day, and I knew the moment they walked up my driveway that they were inspired by the Lord." Reuben must have felt so too, because for the first time ever, he allowed missionaries to come inside his home. But, as Sister Gubler says, "It wasn't about us—it was all about timing."

A Special Connection

The Haywards felt a special connection to the Gublers right away, asking if the missionary couple would come back every week to teach their two sons. The Gublers happily agreed. Sister Gubler taught the Haywards' sons, Whaimutu and Hikurangi, while Elder Gubler subtly tried to relate the lessons to the Haywards themselves.



Lonne and Nancy Gubler (far right) with Reuben and Nara Hayward and their sons, Whaimutu and Hikurangi. The Haywards have since added a daughter, Theia-Christine, to their family.

After a few lessons, the Gublers asked if they could pick the children up for church. They were surprised when the Haywards said that they would come to church together, as a family. Little by little, the Haywards' sons soaked up the message of the gospel and the Haywards were reminded of truths they had learned long ago.

Finally, the Gublers decided to ask the Haywards for permission to baptize their sons. Reuben shocked them again with his answer: "Yes, they can be baptized, but I want to be the one to do it."

Over the following months, the Haywards worked to obey the Word of Wisdom and overcome other issues to prepare themselves and their sons for their sons' baptisms. They made sure to invite Reuben's parents to the baptism, not telling them that it would be Reuben performing the ordinance. Throughout the Haywards' 11 years of inactivity, Reuben's parents, devout members, had never given up on the hope of their son's family returning to the Church. They had fasted weekly and prayed daily that Reuben and his family would come back, pleading with the Lord to send someone who might be able to touch their hearts.

The day of the baptism, Reuben's parents were overjoyed, to say the least, to realize that not only were their grandsons getting baptized but their son and daughter-in-law had returned to Church activity and were working toward becoming an eternal family. Similar to Alma the Elder's experience, their prayers and fasting in behalf of their children were answered (see Mosiah 27:14).

A few months after Reuben baptized his sons, the family was sealed in the Hamilton New Zealand Temple. Since

their reactivation, two of Nara's brothers have also returned to the Church, and her mother has completed the temple ordinances for her husband and been sealed to him. Both Reuben and Nara have now served in leadership positions in their ward. Reuben's parents were inspired to serve a mission themselves, hoping that they might reach another couple's wayward son or daughter, as the Gublers had with theirs.

The Lord Knows All

Two couples' lives were changed forever—thanks to the Gublers' inspired stake president and their willingness to serve, and the Haywards' inspired bishop and their willingness to change.

Sister Gubler says, "We are so thankful the Lord put the Haywards in our path. He knows all. He puts us in places for a reason.

"We are also thankful for a stake president who followed his promptings to call us on our mission. We know the power of couple missionaries! They are needed so much! We didn't know how we could ever leave our business or our family, but we knew the Lord would provide a way. And He did. It is nothing short of a miracle." ■



Teaching OUR CHILDREN ABOUT the Temple

*A husband and wife from Australia share
how they helped their children develop
a love for the temple.*

By Graham and Gail Nicholl

Gail: My dad was diagnosed with cancer when I was 18; two weeks after I turned 19, he died. I wanted to know where he had gone, so I asked my older sister, who, while living away from home for work, had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She arranged for the missionaries to meet with me. I felt through the Holy Ghost that the gospel was true and that joining the Church was the right thing to do, so I was baptized.

Graham and I met a few months after I was baptized, and in 1970 we were sealed in the New Zealand Temple. This was before we had a temple in Australia. While we were on our honeymoon, Graham was able to perform the temple ordinances for my father.

Mum died five years after Dad. A year and a half later, my older sister, my younger sister (who, by this time, had also joined the Church), and I flew to the New Zealand Temple with our husbands so that my siblings and I could perform the work for Mum and then be sealed to our parents.

Each sister performed one ordinance (mine being the baptism), after which the sealing took place. This was such a joyful experience, especially because our parents loved and cherished each other all their lives. We felt in our hearts that they had accepted these ordinances and were rejoicing with us in their sealing.

Graham: I joined the Church as a teenager; the missionaries knocked on my family's door when I was 14. After they taught us for nine months, all of us joined the Church together. We were sealed in the New Zealand Temple three years later: Mum, Dad, my older sister, and I.

After Gail and I were married, we knew the temple would continue to be an important part of our lives. We started preparing our four children for the temple when they were very young. We sang songs about the temple, hung pictures of the temple in our home, and talked about visiting the temple. We'd take them to the temple grounds and walk around the temple with them, even when they were very small. We did this year after year, until they were all old enough to do baptisms for the dead and go on missions. Even being outside the temple, we felt they could grasp the spirit of it, the joy associated with it. We wanted to make sure that they felt that.

Gail: It took some planning to give them that experience. We would drive the 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) over two days to get to the temple in Sydney. We'd leave home from Adelaide very early in the morning, stay somewhere overnight, and then drive the rest of the way the next day. We knew that we needed to give our children goals; we couldn't expect a love for the temple to just develop on its own. So when the Sydney Temple was built, we set the goal of visiting there at least once a year. I know that the



PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE TEMPLE

"Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy of that blessing."

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), "A Temple-Motivated People," *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 5.

Lord blesses us as parents, but we have to do our part too. "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20).

We'd take them to the temple in Sydney and walk around the grounds with them and talk to them about being reverent there, preparing to do baptisms for the dead when they were 12, the joy that they would feel doing work for the dead, and ultimately being married in the temple one day. Sometimes we would see new brides, which was always a highlight. On our long trip we would also listen to Church music or sing Primary songs. After two days of driving, we'd have a little competition to see who could be the first one to see the statue of Moroni as we neared the temple.

One of the choicest and most memorable experiences of my life was being in the baptism with my husband and all of our children just before our second son left on

his mission to Japan. Today, all four of our children have been married in the temple.

Graham: An interesting sidelight: When our two eldest grandchildren were four years old, before they started school, they attended a kindy (kindergarten) group. These two cousins were the only Church members among their 20 classmates.

One day, they got a large cardboard box, decorated it together, and then sat inside. Their kindergarten teacher asked, "What are you doing?"

They replied, "We've made a motorbike. We're going to the temple."

And so it continues on, to the next generation.

Gail: The generations *do* go on. You have those kinds of experiences as a parent, and they're very choice, but when you see it in the next generation, in our precious grandchildren, we feel extremely blessed. My own parents never had the opportunity of knowing my children in this life, so I cherish the association I have with my grandchildren.

We hope and pray that our children, grandchildren, and the generations that follow will always hold strong to the faith so that we'll all be together forever. That is our greatest joy, that families are forever.

We're both so grateful that through the everyday trials of life, both large and small, we were blessed with the gospel to raise our children, that we could teach them to know the Savior and the plan of salvation, and that they know for themselves that by making good choices and keeping temple covenants, they can return to live with Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ for eternity. ■

The authors live in Queensland, Australia.

After two days of driving, we'd have a little competition to see who could be the first one to see the statue of Moroni as we neared the temple.



ONE HOLY MOMENT

By Don L. Searle

*Born in different centuries,
You and I, an ocean apart,
And half a continent.*

*Never would our lives touch
But for this holy moment
In a temple of our God.*

*I would meet you if I could.
Who were you, friend?
Father, farmer, tutor, craftsman?
Did you buy, or sell, or plow?
Was there family by your fire,
And love to ease your passage?
Did you know joy in your years?*

*I hope you know it now,
As our lives touch
In this sacred moment,
My one brief chance to serve.
Would that I could reach a hand
Across two hundred years,
Or put an arm across a shoulder
To tell you what I feel:
"Welcome, brother—welcome here."*

BREAD OF LIFE, LIVING WATER

Thoughtfully ♩ = 82-90

Words and music by
Annette W. Dickman

1. Je - sus of - fered up His bod - y on the cross in bit - ter pain. Free - ly He gave
2. In the gar - den Je - sus suf - fered ev - 'ry sin and ev - 'ry woe, Bleed - ing drops from
3. Now I come be - fore the al - tar, of - f'ring up my brok - en heart, Seek - ing for the

up His life so that we might live a - gain.
ev - 'ry pore, so we could for - give - ness know. Bread of Life, Liv - ing Wat - er,
bless - ed gifts His A - tone - ment can im - part.

feed my soul, fill my heart. Give to me new life in Thee, and

make me whole, com - plete and ho - ly, bound to Thee e - ter - nal - ly.

© 2013 by Annette W. Dickman. All rights reserved.
This song may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use.
This notice must be included on each copy made.

RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JERRY L. GARNIS



By Marissa Widdison
Church Magazines

Music is an important part of personal and congregational worship. “Music can help you draw closer to your Heavenly Father,” President Thomas S. Monson taught. “It can be used to educate, edify, inspire, and unite.”¹ In Doctrine and Covenants 25:12, the Lord tells us that “the song of the righteous is a prayer unto [Him].” Here are some resources that can enrich your life musically at church or at home.

Music.Ilds.org

This is the Church’s main music site. If you have a music calling, look here for answers to frequently asked questions. You can use the interactive music player to listen to and download hymns and children’s songs. In the music library, you’ll find sheet music for any Church occasion.

Helpful Music Resources

Youth.Ilds.org

Did you know that the youth website has free, uplifting music for teens to listen to and download? Click “Music” on the right-hand menu to find a treasure trove of MP3 files from *Especially for Youth* and other popular albums.

Friend.Ilds.org

Click “Music in the *Friend*” and look for the “I Can Play It!” series if you want sheet music and audio files of simplified Primary songs. New this year, the *Friend* site also features music videos with beautiful pictures and captions for the sharing time songs.

Music Library

Books



Hymnal



Children's Songbook



Hymns Made Easy



Conducting Course

Collections



ASL Children's Songs



ASL Hymns



Instrumental Music



General Conference

Primary.Ilds.org

The “Leader Resources” page contains a section on music callings. There are videos from recent leadership training broadcasts that share ideas for teaching music to children.

Store.Ilds.org

Click the “Music, Media, and Art” category at the top of the page to order CDs of hymns and children’s songs that can be used when no accompanist is available. Under “Serving in the Church,” select “Specialists and Committees” and then scroll down to the music section to find kits that can help you learn to play the keyboard or conduct music.

Printed Materials

Diagrams for conducting music, chord charts, suggestions for fulfilling callings, and other helpful tips can be found in the back of the printed hymnbook and *Children’s Songbook*. Similar sections are found in *The Choirbook* and *Young Women Camp Manual*. Music is usually published at least twice a year in the Church magazines. ■

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “That We May Touch Heaven,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 46.

I WOULD NOT CHEAT

As a freshman in college, I was often disappointed with my classmates. That's because many of them would cheat during exams. Some would sneak their notes into class. Some would text test answers to others. A few would even copy off the exams of their classmates.

Those who cheated always got higher scores than I did. Nevertheless, I was not tempted to join them. I always put into my mind and heart that it's better to have an honest 0 percent than a stolen 100 percent.

If I cheated, I wouldn't be setting an example for them. I wouldn't be living in a way that I could share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them. I wouldn't be showing them that the Church is true.

One afternoon I went to the college cashier office to ask about my remaining tuition balance. I had to pay all my fees before I could take final exams the following week. As I was walking, I worried about where I would get the money I needed. For a self-supporting student like me, finances were tight.

When I reached the office, I asked the cashier how much I still owed.

"You pay no more until you graduate," she said.

Shocked, I asked her if she was sure or if she was pulling a prank.

"Yes, I'm sure, and I'm serious," she said. "The guidance counselor processed an application for you to get a scholarship from a senator. You are now a scholar."

Hearing those words made me very happy. I thanked her and ran to the guidance counselor's office to thank the person responsible.

"You don't have to thank me," the counselor said after I told her how thankful and happy I was. "I was only an instrument."

As I left, I remembered the scripture I always love to share: "And blessed is he that is found faithful unto my name at the last day, for he shall be lifted up to dwell in the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world. And behold it is I [Jesus Christ] that hath spoken it" (Ether 4:19).

By doing right, I had shown my faithfulness in keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father—even in a situation where dishonesty was common. I know that by standing firm in my faith, He will never leave me.

I am happy that I can now study with no payments to worry about. I'm also encouraged to continue doing what's right, not because of the rewards and blessings I could receive but because I love Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, who set an example for me. ■

Joanna Mae Rangga, Southern Leyte, Philippines

My classmates who cheated always got higher scores than I did. Nevertheless, I was not tempted to join them.





I wanted so much to wear my mother's wedding dress when the day of my marriage arrived.

MY MOTHER'S WEDDING DRESS

I was a girl when I first saw my mother's wedding dress. It was carefully wrapped inside a box, and I remember my mother unwrapping it tenderly so I could see it. How beautiful it was! I so much wanted to wear that dress when the day of my marriage arrived.

My mother gently put it back and promised to lend it to me in the future. She said the dress had been a special gift from my father. She looked so in love and beautiful in her wedding photographs. My parents, not members of the Church, were wonderful people.

I learned about the Church when I met the man who would become my husband. That meeting was unusual because, though he was not active in the Church, our meeting led to the story of the First Vision. I found the story amazing, but I was not ready to accept it.

After we had dated for 16 months, my dreams came true when I put on

my mother's wedding dress with its long tail and walked down the aisle toward my fiancé. I also was so in love. Many people said I looked just like my mother when she married.

Years passed, and we had two sons. When my husband tried to return to church, I hindered his efforts. Though I wasn't active in the church of my youth, I had a hard time accepting another church.

That finally changed after 19 years of marriage. My husband returned to church, and a few weeks later I began to attend with him. My testimony grew rapidly, and I was baptized and confirmed. Soon afterward my greatest desire was to prepare myself to be sealed to my husband in the temple.

When the happy day of our sealing arrived, I wore my mother's white dress again. A friend from church had adjusted it so it would be proper to wear in the temple.

I have worn it there ever since.

By the time my father had passed away and my mother had entered her last days, she still wasn't ready to accept the restored Church. But I told her many wonderful things about the Restoration. I also told her that when she crossed the veil, she was going to hear the message of the true gospel. I promised her that after a year, I would wear our dress in her behalf so she could vicariously receive temple ordinances and be sealed to my father. And I did.

My dress is old now, and I know that one day I will have to retire it. Until that day comes, I will continue to wear it with love—for my husband, for my mother and father, for family members I have served vicariously in the temple, for the true gospel, for my sacred covenants, and for my Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. ■

Angélica Flores Algaba, Querétaro, Mexico

THE LORD SPOKE PEACE TO ME

Our daughter Carlie had been sick for a few days, and I thought all she had was a cold. But as her symptoms progressed, I began to think it might be more serious.

My fears were confirmed and intensified at her doctor's appointment—Carlie was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. She was slipping into a diabetic coma and needed to get to the hospital quickly. I prayed in my heart that I would be calm and that the doctors would be able to help her.

When we arrived at the emergency room, the doctors and nurses quickly went to work trying to save her. I pled with my Heavenly Father for comfort and peace.

In a moment of quiet, my husband and his father gave Carlie a priesthood blessing. In his blessing, my husband assured her that it was the will of her Heavenly Father that

she live. I began to feel peace.

After several more hours of watching doctors poke, test, and check Carlie for improvement, I was exhausted. Her room became less hectic around 1:00 a.m. I didn't know what to expect, I couldn't sleep, and I felt alone.

I pulled out a copy of the Book of Mormon my sister had brought to the hospital and prayed that the scriptures would bring me the reassurance I needed. The book fell open to Alma 36:3. As I read, I felt that the Lord was speaking to me: "I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day."

For the second time that night, I felt peace. I knew Heavenly Father was aware of us. He wanted me to know that He was there and that I needed to have faith in Him.

As I reflected on the day's events, I thought of how the Lord had blessed us. I had felt an urgency to take Carlie to the doctor. We had arrived at the hospital safely. Priesthood holders had arrived quickly to administer a blessing.

Since that day we have settled into a routine of checking blood sugar and keeping snacks on hand. We have learned how diabetes management can affect the body. Carlie's disease continues to be a trial, but we have learned to trust in our Heavenly Father every day.

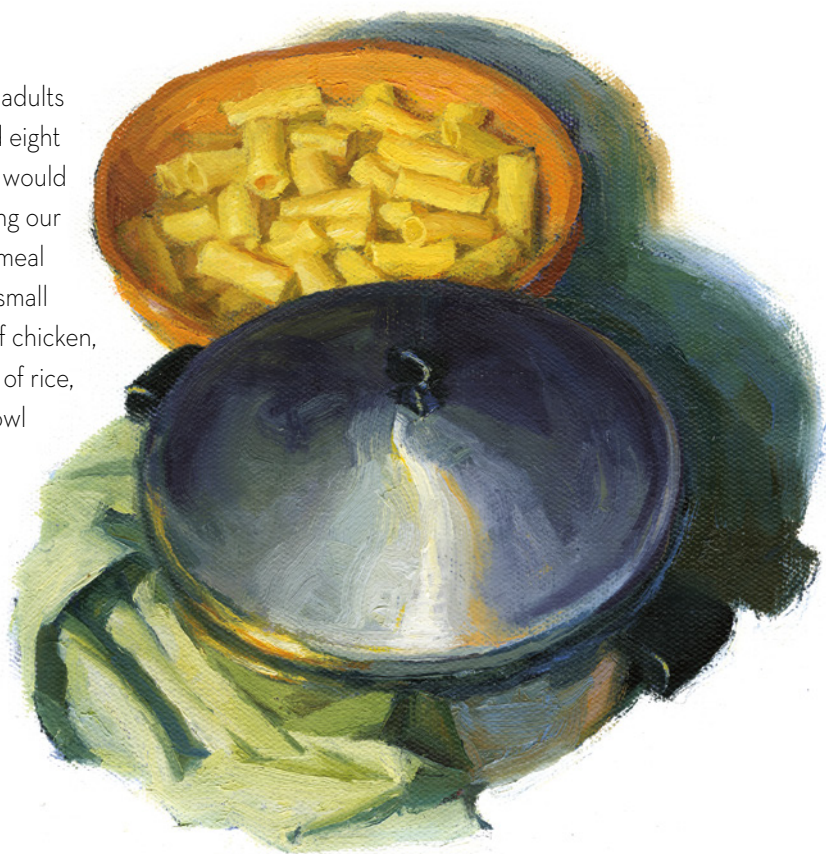
That day in the hospital is not one I want to relive, but it is one I will be forever grateful for. It was a day of learning, of exercising faith, of feeling gratitude. I learned that Heavenly Father is aware of each of His children and that He will truly support us in our trials. ■

Trisha Tomkinson Riggs, Arizona, USA

When we arrived at the emergency room, the doctors and nurses quickly went to work trying to save Carlie.



Nine adults and eight children would be sharing our meager meal of eight small pieces of chicken, a platter of rice, and a bowl of pasta.



EIGHT SMALL PIECES OF CHICKEN

With my husband temporarily out of work, making ends meet for a family with five growing children was challenging. A day before the broadcast of the October 2013 general conference, we checked our food supplies and decided we would prepare a simple lunch of fried chicken and rice during the break between conference sessions.

Sunday came, and we were all set. The rest of our extended family, composed of my parents and my sisters and their families, met at the stake center half an hour before the broadcast started.

What a joy and a blessing it was to hear prophets, seers, and revelators share messages specifically for our generation. As I listened to the counsel and basked in the wonderful spirit of peace and love I felt from

my Heavenly Father, I received the assurance that everything would be all right, that my family's spiritual and temporal needs would be addressed, and that if I continued to exercise faith and let my Savior take the reins, we would be released from the grips of poverty and other hardships.

Enjoying the beautiful spirit of that Sabbath day, I had forgotten about lunch. Only when the break between sessions arrived did I realize there would be 17 of us. Nine adults and eight children would be sharing our meager meal of eight small pieces of chicken and a platter of rice, along with a bowl of pasta one of my sisters had brought.

Eight-year-old Henry offered a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing on our food, asking that all who partook would be filled. Then I broke each

piece of chicken into smaller portions and handed these to the children as my sister placed pasta and rice on their plates. I could not keep tears from falling as I realized we had enough for one small serving for everyone and one extra serving after all the pieces were broken and the pasta and rice were divided among us. All of us then ate—and were filled.

I told my parents and husband that I knew of a surety that the Savior had indeed divided five loaves of bread and two fish and fed a multitude of “five thousand men, beside women and children” (see Matthew 14:14–21). Some critics and nonbelievers claim that the miracle was metaphorical, exaggerated, or impossible. But to my family and me, the account is true as written.

Heavenly Father had heard the prayer of a faithful child who gave thanks and requested the blessing that all who would partake would be filled and receive nourishment.

As we returned to the hall for general conference, I was feasting in my heart. I felt as though I were there with the multitude Jesus had fed, yearning to stay and learn from Him who promises that if we heed and hearken, we will never hunger or thirst (see John 6:35).

With our children we quietly took our seats inside the chapel and prepared to listen to Heavenly Father's chosen servants. It was an occasion we will always remember. ■

Abigail Almeria, Cebu, Philippines



By President
James E. Faust
(1920–2007)

Second Counselor
in the First Presidency

OF LAMBS AND SHEPHERDS

*My little friend was frightened in the storm,
and I could hear it bleating.*

When I was a very small boy, my father found a lamb all alone out in the desert. The herd of sheep to which its mother belonged had moved on, and somehow the lamb got separated from its mother, and the shepherd must not have known that it was lost. Because it could not survive alone in the desert, my father picked it up and brought it home. To have left the lamb there would have meant certain death, either by falling prey to the coyotes or by starvation because it was so young that it still needed milk. Some sheepmen call these lambs “bummers.” My father gave the lamb to me and I became its shepherd.

For several weeks I warmed cow’s milk in a baby’s bottle and fed the lamb. We became fast friends. I called him Nigh—why I don’t remember. It began to grow. My lamb and I would play on the lawn. Sometimes we would lie together on the grass and I would lay my head on its soft, woolly



side and look up at the blue sky and the white billowing clouds. I did not lock my lamb up during the day. It would not run away. It soon learned to eat grass. I could call my lamb from anywhere in the yard by just imitating as best I could the bleating sound of a sheep: *Baa. Baa.*

One night there came a terrible storm. I forgot to put my lamb in the barn that night as I should have done. I went to bed. My little friend was frightened in the storm, and I could hear it bleating. I knew that I should help my pet, but I wanted to stay safe, warm, and dry in my bed. I didn’t get up as I should have done. The next morning I went out to find

my lamb dead. A dog had also heard its bleating cry and killed it. My heart was broken. I had not been a good shepherd or steward of that which my father had entrusted to me. My father said, “Son, couldn’t I trust you to take care of just one lamb?” My father’s remark hurt me more than losing my woolly friend. I resolved that day, as a little boy, that I would try never again to neglect my stewardship as a shepherd if I were ever placed in that position again. . . .

After more than sixty years, I can still hear in my mind the bleating, frightened cry of the lamb of my boyhood that I did not shepherd as I should have. I can also remember the loving rebuke of my father: “Son, couldn’t I trust you to take care of just one lamb?” If we are not good shepherds, I wonder how we will feel in the eternities. ■

From James E. Faust, “Responsibilities of Shepherds,” Ensign, May 1995, 46, 48.



My Plan

Strengthening Returning Missionaries on the Path of Discipleship

When young men and young women accept a prophet's call to preach the gospel, everything changes. They take a fundamental step on the path of discipleship. As they continue on that path, they discover their own spiritual gifts and talents. They awaken to a vision of their future. They become who God created them to be. And when they return home—worn but filled with wonder—they rejoice, because their path of discipleship goes on. It's a path of faith, sacrifice, and service. It's the path that leads them and their families to eternal life.

My Plan is a new resource to help returning missionaries continue on the path of discipleship.

Learn more at myplan.lds.org.





In Church Magazines

Ensign: Religion and government both need their independence in order to flourish but are most effective when they protect and encourage each other. See page 46 to understand more about this timely topic.

New Era: This month's issue includes articles that help youth prepare for temple ordinances (pages 8–14), the Melchizedek Priesthood (page 28), and missionary service (page 48).

Friend: Help your children learn about and prepare for the temple! Read pages 21–37 of this month's *Friend* and talk with your children about why the temple is such an important place. Help them get ready now to go inside someday.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS