

THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JUNE 2018


Ensign



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Has Blessed the
Whole World, p. 30**

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“NOBLE FATHERHOOD
GIVES US A GLIMPSE OF THE
DIVINE ATTRIBUTES
OF OUR FATHER
IN HEAVEN.”

PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

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HELPING THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

Elder Holland teaches that we can be saviors on Mount Zion when we seek to lift the burdens of others (see page 24). Find four suggestions for lifting and supporting families who carry the burden of disabilities: [lds.org/go/disabilitiesE618](https://www.lds.org/go/disabilitiesE618).

FIRST BAPTISMS IN WEST AFRICA

Not long after the June 1978 announcement extending the priesthood to all worthy males (see page 30), faithful men and women in West Africa were baptized and the first branches were organized in Nigeria and Ghana. See rare film footage of these events at [lds.org/go/africaE618](https://www.lds.org/go/africaE618).



FATHER FIGURES

Not having an earthly father as she grew up, one woman found guidance and inspiration from the father figures in her life—a righteous grandfather, a home teacher, a stepfather (see page 56). To read more about ways that any man can be a father figure and mentor to others, visit [lds.org/go/fathersE618](https://www.lds.org/go/fathersE618).

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PORTRAITS OF FAITH

Four months into her second pregnancy, Delva was told that her baby had a rare chromosome disorder called trisomy 13. There was little chance for the baby's survival, and because Delva's life could also be at risk, doctors repeatedly advised her to abort the pregnancy. Faced with an uncertain outcome, Delva chose to trust Heavenly Father no matter what happened.

CHRISTINA SMITH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Delva Netane

California, USA

At eight and a half months, I went in for a 4D ultrasound.

In previous ultrasounds, doctors couldn't see any physical features. Because of this, they said our daughter's hands would be stubs and her face would be deformed. The images in a 4D ultrasound are more detailed, so when the technician began the ultrasound, I saw my daughter's perfect hand waving at me on the screen. I also saw two perfect eyes and a perfect mouth. I had an overwhelming feeling that she wasn't going to die.

When our daughter, MeLa, was born, specialists were standing by but were not needed. MeLa did not have trisomy 13. Doctors and specialists could not explain why, but my husband and I knew it was a miracle.

DISCOVER MORE

See more about Delva's journey of faith at lds.org/go/E6185.

Find more stories in the "Portraits of Faith" series in the Media Library on LDS.org.

Ministering Principles

FIVE THINGS GOOD LISTENERS DO

Truly listening will help you know how to help meet the spiritual and temporal needs of others as the Savior would.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Perhaps even more important than speaking is listening. . . . If we listen with love, we won’t need to wonder what to say. It will be given to us—by the Spirit.”¹

Listening is a skill we can learn. Listening shows our love for others, helps build strong relationships, and invites the Spirit to bless us with the gift of discernment to help us understand others’ needs.² Here are five ways we can improve how we listen.

Find Common Ground

You might not agree with everything said, but agree with what you can without misrepresenting your own feelings. Being agreeable can help defuse anxiety and defensiveness (see Matthew 5:25).

Reflect

Paraphrase what you heard and how you understand the other to feel. This helps them know if they have been understood and gives them an opportunity to clarify.

Give Them Time

Many people need time to gather their thoughts before speaking. Give them time to think both before and after they say something (see James 1:19). Just because they are finished speaking doesn't mean they have said everything they need to. Don't be afraid of silence (see Job 2:11–3:1 and Alma 18:14–16).

Pay Attention

We think faster than others speak. Resist the temptation to jump to conclusions or to think ahead to what you'll say when they're through (see Proverbs 18:13). Instead, listen with the intent to understand. Your response will be better because it will be informed by greater understanding.

Clarify

Don't be afraid to ask questions that clarify something you didn't understand (see Mark 9:32). Clarifying reduces misunderstanding and shows your interest in what is being said.

President Russell M. Nelson taught that we should “learn to listen, and listen to learn from one another.”³ As you learn to listen with the intent of learning about others, you will be in a better position to understand their needs and hear promptings about how you can care for those around you as the Savior would.

Listening Is Loving

A story from Elder Holland illustrates the power of listening:

“My friend Troy Russell pulled his pickup truck slowly out of his garage. . . .

He felt his back tire roll over a bump. . . . He got out only to find his precious nine-year-old son, Austen, lying face down on the pavement. . . . Austen was gone.

“Unable to sleep, unable to find peace, Troy was inconsolable. . . . But into that agonizing breach came . . . John Manning. . . .

“I frankly don’t know on what schedule John and his junior companion made visits to the Russell home. . . . What I do know is that last spring Brother Manning reached down and picked Troy Russell up off the tragedy of

that driveway just as if he were picking up little Austen himself. Like the . . . brother in the gospel he was supposed to be, John simply took over the priesthood care and keeping of Troy Russell. He started by saying, ‘Troy, Austen wants you back on your feet—including on the basketball court—so I will be here every morning at 5:15 a.m. Be ready. . . .’

“‘I didn’t want to go,’ Troy told me later, ‘because I had always taken Austen with me. . . . But John insisted, so I went. From that first day back, we talked—or rather I talked and John listened. . . . At first it was difficult, but over time I realized I had found my strength in the form of [John Manning], who loved me and listened to me until the sun finally rose again on my life.’”⁴ ■

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Witnesses unto Me,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 15.
2. See David A. Bednar, in “Panel Discussion” (worldwide leadership training meeting, Nov. 2010), broadcasts.lds.org.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Listen to Learn,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 23.
4. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Emissaries to the Church,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 62, 67.

MINISTERING AS THE SAVIOR DID

As Jesus departed from Jericho, two blind men cried out to Him, saying, “Have mercy on us, O Lord. . . .

“And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

“They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

“So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes:

and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him” (Matthew 20:30, 32–34).

What can we learn from how the Savior listened?





INVITATION TO ACT

Consider how you will apply these principles in how you minister. Ask those to whom you minister what they need. Listen to their response and the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Act on what you hear.



“Ministering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during ministering visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.

UNITED IN DOING GOOD

By Emma Hale Smith

This series highlights the lives of devoted women and their messages, excerpted from the book At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women (2017). The complete book, along with seven bonus chapters, is available in the Gospel Library app and online at churchhistorianspress.org/at-the-pulpit.



ABOUT SISTER SMITH

Emma Hale Smith (1804–79) met her husband, Joseph, when he boarded at her parents' farm in Harmony, Pennsylvania, USA. They were married on January 18, 1827. Joseph's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, praised Emma: "I have never seen a woman in my life who would endure every species of fatigue and hardship . . . with that unflinching courage, zeal, and patience."¹ Emma briefly worked as a scribe on the translation of the Book of Mormon. She opened her home to the sick, the orphaned, and other visitors.

In July 1830, Joseph Smith dictated a revelation directed to her, now known as Doctrine and Covenants 25. She was elected president of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo on March 17, 1842. Though Emma met with the society only twelve times in 1842 and four times in March 1844, her leadership was crucial in shaping the organization.

The Nauvoo Relief Society functioned in a discussion format rather than formal lessons. Emma's words, excerpted here, show her leadership.² Emma maintained her sense of spiritual authority, exhorting the women to repent as they strengthened each other and practiced charity. She encouraged unity and instructed the women on compassion and care for the poor.

Be Ambitious to Do Good

[March 17, 1842]

"President³ Emma Smith remarked we are going to do something extraordinary. When a boat is stuck on the rapids with a multitude of Mormons on board, we shall consider that a loud call for relief. We expect extraordinary occasions and pressing calls. . . .

"[She made] remarks on the object of the society, its duties to others, also its relative duties to each other, viz., to seek out and relieve the distressed, that each member should be ambitious to do good, . . . [and] deal frankly with each other."

Be United

[March 24, 1842]

"President E. Smith . . . rose and said that measures to promote union in this society must be carefully attended to. That every member should be held in full fellowship. As a society, [she] hoped they would divest themselves of every jealousy and evil feeling toward each other, if any such existed. . . .

" . . . No one need feel delicate in reference to inquiries about this society. There is nothing private. Its objects are purely benevolent . . . , its objects are charitable: none can object to telling the good, the evil withhold. [She] hoped all would feel themselves bound to observe this rule. . . . It [is] the duty of every person to inquire into the condition of the poor and represent their true state."

Begin at Home

[April 14, 1842]

"President E. Smith[s] . . . desire was to do good. Wished all the members of this society to assist her. Said it was necessary to begin at home, to eradicate all evil from our own hearts. . . . Enforced the necessity of walking in a manner that would be approbated of God."

Repent and Forsake

[May 19, 1842]

"Mrs. President continued by exhorting all who had erred to repent and forsake their sins. Said that Satan's forces were against this Church."

Live Right before God

[June 23, 1842]

“Mrs. President said she was rejoiced to see the increasing union of the society. Hoped we should live right before God, among ourselves, and before the world. . . . Said we had nothing to do but to fear God and keep the commandments, and in doing so we shall prosper.”

Strengthen Each Other

[March 16, 1844]

“Mrs. President . . . addressed the meeting upon the necessity of being united among ourselves and strengthening each other’s hands in order that we may be able to do much good among the poor. . . . We must throw the mantle of charity round to shield those who will repent and do so no

more. . . . She advised all to abide the Book of Mormon [and] Doctrine and Covenants.” ■

NOTES

1. “Lucy Mack Smith, History, 1845,” 190, josephsmithpapers.org.
2. Excerpted from Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, Mar. 17, 1842–Mar. 16, 1844, 8–[126]; capitalization and punctuation standardized.
3. Nineteenth-century female leaders often held a variety of titles. In the Nauvoo Minutes, Emma was called President Smith and, to distinguish her from her husband, Presidentess, President Emma Smith, and Mrs. President.

In July and August of 1839, the town of Commerce (later Nauvoo), Illinois, was besieged by a malaria epidemic. In this painting, Emma is at the center of a circle of malaria victims, giving help and comfort.



WHERE WE WERE NEEDED

By Wilfried and Laura Eyi

A prompting to move to Brooklyn, New York, led us to service and blessings we never could have imagined.

In 2013 we were living in Manhattan, New York, USA. We loved our ward. Because we were expecting our first child, we began looking for a larger apartment in the ward. We found one that seemed perfect, but it didn't feel right.

That spring, Laura started to feel that maybe we should move to Brooklyn. Wil wasn't so sure. We didn't know anything about Brooklyn, and Wil wanted to be close to his investment-banking job so that, given his long work hours, he had a short commute. We decided to pray about it and listen for an answer during general conference.

As we watched the talks on a laptop computer in our studio apartment, Elder Stanley G. Ellis of the Seventy shared an experience he had as a member of a stake presidency. He said that families moving into his stake in Texas, USA, would often ask which ward was best. Only once in 16 years did a family ask which ward needed help.¹

We were touched by his story. It answered our prayers. So, instead of staying in a ward we loved, that we felt comfortable in, and that had a great nursery and Primary, we took Elder Ellis's advice to heart and prayed about where we should move.

At the time, we were serving as ordinance workers in the Manhattan New York Temple. One of the workers there knew New York City well. He suggested two wards where he thought we could help—*both in Brooklyn*.

The first ward was too far from Wil's work. The second one was closer, and we felt we had found the right place when we visited the ward's sacrament meeting. Many of the members were Haitian immigrants. Because Wil is from Gabon and speaks French, we thought the ward would be a great home for us.

Remarkable Experiences

A few weeks later we found an apartment and moved in. Wil was soon called to serve in various

meaningful ways. Understanding the language took some time, but he felt blessed to quickly become proficient enough in Haitian Creole to help interpret for members during meetings and interviews. Laura was also blessed to serve in various capacities, and we became involved in missionary work.

One of the friends we made was a young investigator named Normil Romelus, who had come from Haiti to get an education. He would visit our home with the missionaries, and we would help teach him in French and Creole. After Normil was baptized, we sponsored him in the Church's Pathway program, where he met his future wife. Wil felt grateful to attend their marriage in the Manhattan Temple.

We also met a faithful sister who came to New York from Haiti to be treated for cancer. During her stays, the ward council did everything it could to help her and make sure she had what she needed, including transportation to and from her treatments. We were blessed to serve and visit her during

this time. We hoped for a better ending, but she passed away.

Those two experiences represent what the ward did for people—help them and lift them. We are grateful for these and other remarkable experiences.

What Really Matters

We learned that when we serve the Lord and His children, He takes care of us. Our experiences in Brooklyn helped keep us grounded. They especially helped Wil care less about the fanfare of Wall Street and remember what matters most. In investment banking, almost everyone works on Sundays. Wil occasionally had to do catch-up work from home, but the Lord blessed us so that he never had to go into the office on Sundays.

When we moved to Brooklyn, we thought we were going to be one of only two families with young children in the ward. But the ward's boundaries changed two weeks after we



moved in, and several other young families also moved in.

Eventually, we intend to move to Gabon. We feel that our experiences in Brooklyn have helped prepare us to better serve the Church and people of Africa. We're thankful we

followed the prompting to move. The Lord blessed us—and continues to bless us—in ways we never could have imagined. ■

The authors now live in Massachusetts, USA.

NOTE

1. See Stanley G. Ellis, "The Lord's Way," *Ensign*, May 2013, 36–38.

Deciding for Myself

I wanted the Lord to decide for me because I knew He saw the whole picture, but that's why He wanted me to decide for myself.



By Valerie Durrant
Church Magazines

I had a choice—I could accept a mission call or a marriage proposal. In a somewhat surprising turn of events, I was presented with both opportunities, but I didn't know which to choose. After discussing my dilemma with the bishop, he helped me come to the conclusion that I had to decide for myself.

Though I wished that his answer had been more definitive, I can't say I was surprised; I had felt the same way when I prayed. As much as I wanted a clear-cut answer, it didn't come until I made my own decision and moved forward in faith.

The Dilemma

The decision to serve had been easy. I had always wanted to be a missionary, and when President Thomas S. Monson announced that sisters would be eligible to serve at age 19, I started preparing right away. I attended missionary preparation classes, met with my bishop, and got my wisdom teeth pulled. Before I knew it, I was opening my call to the Argentina Salta Mission and was scheduled to leave in five months.

Everything was going according to plan. Even Ryan, the young man I was dating, supported my desire to serve, and we soon broke up so that I could focus on preparing.

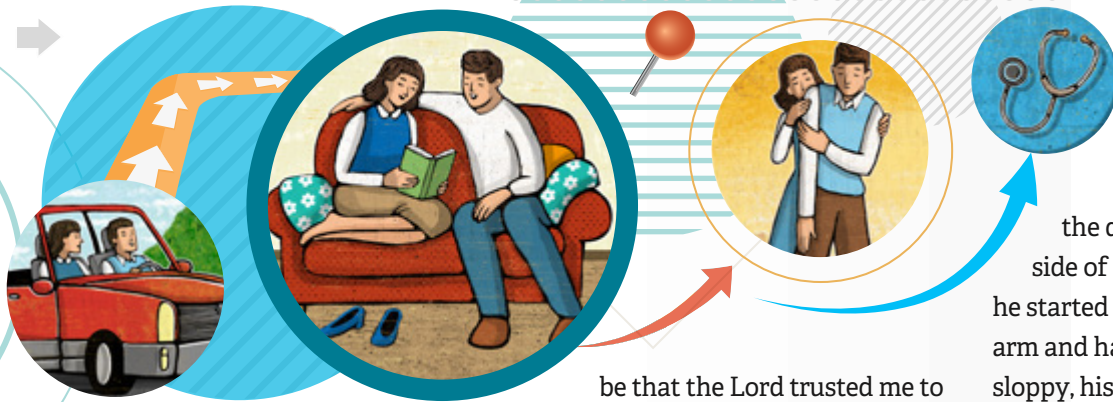
There was just one problem: my feelings for Ryan didn't go away. I

prayed about our relationship and received spiritual confirmation that he was someone I could marry. But I wanted to serve my mission, so I did my best not to think about him. I could think about marriage when I got back.

Then, two weeks before I was to enter the missionary training center, Ryan showed up unexpectedly at my house. To my surprise, he asked me to defer my mission and consider marrying him. I had no idea what to do: I wanted to marry Ryan, but I also wanted to serve my mission. Both were righteous desires.

It felt like the weight of the world had been compressed into this one decision—the course of my life, now and in eternity, would be affected by





my choice. I prayed to know what Heavenly Father would have me do but didn't feel guided in either direction.

Exercising My Agency

After much frustration, I recalled the counsel in Doctrine and Covenants 9:8: "You must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right." As I considered the consequences of each choice, I started to think that the right thing for me was to defer my mission call and keep dating Ryan. But still, I had not received a distinct spiritual impression telling me that this choice was right—or wrong.

There wasn't time to wait, though, and I had to move forward. After consulting with my bishop and stake president, I deferred my mission call for six months. Soon, the Holy Ghost bore witness to me that I was on the right path, and later that year, Ryan and I were sealed for time and all eternity in the temple.

Why Did He Let Me Decide?

If it was the Lord's will all along that I stay and marry Ryan, why hadn't He just told me so from the beginning? The simple answer might

be that the Lord trusted me to make my own decision. After all, He wants us "to act for [ourselves] and not to be acted upon" (2 Nephi 2:26).

This is not to say that the Lord will leave us entirely without guidance. Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that Heavenly Father "will confirm the correctness of our choices His way. That confirmation generally comes through packets of help found along the way. We discover them by being spiritually sensitive. They are like notes from a loving Father as evidence of His approval."¹ The spiritual witness I received after my decision served as just such a note of divine approval.

With the gift of hindsight, I also recognize that Heavenly Father was teaching me another vital principle of agency: that we grow as we assume total responsibility for our decisions. By allowing me to make my own choice and move forward in faith, the Lord was preparing me for larger trials ahead.

The Diagnosis

Just one year after Ryan and I were sealed (around the time that I would have been returning from my mission, had I gone), Ryan started to feel a tingling sensation in the right side of his mouth. I didn't think much of it when he said, "I feel like I just got back from

the dentist, but just the right side of my tongue is numb." Then he started losing control of his right arm and hand. His handwriting went sloppy, his smile became lopsided, and he felt clumsy and weak while playing basketball.

We knew we had to go to the doctor to have Ryan checked out. Before we went, Ryan asked his dad for a priesthood blessing. His dad blessed him that the doctors would be able to resolve the issue quickly and that he would become whole and complete again. With those words ringing in our ears, we headed to the hospital.

After learning about Ryan's symptoms, the doctor ordered an MRI. He told us he just wanted to be sure it wasn't something serious, like a brain tumor or multiple sclerosis.

Afterward, the doctor came into the small hospital room where we had been waiting and said he didn't have good news. The MRI showed eight lesions on Ryan's brain, and the doctor was almost certain that it was a case of multiple sclerosis.

Strengthened to Bear Our Burden

We weren't prepared for this diagnosis. Ryan says, "I remember feeling helpless—this wasn't something I could just 'tough out.' My entire self-image changed; I used to be invincible, and now I could barely scribble my own name." After several rounds of steroid treatment over the next few weeks, Ryan regained control of

the right side of his body and started to feel normal again—physically, at least. Mentally we were still in turmoil, uncertain of the future but still trying to have faith in the Lord’s plan and the blessing Ryan’s father had given him.

In my own priesthood blessing I was blessed with an added measure of faith to face the uncertainties ahead. Together we adjusted to the new normal, attending doctor appointments and educating ourselves about this disease that was now part of our lives. We came to rely on each other more than ever, and as a result, we emerged more bonded together than ever.

I was humbled when Ryan told me, “There was nothing more comforting than being able to cry with you, have you by my side as we met with doctors, and feel your complete support and love.” And we realized that if I had served my mission, I wouldn’t have been there for him when he was diagnosed, whether we would have ended up marrying or not. “It was the greatest blessing to have someone who I knew loved me no matter what happened,” Ryan says.

my marriage—the sacrifices and trials, the prayers for strength and guidance, the development of trust in the Lord and his timing—have shaped me and helped me become a little more Christlike; they have given me the opportunity to think about someone other than myself. For both Ryan and me, marriage has been a gateway to additional learning and growth.

I am grateful that in His infinite wisdom, the Lord gave me experiences that would prepare me to respond to my trials with faith—one of which was the blessing to exercise my agency and choose to marry Ryan instead of going on my mission. It may have been difficult to face that decision on my own, but because the Lord trusted me to make my own decision, I was confident and ready to accept the responsibility that accompanied that choice. By *not* intervening, He showed me great love. ■

NOTE

1. Richard G. Scott, “Learning to Recognize Answers to Prayer,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 32. Elder Scott further explained, “If, in trust, we begin something which is not right, [Heavenly Father] will let us know before we have gone too far. We sense that help by recognizing troubled or uneasy feelings” (page 32).

Grateful for the Lord’s Trust

With the help of the Lord, Ryan and I were strengthened beyond our normal capacity. We grew stronger individually and as a couple during those first few months of uncertainty—maybe more than we had throughout our whole lives leading up to that point. We learned how to rely on our Heavenly Father, and we came to understand what a blessing it was to be together.

The experiences that have come with





By Elder Michael
John U. Teh
Of the Seventy

The Balancing Act of Endurance

I testify that we can “enjoy to the end” as we follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, choose good over evil, and balance our responsibilities.

I recently spoke to my children, nieces, and a young friend to gain a sense of the questions, challenges, frustrations, and triumphs young adults face today. I have pondered and prayed about what was shared with me and have summarized it into points that I now share in hopes that they may help answer some of those questions and challenges.

Listen to the Holy Ghost

Contrary to how some of you may feel at times, I declare that our Heavenly Father does answer our prayers in His way. Consider the following scriptures:

“For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth;

and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened” (3 Nephi 14:8).

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

“Behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart” (D&C 8:2).

How then do we receive answers and revelation? How do we know it’s the Holy Ghost and not just our own thinking? I share two experiences in my life that have become patterns.

After Sister Teh and I dated for a little while, it became obvious that I wanted to spend eternity with her. Naturally, I made it a subject



of earnest prayer and fasting. No particular change in my feeling followed. I did not feel a burning in my bosom. I did, however, continue to feel good about my decision, so I persevered. Sister Teh got the same answer, so here we are. Since that experience, I have arrived at many of my decisions in a similar fashion (see D&C 6:22–23).

Contrast that with experiences I now have concerning specific assignments from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to call a new stake president. As I approach this assignment in the spirit of prayer and fasting, I have been blessed with distinct impressions that help me know who should be called. The impressions come sometimes before, sometimes during, or sometimes even after the interview process. I always feel a burning in my bosom. I have since recognized that as the way the Holy Ghost guides me in such assignments.

Why the difference in the way the Holy Ghost communicates with me? I do not know. The important thing is that I have learned to recognize these patterns as ways I receive personal revelation. I take comfort and confidence in the following admonition: “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10).

Choose Good over Evil

Some people think that it is becoming harder and harder to distinguish right from wrong. There appear to be more and more gray areas. Many of the incorrect but popular opinions of the day appear to make sense when viewed solely through a narrow lens. But old garbage covered with new packaging and backed by creative advertising is still garbage.

Discerning between right and wrong need not be complicated. Even before we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, we are blessed with the Light of Christ:

“For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

“But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good” (Moroni 7:16–17).

One of the greatest tests of our day is sustaining the living prophet. Most of us will say, “Oh, that’s easy. I already got that. Check.”

But it is amazing to see how some people who supposedly sustain the living prophet react to some of the popular opinions of the day. When faced with peer pressure, some of us act as if or form opinions that suggest that we don’t know there is a living prophet.

Find the Right Balance

Do you have so much to do that you feel you are being pulled in different directions? Guess what. It will only get worse. So the question is: How do you find the right balance?

Establish as your beacon the eternal nature of our spirits and your identity as a son or daughter of God. Focus your energy on that truth and what it means. Everything else will either drop out of your life or fall into its proper place.¹ Two scriptures can serve as guiding principles:

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you” (3 Nephi 13:33).



"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:20–21).

Believe it or not, I was once in your shoes. There was a point in my life when I had a full-time job, went to school at night, and had a second part-time job after school until the wee hours of the morning—while Sister Teh and I were raising our young family. I got only a couple of hours of sleep a few days a week for two months. On top of all that, I was serving in a ward bishopric.

That was one of the most productive times in my life. I don't think I have ever utilized 24 hours a day as efficiently as I did during that period.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) reminded us that we have a responsibility to our family, to our employer, to the Lord, and to ourselves.

How do we balance those responsibilities? President Hinckley said: "I don't think that is difficult. I served in many capacities in this Church. I am the father of five children, who were young and growing up when I was serving in those various capacities. . . . We enjoyed life. We had family home evenings. We just did what the Church expected us to do."²

Enjoy to the End

Enduring to the end is not about completing a gospel checklist and then saying: "I'm good. All I have to do now is coast along and maintain it." Rather, it is about continually learning and growing. The gospel of Jesus Christ is about constant repentance and change—it is an uphill climb rather than a stroll in the park.

King Benjamin said, "See that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a



man should run faster than he has strength" (Mosiah 4:27).

Some Latter-day Saints embrace this passage as a justification for their unwillingness to try harder or do their best. The problem is they focus only on the first half of the passage.

Here is the second half: "It is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order." The two halves together clarify what

it really means to do things in wisdom and order.

A young athlete friend introduced me to the phenomenon called *second wind*, which is a feeling of renewed energy that gives you strength to carry on even when you're tired.

As for finding a second wind in other aspects of his life, my friend says: "As a college student, it can be really easy to come home from a late night and make an excuse to be too tired to say prayers or read scriptures or even make regular temple visits. There can be many excuses for not doing these things,

especially for college students. But in the end, we need to find our second wind and do those little things."

Maybe instead of *endure* to the end, we can find our second wind—our spiritual wind—and *enjoy* to the end. I testify that we can do so as we follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, choose good over evil, and balance our responsibilities. ■

From a devotional address, "These Are Your Days," delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on June 9, 2015. For the full address, go to web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches.

NOTES

1. See Ezra Taft Benson, "The Great Commandment—Love the Lord," *Ensign*, May 1988, 4.
2. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 33.

My pride prevented me from accepting the bishop's chastisement as truth—but could I really argue with the Holy Ghost?

Being Honest

with Myself—and with God

By Faith Sutherlin Blackhurst

About halfway through my mission, my companion and I were struggling to work well with our ward mission leader. There had been various disagreements, so we decided to talk to the bishop to see what we should do. Deep down, I hoped that the bishop would just have a talk with him and fix our problems for us.

But instead, the bishop told me that I was being prideful and overly critical of others. I went stomping home feeling misunderstood and frustrated—how could he say that about me? Did he even care about our struggles to share the gospel?

As we walked, I vented my feelings to my companion. But suddenly a phrase came into my head: “The guilty taketh the truth to be hard” (1 Nephi 16:2). It stopped me in my tracks. It was obvious to me that the thought came from the Spirit. My pride may have prevented me from accepting the bishop's chastisement as truth—but could I really argue with the Holy Ghost?

I was guilty, and God was letting me know it.

Stomping Out Self-Justification

At that time, it was very tempting to ignore the things I was doing wrong. “None of us likes to admit when we are drifting off the right course,” agrees Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “. . . Consequently, when we do examine our lives, we look through the filter of biases, excuses, and stories we tell ourselves in order to justify unworthy thoughts and actions.”¹

In my case, I had convinced myself that I was complaining for the good of the missionary work in our area. And rather than accepting our ward mission leader's faithful service—imperfect as it seemed to me—I suddenly saw that I was being ungrateful, impatient, and frankly, unkind. Because of the Spirit's prompting, I could see my actions for what they truly were.



weaknesses in humility, God can help me turn them into strengths through His grace (see Ether 12:27; 1 Peter 5:5).

After all, honestly acknowledging our weaknesses—or seeing ourselves as we truly are—is the first step on the path to positive change. As I continue to be honest and seek guidance from the Spirit, my Heavenly Father will help me know what needs to change in my life. And as I rely on Jesus Christ, His Atonement, and His refining power, I will see improvement in myself.

Although it was unpleasant to admit my mistakes in that moment of chastisement, I know that when I choose to be humble and honest with myself and with God, I am happier and more accepting of myself. I know that despite my flaws, I am of divine worth to my Heavenly Father—but He still wants me to improve. Through the power of His Son, Jesus Christ, and sincere repentance, I can become so much better than I ever dreamed I could be. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Lord, Is It I?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 58.
2. Larry R. Lawrence, “What Lack I Yet?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 35.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Lord, Is It I?” 58.

A Spiritual Reality Check

Receiving such direct chastisement from the Spirit was painful, but in the best way. It made me realize that I had to be honest with myself about my flaws.

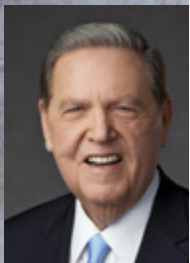
I knew firsthand that the Spirit could be my greatest ally in the process. I felt that Elder Larry R. Lawrence of the Seventy spoke directly to me when he invited Church members to “humbly ask the Lord the following question: ‘What is keeping me from progressing?’ . . . If you are sincere,” he said, “the answer

will soon become clear. It will be revelation intended just for you.”² I knew that I had the power to not only receive promptings about my weaknesses but also improve them.

From Weakness to Strength

My experience taught me that “if [my] weaknesses and shortcomings remain obscured in the shadows, then the redeeming power of the Savior cannot heal them and make them strengths.”³

However, if I am brave enough to be vulnerable and admit my



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

BEARING One Another's Burdens

From an address given to LDS Family Services employees in June 2017. Elder Holland adapted this version for a broader audience.

The Apostle Peter wrote that disciples of Jesus Christ are to have “compassion one of another” (1 Peter 3:8). Many of you fulfill that commandment honorably and admirably every day of your lives. Certainly, the need for compassion is as great today as it ever has been. Current data suggests that approximately one in five adults in the United States (43.8 million people) experiences mental illness every year.¹ Pornography abounds, with one website receiving over 23 billion visits in 2016 alone.² “Two-parent households are on [a precipitous] decline in the United States as divorce, . . . cohabitation, [and out-of-wedlock births] are on the rise. . . . Today fully four-in-ten births occur to women who are single or living with a non-marital partner.”³

To be called the Savior’s people and to stand in His Church, we must be “willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; yea, and [be] willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things” (Mosiah 18:8–9).

For me, bearing another’s burden is a simple but powerful definition of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. When we seek to lift the burden of another, we are “saviours . . . on mount Zion”



We may not be able to alter the journey, but we can make sure no one walks it alone. Surely that is what it means to bear one another's burdens.





When we seek to lift the burden of another, we are “saviours . . . on mount Zion” —symbolically aligning ourselves with the Redeemer of the world and His Atonement.

(Obadiah 1:21). We are symbolically aligning ourselves with the Redeemer of the world and His Atonement. We are “bind[ing] up the brokenhearted, . . . proclaim[ing] liberty to the captives, and . . . opening . . . the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1).

Divine Empathy

Let’s stay with this matter of Christ’s Atonement for a moment. If I understand the doctrine properly, in the experience of the Atonement, Jesus Christ vicariously experienced—and bore the burden of—the sins and sorrows and troubles and tears of all mankind, from Adam and Eve to the end of the world. In this, He Himself did not actually sin, but He felt the pain and consequence of those who did. He did not personally experience a broken marriage, but He felt the pain and consequence of those who do. He did not personally experience rape or schizophrenia or cancer or the loss of a child, but He felt the pain and consequence of those who do, and so on and on through the litany of life’s burdens and broken hearts.

That view of how the Atonement works suggests the one true divine example of *empathy* the world has ever known. Obviously, no word does justice to the universe’s most consequential act, but today I don’t have a better substitute, so I will use it.

Empathy is defined as “the action of understanding . . . and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another

of either the past or present.”⁴ As already noted, that is actually a reasonably good statement of the atoning process, especially if we add “future” to “past” and “present.”

We all know that too many of God’s children do suffer silently and alone. Take, for example, a young man who wrote me expressing his testimony in a remarkably articulate letter but then adding that his heart breaks because he does not see any fulfillment or future joy for him as a person with same-sex attraction:

“I face a lifetime of lonely nights and dreary mornings. I attend my YSA ward faithfully and each week leave church knowing that I can never really fit in. I will never teach my son to ride a bike. I will never feel my baby girl hold my finger as she learns to walk. I will never have grandchildren.

“I will come home to an empty house, day after day, month after month, decade after decade, anchored only by my hope in Christ. Sometimes I wonder why He would do this to me and ask me to make such an impossible sacrifice. I cry at night when nobody can see. I have not told anybody, not even my parents. They and my friends . . . would reject me if they knew, just as they all have rejected those who have walked this path in front of me. I will live life at the margins. I have the option of either being harassed and avoided for being single, or pitied and ignored for telling the reason. Life looms long before me. Is there no balm in Gilead?”⁵

With so much pain and despondency, so much hopelessness, one thing we certainly





ought to try to give such a person is the reassurance that he is not alone. We should be adamant in stressing that God is with him, angels are with him, and we are with him.

Empathy. Sounds pretty inadequate, but it is a place to start. We may not be able to alter the journey, but we can make sure no one walks it alone. Surely that is what it means to bear one another's burdens—they *are* burdens. And who knows when or if they will be lifted in mortality? But we can walk together and share the load. We can lift our brothers and sisters as Jesus Christ lifted us (see Alma 7:11–13).

And through all of this, we certainly gain new and brighter appreciation for what the Savior ultimately does for us. As I once said:

“In striving for some peace and understanding in these difficult matters, it is crucial to remember that we are living—and chose to live—in a fallen world where for divine purposes our pursuit of godliness will be tested and tried again and again. Of greatest assurance in God’s plan is that a Savior was promised, a Redeemer, who through our faith in Him would lift us triumphantly over those tests and trials, even though the cost to do so would be unfathomable

for both the Father who sent Him and the Son who came. It is only an appreciation of this divine love that will make our own lesser suffering first bearable, then understandable, and finally redemptive.”⁶

We learn quickly that our best and most selfless services are often not adequate to comfort or encourage in the way people need. Or if we succeed once, we often can’t seem to repeat it. Nor are we superheroes at preventing regression in those we care about. All this is why we must ultimately turn to Jesus Christ and rely on Him (see 2 Nephi 9:21).

Often enough we can’t help—or at least can’t sustain our help or can’t repeat it when we do sometimes succeed. But Christ can help. God the Father can help. The Holy Ghost can help, and we need to keep trying to be Their agents, helping when and where we can.

Refortify Yourself

For those of you who earnestly seek to bear another’s burdens, it is important that you refortify yourself and build yourself back up when others expect so much of you and indeed take so much out of you. No one is so strong that they do not ever feel fatigued or frustrated or recognize the



The service we provide when we bear another's burdens is crucially important—literally the work of the Master.

need to care for themselves. Jesus certainly experienced that fatigue, felt the drain on His strength. He gave and gave, but there was a cost attached to that, and He felt the effects of so many relying on Him. When the woman with an issue of blood touched Him in the crowd, He healed her, but He also noted “that virtue had gone out of him” (see Mark 5:25–34).

I have always been amazed that He could sleep through a storm on the Sea of Galilee so serious and severe that His experienced fishermen disciples thought the ship was going down. How tired is that? How many sermons can you give and blessings can you administer without being absolutely exhausted? The caregivers have to have care too. You have to have fuel in the tank before you can give it to others.

Rosalynn Carter, board president of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, once said, “There are only four kinds of people in this world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.”⁷

Obviously, “the relationship between a caregiver and care receiver is a [serious one, even a] sacred one.”⁸ However, as we experience the challenge of bearing one another's burdens, we can remember that none of us are immune from the impact of empathizing with the pain and suffering of someone about whom we care.

Seek Balance

It is important to find ways to balance your caregiving role with other aspects of your life—including work, family, relationships, and activities you enjoy. In a general conference talk on this subject, I tried to “pay tribute to all of you, to all who do so much and care so deeply and labor with ‘the intent to do good.’ So many are so generous. I know that some of you [may struggle emotionally or financially] in your own lives and still you find something to share [with others]. As King Benjamin cautioned his people, it is not intended that we run faster than we have strength and all things should be done in order [see Mosiah 4:27].”⁹ But despite that, I know that many of you run very fast and that your energy and emotional supply sometimes registers close to empty.

When the problems seem too large, remember these lines from an essay by David Batty:

“Hope is not a feeling—it's not a tidal wave of joy in the middle of a problem.

“. . . Hope is not the magic wand that makes the problem disappear. Hope is the lifeline that can keep you from being overwhelmed by the storms in your life.

“When you place your hope in Jesus, you place your confidence in His promises that He will never leave you or forsake you—that He will do what is best for you. Even though you may be in the middle of a huge problem, hope enables you to be at peace, knowing that Jesus is with you every step of the way.”¹⁰

I love how Paul dealt with this struggle and feeling of inadequacy. In the scriptures,



the Lord explained that His grace was sufficient for Paul and that, in fact, His strength was actually “made perfect in weakness.” Then Paul wrote, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9).¹¹



Trust the Father and the Son

We must trust that our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ truly care about us and what we are doing, that They want us to be made “perfect in weakness”—just what you want for those for whom you care.

I bear witness that God is aware of our burdens and will strengthen us to strengthen others. This does not mean our problems will always disappear or the world will suddenly be at peace. But neither do your prayers fall on deaf ears. And neither do the prayers of those you care for—the widowed, the divorced, the lonely, the overwhelmed, the addicted, the ill, the hopeless—everyone.¹²

Brothers and sisters, the service we provide when we bear another’s burdens is crucially important—literally the work of the Master. The number of letters received in my office underscores how much help is needed. That help is manna from heaven to those who struggle.

I said once: “When we speak of those who are instruments in the hand of God, we are reminded that not all angels are from the other side of the veil. Some of them we walk with and talk with—here, now, every day. Some of them reside in our own neighborhoods. Some of them gave birth to us, and in my case, one of them consented to marry me. Indeed heaven never seems closer than when

we see the love of God manifested in the kindness and devotion of people so good and so pure that *angelic* is the only word that comes to mind.”¹³

To me, when you strive to lighten another’s burdens, you are truly angels of mercy in the most literal sense. May you receive back a hundredfold all that you try to give. ■

NOTES

1. See “Mental Health by the Numbers,” National Alliance on Mental Illness, nami.org.
2. See “World’s Largest Porn Site Reveals the Most-Searches Porn Genre of 2016,” Fight the New Drug, Jan. 9, 2017, fightthenewdrug.org.
3. “Parenting in America,” Pew Research Center, Dec. 17, 2015, pewsocialtrends.org; see also D’Vera Cohn and Andrea Caumont, “10 Demographic Trends That Are Shaping the U.S. and the World,” Pew Research Center, Mar. 31, 2016, pewsocialtrends.org.
4. *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2003), “empathy.”
5. Personal correspondence.
6. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Like a Broken Vessel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 40.
7. See rosalynncarter.org/UserFiles/Jensen.pdf; see also Rosalynn Carter, in Randi Kaplan, “How to Care for the Caregiver,” May 13, 2015, health.usnews.com.
8. Nancy Madsen-Wilkerson, “When One Needs Care, Two Need Help,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2016, 38.
9. Jeffrey R. Holland, “A Handful of Meal and a Little Oil,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 31.
10. David Batty, “Finding Hope in the Midst of Life’s Problems,” livingfree.org.
11. See Anne C. Pingree, “Making Weak Things Become Strong,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2004, 28–30.
12. See Dallin H. Oaks, “He Heals the Heavy Laden,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 6–9.
13. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Ministry of Angels,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 30.

EXTENDING THE BLESSINGS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

God loves all of His children and has provided a way for each of us to return to Him.

Editors' note: Rarely is an event so significant that everyone remembers where they were when they heard about it. The 1978 revelation on the priesthood had that kind of impact on an entire generation of Saints. It is impossible in the space available to adequately explore the history of the revelation or its profound influence on the family of God, but in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the revelation, the Ensign offers this short collection of articles and personal essays.

The Book of Mormon teaches that “all are alike unto God,” including “black and white, bond and free, male and female” (2 Nephi 26:33). Because God loves all of us, He has provided a way for each of us to return to Him (see Moses 5:9; Articles of Faith 1:3). Throughout the history of the Church, people of every race and ethnicity have been baptized to that end and have lived as faithful Latter-day Saints.

The First Presidency stands during the October 1978 general conference, when members unanimously accepted Official Declaration 2.

The revelation regarding the priesthood blessed families and opened the door to temple blessings. Far right: A family walks the grounds of the Accra Ghana Temple, one of eight temples announced, under construction, or in operation in Africa.



PHOTOGRAPH OF FIRST PRESIDENCY IN 1978 COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY



From the mid-1800s, the Church did not ordain men of black African descent to the priesthood or allow black men or women to participate in temple endowment or sealing ordinances.¹ No known records exist that explain the origin of the practice, and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has emphasized that any theories given in an attempt to explain the restrictions are “folklore” that must never be perpetuated: “However well-intended the explanations were, I think almost all of them were inadequate and/or wrong. . . . We simply do not know why that practice . . . was in place.”²

Many prophets and Presidents of the Church, including Brigham Young, had promised that the day would come when all men who were worthy would receive the priesthood. Knowing these promises and witnessing the faithfulness of black Latter-day Saints, Church leaders in the mid-20th century “pleaded long and earnestly . . . supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.”³

Revelation from God

That guidance came to President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) “after extended meditation and prayer in the sacred rooms of the holy temple.” On June 1, 1978, the Lord revealed to His prophet and to the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles that “the long-promised day ha[d] come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise

its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple.”⁴

In announcing the revelation, the First Presidency stated, “We declare with soberness that the Lord has now made known his will for the blessing of all his children throughout the earth.”⁵

During the next general conference, the First Presidency presented the revelation to Church membership, who accepted it as “the word and will of the Lord” and unanimously sustained Official Declaration 2 as part of scriptural canon.

The Revelation’s Result

The impact of the revelation was profound. Not only had God extended the blessings of the priesthood and the temple to all worthy members regardless of race, but temple ordinances could be performed for everyone who has ever lived.

With the revelation came opportunities to expand missionary work, and membership flourished among many nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

A young man teaches during a quorum meeting in Paris, France, where most wards have members from a wide variety of countries around the world.



Church Teachings

As the work of the Lord has continued to spread across the world, members of the Church have enjoyed an era of greater unity. As Church members increasingly interact with others from many nationalities and cultures, Church leaders have emphasized the importance of loving and strengthening one another and eliminating prejudice and racism of any kind.

“We need to embrace God’s children compassionately and eliminate any prejudice, including racism, sexism, and nationalism,” taught President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Let it be said that we truly believe the blessings of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ are for every child of God.”⁶ Speaking of God’s eternal family, President Russell M. Nelson taught: “Only the comprehension of the true Fatherhood of God can bring full appreciation of the true brotherhood of man. That understanding inspires desire to build bridges of cooperation instead of walls of segregation.”⁷

Moving Forward Together

While we don’t know everything, there are a few things each of us can know. We can know that God loves us and has a plan for all of us to be a unified, eternal family. We can know that this is the Lord’s restored



Church and that He leads it through His prophets. Having a personal witness of these truths can help as we move forward together through the opportunities and challenges we face on the path to becoming like Him (see Moroni 7:48). ■

NOTES

1. See “Race and the Priesthood,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.
2. In “The Mormons” (interview with Jeffrey R. Holland, Mar. 4, 2006), pbs.org/mormons/interviews; see also Dallin H. Oaks, in “Apostles Talk about Reasons for Lifting Ban,” *Daily Herald*, June 5, 1988, 21.
3. Official Declaration 2.
4. Official Declaration 2.
5. Official Declaration 2.
6. M. Russell Ballard, “The Trek Continues!” *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 106.
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Teach Us Tolerance and Love,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 70.

THE LONG-PROMIS

Additional context behind excerpts from Official Declaration 2

1

AWARE OF THE PROMISES

With the help of others, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) carefully studied the scriptures and statements made by Church leaders in addresses, journals, meetings, and other sources since the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith, including the following:



President Brigham Young (1801–77)

1852

“That time will come . . . [when] they [black members of the

Church] will come and have the privilege of all we have the privilege and more.”¹



President David O. McKay (1873–1970)

1947

“Sometime in God’s eternal plan, the Negro will be given the right to hold the priesthood. In the meantime, those of that race who receive the testimony of the

restored gospel may have their family ties protected and other blessings made secure, for in the justice and mercy of the Lord they will possess all the blessings to which they are entitled in the eternal plan of salvation and exaltation.”²

Excerpt from Official Declaration 2

“**Aware of the promises** made by the prophets and presidents of the Church who have preceded us that at some time, in God’s eternal plan, all of our brethren who are worthy may receive the priesthood, and **witnessing the faithfulness** of those from whom the priesthood has been withheld, we have pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending **many hours in the Upper Room of the Temple supplicating** the Lord for divine guidance.”

1

2

3



President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)

1972

“It’s only a matter of time before the black achieves full status in the Church. We must believe in the justice of God. The black will achieve full status, we’re just waiting for that time.”³

ED DAY

2

WITNESSING THE FAITHFULNESS

Read the powerful experiences of faithful black members around the world who joined the Church before the 1978 revelation and experienced the announcement of the long-promised day:

- Charlotte and William Acquah (Ghana), Helvécio and Rudá Martins (Brazil), and Joseph and Toe Freeman (USA) in “Witnessing the Faithfulness: Official Declaration 2” at [lds.org/go/061820a](https://www.lds.org/go/061820a).

3

MANY HOURS ... SUPPLICATING



President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

1978

“I remember very vividly the day after day that I walked over to the temple.

... I knelt and prayed. And I prayed with such a fervency, I tell you! I knew that something was before us that was extremely important to many of the children of God.”⁴

In 1979, President Kimball further explained: “I want you to know, as a special witness of the Savior, how close I have felt to him and to our Heavenly Father as I have made numerous visits to the upper rooms in the temple, going on some days several times by myself. The Lord made it very clear to me what was to be done.”⁵

- George Rickford (England) in “I Will Take It in Faith” at [lds.org/go/061820b](https://www.lds.org/go/061820b).
- Victor Nugent (Jamaica) in “It Was the Truth!” at [lds.org/go/061820c](https://www.lds.org/go/061820c).
- Joseph William Billy Johnson (Ghana) in “A People Prepared” at [lds.org/go/061820d](https://www.lds.org/go/061820d).
- Anthony Obinna (Nigeria) in “You Have Come at Last” at [lds.org/go/061820e](https://www.lds.org/go/061820e).

4

HE HAS HEARD OUR PRAYERS



President
Thomas S.
Monson
(1927–2018)

1978

“At the conclusion of the meeting with the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, we had a special prayer at the altar [in the temple] where President [Spencer W.] Kimball was voice. He implored the Lord for light and knowledge on this issue which has such far-reaching consequences. It was a source of great comfort to the Brethren to hear his humble pleadings as he sought guidance in his lofty calling.”⁶

In 1985, reflecting on the direction from God that followed this prayer, President Monson wrote, “It was a moment of exultation, for we had heard the Lord’s prophet declare the Lord’s revelation for this time.”⁷

DISCOVER MORE ONLINE

Watch a video that includes President Kimball’s and President Hinckley’s recollections about their experience with the 1978 priesthood revelation: [lds.org/go/061816](https://www.lds.org/go/061816).

4

Excerpt from Official Declaration 2

“He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple.”

5

6

5

BY REVELATION ... CONFIRMED



President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)

1988

“There was a hallowed and sanctified atmosphere in the room. For me, it felt as if a conduit opened between the heavenly throne and the kneeling, pleading prophet of God who was joined by his Brethren. The Spirit of God was there. And by the power of the Holy Ghost there came to that prophet an assurance that the thing for which he prayed was right, that the time had come, and that now the wondrous blessings of the priesthood should be extended to worthy men everywhere regardless of lineage.

“Every man in that circle, by the power of the Holy Ghost, knew the same thing.”⁸



6

EVERY BLESSING

The revelation was about more than just ordination to the priesthood. Men, women, and children were blessed by access to all priesthood ordinances, including the blessings of the temple.



Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85)

1981

“The time had now come to offer the fulness of the everlasting gospel, including celestial marriage, and the priesthood, and the blessings of the temple, to all men, without reference to race or color, solely on the basis of personal worthiness.”⁹ ■

Editors’ note: This article is not meant to be a comprehensive explanation of Official Declaration 2, only a starting point for your own study.

NOTES

1. Brigham Young, speech given on Feb. 5, 1852; see “Race and the Priesthood,” Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.
2. David O. McKay, in Llewelyn R. McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay* (1956), 231.
3. Harold B. Lee, in L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (1985), 506.
4. Spencer W. Kimball, in Edward L. Kimball, “Spencer W. Kimball and the Revelation on Priesthood,” *BYU Studies*, vol. 47, no. 2 (2008), 52.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 239.
6. Thomas S. Monson, in Heidi S. Swinton, *To the Rescue: The Biography of Thomas S. Monson* (2010), 393.
7. Thomas S. Monson, in Swinton, *To the Rescue*, 394.
8. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Priesthood Restoration,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1988, 70.
9. Bruce R. McConkie, “The New Revelation on Priesthood,” in *Priesthood* (1981), 128.



By Elder
Edward Dube
Of the Seventy

BLESSED IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE

*How the revelation has blessed me,
my family, and the Church in Africa.*

Editors' note: Even after the 1978 revelation lifted restrictions on who could hold the priesthood, many members have sought understanding about why God would allow those restrictions in the first place. Here, Elder Dube shares his personal experience with the question.

The first time I heard about the restriction on black men holding the priesthood, I was on my mission. I was baptized in 1984, after the restriction had already ended. Two years later I was called to serve in the South Africa Johannesburg Mission.

While assigned to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, my companion, Elder Francis Jack, and I visited a less-active sister. Her husband was a theological professor from another church. He asked us why the priesthood had been withheld from men of black African descent. He said many



things that bothered me—things I had never heard before. When I walked out of that room, I felt very low and very discouraged.

Elder Jack and I rode our bikes back to our apartment without speaking. When we got there, he looked at me and said, “Elder Dube, what is wrong with you? You seem very disturbed.”

“Didn’t you hear what he said?” I responded. “How could this happen?”

“Elder, do you believe that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to the boy Joseph?”

“Yes,” I said. “But what does that have to do with this?”

“It has everything to do with it,” Elder Jack replied. “We believe in revelation, don’t we?”

I thought about his words and what the professor had said. That night I woke up in the middle of the night. I felt happy and at peace.

The answer to every gospel question ties back to what happened in 1820. Knowing that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith means that he was a prophet and that this is the Lord’s Church. If Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to the boy Joseph, then all gospel principles and questions fall into place. This is a church of revelation, and the Lord reveals certain processes at certain times to His servants, the prophets, and that is what brought peace to me.

I started jumping up and down and woke my companion, shouting, “Yes, yes! You are right, Elder Jack! Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to the boy Joseph! This is the Lord’s Church!”

The lifting of this restriction has been a blessing to members throughout Africa. The

priesthood has blessed me and my family in every way possible. It has been a great strength to me to have the blessings of the temple, the blessing of knowing that we will live together as families for eternity.

Access to the priesthood has blessed Africa. People here are happy and positive already, but the gospel has added to it. Families are very important in Africa. So the temple is seen as a great blessing. The Church is growing very quickly here.

Members here listen to the will of God and we go and do it. This has blessed the members. At a time when some areas in Africa have 90 percent unemployment, our members seem to be doing well because they are self-reliant. The priesthood and direction from priesthood leaders have blessed us.

I am grateful to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ for the opportunity to bear the priesthood, for the blessing it has been in my life, and for how it has blessed members throughout the African continent. ■

Elder Edward Dube was born in Zimbabwe, and he and his wife, Naume, have four children.

Youth attend the temple in Preston, England. After the 1978 revelation, temple ordinances were available to everyone who has ever lived on the earth.



IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE BLACK

Despite the hurtful assumptions some people make because of my race, I have faith that the gospel can help us all become more Christlike.



By Kirstie Stanger-Weyland

“You only got in because you’re black.”

I worked hard in high school. I took advanced placement classes and performed well academically. But when my good friend and I applied for the same college and only I got in, she didn’t mention any of that. Instead, she said what I started to hear from a lot of people.

“It’s just because you’re black.”

Growing up I never thought of myself as different from my adoptive white family. Our parents taught us that hard work was more important than ability, and I lived that.

So when some people started seeing my skin color instead of my hard work and intelligence, it hurt. After three years at college, I still sometimes hear that I’m here just because of affirmative action on college applications.

Unfortunately making assumptions based on skin color instead of who someone really is isn’t a problem limited to school. I’ve heard people ask my husband, who is white, what it’s like to be married to a black woman. At church, I have to remind myself that people are just being



nice and trying to help when they ask if I’m a recent convert. I have grown up in the Church, served a mission, and been married in the temple, but the assumption that I must be new to the Church because I’m black reinforces that some people see my race rather than seeing me for who I am.

From the mid-1800s until 1978, the Church didn't ordain black men or allow black men and women to participate in temple endowment or sealing ordinances. While the revelation extending priesthood and temple blessings was received 40 years ago, some of the past speculation on why the restriction existed still seems to affect the way some members of the Church look at



me today. I don't know why the priesthood restriction was put in place. Personally, I'm OK with not knowing, because I know that God loves all of His children. But occasionally some members still say really hurtful things about the faithfulness and capabilities (or lack thereof) of black members to try to explain it.

Some believe that racism doesn't exist anymore. While I feel the world has made progress, I've also felt the sting of stereotypes that some still hold. But I have hope we can continue to progress past racism by recognizing our assumptions and not stereotyping.

My faith is in God. I am so grateful for the gospel of Jesus Christ found in His Church. I have always loved it and wanted to learn more about it. The more I study the scriptures, the more that love grows. I've lived the gospel and I've seen its blessings. I don't think I could live my life as well or as happily if I weren't a member of the Church. Thanks to the Savior and His gospel, I can become better and find peace through any struggle I have. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

DISCOVER MORE ONLINE

- Read another experience from a young adult who had to reconcile questions about the restriction with faith in God and His plan: lds.org/go/E61841.
- Follow the faith journey of a Church leader who grew up in the inner city:
 - Part 1: "Revelations in the Summer of 1978," lds.org/go/E61841a
 - Part 2: "Seeing as We Are Seen," lds.org/go/E61841b
 - Part 3: "He Denieth None That Come unto Him," lds.org/go/E61841c
 - Part 4: "Till We All Come in the Unity of the Faith," lds.org/go/E61841d

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

There are some among us who feel marginalized because of differences. How can we move together as brothers and sisters toward our divine potential?



By Darius Gray

Founding member and
former president of Genesis

Talking with one another about physical ailments such as colds, the flu, broken bones, and sprained joints can help us learn how to find healing. However, we also benefit when we address the challenges of incorrect thoughts and attitudes, including words and actions that harm others as well as ourselves.

Some have felt the sting of being considered “the other.” It seems to me that such attitudes have increased in the world around us in recent years, perhaps due in part to the vitriolic language that has come to permeate political speech in various nations around the globe. Nothing could be further from the teachings of Jesus Christ than for any human being to think of himself or herself as somehow superior to another human being based upon race, sex, nationality, ethnic origins, economic circumstances, or other characteristics.¹

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) spoke broadly to that topic in his address “The Need for Greater

Kindness,” given in the general priesthood session of April 2006 general conference:

“I have wondered why there is so much hatred in the world. . . .

“Racial strife still lifts its ugly head. I am advised that even right here among us there is some of this. . . .

“. . . I remind you that no man who makes disparaging remarks concerning those of another race can consider himself a true disciple of Christ. Nor can he consider himself to be in harmony with the teachings of the Church of Christ. . . .

“Let us all recognize that each of us is a son or daughter of our Father in Heaven, who loves all of His children.”²

Racial and cultural bias is too widespread in the world. Sadly the practices associated with racism and prejudice have caused deep wounds for many.

As we endeavor to heal the wounds of racism, here are four steps each of us needs to take so that we can all move forward together in our efforts to reach our divine potential.

Acknowledge the Problem

The first step toward healing is the realization that the problem exists, even among some of us in the Church, as President Hinckley pointed out. We cannot fix that which we overlook or deny. Our attitudes toward others of a different race or of a different culture should not be considered a minor matter. Viewing them as such only affirms a willingness to stay unchanged.

Recognize It in Ourselves

Some people acknowledge the problem but may not recognize it in themselves. Sometimes racism is so subtle, we may not realize we're expressing it. (See the longer version of this article online for examples that can help you recognize thoughts or ideas that may identify false thinking: lds.org/go/E61843.)

Learn a New Approach

If you are seeking a way to approach those who may appear different, try not to enter into any encounter with a predetermined set of ideas. Meet the person, not the color. Greet the individual, not the ethnicity. See the child of God

for who he or she really is—a brother or sister—rather than someone different.

Listen

If we endeavored to truly hear from those we consider as “the other,” and if our honest focus was to let them share of their lives, their histories, their families, their hopes, and their pains, not only would we gain a greater understanding, but this practice would go a long way toward healing the wounds of racism.

May each of us acknowledge the ongoing harm of racism in the world and recognize it when we see it in ourselves. To the extent that we do this and are willing to make necessary changes, we will help heal the wounds of racism and free ourselves and others to move forward together toward our divine potential as children of our Heavenly Father (see Malachi 2:10). ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

See the full version of this article written for the *Ensign* on the LDS.org blog at lds.org/go/E61843.

NOTES

1. See Quentin L. Cook, “The Eternal Everyday,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 51.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Need for Greater Kindness,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 58.





**By Elder Fred A.
"Tony" Parker**

Of the Seventy,
North America
Southeast Area

THE SAVIOR HEALS OUR HURTS

How do we respond when someone does something that hurts us?

I grew up in the southern United States in the '60s. The grandson of slaves, I was born and raised in inner-city Atlanta, where you couldn't live without seeing racism. I went to school where there were separate drinking fountains for "people of color." I've been called every name in the book. When that happens, it hurts.

But it hurts more when it happens at church—in a place where we should know better.

Since joining the Church in 1983, there have been certain instances where I have felt misjudged, betrayed, or belittled based on my color. I've been told I should be better at basketball because I'm black. I've been called a "coon" when someone got upset with me. When I was called as a stake president, I learned that someone who didn't know me had said, "The only reason they called him was because they needed a black stake president here in the South."

Not everyone in the Church has a problem with racism; it's just a few. But racism exists everywhere, so of course sometimes you come across those one or two in the Church. So how do we respond when someone does something that hurts us? And how do we heal?



Responding to the Hurt of Racism

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, how we respond when we've been hurt or offended makes a great deal of difference.

When I've been a victim of racism, I've found success in meeting it head-on, forgiving the individual and

addressing the issue. If someone says something to hurt my feelings, I need to find a way to help him understand why that hurt. It is an opportunity not only to forgive but to build a relationship so that the person doesn't just look at Tony Parker as an African-American but as a child of God. Jesus taught forgiveness (see Matthew 18:21–35), and He taught us when we have been offended to take it to the individual and work it out (see Matthew 18:15).

What He didn't say was to stop going to church, though that's what many do who are offended. But leaving the Church isn't the answer, because that means leaving Him and His gospel and His power to heal (see John

about the earlier restriction on blacks holding the priesthood, the missionaries could never satisfy me as to the reasons why. I couldn't understand it.

In the end, after four years of investigating, it wasn't a person who got me through my questions. I never even talked to a bishop about it. I accepted the missionaries' invitation to find out for myself, to read the Book of Mormon and then take it to the Lord to know if it was true. My answer came through praying, studying, and feeling the Spirit.

When I got baptized, I didn't have all the answers, nor did I know all the history. But the Lord got me to a point where I could move forward in faith because I had come to a conclusion that joining the Church was right and that I was being led for reasons beyond my own understanding.

Finding Healing through the Savior

I've found that to overcome hurt, whatever the cause, our source of healing and conversion is Jesus Christ (see 3 Nephi 9:13; D&C 112:13), and the Church is His means to bring us to Him through learning His gospel and participating in ordinances so that we can be healed.¹

That healing for me has come through renewing my covenant relationship with Christ on a weekly basis through the sacrament. He can help us if we are willing to take whatever we are hurt by or struggling with and put it on the altar.

"Lord, I'm not perfect. I've got this situation that's bothering me. So I'm going to put this here. And I'm going to commit to do what You direct me to do. So Lord, help me walk this walk with You."

To be His people, we must be one in Christ. But our relationship with Christ is individual before it can be collective. Before I can be one with others, including my family, I, Tony Parker, have to have a relationship with Jesus Christ and my Heavenly Father that is solid, genuine, honest, direct, and continually improving every day. Then as we individually come closer to Christ, we come closer together as a ward, as a stake, and as a church. ■

NOTES

1. See Quentin L. Cook, "The Lord Is My Light," *Ensign*, May 2015, 62–66.



6:67–68). What's more, if I have a hurtful tongue, your not coming back to church isn't going to do anything to help me realize I need to change my tongue.

My Experience with the Restriction

I began investigating the Church in 1979. When I learned

FINDING ANSWERS FOR Family Caregiving



When families organize themselves, they are better able, as a group, to shoulder caregiving responsibilities that are difficult for an individual to bear alone.

By Arla Halpin

I will never forget the night my sister in Wisconsin, USA, called and told me my parents needed help. My husband and I lived about 1,000 miles away and didn't know how debilitating my father's health problems had become. My sister explained that caring for Dad was taking a heavy toll on my mother and suggested Mom and Dad should come and live with me and my family.

What could we do?

I didn't think that would be possible. We had a young family, four children ages four to ten, plus we had multiple work and Church responsibilities. Then a scripture came into my mind: "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12).

I knew the right thing for me to do was to help my mother care for my father. I didn't know how everything would work out, but the Spirit spoke peace to my heart. I knew we would find answers.

After the phone call, I thought back to something that had happened a few months earlier. My brother, his wife, and their family had brought Mom and Dad on a short vacation to see us. Thinking back on that visit, I knew our home would be a good fit for both Mom and Dad.

Soon the kids and I drove our station wagon to Wisconsin and moved my parents to our home in Virginia. My mother, my husband, and I provided care for my father throughout his illness. My children had the opportunity to participate in caregiving and to grow up in a multi-generational household. The experience of caring for my father even led me back to school to get master's degrees in both clinical social work and gerontology.

What is family caregiving?

As a social worker and gerontologist, I regularly assist families navigating the complexities of caring for an aging loved one. While residential programs provide a viable alternative

in many cases, today's longer life expectancies, chronic diseases, and increased medical costs mean much of the care provided for older adults today is done by family members, often unpaid relatives who provide care for a parent, grandparent, or other dependent person in their family. Family caregivers usually receive no formal training.

Caring for a loved one usually necessitates help from multiple family members, but this can be tricky. Even the best families face challenges deciding how to provide care for an aging parent. And for those in the 40–60 age bracket, the responsibilities of caring for an aging parent—while at the same time caring for younger children and adult children—can prove to be a struggle.

Where will care take place?

Caring for my father at my home was a good fit for me and my



HOW TO COPE WHILE CARING

Self-care means caring for yourself so you are able to care for another. Here are some self-care suggestions:

- **Organize as a family.** Involve the entire family as much as possible. Discuss how you will share responsibilities involved in caring for your loved one. Open, honest, and non-threatening communication is a key component for families working together to provide care.
- **Reach out.** In addition to family members, let friends and Church leaders know when you need help and support.
- **Take a break now and then.** A walk around the block or a chat with a neighbor may renew your ability to cope. If you can, allow others to give you a respite so you can rest and renew your strength.
- **Recharge spiritually.** Caregivers need spiritual renewal. Listening to uplifting music and general conference talks, studying scriptures, and attending the temple can provide reassurance and perspective.

family. However, there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Each individual and family face a unique set of circumstances, and caring for a loved one in a home setting may not be appropriate for you. The individual and family may also need to reassess location of care as health-care needs change.

Much of the decision about health-care location depends upon the health-care needs of the individual and the family's ability to meet those needs in a home setting. An assisted-living facility, continued-care retirement center, nursing home, memory center, or medical group home may better meet the needs of those with acute or chronic health-care needs. The cost of such facilities varies, and costs rise as care level increases.

How can adult children navigate caregiving responsibilities?

The responsibilities involved in caregiving can create strain between family members. Those who live far away may not fully understand the demands involved in caring for someone on a daily basis. Siblings may revert to previous roles, such as the "responsible one," or they may assume that because someone played a certain role in the past they will continue to play that role in the future. Establishing appropriate roles for *today's* needs requires recognizing what contributions each sibling can make both now and in the future.

Adult children caring for an aged parent may find it helpful to hold a family council to discuss their parent's needs, work through what will need to be done, and divide responsibilities. Everyone should contribute if possible because caregiving is more than a one-person job. If family members cannot contribute direct care, they can contribute in other ways if circumstances allow, such as helping with household chores, providing transportation, shopping for groceries, or contributing financially.

Family caregivers can enlist the help of other family members to provide companionship and give service to an older adult. As I work with families caring for an aging loved one, I often



suggest they create a schedule, writing down when each family member can help. Some families find it is appropriate to hire paid caregivers to fill in the gaps. This can prove expensive but is sometimes necessary when a spouse or other caregiver is overwhelmed or exhausted.

Teens and children can often provide service and companionship to both the person receiving care *and* the caregiver. For example, children might look at photo albums with an older person and discuss life experiences with them. Older adults have accumulated a lifetime of wisdom and, if able, may be delighted to share their knowledge.

“Some feel that their loved one is taken care of just by being placed in assisted living,” said one sister who is caring for an aging parent. “But the family should still support that loved one with regular contact.”

The responsibilities of caregiving frequently fall on one person, often a daughter or wife. To avoid stress or resentment, it is important that caregivers reach out to others for help, clearly communicating what is needed. When families organize themselves, they are better able to shoulder as a group responsibilities that are difficult for an individual to bear alone. If all family members assist, there is less chance that one or two will experience caregiver stress and burnout.

Where can we turn for help?

Even the Savior knew when to ask for help. While on the cross He asked John to care for His mother (see John 19:26–27).

In addition to reaching out to each other, family members can reach out to the bishop, the Relief Society president, quorum leaders, and ministering brothers and sisters. Community resources such as a home health agency, department of social services, or a local area agency on aging can also provide information and resources.

Community and governmental agencies may also provide assistance with meals, transportation, housekeeping, home health care, and applying for benefits. They can also offer guidance for avoiding or combatting elder abuse or financial exploitation.



PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- **Family history:** Go through family photos with your loved one. Record names, dates, and significant life events. Use audio or video recordings to capture remembrances.
- **Legal documents:** Learn about and prepare an advance medical directive (AMD), financial power of attorney, and a legal will. Knowing a person's wishes and sharing them in advance can avoid contention and disputes later on. (Legal terminology may vary, and legal counsel may be helpful.)
- **Accounts:** Update beneficiaries on bank accounts, insurance policies, pensions, and retirement funds. A list of account numbers and access codes should be entrusted to an executor. The family should be aware of any pre-paid funeral policies, death benefits or insurance policies, or liens on property.
- **End-of-life plans:** Preplanning helps ensure the individual's wishes are respected after they have passed on. Some families may wish to select a funeral home and cemetery in advance and may want to discuss with the individual what an obituary should include, along with requests for the funeral service—favorite hymns, for example, and which family members may be asked to pray or speak, subject to approval from Church leaders.

RESOURCES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE U.S.:

- National Alliance for Caregiving: caregiving.org
- National Association of Area Agencies on Aging: n4a.org
- Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving: rosalynncarter.org
- Alzheimer's Association: alz.org
- InternationalCaregiversAssociation.com
- Alzheimer's Disease International: alz.co.uk

What if we feel overwhelmed?

One way to cope is to break down tasks and responsibilities into simpler steps, then take one step at a time. Also, it is important to take care of yourself when you are a caregiver. Take time to care for your own physical, social, and spiritual needs. “See that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength” (Mosiah 4:27).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles offered this counsel:

“For those of you who earnestly seek to bear another’s burdens, it is important that you reformat yourself and build yourself back up when others expect so much of you and indeed take so much out of you. No one is so strong that he or she does not ever feel fatigued or frustrated or recognize the need to care for themselves. Jesus certainly experienced that fatigue, felt the drain on His strength. He gave and gave, but there was a cost attached to that, and He felt the effects of so many relying on Him. When the woman with an issue of blood touched Him in the crowd, He healed her, but He also noted that ‘virtue had gone out of him’ [see Mark 5:25–34].

“I have always been amazed that He could

sleep through a storm on the Sea of Galilee so serious and severe that His experienced fishermen disciples thought the ship was going down. How tired is that? How many sermons can you give and blessings can you administer without being absolutely exhausted? The caregivers have to have care too. You have to have something in the tank before you can give it to others.”¹

Where can caregivers find hope?

Elder Robert D. Hales (1932–2017) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles acknowledged his wife’s role as “the special caregiver in my life.” He said caregiving is a “special way disciples show their love for the Savior. . . . I pay tribute to all who serve the Lord as caregivers. How the Lord loves you! In your quiet, unheralded service, you are following Him who promised, ‘Thy Father who seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly’ [3 Nephi 13:4; see also Matthew 6:4].”

Elder Hales continued: “If you are suffering deeply, with others or alone, I urge you to let the Savior be your caregiver. Lean on His ample arm. Accept His assurance. ‘I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you,’ He promises [John 14:18].”² Sometimes this may seem like the only source of help, but it is real.

What are some of the best practices in caregiving?

Christine Jensen, PhD—director of health services research for the Riverside Center for Excellence in Aging and Lifelong Health in Williamsburg, Virginia, USA, and master trainer at the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving—suggests that as a caregiver, you should:





WE'RE ALL CAREGIVERS

- Be an advocate for yourself and the person you are caring for.
- Not be embarrassed about asking for help.
- Realize you are not alone.
- Think of yourself as a “care partner” when advocating for those in your care.
- Develop relationships with local agencies and ask what services they offer.
- Tell your doctor you are a caregiver. “Serving as a caregiver plays an important part in your own physical and mental well-being.”
- Take care of yourself. “Caregivers tend to put themselves last and their loved ones first. But if they don’t care for themselves, they may end up unable to help.”³

What are the rewards of caregiving?

Although caregiving can be challenging, it can also be rewarding.

When caregivers find meaning in the care they provide, the experience can be both emotionally and spiritually transformative. Caregiving can enable both giver and receiver to develop compassion and gratitude. It can heal and enhance relationships with family members. It may even help the caregiver to develop new skills, competencies, and feelings of self-worth.

In my professional experience, as well as in my personal life, I have seen the blessings that come to those who turn to the Lord for support as they provide care for others. I know that with the Savior’s help, Heavenly Father’s help, and the guidance of the Holy Ghost, caregivers can be edified and find the strength to carry on. ■

The author lives in Virginia, USA.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Bearing One Another’s Burdens,” [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/bearing-one-anothers-burdens](https://www.lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/bearing-one-anothers-burdens).
2. Robert D. Hales, “‘Come, Follow Me’ by Practicing Christian Love and Service,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 24.
3. From an interview with Christine Jensen.

Many caregivers don’t have family members or others they can call on to help. And many find it difficult to ask for help—it seems less stressful to simply continue alone rather than to ask for a hand. Neighbors, ministering brothers and sisters, and ward councils, acting with sensitivity and compassion, can reach out to them.

Here are a few suggestions. As appropriate:

- With the bishop’s approval, priesthood holders can take the sacrament to the home.
- Assist with transportation—rides to and from Church meetings and activities, medical appointments, or other errands.
- Show interest—a visit or phone call can help both the caregiver and the care recipient feel remembered.
- Consider organizing an occasional dinner or a “night in” with friends.
- Help with yard maintenance or seasonal home needs, such as snow removal, raking leaves, and so on.



By Elder
Gary B. Sabin
Of the Seventy

PLACE YOUR TRUST IN HIM

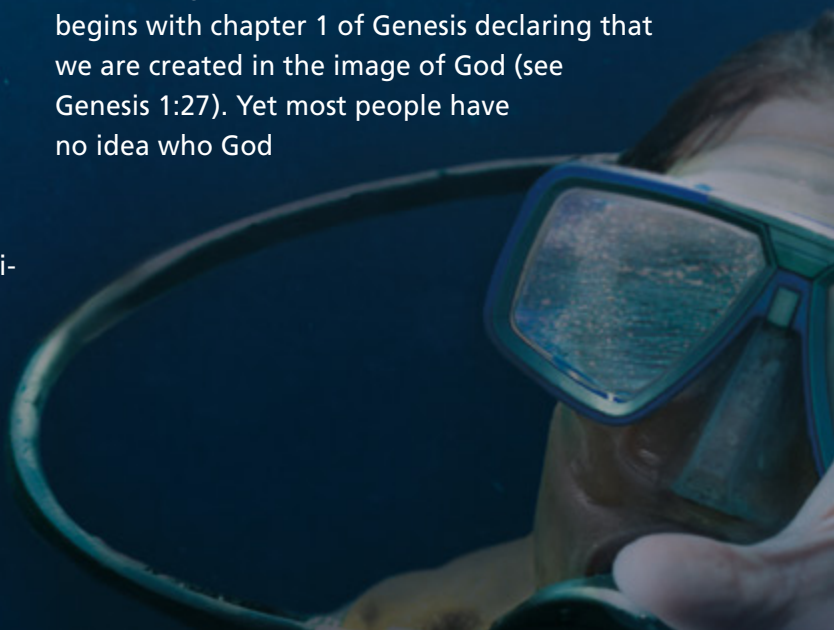
Several years ago, my brother Ron and I went scuba diving in California. After we finished, we decided to leave our equipment on the beach and go bodysurfing. We were out quite a distance when I looked back toward the beach and saw a woman in the water in full scuba gear, drowning. She had walked out into the ocean intending to scuba dive but had unexpectedly stepped off a sandy shelf into water over her head and panicked.

The woman had at her fingertips everything she needed to be safe. She could have dropped her weight belt with a flick of her finger on the quick-release buckle, pressed the button on her inflatable buoyancy vest so she could float, or put her regulator in her mouth so she could breathe underwater. We quickly swam back to her and pulled her to shore. She was embarrassed and obviously inexperienced. She had been taught correct principles of how to scuba dive safely but hadn't applied what she had learned. She was, you could say, living well below her privileges. She almost died because of it.

The Lord will reach out to us if we will reach out to Him.

The Need for Vision

We often live below our spiritual privileges, even though we've been taught by the true and living God through His prophets how to safely navigate this mortal experience. We sometimes panic and flail about because we have become disoriented and lose sight of who we are. The Old Testament begins with chapter 1 of Genesis declaring that we are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27). Yet most people have no idea who God





really is and that we are His children, with divine potential. This truth, with its eternal perspective, allows us to breathe without fear even when we are submerged by life's difficulties.

Helen Keller, the first deaf-and-blind person to receive a university degree, is often quoted as having said, "The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision."¹ The importance of vision is the underlying basis of two recurring themes in the Old Testament. The first is the

constant need for the Lord's covenant people to be reminded of who their true God is and thus their own identity—that God is not something they can create with their own hands. The second is that the Lord will protect and bless those who will have Him to be their God.

Let Go of False Gods

In two of the Ten Commandments, the Lord commanded the children of Israel, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3) and, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Exodus 20:4). These commandments were given to the children of Israel when, even after the Lord had miraculously delivered them from slavery in Egypt, they were quick to forget Him. The Psalmist lamented:

"They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

"Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass" (Psalm 106:19–20).

A divine wake-up call was delivered in the form of stone tablets engraved with protective commandments (see Exodus 34:1, 4, 12, 14), but it was still said of them, "And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them" (Psalm 106:36). Like the drowning scuba diver who could have dropped her weight belt, the children of Israel needed to let go of their false gods that weighed them down, endangering their spiritual lives.

Isaiah logically exclaimed, "Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?" (Isaiah 44:19) and, "Shall the



clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?" (Isaiah 45:9).

Jeremiah similarly reasoned:

"[The Israelites say] to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: . . . but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

"But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah" (Jeremiah 2:27–28).

Just as the woman could have used her scuba gear regulator to breathe life-sustaining oxygen, God, the source of all truth and wisdom, has instructed us to rely on only that which will spiritually sustain us. He has declared, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour" (Isaiah 43:11).

Habakkuk, a prophet who lived about a century after Isaiah, continued to plead with Israel to let go of their false idols and worship the only true God:

"Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.

"But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2:19–20).

Zephaniah also warned Israel to repent before it was too late: "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath" (Zephaniah 1:18).

We may say of ancient idol worship, "Yes, but that was then. I would never be so foolish!" But what do we worship today? If we are to have "no other gods"

before Him, then rightfully God should be that which we value most. Can we say that is true for each of us?

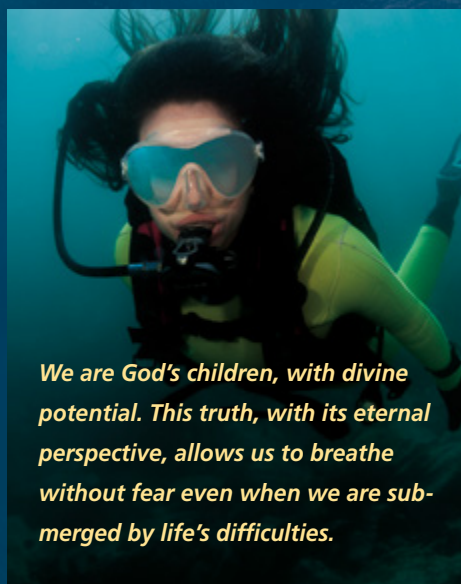
The Lord told Hyrum Smith, through the Prophet Joseph: "Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich" (D&C 11:7).

If our greatest desire is for money, sports, music, fame, entertainment, praise, or popularity, then we risk having them

become our own graven images, replacing or taking priority over God and His plan for us. We may find ourselves "in over our heads" with the concerns of the world, lacking the clarity of thought to let go of those things that weigh us down and keep us from being spiritually safe. The ultimate irony of our displaced loyalties and priorities is that God's plan is for our ultimate happiness. Why would we not enthusiastically embrace it? We can easily panic and spiritually drown when we forget who we are, don't believe in that divine heritage, want an easier way than God's plan provides, or procrastinate obedience.

Blessings from Trusting God

The second recurring and related theme in the Old Testament is that when we trust in the living God



We are God's children, with divine potential. This truth, with its eternal perspective, allows us to breathe without fear even when we are submerged by life's difficulties.



rather than in the arm of flesh, God will bless us. In 2 Chronicles 20, we read that the people of Judah were surrounded by a great, hostile multitude and had no apparent ability to survive the battle. The people fasted and prayed for deliverance, not to false gods made with their own hands but to the one true God.

Then Jahaziel, speaking for the Lord, declared to King Jehoshaphat and all of Judah, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chronicles 20:15). This promise was miraculously fulfilled when the enemy turned on each other, sparing Judah. "So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about" (2 Chronicles 20:30).

Another Old Testament example of blessings that come from trusting in God is presented through the courageous example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. They were told they would be thrown into a fiery furnace if they didn't fall down and worship the golden image set up by King Nebuchadnezzar. The king taunted them by declaring, "And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (Daniel 3:15).

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered the king boldly:

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

"But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:17–18).

This courageous reply is a marvelous example of trust in the living God. They knew that whether they lived or died, all would be well because they were following the true God, and His plan extends beyond this short mortal life. One of the most comforting promises we can rely on is that the Lord is mindful of us and will watch over us if we will put our trust in Him. "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nahum 1:7).

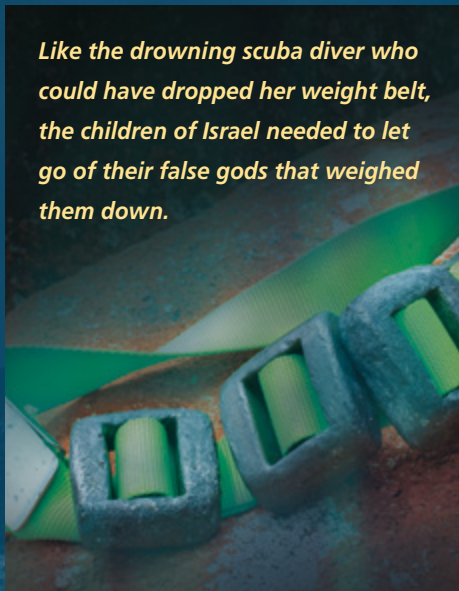
Placing our trust in the true God seems so clearly obvious and wise when compared to the alternatives; however, the lessons of mankind throughout

the ages show that, much like the drowning scuba diver, the obvious is not always so obvious. Dropping those weights which endanger our eternal well-being is a lesson for the ages. Malachi closes the Old Testament reminding us of perhaps the greatest message in the scriptures when he declares: "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" (Malachi 2:10).

May we all receive the comfort, peace, strength, and guidance that come from putting our trust in the true God. He alone is capa-

ble of sustaining and saving us. There is great peace in knowing that putting our trust in God also puts the battle in His hands, "for the battle is not yours, but God's." ■

Like the drowning scuba diver who could have dropped her weight belt, the children of Israel needed to let go of their false gods that weighed them down.



NOTE

1. Although this quote is often attributed to Helen Keller, the wording varies according to the source.

A Righteous Father's Influence

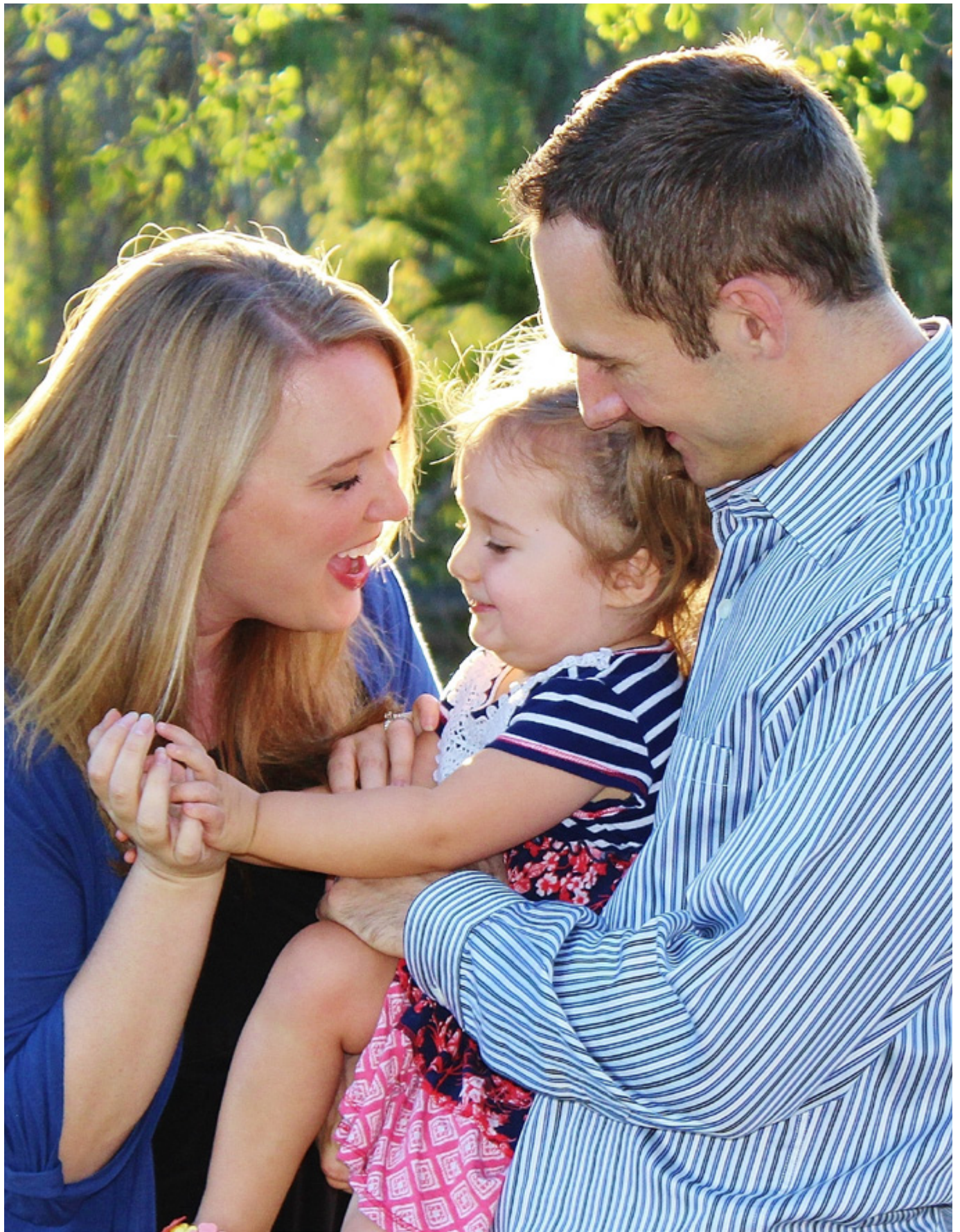
*By looking to righteous father figures
and my Heavenly Father, I learned
what true fatherhood is.*

By Megan Warren

Growing up, I didn't have an earthly father in my life to familiarize me with the kind of love my Heavenly Father has for me. Instead, I observed other men who emanated His love and were examples of true fatherhood. President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, taught, “Noble fatherhood gives us a glimpse of the divine attributes of our Father in Heaven.”¹ Through the examples of many father figures, including extended family members, Church leaders, righteous men in the scriptures, and even diligent home teachers, I learned about Heavenly Father's character and the noble attributes earthly fathers can develop to emulate Him. Eventually I was able to turn the heartache I felt from lacking an earthly father into rejoicing over the close relationship that I could develop with my Heavenly Father.

Steady and Supportive

Our Father in Heaven is unchanging. We read that He “is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Mormon 9:9). I have observed that noble earthly fathers follow Heavenly Father's example of being unwavering. A noble father is true to his word in all things. He understands that consistency helps his children feel secure and loved, and he is present in times of both crisis and joy.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE AUTHOR WITH HER HUSBAND AND DAUGHTER BY JESSE WARREN

Our Heavenly Father also understands the kind of hard work it takes to be worthy to live with Him eternally. He knows each of us by name, and He allows us to have challenges in order to refine us. A noble earthly father also allows his children to struggle from time to time because he knows that challenges bring opportunities for growth.

My husband is a talented martial artist. He was taught by his father and often relates that his dad was harder on him than he was on the other students. His father's discipline strengthened him and helped him advance more quickly. Like our Heavenly Father, noble earthly fathers encourage their children to do their best while offering strength, love, and support.

"Works without End"

Our Heavenly Father's work is eternal and without end (see Alma 12:25–33). In a similar way, a noble earthly father's work also never ends. Noble fathers constantly do good works and strive for righteousness. They are true and honest in their adherence to God's commandments. They set aside selfish pursuits for the good of their family. In "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," living prophets have taught that "by divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families."² This includes not just physical protection but spiritual protection as well. Noble fathers lead by example and offer love and counsel to their children. They also warn against spiritual danger when needed.

An Empowering Family Narrative

In his *New York Times* article "The Stories That Bind Us," Bruce Feiler gives an overview of studies regarding the deterioration of the family. In these studies, psychologists found that children who demonstrated the greatest resilience had been exposed to an empowering family narrative, which helped them feel that they belonged to something bigger. "If you want a happier family," says Feiler, "create, refine and retell the story of your family's

positive moments and your ability to bounce back from the difficult ones. That act alone may increase the odds that your family will thrive for many generations to come."³

An example of this can be seen in Moses 1. Moses was empowered by his knowledge of God's plan and his own divine identity. When Satan came tempting him, Moses resiliently replied, "Who art thou? For behold, I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten; and where is thy glory, that I should worship thee?" (Moses 1:13). Moses then even had the courage to command Satan to depart.

Noble earthly fathers empower their children by reminding them of their divine identity as spirit children of God. They help build a strong family through their good examples and ensure that their children take part in it. This gives their children a strong sense of purpose and the confidence to succeed.

Searching for a Noble Husband

When I was dating, I was seeking an eternal companion who would be a noble father. Since I grew up without that example in my childhood, it was harder for me to know all the characteristics that a noble earthly father should have. I was disappointed that my patriarchal blessing did not give more detailed direction about the person Heavenly Father wanted me to marry. It said only that I should seek someone who could take me to the temple. But even this seemingly simple instruction was challenged. Although I had some positive dating experiences, I often worried that either such a man did not truly exist or I was meant to suffer endless trials of the heart.

Despite my experience-driven anxiety, I continued to pray for a husband who would be a righteous father for my children, who would love them and stay present in their lives. Like my faithful mother, I knew that no matter what happened, I would be able to lean on my Eternal Father for support.

To my surprise and delight, my prayers were answered on Heavenly Father's perfect timetable. It is healing for me to observe my husband's loving example of what a



A watercolor painted by the author of her husband and daughter. She was inspired to pursue art by her home teacher—one of the father figures in her life.

father should be. I'm grateful he follows the examples set by prophets and apostles and that he chooses to cherish and love me unselfishly. His example as a loving husband also blesses our children. My heart is full of gratitude for his faithfulness through trials, his example of hard work, his worthiness to exercise the priesthood, and the pure, unwavering love he demonstrates as a young father.

The Fathers around Us

There is no limit to the influence of a man who understands, like Moses, who he is. Sister Sheri Dew, former Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, taught that all women who nurture fulfill the role of motherhood, even when they are not yet mothers. “*We are all mothers in Israel*,” she testified, “and our calling is to love and help lead the rising generation through the dangerous streets of mortality.”⁴ Men who are righteous examples fulfill the role of being fathers in Israel, and their virtuous examples can extend beyond the reach of their own family.

After my childhood challenges, I am confident that Heavenly Father knew exactly what I needed to enable

me to trust my eternal companion. He placed many steadfast examples of fatherhood in my life. These included my righteous grandfather, who loved the Lord, and a diligent home teacher who—understanding my family’s financial limitations—took me on as a student at his art studio and inspired me to follow in his footsteps professionally. In my young adult life, heavenly healing was also delivered through the unexpected blessing of gaining a righteous stepfather, who was patient with my hesitancy to trust a father figure and who continually showed me kindness.

Through the righteous influence of these father figures, I have found hope, healing, and joy. I am grateful for all men who follow the example set by our Father in Heaven and strive to be examples of noble fatherhood. ■

The author lives in California, USA.

NOTES

1. James E. Faust, “Them That Honour Me I Will Honour,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 46.
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, May 2017, 145.
3. Bruce Feiler, “The Stories That Bind Us,” *New York Times*, Mar. 15, 2013, nytimes.com.
4. Sheri L. Dew, “Are We Not All Mothers?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 97.

Creating A Culture of Inclusion

12 stories about reaching across boundaries

By Jan Pinborough
Church Magazines

God's family circle is as varied and colorful as a field of flowers. It stretches wide to include every one of us. God loves all of His children, and He invites us all to come unto Him because "all are alike unto God" (2 Nephi 26:33).

Too often, though, we divide ourselves by education and economics, by culture and color. These divisions are a source of great sorrow to God. As He explained when Enoch saw Him weeping, "Unto thy brethren have I . . . given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood" (see Moses 7:33–41).

So how God's joy must soar when we do see each other as brothers and sisters—even more when we try to create something resembling the familial unity He wants for His children.

We reached out to ask some Church members how they are trying to create a culture of unity and love in their own neighborhoods and communities.



Showing Up

Our family believes in showing up. We have shown up to support friends at Passover Seders, Ramadan Iftars, racial justice discussions, interfaith prayer vigils, and Baha'i celebrations of Ayyám-i-Há. We show up to demonstrate that we love and support our friends and appreciate the many rich ways we are different. (And sometimes showing up is how we make new friends!)

Heather and Chase Kimball,
Washington, D.C., USA

Walking Together

Last fall, a few members of our ward and a couple who work with the local Muslim society planned a Mormons and Muslims (M&M) charity walk. On the day of the walk, we had two prayers, one from each religion. We enjoyed a walk on nature trails, and afterward we had snacks (including M&Ms, of course!). We all made a lot of friends and hope to do the walk again next year.



No Reason Not to Love

We have been blessed to have an uncle with Down syndrome. We also have amazing friends who have different abilities and struggles. My children love them and play with them because there is no reason not to. They understand that these wonderful friends are just like them, children of a loving Heavenly Father who just do things a little differently.

Emily Galvez,
Utah, USA



No Second-Class Citizens

Naidia: After I moved here from Jamaica, my bishop and his wife invited me over for dinner. They made a Jamaican night of it! They also invited women in my age-group so I could develop friendships. This experience really warmed my heart and helped me feel included, loved, and needed when, because of my culture or the color of my skin, I might have felt left out and lonely.

Damola: No one should feel like a second-class citizen in the Lord's Church. Our family loves to meditate on the scriptures and the symbolic meaning of temple covenants that tie us into one big eternal family. We have also invited members of our ward to our house for a get-together.

Naidia and Damola Sogunro,
Washington, D.C., USA

Finding Good in All We See

Before the Olympics, we always take the time to learn about the host country by eating a few traditional meals and looking at pictures. My girls love seeing the different costumes and always share what they love about each one—because we try to find good in all we see and see a bit of ourselves in others.

Natalia Earley, Idaho, USA





Serving the Overlooked

A couple of years ago, I felt inspired to serve people we often look past: the homeless. I invited local businesses, schools, and churches to participate in a “Warm Hands & Warm Hearts” charity drive. Last year we collected 1,458 new hats, gloves, scarves, and socks, as well as almost 300 handwritten letters and cards of encouragement. Our local rescue mission added candy and personal hygiene items and placed them at the bedside of those who spent Christmas Eve in the homeless shelter. It’s been wonderful to work with folks of different faiths and backgrounds to serve the less fortunate in our community.

Kevin Wells, Virginia, USA

Singing the Same Song

We have a lot of languages and nationalities in our Primary, with many children who are bilingual or trilingual. One Sunday, I had several groups of kids sing the first verse of “I Am a Child of God” in their native language. I told the kids that no matter where we live or what language we speak, we sing the same songs worldwide. I had such a strong feeling of togetherness that I had tears in my eyes. If we can plant that feeling in our children, they will grow up celebrating their differences and their uniqueness.

Naomi Martes, South Holland (Rotterdam), the Netherlands

One Heart and One Mind

In 1990, my family traveled to the Frankfurt Germany Temple, arranging to stay in the home of a widow who was a member of the Church. On the second day of our visit, our host told us that if she had known we were black, she would have not let us stay in her home. “But your presence in my home has taught me a great lesson,” she continued. “I do not see any difference between us.”

Last year, when our daughter told us of her plan to marry her sweetheart in the Salt Lake Temple, we wondered what to expect among people who were different from us both in culture and race. But we enjoyed an



extraordinary outpouring of love and kindness from all the people we met. At the marriage ceremony in the temple, the words “a people of one heart and one mind” (see Moses 7:18) came into my mind. We truly experienced a culture of love.

Roderick Kofi Anatsui, Greater London, England





Building Bridges

We have built bridges through community involvement.

I started as a PTA volunteer and have been PTA president and on a school board steering committee. As president of our local soccer league, Nate works with families of many races, nationalities, religions, languages, and situations—including some same-sex couples. He treats everyone with dignity, focusing on the common desire to help the kids learn and love soccer. The friendships we've formed have been sweet. We've also been able to share our beliefs and build awareness for the Church in our area.

Church members often do well at being respectful of the beliefs of others, but sometimes we could be better at understanding and being inclusive of our own brothers and sisters who choose not to worship with us. Knowing others as people gets you past labels and stereotypes. It opens the door to loving and seeing others as who they really are.

Nathan and Camille Johnson,
Ohio, USA

All Trying to Be Better People

Every time we move, we treat it as a way to make new and diverse friendships. In Japan, we've visited Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, and we always tell our children that these are sacred places to others, just like our church buildings and temples are to us. We teach them that people in other religions believe other things and that it's great that, like us, they are trying to be better people.

Cassidy Larsen, Kanto Prefecture (Tokyo),
Japan

Less about "Me" and More about "We"

I've had the opportunity to get to know a member of our ward who is Navajo. Learning about his background and listening to his testimony has enlarged my understanding. When we learn about the trials of others, it puts our own trials into perspective. It becomes less about "me" and more about "we." After all, we are all in this together.

Dorothy Galloway,
Washington, D.C., USA



Learning about Other Cultures

We are lucky to live in a very diverse area, and I take advantage of daily life to teach my children about other cultures and how to love your neighbor. We have celebrated Chinese New Year and learned about what is celebrated for the Jewish High Holy Days. This year our neighbors invited us to their Sukkot. We also discuss Ramadan and how our kids can support their Muslim friends who are fasting all day at school.

Rebekah Mo,
Delaware,
USA ■

How can you reach out to help create a culture of love in your community?





CHAPTER 4

Be Watchful

This is chapter 4 of the new four-volume narrative history of the Church titled Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days. The book will be available in 14 languages in print, in the Church History section of the Gospel Library app, and at saints.lds.org. The next several chapters will be published in upcoming issues until volume 1 is released later this year. Those chapters will be available in 47 languages in the Gospel Library app and at saints.lds.org.

Twenty-one-year-old Emma Hale first heard about Joseph Smith when he came to work for Josiah Stowell in the fall of 1825. Josiah had hired the young man and his father to help him find buried treasure on his property.¹ Local legends claimed that a band of explorers had mined a silver deposit and hidden the treasure in the area hundreds of years earlier. Knowing Joseph had a gift for using seer stones, Josiah offered him good wages and a share of the findings if he would help in the search.²

Emma's father, Isaac, supported the venture. When Joseph and his father came to the Stowell farm in Harmony, Pennsylvania—a village some 150 miles (240 km) south of Palmyra—Isaac served as a witness when they signed their contracts. He also allowed the workers to live in his home.³

Emma met Joseph soon after. He was younger than she was, stood over six feet (1.8 m) tall, and looked like someone who was used to hard work. He had blue eyes and a light complexion, and he walked with a faint limp. His grammar was uneven, and he sometimes used too many words to express himself, but he displayed a natural intelligence when he spoke. He and his father were good men who preferred to worship on their own rather than attend the church where Emma and her family worshipped.⁴

Both Joseph and Emma liked being outdoors. Since childhood, Emma had enjoyed riding horses and canoeing in the river near her home. Joseph was not a skilled horseman, but he excelled in wrestling and ball games. He was at ease around others and quick to smile, often telling jokes or humorous stories. Emma was more reserved, but she loved a good joke and could talk with anyone. She also liked to read and sing.⁵

As the weeks passed and Emma got to know Joseph better, her parents grew anxious about their relationship. Joseph was a poor laborer from another state, and they hoped their daughter would lose interest in him and marry into one of the prosperous families in their valley. Emma's father had

also grown wary of the treasure hunt and was suspicious of Joseph's role in it. It did not seem to matter to Isaac Hale that Joseph had tried to convince Josiah Stowell to call the search off when it became clear nothing would come of it.⁶

Emma liked Joseph better than any other man she knew, and she did not stop spending time with him. After he succeeded in convincing Josiah to stop looking for silver, Joseph remained in Harmony to work on Josiah's farm. Sometimes he also worked for Joseph and Polly Knight, another farming family in the area. When he was not working, he visited Emma.⁷

Joseph and his seer stone soon became the subject of gossip in Harmony. Some of the older folks in town

In 2015 the Church rebuilt this replica of the Isaac and Elizabeth Hale home in Harmony, Pennsylvania. Joseph Smith met their daughter Emma when he lived on the property while working for Josiah Stowell.





The Smith family frame home in Manchester, New York, was restored using the original structure. After their marriage in 1827, Joseph and Emma lived here with his parents.

believed in seers, but many of their children and grandchildren did not. Josiah's nephew, claiming that Joseph had taken advantage of his uncle, brought the young man to court and charged him with being a fraud.

Standing before the local judge, Joseph explained how he had found the stone. Joseph Sr. testified that he had constantly asked God to show them His will for Joseph's marvelous gift as a seer. Finally, Josiah stood before the court and stated that Joseph had not swindled him.

"Do I understand," said the judge, "that you believe the prisoner can see by the aid of the stone?"

No, Josiah insisted, "I positively know it to be true."

Josiah was a well-respected man in the community, and people accepted his word. In the end, the hearing produced no evidence that Joseph had deceived him, so the judge dismissed the charge.⁸

In September 1826, Joseph returned to the hill for the plates [see chapter 3], but Moroni said he was still not ready for them. "Quit the company of the money diggers," the angel told him. There were wicked men among them.⁹ Moroni gave him one more year to align his will with God's. If he did not, the plates would never be entrusted to him.

The angel also told him to bring someone with him next time. It was the same request he had made at the end of Joseph's first visit to the hill. But since Alvin was dead, Joseph was confused.

"Who is the right person?" he asked.

"You will know," Moroni said.

Joseph sought the Lord's direction through his seer stone. The right person, he learned, was Emma.¹⁰

Joseph had been drawn to Emma as soon as he met her. Like Alvin, she was someone who could help him become the man the Lord needed to carry out His work. But there was more to Emma than that. Joseph loved her and wanted to marry her.¹¹

In December, Joseph turned 21 years old. In the past, he had let himself be pulled this way and that by the expectations of those who wanted to take advantage of his gift.¹² But after his last visit to the hill, he knew he had to do more to prepare himself to receive the plates.

Before returning to Harmony, Joseph spoke with his parents. "I have concluded to get married," he told them, "and, if you have no objections, Miss Emma Hale would be



On the night of September 22, 1827, Joseph and Emma drove a carriage to this hill, where the Book of Mormon plates were buried. After obtaining the plates, Joseph hid them in a hollow log for a time to protect them from treasure seekers.

my choice.” His parents were pleased with his decision, and Lucy urged him to come live with them after they married.¹³

Joseph spent as much time as he could with Emma that winter, sometimes borrowing the Knights’ sleigh when snow made it hard to travel to the Hales’ house. But her parents still did not like him, and his efforts to win over the family failed.¹⁴

In January 1827, Emma visited the Stowells’ home, where she and Joseph could spend time together without her family’s disapproving looks. Joseph proposed to Emma there, and at first, Emma seemed surprised. She knew her parents would oppose the marriage.¹⁵ But Joseph urged her to think about it. They could elope right away.

Emma considered the proposal. Marrying Joseph would disappoint her parents, but it was her choice, and she loved him.¹⁶

A short time later, on January 18, 1827, Joseph and Emma were married in the home of the local justice of the peace. They then went to Manchester and began life together in the new home of Joseph’s parents. The house was comfortable, but Joseph Sr. and Lucy had overspent on it, fallen behind on their payments, and lost the property.

They were now renting it from the new owners.¹⁷

The Smiths liked having Joseph and Emma with them. But their son’s divine call made them anxious. People in the area had heard about the gold plates and sometimes went looking for them.¹⁸

One day, Joseph went to town on an errand. Expecting him back for dinner, his parents were alarmed when he did not return. They waited for hours, unable to sleep. At last Joseph opened the door and threw himself into a chair, exhausted.

“Why are you so late?” his father asked.

“I have had the severest chastisement that I ever had in my life,” Joseph said.

“Who has been taking you to task?” demanded his father.

“It was the angel of the Lord,” Joseph replied. “He says I have been negligent.” The day of his next meeting with Moroni was coming soon. “I must be up and doing,” he said. “I must set myself about the things which God has commanded me to do.”¹⁹

After the fall harvest, Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight traveled to the Manchester area on business. Both men

a group of men plotting to steal the gold plates. “We will have the plates,” one of them said, “in spite of Joe Smith or all the devils in hell.”

Alarmed, Joseph Sr. returned home and told Emma. She said she did not know where the plates were, but she was sure Joseph had protected them.

“Yes,” Joseph Sr. replied, “but remember that for a small thing Esau lost his blessing and birthright. It may be so with Joseph.”²⁸

To be sure the plates were secure, Emma mounted a horse and rode for more than an hour to the farm where Joseph was working. She found him by the well, caked in dirt and sweat from the day’s work.

Hearing of the danger, Joseph looked into the Urim and Thummim and saw that the plates were safe.

Back home, Joseph Sr. paced back and forth outside the house, glancing every minute down the road until he saw Joseph and Emma.

“Father,” Joseph said as they rode up, “all is perfectly safe—there is no cause of alarm.”²⁹

But it was time to act.

Hurrying to the hill, Joseph found the log where the plates were hidden and carefully wrapped them in a shirt.³⁰ He then ducked into the woods and headed for home, his eyes alert to danger. The forest concealed him from people on the main road, but it gave thieves plenty of places to hide.

Straining under the weight of the record, Joseph tramped through the woods as fast as he could. A fallen tree blocked the path ahead of him, and as he bounded over it, he felt something hard strike him from behind. Turning around, he saw a man coming at him, wielding a gun like a club.

Clutching the plates tightly with one arm, Joseph knocked the man to the ground and scrambled deeper into the thicket. He ran for about half a mile when another man

sprang from behind a tree and struck him with the butt of his gun. Joseph fought the man off and darted away, desperate to be out of the woods. But before he could get very far a third man attacked, landing a heavy blow that sent him reeling. Gathering his strength, Joseph hit the man hard and ran for home.³¹

Back at the house, Joseph burst through the door with his heavy bundle tucked beneath one arm. “Father,” he cried, “I have got the plates.”

His 14-year-old sister, Katharine, helped him set the bundle on a table as the rest of the family gathered around him. Joseph could tell that his father and younger brother

William wanted to unwrap the plates, but he stopped them.

“Can we not see them?” Joseph Sr. asked.

“No,” Joseph said. “I was disobedient the first time, but I intend to be faithful this time.”

He told them they could feel the plates through the cloth, and his brother William picked up the bundle. It was heavier than stone, and William could tell that it had leaves that moved like the pages of a

book.³² Joseph also sent his youngest brother, Don Carlos, to get a lockbox from Hyrum, who lived down the road with his wife, Jerusha, and their newborn daughter.

Hyrum arrived soon after, and once the plates were securely in the box, Joseph collapsed onto a nearby bed and started telling his family about the men in the woods.

As he spoke, he realized his hand ached. Sometime during the attacks he had dislocated a thumb.

“I must stop talking, Father,” he said suddenly, “and get you to put my thumb back in place.”³³ ■

A complete list of works cited is available at saints.lds.org.

The word *Topic* in the notes indicates additional information online at saints.lds.org.

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Joseph borrowed a lockbox like this from his brother Hyrum to store the Book of Mormon plates.

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HELPING CHILDREN MAKE

Good Media Choices

There's one media filter that will never fail your child.

By Lori Fuller and Marissa Widdison
Church Magazines

Sophie, an 11-year-old in Queensland, Australia, was excited to visit her friend's house. First, they tried reading magazines.

"I opened it up to the first page and saw there were some bad words and pictures there," she said. She asked her friend if they could do something else instead, so they decided to watch a movie. But the movie had lots of swearing in it.

"It made me feel uncomfortable," Sophie said. She asked her friend to turn it off.

"No way!" her friend said. "This is the best movie ever!"

So, Sophie went home—disappointed but also happy because she felt like she had made the right choice.

Media is so present in our lives that it's nearly impossible to prevent children from confronting things we wish we could protect them from. There simply aren't enough filters in the world to screen out everything that offends the Spirit. And when children leave home, they can't always take filters along. So what can we do?

What we can do, and *should* do, is help our children learn to recognize, respond to, and rely on an internal filter that will never fail: the Holy Spirit. This preparation happens best through multiple small conversations, starting at an early age and continuing throughout childhood.

Recognize the Spirit

Point out to your children when you are feeling the Spirit during a Church meeting or other time. Your children might be feeling it too! This will help them become familiar with how the Spirit communicates to them. Explain that the Spirit talks to our minds and hearts through good ideas and warm, light feelings.

Talk about what it feels like when the Spirit warns you not to do something. Explain that we might feel uncomfortable or confused. When the Spirit leaves, we might feel angry or upset.

Respond to the Spirit

Just recognizing the Spirit isn't enough—our children must also be prepared to respond to those promptings. As a family, come up with a "get-away plan" for when children encounter bad media. That might include:

- Telling a parent or trusted adult as soon as possible after they see something questionable, so that bad feelings don't linger.
- Creating a code phrase that children can use when they need help escaping bad media or other uncomfortable situations (for example, in one family, a child would text the letter "x" to his parents; in another family, children were told they could say, "My parents need me to come home now").



- Making it clear that children will not get into trouble for accidentally seeing bad media but agreeing on appropriate consequences if they purposely seek out bad media.

Rely on the Spirit

When you rely on something, you trust it. You depend on it. We need to help our children trust that following the Spirit is the right choice. Some children are teased when they turn away from bad media in response to the Spirit. Let's make sure our children understand that such treatment doesn't mean they did something wrong, and it doesn't mean the Spirit failed them. It's part of standing up for what's right. In the long run, we will be happier, healthier, and safer for sticking with good choices!

Remember

The safer our children feel while talking to us, the more likely they will open up about media experiences. Take time each day to ask, "Is there anything today you have questions about?" Then answer their questions in an honest and age-appropriate way. Don't put off answers till "when you're older." You want *you* to be their first, best source for answers—not the internet.

If your child tells you they sought out pornography or other bad media, don't freak out! Remember that it's a good thing they are telling you about it. Keep your face and voice calm. Take shame out of the conversation by using lines like, "Curiosity is normal, but we have standards and rules because_____." If you need to, practice uncomfortable words and conversations ahead of time. Help your child repent and regain a relationship with the Spirit.

Above all, make sure your children feel loved! Remind them that God loves them no matter what. He might not like the choices we make sometimes, but He still loves us as His children. We can always choose to try again and make better choices. That's how we learn and grow in life.

Like Sophie, your children will undoubtedly run into bad media throughout their lives. But, like Sophie, they can have the awareness and fortitude to make right choices. They just need some help from us to learn to recognize, respond to, and rely on the Spirit! ■

Turn the page for resources from the *Friend* magazine to go along with this topic.



Use the Friend magazine to help your family understand a different sensitive topic each month.

CHOOSING GOOD MEDIA

Our children are surrounded by media each day. And even though we can't filter out every bad thing they may see, hear, or read, there is something we can do. We can teach them to rely on the *internal* filter of the Holy Spirit. (For more about this idea, see the article on pages 72–73 of this month's *Ensign*.) Here are some *Friend* articles you can use to have ongoing conversations about good media decisions in your home.

"Filter Fail" (June 2018, page 32)

A girl comes across a bad picture and talks to her parents about it. Their kind response is a good example for how adults should act—whether the image was seen on purpose or not. Then read "What's on Your Mind?" (page 34) to talk about filling your mind with positive things.



"Bedtime for Felix" (June 2018, page 36)

One way to prepare children to make wise choices online is to teach—and model—a healthy balance of time

with your family, good media activities, time with friends, and so on. You could use this story, about a boy who takes a break from video games to be with his brother, to talk about finding balance. This month's Family History Quest (page 18) gives an idea for one great way to use technology.

"Be Smart, Be Safe, and Have Fun!" (Aug. 2016, page 24)

You can use this activity to start a conversation about media guidelines for your family.



RELATED RESOURCES

- *A Parent's Guide* on LDS.org has excellent age-by-age help for teaching children about healthy intimacy.
- Go to overcomingpornography.org for family home evening lessons and other helps for parents, including the video for children "What Should I Do If I See Pornography?"
- Standards for making good media choices can be found in the "Entertainment and Media" section of *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011), 11–13.
- The article "Growing a Healthy Technology Garden" (*Ensign*, Apr. 2017, 64) gives ideas for creating a family media plan.
- EducateEmpowerKids.org is not affiliated with or endorsed by the Church, but is a resource created and managed by Latter-day Saint professionals geared toward helping parents talk to their children about body image, sexual intimacy, pornography, and other issues.

Find stories, activities, and media about other gospel topics at lessonhelps.lds.org. For past *Friend* Connection articles, visit FriendConnection.lds.org.



The New Era magazine is there for your teens—and for you. See how this month's issue can help you talk with them and teach them.

Looking toward the Future

This month's *New Era* has the following articles about looking toward the future:



"Look Forward to the Future with Faith."

President Russell M. Nelson talks about how the Church is moving forward now, as well as how each of us can move forward on the covenant path (page 2).



"Will Relief Society Be Boring?"

A young woman describes going to Relief Society for the first time (page 6).



"My First Day in Elders Quorum."

A young man describes going to elders quorum for the first time (page 8).



"Helps for Being Your Happiest and Best Self."

Elder J. Devn Cornish of the Seventy counsels youth on how to avoid future heartache (page 12).

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Here are some questions answered in this month's *New Era* (pages 44–45):

I constantly compare myself to others, especially those who seem to have perfect lives. How can I feel more confident?

What is the gift of discernment?

TALK WITH THEM

Here are some questions you might ask:

- How do you think what you're doing now will relate to what you'll be doing a few years from now?
- When you think about the changes ahead for you, what does it make you want to do more of now?
- Even though certain changes are inevitable, what are the things that you should try to always keep in your life?

TEACH THEM

In family home evening or other teaching settings, consider using something you saw in the New Era. For instance:

- Share your own experience of going to Relief Society or elders quorum for the first time and what you learned about facing change with faith.
- Talk about the person who was President of the Church when you were younger and how you felt when he passed away. Then bear your testimony of how the Lord leads His Church through prophets and apostles.

SEND US YOUR SUGGESTIONS

How can the *New Era* better meet the needs of your youth? Do you have specific ideas for article topics, questions to be answered, or ways to help youth understand the gospel? Send your suggestions to newera@ldschurch.org.

THE CHURCH IS *HERE*?

I joined the Church at age 36, and at times I felt spiritually strong. Other times I just went through the motions. Between a hectic work schedule, my wife starting a new career, poor health, and other challenges, I began to struggle spiritually. I attended church and helped teach the deacons quorum, but that was all I could bring myself to do. I couldn't find the strength to open my scriptures or kneel to pray.

I was still struggling when I left on a business trip to northern Chile. From the airport in Copiapó, we drove two hours to the site for a solar installation project in Chile's Atacama Desert. I was surprised by how remote this region was, only red desert for miles and

miles. The loneliness of the landscape was startling.

After being on-site for about a week, we drove to the nearest town for supplies. There I saw a building that caught my eye. I asked the driver to pull over. The building had beautiful grounds that were surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence. On the front of the building was a familiar sign, "La Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días," or "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"The Church is *here*?" I thought. I was amazed that the Church had made it to this remote part of the world. I took a picture of the meeting-house and texted it to my wife. Her

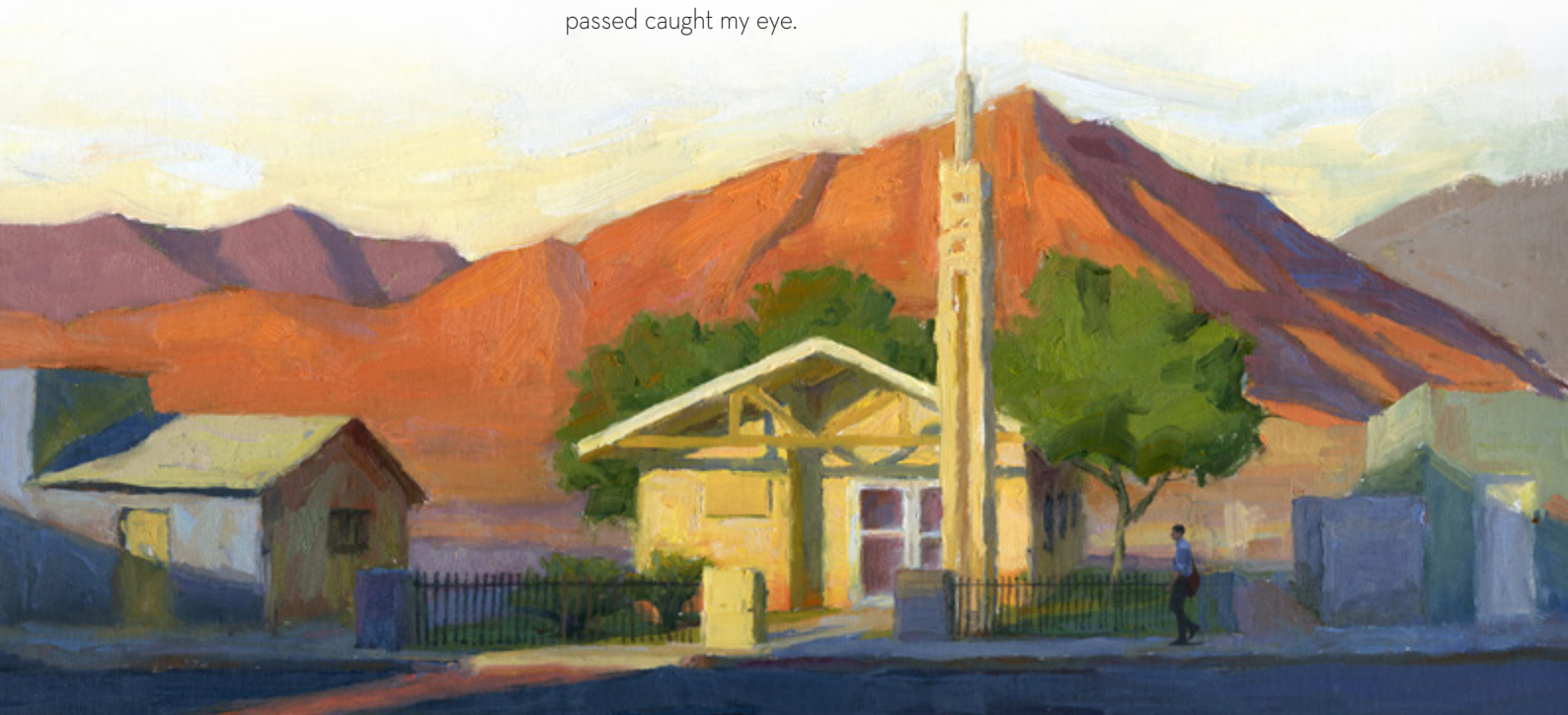
response had a profound effect on me: "Heavenly Father is aware of His people everywhere."

This was a direct message for me from my Heavenly Father. In the stress of living day to day, I had forgotten, and needed to be reminded, that Heavenly Father loves all His children. He loves those Saints in that small and remote town in the middle of the desert, and He also loves me.

That night I knelt and thanked Heavenly Father for the blessings He had given me that day. Knowing that He loves me has helped me rebuild my spirituality, and it continues to strengthen me each day. ■

Jon Evans, California, USA

As we drove to the nearest town for supplies, a building we passed caught my eye.



TWO MISSIONS, TWO FAMILIES BLESSED

While serving in the Arizona Mesa Mission, I often received emails from my older sister in Argentina. Natalia was not a member of the Church. Several years before, when her daughter passed away, our family tried to share the gospel with her, but she was never receptive.

I continued to share my testimony with her on my mission. In one email, I told her about a woman my companion and I had met. Her daughter had also passed away. We testified of eternal families and she felt hope in what we shared. I told Natalia she could feel the same. She wrote back, telling me that she wanted to feel that hope but thought her faith wasn't strong enough.

I decided to send Natalia a handwritten letter inviting her to pray for help to believe. I also felt prompted to write one paragraph in English and address it to a missionary. Natalia only knew Spanish, so I told her to look for the missionaries and ask them to translate for her. I figured a missionary would know English.

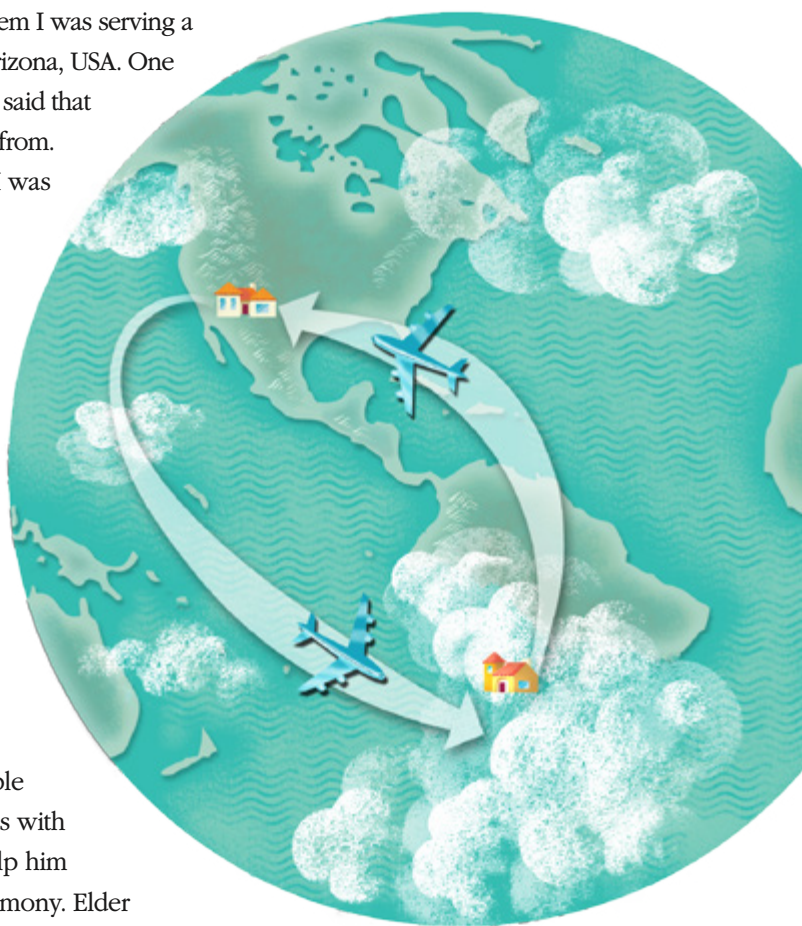
Soon after, I received an email from Natalia. She had found the missionaries and asked them to translate my letter. They read it silently and smiled. When Natalia asked what I had written, they replied, "Let's talk about it!" I had written that Natalia was struggling with the death of her daughter, and

I asked the missionaries to teach her about the plan of salvation.

The missionaries shared a short message, and Natalia liked what they taught. Natalia then told them I was serving a mission in Mesa, Arizona, USA. One elder, Elder Larson, said that was where he was from.

One year later, I was transferred to the area where Elder Larson's family lived. I got to know his family as he got to know mine, and both families were blessed. Elder Larson had been praying for his younger brother, who was struggling with his testimony. I was able to go on exchanges with his brother and help him strengthen his testimony. Elder Larson and his companion continued to teach Natalia, and eventually she was baptized. I know the Lord sent us in two directions, me to Arizona, and Elder Larson to Argentina, so we could both help Him strengthen our families in the gospel. ■

Juan Manuel Gomez, Rosario, Argentina



I am grateful I was assigned to Arizona and Elder Larson was assigned to Argentina so we could both help the Lord bless our families.



Despite my anxious feelings, I straightened up tall and said, “I go to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

BLESSED FOR DECLARING MY FAITH

I was baptized when I was 19. Many of my family and friends did not accept my decision to join the Church, but that didn’t stop me. Two weeks later, I started my second year of college. When I got back to campus, I became nervous about my new faith.

I started to worry that I wouldn’t have the courage to stand up for my religion. I felt alone. I had never met a member of the Church at college, and I didn’t know where to find a meetinghouse, or if there was even a ward or branch nearby. I prayed to Heavenly Father for courage. I prayed I would have confidence to stand up for my newfound beliefs.

A few days later, I helped some people move in. I met a young man

named Brian and we became friends. We were walking through campus one day when he asked me what my plans were for Sunday. I told him I was going to church.

“Oh, what church do you go to?” he asked.

Despite the anxious feeling in my stomach, I straightened up tall and said, “I go to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

I was proud of myself! I was also nervous about how Brian would respond. Just then, I saw the missionaries. Before Brian said anything, I told him I would be right back. I ran over to the missionaries. They were happy to meet me and gave me all the details I needed to get to church the next day.

I went back to Brian and explained what had happened. I also shared a little bit about the Church with him, and we continued walking without much difference, except I now had a spring in my step. I also felt the warmth and peace only the Spirit can bring. I had been worried about being alone and not knowing where to go to church. But I believe that those missionaries arriving at that exact spot at that time was Heavenly Father’s way of blessing me for declaring my faith.

More than 10 years have gone by, and since that day I have never been afraid to say, “I’m a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints!” ■

Kristin McElderry, Massachusetts, USA

THE LORD'S HELP THROUGH TWO BRAIN SURGERIES

During physical therapy for back pain, I noticed that the left side of my body felt weak and numb. When I explained these symptoms to my physical therapist, he became concerned and encouraged me to see a doctor.

An MRI revealed that my brain had grown below my skull and had trapped spinal fluid in my neck for years. This caused severe and persistent headaches and pain. The only option was surgery. But despite the operation, I still experienced constant pain.

Six months later, I returned to my doctor for further tests, only to discover that the trapped spinal fluid had grown even larger. I was terrified to undergo another painful operation. My husband and I sought several medical opinions and then moved forward with a doctor

who felt confident that removing part of my brain would help.

Recovering from my second brain surgery was the most painful experience of my life. I searched desperately for the Spirit to comfort me. I listened to talks and hymns, prayed continually, and received many priesthood blessings.

Through my painful recovery, I know that Heavenly Father heard my prayers and the prayers that others offered in my behalf. He sent people to me when I needed them. A nurse in my ward helped me learn how to manage my medications. My aunt and uncle, noticing signs of dehydration, took me to the hospital. And a Primary boy, wanting to help our family, left his toys on our doorstep for my son.

Through this experience and many others, I could feel the Savior bearing me up and my testimony growing stronger each day. This was a remarkable and sacred experience stemming from a truly painful one.

Although my second surgery was a success, my discomfort has continued, and I've had to learn to adjust to a life with chronic pain and trust that Heavenly Father has a purpose in it. But I have hope in His promise that He will continue to strengthen me in my challenges, as He said: "I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up" (D&C 84:88). ■

Bryn Booker, Idaho, USA

An MRI revealed that my pain was caused by trapped spinal fluid in my neck. The only option was surgery.





**By President
M. Russell Ballard**

Acting President of
the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

OUR SABBATH SANCTUARY

*If we can start thinking of the chapel
as a sanctuary of faith and devotion for
sacrament meeting, we all will be blessed.*

Sacrament meeting is a wonderful and glorious time. When we step into the chapel and prepare to receive the sacrament, we should think of ourselves as being in a sanctuary, a sacred and special place where we can contemplate Christ and His great and glorious mission. We put aside the things of the world and think instead of what is eternal. We need to put aside our cell phones and ponder about Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

We have just 70 minutes each week to focus on our love for the Savior. If we can start thinking of the chapel as a sanctuary of faith and devotion for sacrament meeting, we all will be blessed.



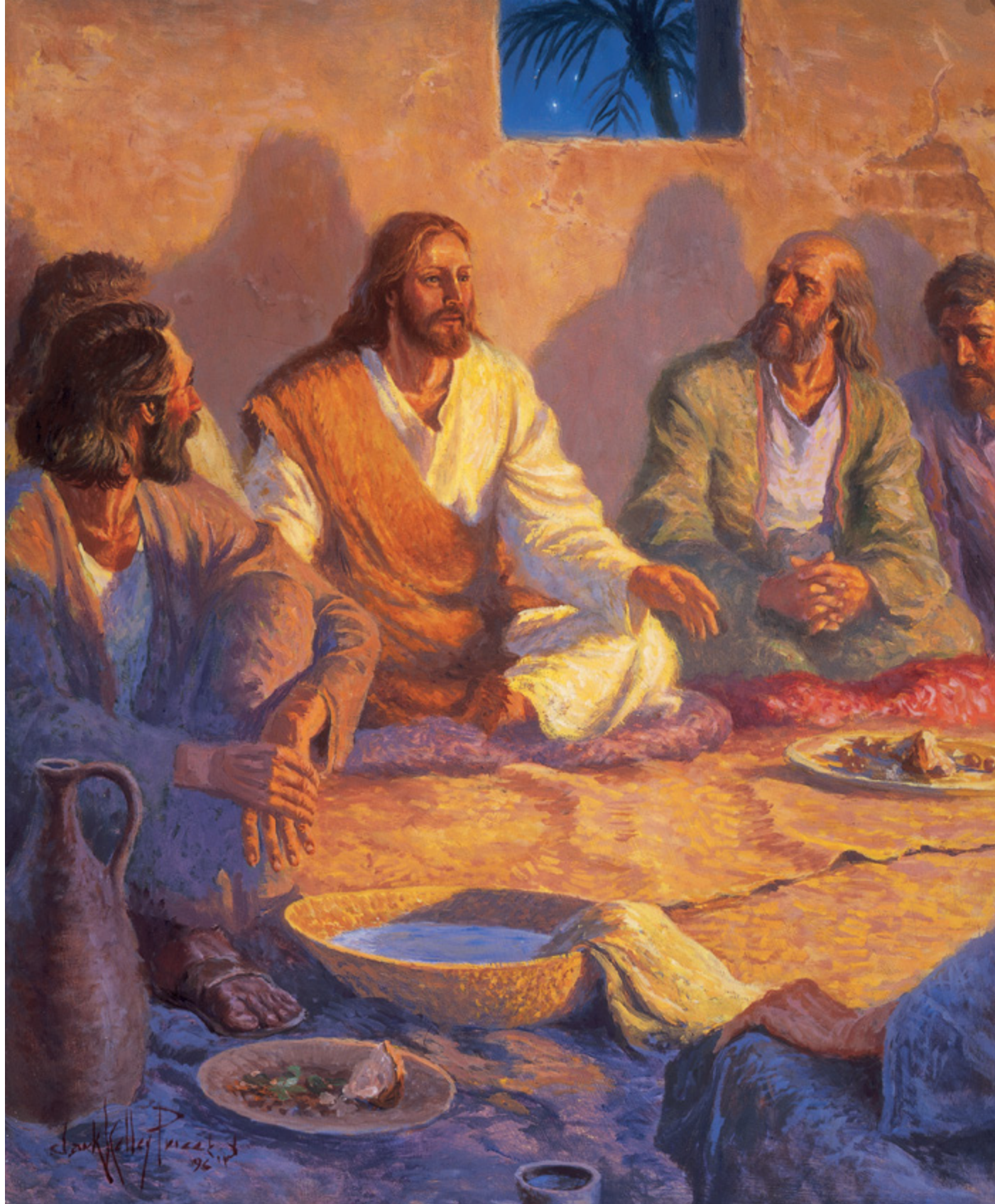
As we build the kingdom of God, I can't think of anything more important than having a well-prepared sacrament meeting where speakers speak of Christ, testify of Christ, and share testimonies from the apostles and prophets in the scriptures and other sources.

As a Church we've been focused on the Sabbath day. We've made progress, but we are not there yet. We'll continue our efforts until every

member and missionary is so spiritually motivated during their Sabbath day worship that each says to his or her neighbors, investigators, and relatives, "Come and see. Come and worship with us." This is where we want to be.

If we could all do this as a Church, those who accept our invitation to "come and see" will feel the power of the message of the restored Church of Jesus Christ. As they worship with us in our sacrament meetings, their hearts will be touched and the light of the gospel will be lit in their hearts and minds. ■

*From "The Chapel: Our Sabbath Sanctuary" at
prophets.lds.org.*



**THE LAST SUPPER,
BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE**

"And when the hour was come, [Jesus] sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. . . .

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:14, 19–20).



YOUNG ADULTS

THE BALANCING ACT OF ENDURANCE

*Following these three principles
can help us not just endure but
“enjoy to the end.”*

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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

