



Peter's Mother-in-Law

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*Like Peter's mother-in-law,
we can be healed and
strengthened when we allow
the Savior into our lives.*

It had been only a few months since my stake president, a mentor and dear friend, suddenly passed away. After his passing, his newly widowed wife and their children testified of the plan of salvation and eternal families. They seemed to gain an added level of strength and peace from the Savior and their knowledge of His Atonement.

I didn't feel like there was anything I could do to let the family know I cared. However, sure that they were still in need of comfort, I decided to drop off some flowers and a note anonymously on the doorstep.

As I approached the door, I could see the family gathered in the living room, ministering to another widow in the ward. They likely had invited her to dinner, but in that moment they

were all gathered around while a son gave her a blessing. Tears began to flow down my face as I realized that even in their grief, this family had found ways to minister to others in need.

It reminds me of an often-overlooked story in the New Testament about Peter's mother-in-law—a woman who expressed her gratitude to God through ministering (see Matthew 8:14–15; Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38–39). We don't know the extent of her suffering, but Luke, a physician, seems to emphasize the seriousness of her illness by describing it as a “great fever” (Luke 4:38). When Jesus arrived at Peter's home, He was informed of her condition. He “took her by the hand, and lifted her up” (Mark 1:31). All eyes must have been on

Peter's mother-in-law. How would she respond? How do you thank the Savior for saving you?

“Immediately she arose and ministered unto them” (Luke 4:39). Note that in describing the woman's response, Mark used the same Greek word (*diakoneō*, translated as “ministered”) that he used to describe how the angels served Jesus only a few verses earlier (see Mark 1:13). As one Latter-day Saint source points out: “Mark, by using the same word for the action of angels and the action of the healed woman, may be attempting to equate her level of service to Jesus as that of the angels. What the angels were able to do for Jesus in the wilderness, the woman whose fever has now fled does for him in her home.”¹



After being healed, Peter's mother-in-law showed her gratitude by serving the Savior and His followers. Her actions stand as an example to all of us.

In the three accounts of the Savior's healing of Peter's mother-in-law, we learn that the news of the miraculous healing had spread by the end of the day. Her faith to be healed and her service to others became a beacon of hope to those in her community and within her family. Many brought their sick to Jesus, "and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them" (Luke 4:40).

My stake president's family, in gratitude for what the Savior had done for them, found healing through ministering. The example of this faithful sister and her children caused friends, neighbors, and people in the community to ask, How could they be so grateful when they had lost so much?

When we seek to be grateful in our circumstances by turning outward to provide service, we lift others and in turn are strengthened ourselves. ■

NOTE

1. Jeni Broberg Holzapfel and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, *Sisters at the Well: Women and the Life and Teachings of Jesus* (1993), 109.



A GRATEFUL HEART IS A CHANGED HEART

"It might sound contrary to the wisdom of the world

to suggest that one who is burdened with sorrow should give thanks to God. But those who set aside the bottle of bitterness and lift instead the goblet of gratitude can find a purifying drink of healing, peace, and understanding."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Grateful in Any Circumstances," *Ensign*, May 2014, 70.