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Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives

The gospel of Jesus Christ is filled with His power, which is available to every earnestly seeking daughter or son of God.

My dear brothers and sisters, we live in a most difficult dispensation. Challenges, controversies, and complexities swirl around us. These turbulent times were foreseen by the Savior. He warned us that in our day the adversary would stir up anger in the hearts of men and lead them astray.¹ Yet our Heavenly Father never intended that we would deal with the maze of personal problems and social issues on our own.

God so loved the world that He sent His Only Begotten Son² to help us.³ And His Son, Jesus Christ, gave His life for us. All so that we could have access to godly power—power sufficient to deal with the burdens, obstacles, and temptations of our day.⁴ Today I would like to speak about *how* we can draw into our lives the power of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

We begin by learning about Him.⁵ “It is impossible for [us] to be saved in ignorance.”⁶ The more we know about the Savior’s ministry and mission⁷—the more we understand His doctrine⁸

and what He did for us—the more we know that He can provide the power that we need for our lives.

Earlier this year, I asked the young adults of the Church to consecrate a portion of their time each week to study *everything* Jesus said and did as recorded in the standard works.⁹ I invited them to let the scriptural citations about Jesus Christ in the Topical Guide become their personal core curriculum.¹⁰

I gave that challenge because I had already accepted it myself. I read and underlined *every* verse cited about Jesus Christ, as listed under the main heading and the 57 subtitles in the Topical Guide.¹¹ When I finished that exciting exercise, my wife asked me what impact it had on me. I told her, “I am a different man!”

I felt a renewed devotion to Him as I read again in the Book of Mormon the Savior’s own statement about His mission in mortality. He declared:

“I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.



“And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross.”¹²

As Latter-day Saints, we refer to His mission as the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which made resurrection a reality for all and made eternal life possible for those who repent of their sins and receive and keep essential ordinances and covenants.

It is doctrinally incomplete to speak of the Lord’s atoning sacrifice by shortcut phrases, such as “the Atonement” or “the enabling power of the Atonement” or “applying the Atonement” or “being

strengthened by the Atonement.” These expressions present a real risk of misdirecting faith by treating the *event* as if it had living existence and capabilities independent of our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Under the Father’s great eternal plan, it is the Savior who suffered. It is the Savior who broke the bands of death. It is the Savior who paid the price for our sins and transgressions and blots them out on condition of our repentance. It is the Savior who delivers us from physical and spiritual death.

There is no amorphous entity called “the Atonement” upon which we may call for succor, healing, forgiveness, or power. Jesus Christ is the source. Sacred terms such as *Atonement* and *Resurrection* describe what the Savior did, according to the Father’s plan, so that we may live with hope in this life and gain eternal life in the world to come. The Savior’s atoning sacrifice—the central act of all human history—is best understood and appreciated when we expressly and clearly connect it to Him.

The importance of the Savior’s mission was emphasized by the Prophet Joseph Smith, who declared emphatically that “the fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”¹³

It was this very statement of the Prophet that provided the incentive for 15 prophets, seers, and revelators to issue and sign their testimony to commemorate the 2,000th anniversary of the Lord’s birth. That historic testimony is titled “The Living Christ.”¹⁴ Many members have memorized its truths. Others barely know of its existence. As you seek to learn more about Jesus Christ, I urge you to study “The Living Christ.”

As we invest time in learning about the Savior and His atoning sacrifice, we are drawn to participate in another key element to accessing His power: we choose to have faith in Him and follow Him.

True disciples of Jesus Christ are willing to stand out, speak up, and be different from the people of the world. They are undaunted, devoted,





and courageous. I learned of such disciples during a recent assignment in Mexico, where I met with government officials as well as leaders of other religious denominations. Each thanked me for our members' heroic and successful efforts to protect and preserve strong marriages and families in their country.

There is nothing easy or automatic about becoming such powerful disciples. Our focus must be riveted on the Savior and His gospel. It is mentally rigorous to strive to look unto Him in *every* thought.¹⁵ But when we do, our doubts and fears flee.¹⁶

Recently I learned of a fearless young Laurel. She was invited to participate in a statewide competition for her high school on the same evening she had committed to participate in a stake Relief Society meeting. When she realized the conflict and explained to competition officials that she would need to leave the competition early to attend an important meeting, she was told she would be disqualified if she did so.

What did this latter-day Laurel do? She kept her commitment to participate in the Relief Society meeting. As promised, she was disqualified from the statewide competition. When asked about her decision, she replied simply, "Well, the Church is more important, isn't it?"

Faith in Jesus Christ propels us to do things we otherwise would not do. Faith that motivates us to action gives us more access to His power.

We also increase the Savior's power in our lives when we make sacred covenants and keep those covenants with precision. Our covenants bind us to Him and give us godly power. As faithful disciples, we repent and follow Him into the waters of baptism. We walk along the covenant path to receive other essential ordinances.¹⁷ And gratefully, God's plan provides for those blessings to be extended to ancestors who died without an opportunity to obtain them during their mortal lives.¹⁸

Covenant-keeping men and women seek for ways to keep themselves

unspotted from the world so there will be nothing blocking their access to the Savior's power. One faithful wife and mother wrote this recently: "These are troubled and perilous times. How blessed we are to have the increased knowledge of the plan of salvation and the inspired guidance from loving prophets, apostles, and leaders to help us sail these stormy seas safely. We stopped our habit of turning on the radio in the morning. Instead, we now listen to a general conference talk on our mobile phones every morning as we prepare ourselves for another day."

Another element in drawing the Savior's power into our lives is to reach up to Him in faith. Such reaching requires diligent, focused effort.

Do you remember the biblical story of the woman who suffered for 12 years with a debilitating problem?¹⁹ She exercised great faith in the Savior, exclaiming, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole."²⁰

This faithful, focused woman needed to stretch as far as she could



to access His power. Her physical stretching was symbolic of her spiritual stretching.

Many of us have cried out from the depths of our hearts a variation of this woman's words: "If I could spiritually stretch enough to draw the Savior's power into my life, I would know how to handle my heart-wrenching situation. I would know what to do. And I would have the power to do it."

When you reach up for the Lord's power in your life with the same intensity that a drowning person has when grasping and gasping for air, power from Jesus Christ will be yours. When the Savior knows you truly want to reach up to Him—when He can feel that the greatest desire of your heart is to draw His power into your life—you will be led by the Holy Ghost to know exactly what you should do.²¹

When you spiritually stretch beyond anything you have ever done before, then His power will flow into you.²² And then you will understand the deep meaning of words we sing in the hymn "The Spirit of God":

The Lord is extending the Saints' understanding. . . .

The knowledge and power of God are expanding;

The veil o'er the earth is beginning to burst.²³

The gospel of Jesus Christ is filled with His power, which is available to every earnestly seeking daughter or son of God. It is my testimony that when we draw His power into our lives, both He and we will rejoice.²⁴

As one of His special witnesses, I declare that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! His Church has been restored to the earth! God's prophet upon the earth today is President Thomas S. Monson, whom I sustain with all my heart. I so testify, with my expression of love and blessing for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. See 2 Nephi 28:19–30.

2. See John 3:16.

3. Jesus was the Anointed One—anoined by Heavenly Father to be His personal representative in all things pertaining to the salvation of mankind. Jesus was anoined to be our Savior and Redeemer. Before the world was formed, Jesus was anoined to make immortality a reality and eternal life a possibility for all of God's children (see John 17:24; 1 Peter 1:20). Thus, Jesus bore two unique titles: *the Messiah* (Hebrew) and *the Christ* (Greek)—each meaning "anoined." (See Bible Dictionary, "Anointed One.")

4. We can protect ourselves by knowing and living by the word of God (see Ephesians 6:17–18; Doctrine and Covenants 27:18).

5. Under the direction of His Father, Jesus was Creator of the earth (see John 1:2–3) and other worlds without number (see Moses 1:33). Long before His mortal birth, Jesus was the great Jehovah—God of the Old Testament. It was Jehovah who

communed with Moses on Mount Sinai.

It was Jehovah who made a covenant with Abraham that all nations of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's lineage. And it was Jehovah who made covenants with families of the house of Israel. Jesus was also the promised Immanuel, as prophesied by Isaiah (see Isaiah 7:14).

6. Doctrine and Covenants 131:6.

7. See Doctrine and Covenants 76:40–41.

8. See 2 Nephi 31:2–21.

9. Holy Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price.

10. See Topical Guide, "Jesus Christ." In addition to text under that major heading, there are 57 subtitles about Him. For non-English editions of the scriptures, use Guide to the Scriptures.

11. More than 2,200 listings are cited in those 18 pages of the Topical Guide.

12. 3 Nephi 27:13–14.

13. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 49.

14. See "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2000, 2–3.

15. See Helaman 8:15.

16. See Doctrine and Covenants 6:36.

17. Jesus Christ taught us the importance of sacred ordinances, such as baptism (see John 3:5), the sacrament (see Doctrine and Covenants 59:9), and the endowment and sealing ordinances of the temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 124:39–42).

18. See Doctrine and Covenants 124:29–32.

19. See Luke 8:43–44.

20. Mark 5:28.

21. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:63.

22. When the faithful woman touched the Savior's clothing, He instantly responded, "I perceive that *virtue* [from the Greek *dunamis*, meaning "power"] is gone out of me" (Luke 8:46; emphasis added).

23. "The Spirit of God," *Hymns*, no. 2.

24. See 3 Nephi 17:20.