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Of the Seventy

Look unto Jesus Christ

If we look to Jesus Christ, He will help us live our covenants and magnify our calling as elders in Israel.

As Jesus walked in a street near Capernaum¹ with a great crowd of people around Him, a woman afflicted with a serious condition for 12 years reached out and touched the hem of His garment. Immediately she was healed.²

The scriptures record that Jesus, perceiving “that [power had] gone out of [Him],”³ “turned him about in the press”⁴ and “looked . . . to see her that had done this thing.”⁵ “When the woman saw that she was not hid,”⁶ she “fell down before him, and told him all the truth.”⁷

Jesus said unto her, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”⁸

Jesus Christ saved the woman. She was healed physically, but when Jesus turned to see her, she declared her faith in Him and He healed her heart.⁹ He spoke to her with love, assured her of His approval, and blessed her with His peace.¹⁰

Brethren, as bearers of the holy priesthood, we are engaged in the work of salvation. In the last year, the Lord has placed the leadership of this work squarely on the shoulders of the elders in Israel.¹¹ We have an inspiring charge from the Lord—working with our sisters, we are to minister in a holier way, accelerate the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil, establish our

homes as sanctuaries of faith and gospel learning, and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.¹²

As in all things, the Savior has shown us the way: we need to look to and serve Jesus Christ as He looked to and served His Father.¹³ The Savior said it this way to the Prophet Joseph:

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.

“Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.”¹⁴

In the premortal realm, Jesus promised His Father that He would do His Father’s will and be our Savior and Redeemer. When His Father asked, “Whom shall I send?”¹⁵ Jesus answered:

“Here am I, send me.”¹⁶

“Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.”¹⁷

All through His mortal life, Jesus lived that promise. In humility, meekness, and love, He taught His Father’s doctrine and did His Father’s work with the power and authority His Father had given Him.¹⁸

Jesus gave His heart to His Father. He said:

“I love the Father.”¹⁹

“I do always those things that please him.”²⁰

“I came . . . not to do mine own will, but the will of [the Father, who] sent me.”²¹

In His agony in Gethsemane, He prayed, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”²²

When the Lord calls the elders in Israel to “look unto me in every thought” and “behold the wounds” in





His resurrected body, it is a call to turn away from sin and the world and to turn to Him and love and obey Him. It is a call to teach His doctrine and do His work in His way. It is, therefore, a call to trust Him completely, surrender our will and yield our hearts to Him, and through His redeeming power become like Him.²³

Brethren, if we look unto Jesus Christ, He will bless us to be *His* elders in Israel—humble, meek, submissive, full of His love.²⁴ And we will bring the joy and blessings of His gospel and His Church to our families and our brothers and sisters on both sides of the veil.

President Russell M. Nelson has called us to look unto Jesus Christ in just this way: “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. But when we do, our doubts and fears flee.”²⁵

Rivet is a great word. It means to fasten firmly, to attract and hold

completely.²⁶ We rivet our focus on Jesus Christ and His gospel by living our covenants.

When we live our covenants, they influence everything we say and do. We live a covenant life²⁷ full of simple, everyday acts of faith that focus us on Jesus Christ: prayer from the heart in *His* name, feasting on *His* word, turning to *Him* to repent of our sins, keeping *His* commandments, partaking of the sacrament and keeping *His* Sabbath holy, worshipping in *His* holy temple as often as we can, and exercising *His* holy priesthood to serve God’s children.

These acts of covenant devotion open our hearts and minds to the redeeming power of the Savior and the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost. Line upon line, the Savior changes our very nature, we become more deeply converted unto Him, and our covenants come alive in our hearts.²⁸

The promises we make to our Heavenly Father become rock-solid commitments, our deepest desires. Heavenly Father’s promises to us fill us

with gratitude and joy.²⁹ Our covenants cease to be rules we follow and become beloved principles that inspire and guide us and rivet our focus on Jesus Christ.³⁰

These acts of devotion are available to all, young and old. You young men who hold the holy Aaronic Priesthood, everything I have said tonight applies to you. I thank God for you. You make sacred ordinances and covenants available to millions of Latter-day Saints every week. When you prepare, bless, or pass the sacrament; minister; baptize in the temple; invite a friend to an activity; or rescue a member of your quorum, you are doing the work of salvation. You too can look unto Jesus Christ and live your covenants every day. I promise you that if you do, you will be trusted servants of the Lord now and, in a coming day, mighty elders in Israel.

Brethren, I know that all of this may sound daunting. But please remember these words of the Savior: “I am not alone, because the Father is with me.”³¹ So it is with us. We are not alone. The



Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father love us, and They are with us.³² Because Jesus looked to His Father and completed the great atoning sacrifice, we can look to Jesus Christ with assurance that He will help us.

None of us are perfect. Sometimes we get stuck. We get distracted or discouraged. We stumble. But if we look to Jesus Christ with a repentant heart, He will lift us up, cleanse us from sin, forgive us, and heal our hearts. He is patient and kind; His redeeming love never ends and never fails.³³ He will help us live our covenants and magnify our calling as elders in Israel.

And the Father will bless us with all things required to accomplish His purposes—“things . . . both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son.”³⁴

When divine light and power flow into our lives, three miraculous things happen:

First, we can see! Through revelation we begin to see as Jesus saw the woman: beyond the surface into the heart.³⁵ As we see as Jesus sees, He blesses us to love those we serve with His love. With His help, those we serve

will see the Savior and feel His love.³⁶

Second, we have priesthood power! We have the authority and the power to act in the name of Jesus Christ “to bless, guide, protect, strengthen, and heal others” and bring miracles to those we love and keep our marriages and families safe.³⁷

Third, Jesus Christ goes with us! Where we go, He goes. When we teach, He teaches. When we comfort, He comforts. When we bless, He blesses.³⁸

Brethren, have we not cause to rejoice? We do! We hold the holy priesthood of God. As we look unto Jesus Christ, live our covenants, and rivet our focus on Him, we will join with our sisters and minister in a holier way, gather scattered Israel on both sides of the veil, strengthen and seal our families, and prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will happen. I so testify.

I close with this prayer from my heart, that all of us, every one, will look unto Jesus Christ in every thought. Doubt not. Fear not. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. James E. Talmage places Jesus in “the vicinity of Capernaum” when this healing occurred

(see *Jesus the Christ* [1916], 313).

2. See Luke 8:43–44; see also Matthew 9:20–21; Mark 5:25–29.

3. Luke 8:46.

4. Mark 5:30.

5. Mark 5:32.

6. Luke 8:47.

7. Mark 5:33.

8. Luke 8:48.

9. James E. Talmage wrote that of greater worth to the woman than the physical healing was the assurance that the Savior had granted the desire of her heart and that her faith was accepted of Him (see *Jesus the Christ*, 318). Jesus healed her physically and spiritually and opened to her the way to salvation.

10. It is instructive that Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, was with Jesus when this healing occurred. Jesus was on the way to the house of Jairus, where He would raise Jairus’s daughter from the dead. The woman that Jesus healed had likely been cast out of the synagogue because of her affliction. When Jesus healed her, He also made clear to all who were there, including Jairus, that she was a beloved daughter, a woman of faith, and whole in body and spirit.

11. See D. Todd Christofferson, “The Elders Quorum” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 55–58) for a discussion of the adjustments to create one Melchizedek Priesthood quorum in a ward. The purpose of that change was described this way in the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Ministering website: “Having one Melchizedek Priesthood quorum in a ward unifies priesthood holders to accomplish all aspects of the work of salvation, including temple and family history work previously coordinated by the high priests group leader” (“This Is Ministering: Frequently Asked Questions,” question 8, ministering.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

Subsequent adjustments have placed the ward mission leader and the new temple and family history leader in the ward under the direction of the presidency of the elders quorum. With ministering to families already under the presidency’s direction, these adjustments have placed leadership of the work of salvation in the elders quorums, assisted by Relief Societies. Of course, the bishop holds the keys to the work of salvation in the ward, but he delegates responsibility and authority for that work to the elders quorum president so that the bishop can spend more time ministering to his own family, strengthening the youth, and serving as a judge in Israel.

12. See Russell M. Nelson, “Let Us All Press

On,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 118–19; Russell M. Nelson, “Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 113–14; Quentin L. Cook, “Deep and Lasting Conversion to Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 8–12.

13. The Father sent Jesus Christ into the world (see John 17:18).
14. Doctrine and Covenants 6:36–37.
15. Abraham 3:27.
16. Abraham 3:27.
17. Moses 4:2.
18. There are numerous references in the scriptures that record statements Jesus made about doing His Father’s work and teaching His Father’s doctrine. See, for example, John 5:19 (Jesus does what He sees the Father do); John 5:36 (the Father gave His Son work to do); John 8:26 (Jesus taught what He had received from His Father); John 14:28 (Jesus declared, “My Father is greater than I”); 3 Nephi 11:32 (His doctrine is the doctrine His Father gave Him).
19. John 14:31.
20. John 8:29.
21. John 6:38; see also John 5:30.
22. Luke 22:42.
23. The word *look* in this passage (see Doctrine and Covenants 6:36–37) has meanings that

correspond to the call of the Lord: to face (or turn to); to direct one’s attention to; to rely upon; to search for; to await with hope; to have in mind as an end; to expect or anticipate (see merriam-webster.com, “look”).

24. See Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–42. The Christlike attributes mentioned in the scripture are gifts of the Spirit that come through the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ. They are what make the elders in Israel *His* elders.
25. Russell M. Nelson, “Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 41.
26. See merriam-webster.com, “rivet.”
27. For a discussion of the concept of a covenant life, see Donald L. Hallstrom, “Living a Covenant Life,” *Ensign*, June 2013, 46–49. This article was adapted from a longer talk given at Brigham Young University–Idaho in May 2011. For the longer version, see Donald L. Hallstrom, “A Covenant Life” (Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional, May 10, 2011), byui.edu.
28. See Jeremiah 31:31–33, where the Lord declares that He will make a new covenant with the house of Israel written in their hearts. This image of covenants written in our hearts, or covenants that come alive in our hearts, is also found in the writings of Paul (see 2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10). For a discussion of conversion and the heart, see David A. Bednar, “Converted unto the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 106–9.
29. The sacramental prayer on the bread expresses beautifully the nature of our covenant relationship with our Heavenly Father. In the Father’s plan of salvation, we make covenants with our Heavenly Father, but the purposes of the covenants are realized and we qualify for the blessings promised through the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the Mediator. In the sacramental ordinance, we witness to the Father (in effect, making a covenant with Him anew) that we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him, and keep His commandments, that we might always have His Spirit (the Holy Ghost) to be with us.

The gifts in the Father’s promises come through the redeeming and strengthening power of Jesus Christ. For example, as President Russell M. Nelson has taught, Jesus Christ “is the source of all joy” (see “Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82). Thus, riveting our focus on Jesus Christ brings joy into our lives no matter our circumstances.

30. President Ezra Taft Benson captured

the impact of this change in attitude and orientation when he said, “When obedience ceases to be an irritant and becomes our quest, in that moment God will endow us with power” (in Donald L. Staheli, “Obedience—Life’s Great Challenge,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 82).

31. John 16:32.
32. For additional discussion of the fact of the Father’s and the Son’s concern for, interest in, love for, and involvement in our lives, see Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Grandeur of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 70–73; Henry B. Eyring, “Walk with Me,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 82–85. See also Matthew 18:20; 28:20; Doctrine and Covenants 6:32; 29:5; 38:7; 61:36; 84:88.
33. See Romans 8:35–39; 1 Corinthians 13:1–8; Moroni 7:46–47.
34. Doctrine and Covenants 50:27. Note that the Lord gives to each who is ordained and sent forth this promise that pertains to, and is circumscribed by, the specific assignment given him:

“The same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least and the servant of all.

“Wherefore, he is possessor of all things; for all things are subject unto him, both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son.

“But no man is possessor of all things except he be purified and cleansed from all sin.

“And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done” (Doctrine and Covenants 50:26–29).
35. See 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14. For an example of this blessing of seeing as Jesus does, see President Henry B. Eyring’s account of his experience as the bishop of a young man who had committed a crime. The Lord said to then-Bishop Eyring, “I’m going to let you see him as I see him” (“Walk with Me,” 84).
36. This is the promise and the charge the Savior gave the people at the temple at Bountiful. He commanded them to so live that His light and His example would be in them, so that they could hold Him up as the light to the world in their lives and in their invitations to others to come unto Him. As His followers so lived and so invited, others would feel Him and see Him in the Lord’s servants. (See 3 Nephi 18:24–25.)
37. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Price of Priesthood Power,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 68.
38. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.

