

PHOTOGRAPH BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY

PRESIDENT  
**JAMES E. FAUST**  
*Beloved Shepherd*

JULY 31, 1920—AUGUST 10, 2007



**Above: Young James Faust (right) with his brothers Rex (left) and Dan. Right: James E. Faust as a missionary.**



**J**ames E. Faust always remembered the bleating of his frightened lamb. As a small boy he forgot to put his pet in the barn one night when a storm arose.

“I knew that I should help my pet, but I wanted to stay safe, warm, and dry in my bed. I didn’t get up as I should have done,” he recalled during a priesthood session of general conference. “The next morning I went out to find my lamb dead. A dog had also heard its bleating cry and killed it.”

“My heart was broken,” he said. He realized that he had not been a good shepherd. His father’s loving rebuke hurt him even more: “Son, couldn’t I trust you to take care of just one lamb?”<sup>1</sup>

That day James resolved that he would try his best to never neglect his stewardship should he have the opportunity again to be a shepherd. As a full-time missionary in Brazil, devoted husband and father, successful lawyer, political leader, member of the

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Second Counselor in the First Presidency, he remembered his resolution. To the end of his ministry, which closed on August 10, 2007, when he died of causes incident to age, President Faust remained devoted to the Lord’s admonition: “Feed my lambs” (John 21:15).

### **Family and Faith**

James Esdras Faust was born in Delta, Utah, on July 31, 1920, one of five sons of George A. and Amy Finlinson Faust. The family later moved to Salt Lake City, where George worked as an attorney and district court judge. At home and on the farms of his grandparents in central Utah, young James enjoyed the love and support of a Christ-centered family and honed the virtues of honesty, hard work, and service.

“No man ever had a better father than did I,”<sup>2</sup> he said. Of his mother he recalled, “She was a deeply spiritual, saintly woman who fully exemplified Christlike living.”<sup>3</sup>

As an adult President Faust strove to honor and emulate his parents, always giving priority to family and Church. “There is no greater responsibility than that of being a husband and a father,”<sup>4</sup> he taught. Of the Church and its mission, he declared, “Nothing in the world is equal to this work.”<sup>5</sup>

After high school, where he excelled in football and track, he was called to serve in the Brazil Mission from 1939 to 1942. While he was in Brazil, his love for God’s children and their welfare blossomed. “I was born with partial color-blindness,” he said. “I have learned to love all of the people in the countries where I have been as a missionary, soldier, or General Authority, regardless of the color of their skins. I hope to be a disciple . . . especially for the



**Above: James Faust (fourth from left) running track as a student. Right: With his parents, Amy and George Faust, and his son James.**

humble, the downtrodden, the poor, the afflicted, the needy, and the poor in spirit. I am mindful that if we forget these, we can in no way be [the Lord's] disciples."<sup>6</sup>

Six weeks after returning from his mission, President Faust joined the U.S. Army Air Corps. While on leave in 1943 he married Ruth Wright, whom he had known since high school, in the Salt Lake Temple. While away during World War II, he wrote her a letter every day.<sup>7</sup> Of the Fausts' relationship, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Theirs is an absolute model of a beautiful marriage."<sup>8</sup>

His deep devotion to Ruth and their 5 children, 25 grandchildren, and 27 great-grandchildren and her unfailing support for him were apparent to all who knew them.

"With all my heart I want my children to know that I cannot succeed in this calling unless I also succeed as their father, and that they will always be paramount in my life,"<sup>9</sup> he said after being called as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1972.

After he was sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles six years later, his first thought was to find Ruth,<sup>10</sup> who he said was "as much a part of me as my heart and soul."<sup>11</sup>

#### **A Moral Compass**

Shortly after applying to officers' candidate school in 1942, President Faust was summoned before a board of inquiry. Nearly all of the questions the board asked him centered on his standards and beliefs. Did he smoke? Did he drink? Did he pray? Though fearful of giving offense, President Faust answered each question without equivocation. Then he was asked whether the moral code should be relaxed during times of war.

"I recognized that here was a chance perhaps to make some points and look broad-minded," he said. "I suspected that the men who were asking me this question did not live by the standards that I had been taught. The thought flashed through my mind that perhaps I could say that I had my own beliefs,

#### **MILESTONES IN THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST**

##### **July 31, 1920**

Born in Delta, Utah, to George A. and Amy Finlinson Faust

##### **1937–39**

Attended the University of Utah in Salt Lake City

##### **1939–42**

Served a mission in Brazil

##### **Apr. 21, 1943**

Married Ruth Wright in the Salt Lake Temple

##### **1942–45**

Served during World War II in the U.S. Army Air Corps, honorably discharged as a first lieutenant

##### **1948**

Graduated from the University of Utah with bachelor's and Juris Doctor degrees; began practicing law in Salt Lake City



**May 8, 1949**

Sustained as bishop of the Big Cottonwood Ward

**1949–51**

Served in the Utah House of Representatives

**Mar. 18, 1956**

Sustained as Cottonwood Stake president

**May 31, 1962**

Elected president of the Utah State Bar

**1962**

Appointed by U.S. president John F. Kennedy to the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Racial Unrest

**Dec. 14, 1968**

Called as a regional representative

**Jan. 1970**

Appointed to the *Deseret News* board of directors

**Oct. 6, 1972**

Sustained as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**Oct. 1, 1976**

Sustained to the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy



**Top left: Ruth Wright Faust. Above: Elder and Sister Faust, about 1980. Right: A wedding photo, 1943.**



but I did not wish to impose them on others. But there seemed to flash before my mind the faces of the many people to whom I had taught the law of chastity as a missionary. In the end I simply said, 'I do not believe there is a double standard of morality.'"<sup>12</sup>

To his surprise, he passed the inquiry and was selected for officers' candidate school.

"In all my long years of life I have tried not to hide who I am and what I believe," he said at the last general conference he attended. "I cannot recall a single instance when it hurt my career or I lost valued friends by humbly

acknowledging that I was a member of this Church.”<sup>13</sup>

Honesty, which President Faust called “a moral compass,” served him well during his 24-year practice as an attorney. His integrity—coupled with a reputation for being fair, making wise decisions, and showing compassion and concern for others—distinguished him among his colleagues and led to opportunities for professional, civic, and community



service. He served in the Utah legislature from 1949 to 1951, as president of the Utah Bar Association from 1962 to 1963, on U.S. president John F. Kennedy’s Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Racial Unrest, and as a member of the Utah Constitutional Revision Commission.

President Faust’s unique blend of empathy and ability also helped him to serve effectively as a bishop, high councilor, stake president, regional representative, Assistant to the Twelve, Seventy, and Apostle. “In each of these callings,” observed Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “he demonstrated that a good leader is always a good listener.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Building Bridges**

Though unassuming and quick to deflect credit, President Faust made many significant



**Above: Elder Faust (far left) as a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, about 1979. Left: President and Sister Faust with their children.**

contributions to the Church throughout decades of service. As a member of the Church’s Public Affairs Committee, he brought his legal expertise to play on several political issues that had moral implications, including proposed pari-mutuel betting in Utah. He also advocated changing the Church’s logo to emphasize Jesus Christ. In addition, he helped shepherd the Church’s decision to retain the services of a worldwide public relations firm that has helped the Church spread its message, correct misconceptions, and improve media relations.

He also worked to build bridges with members and leaders of other faiths. In those efforts he was slow to be offended but quick to show patience, kindness, and understanding.

At one community event he and Sister Faust attended, a leader of another faith criticized the Church. Sister Faust recalled, “I became steamier and steamier as he went on, but Jim just listened patiently. Afterwards, he went up to this man and said, ‘Now, Reverend, if you feel that way, we must be doing something wrong. I’d like for us to have lunch together so that you can let me know what your concerns are.’ They did, and

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**Left: At a 1995 press conference the new Church leadership is introduced: President Thomas S. Monson (left), First Counselor in the First Presidency; President Gordon B. Hinckley; President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency; and President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Below: The First Presidency at the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple.**

**June 1977**

Called to preside over the International Mission

**Sept. 30, 1978**

Sustained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**Mar. 12, 1995**

Set apart as Second Counselor in the First Presidency

**Apr. 27, 1998**

Received a Brazilian national citizenship award—an honor given to only a few world leaders

**2000**

Dedicated seven temples: Oaxaca Mexico, Tuxtla Gutiérrez Mexico, Medford Oregon, Memphis Tennessee, Nashville Tennessee, San José Costa Rica, and Oklahoma City Oklahoma

**Aug. 10, 2007**

Died in Salt Lake City, Utah, at age 87

the two have been good friends ever since.”<sup>15</sup>

In the 1980s President Faust worked closely with President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, then president of Brigham Young University, to turn their vision of BYU’s Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies into reality. President Faust and President Hunter waded through intense negotiations and prolonged opposition in leasing land and overseeing construction of the center.

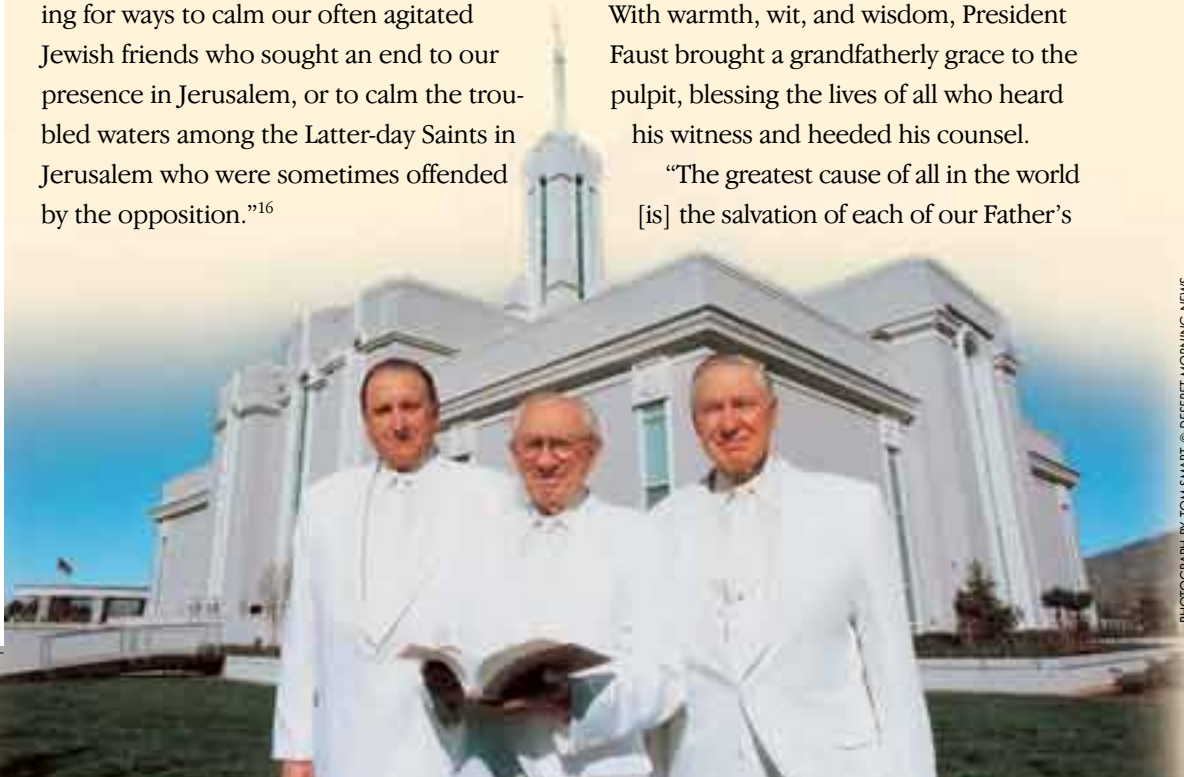
One eyewitness to the process said, “Elder Faust was truly a man of peace, always looking for ways to calm our often agitated Jewish friends who sought an end to our presence in Jerusalem, or to calm the troubled waters among the Latter-day Saints in Jerusalem who were sometimes offended by the opposition.”<sup>16</sup>

**Reaching Out**

Whether laboring in Brazil as the Area Supervisor for South America from 1975 to 1977, presiding over the International Mission in 1977 as a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, ministering to Church members as an Apostle since 1978, or serving as Second Counselor to President Gordon B. Hinckley since 1995, President Faust always strove to reach out in a spirit of kindness and brotherhood.

His conference addresses often reflected the Savior’s two great injunctions: to love and serve God and to love and serve His children. With warmth, wit, and wisdom, President Faust brought a grandfatherly grace to the pulpit, blessing the lives of all who heard his witness and heeded his counsel.

“The greatest cause of all in the world [is] the salvation of each of our Father’s



children,”<sup>17</sup> he said. “The greatest fulfillment in life comes by rendering service to others.”<sup>18</sup>

In his August 2007 First Presidency Message, President Faust said he hoped “to offer opportunities for development and happiness for all members, whether married or single.” Recalling the parable of the good shepherd, he added, “Seeking out the one who needs our help involves reaching out in many ways.”<sup>19</sup>

In his last general conference address, he testified of the healing power of forgiveness. “For all of us who forgive ‘those who trespass against us’ [Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:13], even those who have committed serious crimes, the Atonement brings a measure of peace and comfort,” he said. “Let us remember that we need to forgive to be forgiven. . . . With all my heart and soul, I believe in the healing power that can come to us as we follow the counsel of the Savior to ‘forgive all men’ [D&C 64:10].”<sup>20</sup>

### Testimony

During his ministry President Faust often bore testimony of the Book of Mormon, the Restoration, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the keys and authority held by Presidents of the Church. “It is President Hinckley’s voice we need to hear today, his counsel we need to follow,” he declared, “so that the best things can happen to us.”<sup>21</sup>

President Faust also bore a fervent testimony of the Savior, writing the words to the song “This Is the Christ” and testifying: “Those of us who hold the holy apostleship always wish to fulfill our responsibility by testifying of the divinity of the Savior. I feel compelled to do so. I have had a testimony all of my life. Recently, however, there has come



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW REIER

### FUNERAL TRIBUTES FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

*“His wisdom was deep and profound. It came of long experience in many fields. He brought with him the mind of a lawyer and the compassion of a Church leader. . . . His faith in the truth of the restored gospel was unflinching. There was no doubt in his mind concerning the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith. He had no doubt about the validity of the Book of Mormon. . . .*

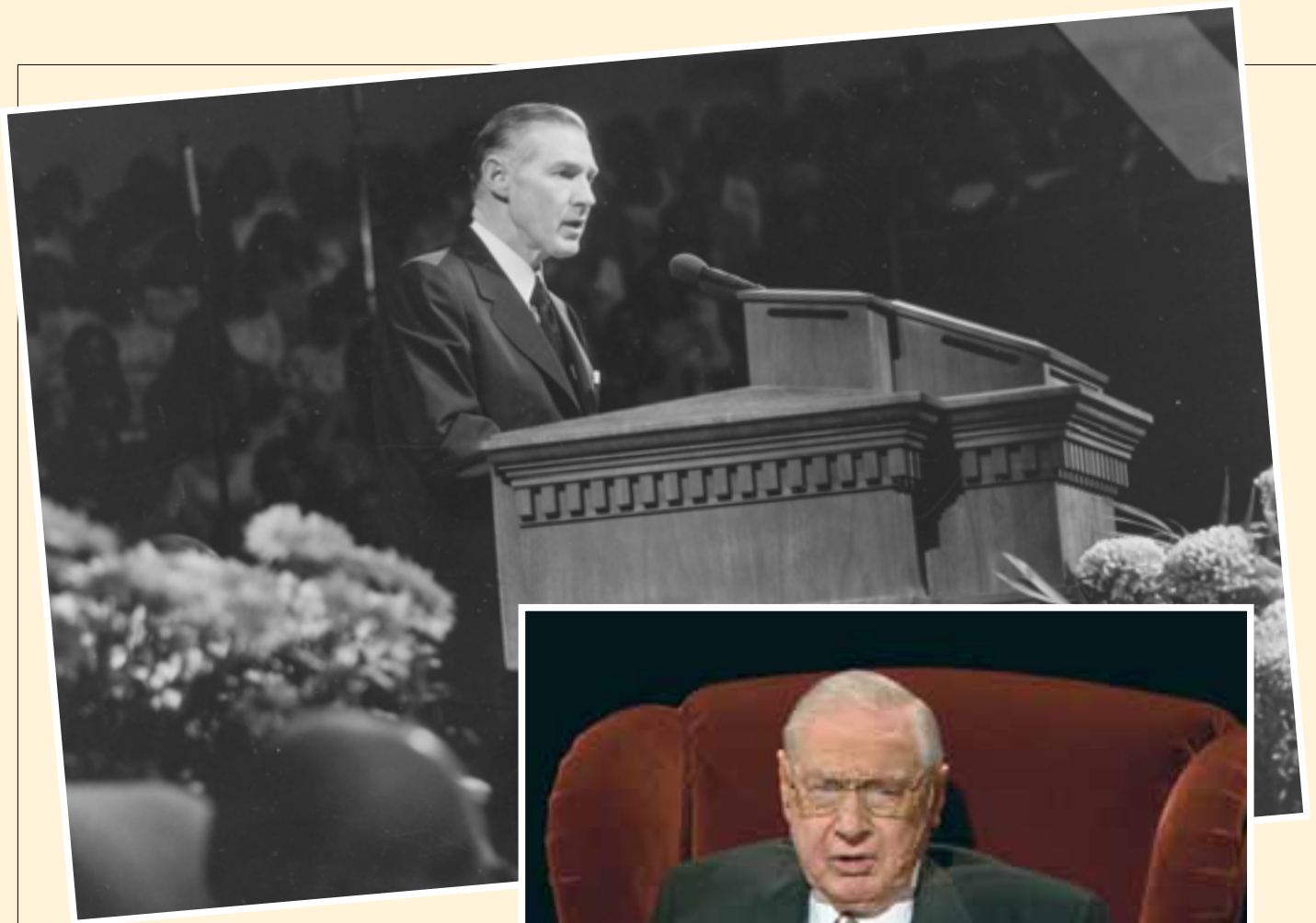
*“His passing has been one of peace and love and light. Peace be to his memory. All of us are the richer for our association with him.”*

**President Gordon B. Hinckley**

*“He was a man of experience, a man of wisdom, a man of love. He was a man of faith, a man of prayer, but most of all he was a man of God. There was no chink in his armor; there was no guile in his soul; there was no flaw in his character.*

*“President Faust loved the Lord with all his heart and soul and served Him with all his might to the very end of his mortal life. . . . He was a teacher of truth. He left behind a heritage of honor and a legacy of love. God bless his memory.”*

**President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency**



**Above: A younger James Faust speaks in the Tabernacle, about 1970. Right: President Faust addresses general conference, April 2007.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

into my soul an overpowering witness of the divinity of this holy work. This sure witness is more certain than ever before in my life.”<sup>22</sup>

President Faust never forgot the frightened lamb of his boyhood. And he never forgot his resolve as a steward to the fold. By endeavoring to emulate the Good Shepherd, of whom he had an “unshakable”<sup>23</sup> testimony, he led a life that became his best sermon—the sermon of a beloved shepherd. ■

#### NOTES

1. “Responsibilities of Shepherds,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 46.
2. “To Become One of the Fishers,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 81.
3. In Wm. Grant Bangerter, “Elder James E. Faust,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1986, 7.
4. *Ensign*, May 1995, 46.
5. “Finding the Abundant Life,” *Liabona*, Nov. 2000, 5; *Ensign*, July 2000, 4.
6. “Response to the Call,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 20.
7. See Neal A. Maxwell, “President James E. Faust: ‘Pure Gold,’” *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 21; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 16.
8. In James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust* (1999), 229.
9. *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 81.
10. See “Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 95.
11. *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 20.
12. “Honesty—a Moral Compass,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 42; see also “Stand up and Be Counted,” *Tambuli*, Oct. 1982, 22–23.
13. “Message to My Grandsons,” *Liabona and Ensign*, May 2007, 56.
14. *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 21; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 15.
15. *In the Strength of the Lord*, 178.
16. David Galbraith, in *In the Strength of the Lord*, 207.
17. “Go Bring Them in from the Plains,” *Liabona*, Nov. 1997, 7; *Ensign*, July 1997, 7.
18. “What’s in It for Me?” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 22.
19. “Welcoming Every Single One,” *Liabona*, Aug. 2007, 3, 5; *Ensign*, Aug. 2007, 5, 7.
20. “The Healing Power of Forgiveness,” *Liabona and Ensign*, May 2007, 69.
21. “It Can’t Happen to Me,” *Liabona*, July 2002, 54; *Ensign*, May 2002, 48.
22. “The Weightier Matters of the Law: Judgment, Mercy, and Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 59.
23. Thomas S. Monson, in *Liabona*, Oct. 1995, 19; *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 14.