

# Ensign

## Sharing Messages of Hope

page 18

Identifying  
and Addressing Abuse,  
pages 5, 48, 54

Finding Answers  
in a Day of Deception,  
page 26

Healing and Peace  
through Jesus Christ,  
page 60



THE  
CHURCH  
IS HERE

Busan


**South Korea**





# rea


Busan is home to one of the 12 stakes in South Korea. A mission is headquartered in Busan. Here are some facts about the Church in South Korea:

members —  **88,418**

 **12** — stakes, 5 districts, 3 missions

congregations —  **100**

**18**  — family history centers

temple (Seoul) —  **1**

**1954** First official missionaries

**1967** Book of Mormon first printed in Korean

**1973** First stake created

**1985** Seoul Temple dedicated

**1991** One millionth copy of Book of Mormon in Korean

**2020** South Korean choir joins in video for final hymn at April general conference



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES

## COVID-19 and This Issue

*Due to the continually changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the material in this issue may not reflect current conditions or be applicable in your local circumstances. Please follow the most recent Church and government guidelines.*

### Ministering through the Children and Youth Program 8



### Hearts Pierced with Deep Wounds: Understanding Abuse in the Family Jason B. Whiting

48



### Apostles Share Messages of Hope 18



### Stand on the Rock of Revelation

Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge

26

## Preventing Abuse

In healthy relationships, people apologize for their unkind words and actions and rely on our Savior's atoning strength to help them improve and repent. But in unhealthy situations, people continue to treat others unkindly, and those relationships can become abusive.

"[Abuse and other] such offenses have no place in the kingdom of God," taught President Russell M. Nelson ("Spiritual Treasures," October 2019 general conference). Several Church magazine articles this month will help us identify and address abuse:

- In my article on page 48, I talk about characteristics of abuse and identify some resources to help you or people you know to recognize and heal from abusive relationships.
- Parents could use the talking points on page 54 to start a conversation with their children about preventing and reporting abuse.
- This month's magazines for children and

youth also include articles on the topic. For example, an activity on page 24 of the *Friend* could be used as part of a home evening lesson.

- Emotional abuse can be just as harmful as other types of abuse. Read "Recognizing Emotional Abuse" in the digital edition of this issue to learn five warning signs and how to get help.

If you have been hurt, you can turn to God for direction and healing and also seek help from trusted individuals. The Lord understands what we are feeling, and He will guide us to safety and joy as we turn to Him.

May we all feel God's love and reach out to Him every day,

Jason Whiting, PhD

Brigham Young University School of Family Life



# Contents

## 5 Abuse Awareness 🕒

## 6 Portraits of Faith 🕒

Sakiusa and Salote Maiwiriwiri—Suva, Fiji

The Maiwiriwiris live their lives with joy and purpose every day, despite having two of their children pass away.

## 8 Ministering Principles

Ministering through the Children and Youth Program

## 12 Weekly Book of Mormon Insights 📖 🕒

- How can we experience the healing power of Christ?
- How can I pray as the Savior taught?
- How do we participate in the Lord's "marvelous work"?
- What does it mean to be truly converted?

## 16 Family Study Fun 📖 🕒

## 18 Apostles Share Messages of Hope

How to stay close to God, minister in love, and patiently move forward during the pandemic.

## 24 Turning Our Hearts 📖 🕒

By Margot Hovley

What can you do as a family to turn your hearts to your ancestors?

## 26 Stand on the Rock of Revelation

By Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge

The search for truth begins with finding answers to primary questions.

## 32 Music

Come, Follow Me

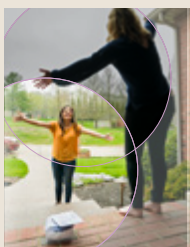
By Samuel McBurney (arranged by David Bauman)

A new piano duet arrangement of a classic hymn.

## 36 Meetinghouses—Places of Reverence and Worship

By Bishop Dean M. Davies

Your meetinghouse is a sacred place that can provide many opportunities to feel the Spirit more strongly in your life.



**On the Cover**  
Photograph from  
Getty Images

🕒 Quick Reads

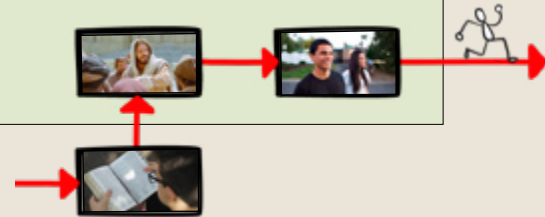
📖 Come, Follow Me Support

## Young Adults

## 68

Addiction can be a chain that is holding us down.

We can **find freedom as we reach out to our Savior**, who loves us even in our weaknesses and struggles.



## 42 Protecting Yourself against Temporal and Spiritual Fraud

By Marissa Widdison

Whether it's social media scams or Satan's lies, we can stay safe by discerning and avoiding deception.

## 48 Hearts Pierced with Deep Wounds: Understanding Abuse in the Family

By Jason B. Whiting

Recognize five patterns of abuse and find hope and healing.

## 54 How Do I Talk to My Kids about Abuse Prevention? 🕒

## 56 Agency and Addiction

By Ben Erwin

The manager of the Church's Addiction Recovery Program shares principles that offer hope.

## 59 Poem 🕒

The Tempest

By Lisa Hains Barker

The Savior can help calm our personal tempests.

## 60 What Church Leaders Are Saying about Healing

Prophets and other leaders testify of the healing power of Jesus Christ.

## 64 Latter-day Saint Voices 🕒

A family finds peace and joy in the temple; a puzzle provides healing; a man gets a second chance to read the Book of Mormon; a young man comes to understand the purpose of his baptism.



## October Digital-Only Articles

Available in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)



### *Come, Follow Me* Resources

For a list of articles and activities (organized by week) that can enrich your family's study of the Book of Mormon, see "Come, Follow Me: Book of Mormon—Support Articles and Activities" in the digital version of this issue (available in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)).

### FIND MORE

In the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org), you can:

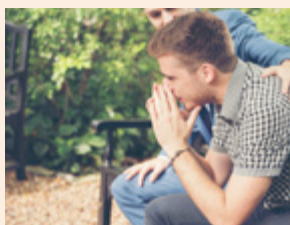
- Find the current issue.
- Discover digital-only articles.
- Explore past issues.
- Enhance your study with digital tools.
- Share favorite articles and videos.



### 38 Different Ways to Study the Scriptures

By Marissa Widdison

If reading isn't your favorite thing, try studying the gospel in one of these ways instead.



### Recognizing Emotional Abuse

By Nanon Talley

A counselor from Family Services shares how to recognize and address emotional abuse in your relationships.



### Celebrating 10 Years of the Joseph Smith Papers Online

By Nathan Waite, Elizabeth Kuehn, and Jeffrey Mahas

Learn about everyday Saints featured in the Joseph Smith Papers who helped move the Lord's work forward.

### SUBMISSIONS

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## ABUSE AWARENESS



**W**hile we all hope that everyone would be treated with respect, some people seek to hurt, control, or manipulate others. Such harmful behavior is called abuse. It is contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, which teaches us to love one another and to treat others as we would want to be treated (see Matthew 7:12; John 13:34; Doctrine and Covenants 121:36–37).

### **Victims are often abused by those they know.**

The offender may be a relative or someone they have met before. This is not to suggest that we should worry about everyone we know, but we can watch for—and teach our children to watch for—these four other signs.

### **Offenders often seek out the vulnerable.**

Offenders search for those who might not be able to give consent or defend themselves.

### **ABUSE HAS SOME COMMON SIGNS. HERE ARE FIVE TO WATCH FOR IN ORDER TO HELP PREVENT OR STOP THE ABUSE:**



### **Offenders often try to isolate victims.**

Using isolation or threats, offenders often seek to keep their victims from reaching out for help.

### **Offenders often begin by violating boundaries.**

Abuse occurs when there is a serious violation of the limits for the appropriate behavior and language toward others. Offenders may completely ignore boundaries or begin with small violations in order to desensitize the victim.

### **Offenders may gradually seek to establish trust before the abuse.**

This is known as “grooming” and often happens to youth and children. Grooming behaviors can include requests for time alone, encouraging secrecy, talking about sexual topics, or showing pornography to or initiating physical contact with a child.







## Sakiusa and Salote Maiwiriwiri

Suva, Fiji



*I could hardly believe the peace and happiness I found in the Maiwiriwiri home. Despite having two of their children pass away, they live their lives with joy and purpose every day.*

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

### Salote:

Two years after our son Esa died of lung cancer, our daughter Esalynn died of meningitis. In the temple, I felt a strong prompting to speak with a senior sister missionary there who also lost two children years earlier. She told me, "If you make your home a holy place, you can feel your children's presence there."

That has become our goal. Everything we do is to make our home a holy place. We want to feel them close.

### Sakiusa:

The experience of losing Esa and Esalynn has ultimately brought our family closer together. We counsel together with our other children. We attend the temple as a family. We live our lives as simple as possible and choose gratitude every day. As we talk about what it means to be sealed as a family in the temple, that sealing becomes alive in us. And through all of this, we do feel the presence of our children.

### DISCOVER MORE

See more about Sakiusa and Salote's journey of faith, including additional photos, in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E10206](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/E10206).

Elder Ronald A. Rasband shares how we can fortify our homes to be places of love and spiritual protection at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/10207](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/10207).

# Ministering Principles

## MINISTERING THROUGH THE **CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM**

*Inviting others to grow and helping them  
along the way is the essence of ministering.*

**O**pportunities abound for ministering through the Children and Youth program. Maybe you have children or youth of your own at home. Maybe you're a leader in the program or you minister to families with children and youth. Or maybe you *happen to know* some children and youth (that should cover just about all of us). Whatever your situation may be, there are many ways to use the program or its principles to bless the lives of others.

### **Developing Ourselves Together**

At the heart of Children and Youth is a focus on trying each day to become more like the Savior, who ministered perfectly. Many of those who have participated in the program have learned that the more you progress in various

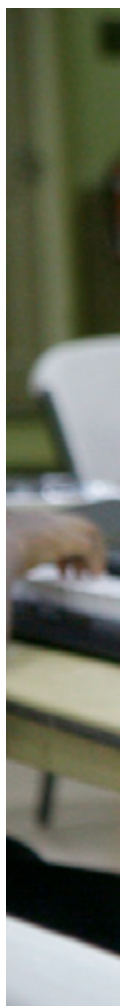
areas of your life, the better equipped you are to help or minister to others.

But with the Children and Youth program, blessing others doesn't have to wait until you've learned something. The act of learning itself provides opportunities to minister.

For a young man named Prophet living in Ghana, setting the goal in Children and Youth to learn how to play the piano was only the beginning. "It's my goal to also help other people know what I am learning," Prophet says.

Even though he's not yet an instructor, his goal has already grown into something much bigger than he ever imagined. There are now 50 students taking piano classes at the

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM GARNER





meetinghouse alongside Prophet. And just who is teaching Prophet and those other 50 students? Alexander M. and Kelvin M., both age 13. “We want to show acts of kindness to other people,” Kelvin says.

Three days a week the two youth teach basic piano lessons for free to all who come to learn. There has

been an added benefit to the piano lessons. Several of the students introduced to the Church through piano lessons later studied the gospel and decided to be baptized.

As we make efforts to improve ourselves, we can minister to others by inviting them to join with us.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ISAAC DARKO-ACHEAMPONG



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEXANDER K. BOATENG



### A Winning Recipe for Ministering

As a stake Primary president, Sabrina Simões Deus Augusto of Curitiba, Brazil, has seen how the personal development aspects of the program bless the children and youth in her stake. But she has also seen many ways to use what she has learned about personal development in her assignment as a ministering sister.

“When I develop a talent,” Sister Augusto says, “I can use that talent to bless someone I minister to.”

Sister Augusto taught one of the sisters to whom she is assigned how to make chocolate truffles. That sister now makes and sells the truffles to help supplement her family’s income. “Months later, I was blessed when another sister taught me how to make honey bread that I could sell,” Sister Augusto said. “Developing and sharing our talents can bless each other’s lives and deepen our relationships as ministering sisters.” ■



# HOW CAN THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM HELP YOU MINISTER?

## 1. Invite others to participate in the Children and Youth program.

You can invite the families of youth and children you minister to to participate in the Children and Youth program. They may be interested in participating in the activities, personal development, or even gospel study aspects of the program. (For more information about ministering through *Come, Follow Me*, see “Ministering through *Come, Follow Me*,” in the September 2020 *Ensign*.)

## 2. Support their goals.

As a ministering brother or sister to families with youth, you’re in a natural position to support the goals they might be working toward in Children and Youth. While their goals are personal, if you know what they are interested in, you could offer to help in a variety of ways. This could take the form of finding the art supplies they’re looking for, serving as a judge for their cookie making, or becoming a mentor in an area where you have knowledge. Do you know how to change the oil in a car? Mend torn clothing? Are you an expert at interviewing for jobs? You can offer to share knowledge or skills you have if they are interested.

## 3. Invite others to be part of your own personal development.

Personal development isn’t reserved for children and youth. You can participate in the program yourself no matter your age. As you spend time improving the spiritual, social, physical, and intellectual areas of your life, you’ll be better prepared to minister to individuals, no matter who you meet. And like Prophet in Ghana, you can bless others by inviting them to participate with you, whether that’s organizing piano lessons, going to an exercise class, or learning a language together.

## 4. Make ministering a goal.

Consider spending time each day for ministering. This could be sending a text or stopping by to see how things are going or to set up a get-together. It might include taking time to calendar the birthdays of those you minister to or following them on social media to find out what they’re interested in or have been doing lately. Just taking five minutes to think about what someone else needs can lead to inspired ideas that could make a difference.



## ONE BY ONE

“A hallmark of the Lord’s true and living Church will always be an organized, directed effort to minister to individual children of God and their families. Because it is His Church, we as His servants will minister to the one, just as He did.”

President Russell M. Nelson,  
“Ministering with the Power and  
Authority of God,” *Ensign*, May  
2018, 69.

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences of ministering or being ministered to. Go to [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) and click “Submit an Article or Feedback.”



## 3 Nephi 17–19

SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 11

**I**n Jesus Christ's ministry to the Nephites, He showed great love and His healing power to all who came unto Him. What can we learn from the Nephites' experience with the Savior?



### DISCUSSION

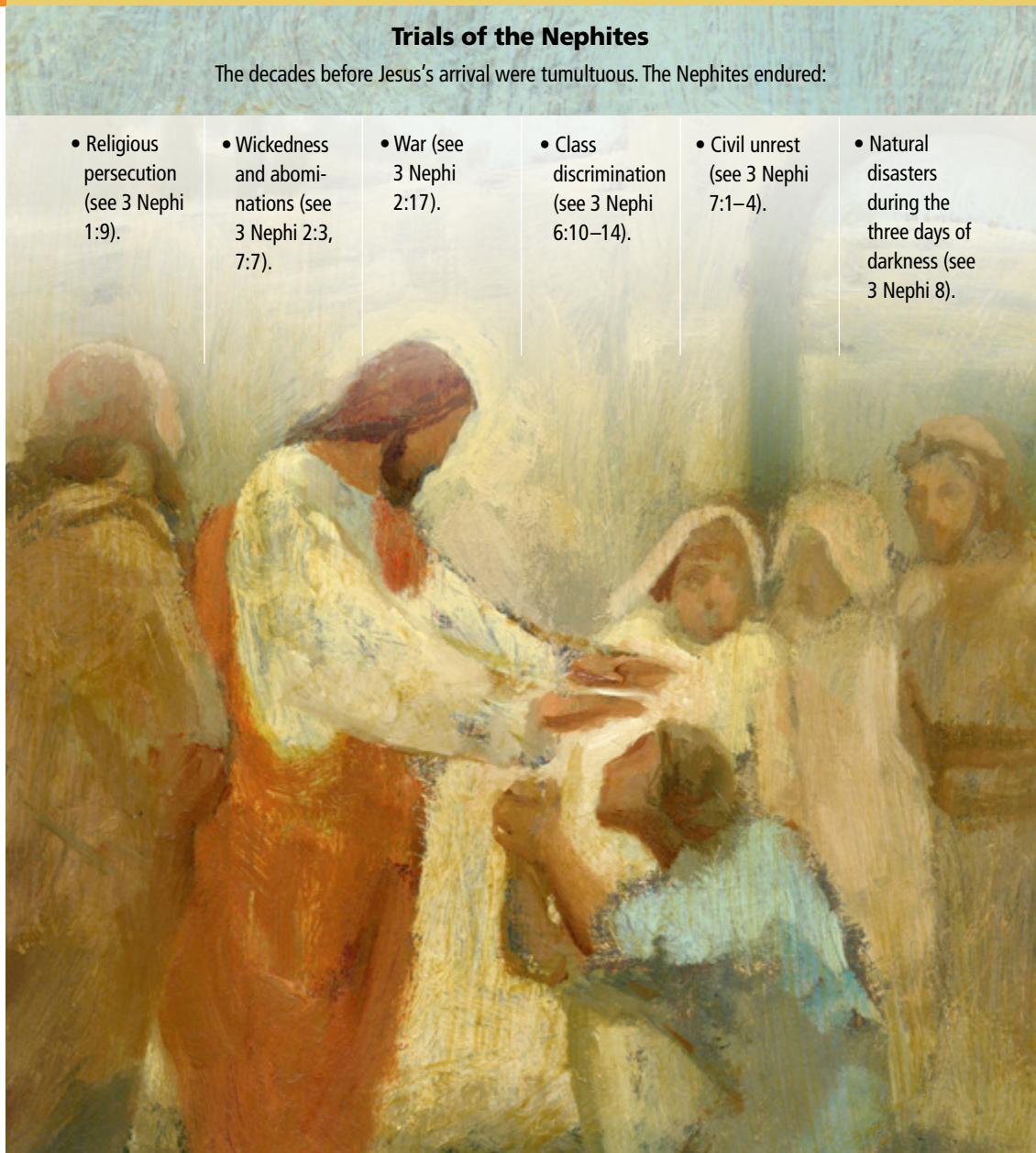
- If you were among the Nephites, what would you ask the Savior to heal? What would you say to Him?
- How can you, like the Nephites, come unto Christ and experience His love and healing power in your life?
- When have you felt the Savior's love? How did you feel that love?

# How can we experience the healing power of Christ?

## Trials of the Nephites

The decades before Jesus's arrival were tumultuous. The Nephites endured:

- |  |   |                           |   |                                     |  |
|--|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Religious persecution (see 3 Nephi 1:9). | • Wickedness and abominations (see 3 Nephi 2:3, 7:7). | • War (see 3 Nephi 2:17). | • Class discrimination (see 3 Nephi 6:10–14). | • Civil unrest (see 3 Nephi 7:1–4). | • Natural disasters during the three days of darkness (see 3 Nephi 8). |
|--|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|



## Christ's Ministry to the Nephites

When the Savior appeared to the Nephites, He invited all who were "afflicted in any manner" (3 Nephi 17:7) to come forward and be healed. His invitation extended beyond the Nephites' recent trials. It applied to wounds seen and unseen that the Nephites may have carried all their lives. Jesus Christ healed "every one" (3 Nephi 17:9) and ministered unto them "one by one" (3 Nephi 17:21).





## 3 Nephi 17–19

SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 11

When Christ visited the Nephites, He prayed with them 11 times. Through word and example, He taught them how they should pray. Latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators continue to teach what the Savior taught about prayer. Here are a few examples:

### DISCUSSION

What else have the Savior and latter-day prophets and apostles taught about prayer? How can these teachings help your prayers become more meaningful to you?

### NOTES

1. David A. Bednar, "Pray Always," *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 43.
2. Thomas S. Monson, "Three Goals to Guide You," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 120.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter* (2015), 229.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, "The Language of Prayer," *Ensign*, May 1993, 17.
5. Boyd K. Packer, "Prayer and Promptings," *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 46.

# How can I pray as the Savior taught?



### What the Savior taught

Pray for others (see 3 Nephi 17:14, 17, 21; see also 3 Nephi 18:23)

"Watch and pray always" (3 Nephi 18:15)

"Pray in your families" (3 Nephi 18:21; see also 3 Nephi 17:3)

Don't multiply many words (see 3 Nephi 19:24; see also 3 Nephi 13:7)

"Pray on" (3 Nephi 19:26)



### What latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators teach

"Praying for others with all of the energy of our souls increases our capacity to hear and to heed the voice of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

"It is through earnest and heartfelt prayer that we can receive the needed blessings and the support required to make our way in this sometimes difficult and challenging journey we call mortality."<sup>2</sup>

"If you will . . . [participate] in daily family prayer, . . . you will receive the promised blessings of the Lord in raising a righteous posterity."<sup>3</sup>

"Our prayers should be simple, direct, and sincere."<sup>4</sup>

"Pray often. Pray in your mind, in your heart. Pray on your knees. Prayer is your personal key to heaven. The lock is on your side of the veil."<sup>5</sup>







## 3 Nephi 20–26

OCTOBER 12–18

# How do we participate in the Lord’s “marvelous work”?

Among the many things the Savior taught the Nephites, He taught them about the gathering of Israel and commanded them to study the scriptures and to keep their own records. How can we follow these teachings today?



### Search the Prophets

The Savior commanded the Nephites to “search the prophets” (3 Nephi 23:5). We have the opportunity to hear the living prophet and other Church leaders speak in general conference.

- What can you do to get more out of general conference?
- How does “searching the prophets” help us in gathering Israel?

### Join the Work

Jesus Christ prophesied of a “marvelous work” in the latter days (see 3 Nephi 21:9). That work is the gathering of Israel. President Russell M. Nelson has called this “the most important thing taking place on earth today” and said, “If you choose to, if you want to, you can be a big part of it.”<sup>1</sup>

- How can you and your family learn more about and participate in the gathering of Israel?



### Keep a Record

Jesus commanded His Nephite disciples to keep a record of His teachings and the prophecies of Samuel the Lamanite (see 3 Nephi 23:4, 6–13). Similarly, we can record our life experiences to help us and to teach others.

- Are there past spiritual experiences you have not recorded?
- How can you record the things God is teaching you?

#### NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), 8, [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/hopeofisrael).



## 3 Nephi 27–4 Nephi

OCTOBER 19–25

# What does it mean to be truly converted?

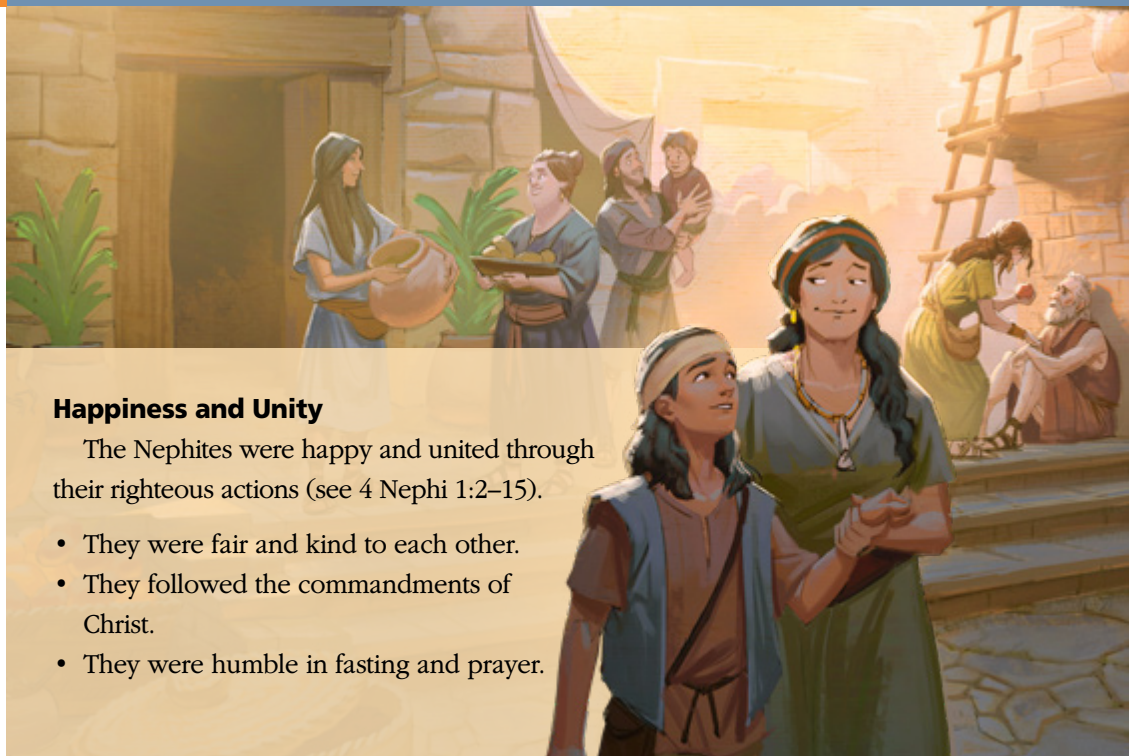
After the Savior's appearance to the Nephites, they experienced nearly 200 years of unity and peace because they were "all converted unto the Lord" (4 Nephi 1:2).

What are some other examples of the Nephites' righteous actions? You can read 4 Nephi 1:2–15 and fill in the blanks with more examples you find:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### DISCUSSION

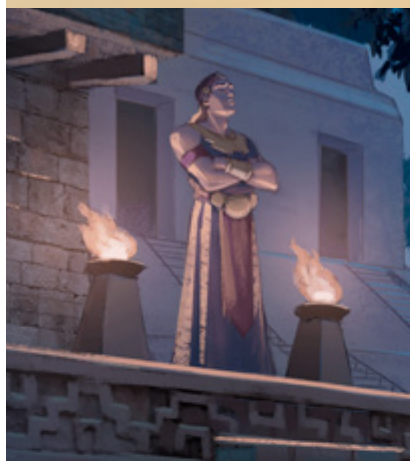
- Compare the happiness of the righteous Nephites to the sorrow when they were unrighteous. Ponder the difference and find ways you can become more converted to the Lord.
- Could you choose one thing you can improve on in your life?
- How can these things bring you closer to your friends, family, and the Lord?



### Happiness and Unity

The Nephites were happy and united through their righteous actions (see 4 Nephi 1:2–15).

- They were fair and kind to each other.
- They followed the commandments of Christ.
- They were humble in fasting and prayer.



### Sorrow and Division

Unfortunately, those years of unity and happiness did not last forever. Eventually, the Nephites stopped obeying the commandments of God (see 4 Nephi 1:24–31). In doing so:

- They became selfish and prideful.
- They built their own churches for financial gain.
- They denied Christ's Church.







# fun Family Study

Consider these activities during family scripture study or home evening.



## Listen and Lift

### 3 Nephi 17 (September 28–October 11)

Read 3 Nephi 17:21–25 with your family, which describes the Savior ministering to people after His Resurrection. Talk about what it might have felt like to be there.

- 1 Draw or write these body parts on pieces of paper: hands, feet, knees, arms, eyes, and mouth. Pass them out to different family members.
- 2 Listen to “Had I Been a Child” from pages 80–81 of the *Children’s Songbook* (recordings are available at [music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or in the Sacred Music app).
- 3 Whenever a body part is mentioned in the song, have the family member holding that paper lift it up for everyone to see.

**Discussion:** Talk about how Jesus has a resurrected body and how one day we’ll have a resurrected body too. Jesus used His body to serve others. How can we serve others and show them love?



## Paper Name Gathering Game

### 3 Nephi 20–22 (October 12–18)

We “gather Israel” when we help other people learn about the gospel. Jesus taught about this gathering in 3 Nephi 20–22.

- 1 Give each person a piece of paper and ask them to write down any name that comes to mind.
- 2 Everyone should close their eyes while one person hides the papers.
- 3 Read 3 Nephi 20:18 and 39–40 out loud. How can you help other people learn about Jesus?
- 4 While listening to a song about Jesus, invite everyone to help find the names and put them by a picture of the Savior.

**Discussion:** How does it make you feel to know that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know each person by name?

## FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Find more home evening ideas in this month's *Friend*.



### Act a Song

#### 3 Nephi 27–4 Nephi (October 19–25)

Read 3 Nephi 27:8 together. Explain what each word in the name of the Church means: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

- 1 Sing "The Church of Jesus Christ" (*Children's Songbook*, 77).
- 2 Come up with actions for the different words in the song. For example, you could stand up when you sing the word "I," touch your head when you sing "know," and march in place for "follow."
- 3 Practice using these different actions as you sing the song together.

**Discussion:** Why is the full name of the Church important? How can you politely help people understand the full name of the Church when they refer to us as "Mormons"?

*Selected activity ideas contributed by Kristie Andersen, Christy Monson, and Mitzi Schoneman*



### The Open Arms of Jesus

#### Mormon 1–6 (October 26–November 1)

Read Mormon 6:17 together. Talk about what it means that Jesus has "open arms to receive [us]" when He is not physically here with us.

- 1 Invite family members to draw a picture of themselves with Jesus. For younger children, use a coloring page from [lessonhelps.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://lessonhelps.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or the September *Friend*.
- 2 When the pictures are finished, fold them up and put them in a bowl. Take turns picking a picture at random.
- 3 When someone's picture is chosen, have them talk about a time they have felt the Savior's love or share something they can do to follow Jesus.

**Discussion:** Talk about what you can do as a family to help each other follow Jesus and feel closer to Him. How can we be His "arms" here on earth?



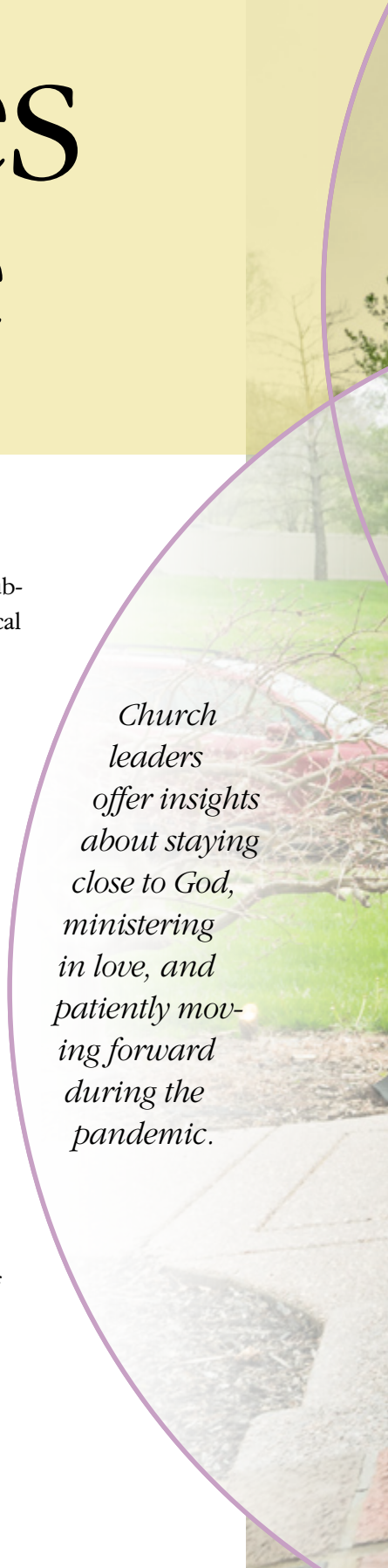
# APOSTLES SHARE Messages of Hope

**I**n response to the virus spreading around the world, officials ban public gatherings and implement quarantines. Schools close, ecclesiastical leaders cancel church meetings, and those who venture outside are required to wear face masks for protection.

The year is 1919, and the raging influenza pandemic that began the year before will claim tens of millions of lives.<sup>1</sup> The Church's new prophet, President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945), was set apart in November 1918 but will not be sustained until June 1919 because April general conference has been postponed.

During his ministry following those and other challenging days, President Grant gave counsel fitting for our day when he said, “We came to this earth to obtain knowledge, wisdom, and experience, to learn the lessons, suffer the pains, endure the temptations, and gain the victories of mortality.” From knowledge he gained through the crucible of personal experience, he added, “I . . . know that in the hour of adversity the Latter-day Saints are comforted and blessed and consoled as no other people are!”<sup>2</sup>

In our current “hour of adversity” with the novel coronavirus, we draw comfort and consolation from the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Our knowledge that Heavenly Father loves His children and that He has called prophets and apostles in our day to guide us through the storms of mortality is a great blessing.



*Church leaders offer insights about staying close to God, ministering in love, and patiently moving forward during the pandemic.*







From counsel shared during recent interviews, several members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles remind us that we can feel joy and look to the future with hope regardless of what is happening around us.<sup>3</sup>

### The Work Goes Forward

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) once likened the Church to “a great caravan” that moves forward despite opposition.<sup>4</sup> Elder David A. Bednar attributes the caravan’s steady forward momentum to the Church’s inspired preparation and its history with adversity.

“No unhallowed hand can stop this work from progressing,<sup>5</sup> and no pandemic will stop this work from progressing either,” he said. “In the midst of all the challenges we face now dealing with this virus, the work goes forward. . . . We do not know how long it will take, but we will overcome. And we may not resume our previous pattern of life exactly as we knew it, but many of those adaptations and changes will be very positive.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook said the Church’s inspired preparation includes such timely examples as emphasis on Sabbath day observance, strengthening Melchizedek Priesthood quorums and Relief Societies, the shift to ministering, and the introduction of *Come, Follow Me*, the Book of Mormon videos, and the Children and Youth program.

“We will look back on this as a foundational time of preparation and not just something we had to endure,” he said.

President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, concurs.

*Temple closures “provide a marvelous opportunity to learn more about family history research, indexing, and how to prepare many, many names for the day when the temple doors will open again.”*

*—Elder David A. Bednar*

Despite the temporary closure of temples and meetinghouses, members of the Church have the spiritual tools they need to continue moving forward.

President Ballard remembers how he felt coming home from church on December 7, 1941, to find out that Pearl Harbor had been attacked and that the United States was about to be drawn into World War II. Like many people today, he worried about the future and wondered whether his own future would be lost.

“But that’s not what happened,” he said. Just as the free people of the world won that war, so will the world win the war against the coronavirus. “Everything is going to be just fine as we turn our hearts to our Father in Heaven and look to Him and to the Savior as the Redeemer of all mankind,” he said.

Another way the Church moves forward is through its missionary efforts, which are responding to changing world conditions. Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf said that Church leaders had been studying new ways of sharing the gospel even before COVID-19 began disrupting missionary work. That disruption has included transporting thousands of missionaries to their home



countries, releasing some early, and reassigning others.

“COVID-19 accelerated our thinking about this tremendously and opened our eyes,” he said. As a result, technology and social media are now opening doors that previously had been closed by gated communities and inaccessible homes and apartment buildings.

“Missionary work will continue to move forward in spite of the pandemic,” Elder Uchtdorf added. “We are continuing to learn how to improve missionary work now and for the future. The Lord has promised to hasten His work for the blessing of all of God’s children (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:73). I feel that we are right in the middle of this process while living through this challenging time. Our precious missionaries are the pioneers of our day, blazing a trail of sharing the gospel message in new ways fitting to our circumstances so that the Church of Jesus Christ will continue to ‘roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth’” (Doctrine and Covenants 65:2).

New opportunities for sharing the gospel are not the only things that are opening. Hearts are also opening because difficult times often humble people and turn them toward God, said Elder D. Todd Christofferson.

“They’re a little more open to thinking, ‘Maybe I need something beyond my bank account. Maybe there’s more to life than what I’ve been living,’” he said.

Elder Christofferson encourages Church members to look for missionary opportunities, such as sharing gospel-related messages and memes via social media, communicating with the full-time missionaries about helping fellowship people they are teaching online, and

staying in touch with people they are not able to see often.

## Social Distancing and Spiritual Distancing

Another way the Church moves forward is through the spiritual response of Latter-day Saints to temporal challenges like COVID-19. For our physical protection, we increase our physical distance from others, but for our spiritual protection, we draw closer to our Father in Heaven and His Son. The COVID-19 pandemic has given many Church members more opportunities to increase their spiritual protection by following President Russell M. Nelson’s counsel to hear the Lord.

“Our Father knows that when we are surrounded by uncertainty and fear, what will help us the very most is to hear His Son,” President Nelson said during the April 2020 general conference. He added, “As we seek to be disciples of Jesus Christ, our efforts to *hear Him* need to be ever more intentional. It takes conscious and consistent effort to fill our daily lives with His words, His teachings, His truths.”<sup>6</sup>

While we do not welcome the suspension of Church meetings, the closure of temples, or the loss of jobs, spending more time at home gives us “a chance to think about awakening unto God” (see Alma 5:7), said Elder Cook. “Perhaps recent events can be a spiritual alarm clock focusing us on those things that matter most. If so, it will be a great blessing in this period to concentrate on things that we can perfect in our lives and how we can bless the lives of others as we awaken unto God and move along the covenant path.”



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland added, “Such times invite us to look into our soul to see if we like what we see there. That’s when [we] think about who [we] really are and what really matters.”

Such times also invite us to increase our faith, service, and gratitude, prompting us to “consider our dependence on God and the blessings from Him we so often take for granted,” said Elder Holland. “We owe it to our Father in Heaven to be a little more grateful, a little more thankful, and a little more inclined to remember how many problems are resolved because of God, angels, covenantal promises, and prayer.”

At the center of our gratitude is the blessing of remembering “how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until [this] time” (Moroni 10:3). Members of the Quorum of the Twelve said that whenever we are required to “shelter in place,” we can follow the example of Nephi and Alma, remembering that He “in whom [we] have trusted,” the Savior Jesus Christ, “will still deliver [us]” (2 Nephi 4:19; Alma 36:27). And we can remember, as the Apostle Paul taught, that nothing can “separate us from the love of Christ” (see Romans 8:35).

The Lord Jesus Christ “is our ultimate shelter” (see Psalm 61:1–4), said Elder Holland. “Whatever else happens, we will never be separated from the Savior’s love and His companionship, even if we don’t recognize it at the time. The Spirit is not blocked by a virus or by national boundaries or by medical forecasts.”

### “Do Kind Things”

Recently, while reading a report produced by a Church committee, Elder Christofferson became concerned about the effects “enforced solitude” can have on single members of the Church—old and young.



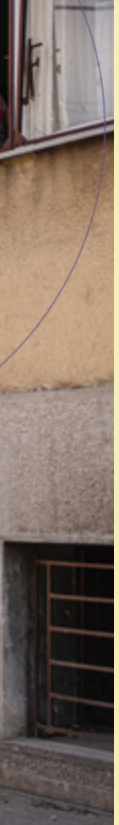
“Enforced solitude can lead to loneliness, and loneliness can have negative physical and mental health consequences,” he said. “To counteract that, some public health advocates recommend that those experiencing loneliness look for ways to ‘do kind things’ for someone.”

Latter-day Saints can find ways to serve, help, and contribute to others, especially to those who are lonely, said Elder Christofferson, and lonely members who render service to others can lessen their feelings of isolation.

“Focus on ministering,” he said. “There’s a lot we can do for each other to have a sense of belonging and brotherhood and sisterhood. This is a time when the elders quorum and the Relief Society can really come into their own and provide what only they are uniquely organized to do.”

And rather than always text someone, he suggested, “I think it’s very healthy to call someone using that old technology called the telephone. Just call to talk and interact. Let them hear a voice.”

Small efforts to reach out to others can make



*Small efforts to reach out to others can make a big difference, brightening someone's day in ways we may not know. "Our ministering is very much needed with people being so isolated."*

*—Elder Quentin L. Cook*

a big difference, brightening someone's day in ways we may not know. "Our ministering is very much needed with people being so isolated," said Elder Cook.

Elder Holland suggested, "We ought to dedicate a certain part of our day to communicating to people who need a boost. Of course, we get a boost from doing that, so everyone is 'lifted up' (3 Nephi 27:14, 15), as the Savior said He was sent to earth to do."

Another way we can lift ourselves and others is to prepare for the day when the temples reopen. Temple closures—whether for pandemics, remodeling, or cleaning—"provide a marvelous opportunity to learn more about family history research, indexing, and how to prepare many, many names for the day when the temple doors will open again," said Elder Bednar.

Regardless of whether temples are open or closed, Elder Bednar added, members of the Church can still strive to be worthy of and have a current temple recommend.

### Lessons the Lord Would Have Us Learn

As Elder Bednar pointed out, while no one would choose to experience the COVID-19 pandemic, a latter-day plague is upon us nonetheless.

"With the eternal perspective that the restored gospel provides and the grace that comes from the Savior's Atonement, we can learn lessons from the adversity of mortality that prepare us for the blessings of eternity," he said. "We have to pray. We have to seek. We have to ask. We have to have eyes to see and ears to hear. But we can be blessed in remarkable ways to learn lessons that will bless us now and forever."

With its devastating impact on families throughout the world, COVID-19 has taught people to show increased concern for others, said President Ballard.

"We are coming to realize how precious our families are, how precious our neighbors are, and how precious our fellow Church members are," he said. "There are lessons we are learning now that will make us better people."

And when the current storm passes, what can we expect then? More of the same, said Elder Uchtdorf. God's children inside and outside the Church will continue to face challenges.

"We are living in a time when we need to learn," he said. And the most important lesson we can learn is that the answer to coming challenges is also the answer to the current challenge: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because Latter-day Saints have the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, Elder Holland said, they can learn to be positive and optimistic, doing the best they can and taking the Lord at His word when He said, "Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed" (Doctrine and Covenants 123:17).

"There is a lot to be joyful about as we refine our faith, trust more in the Lord, and see the miracle of His deliverance," Elder Holland said. ■

### NOTES

1. See William G. Hartley, "The Church Grows in Strength," *Ensign*, Sept. 1999, 35.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* (2002), 49, 48.
3. See Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 82.
4. Bruce R. McConkie, "The Caravan Moves On," *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 85.
5. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:540.
6. Russell M. Nelson, "Hear Him," *Ensign*, May 2020, 89.





# Turning Our Hearts

*When Jesus visited the Americas, He taught that the hearts of the children would turn to their fathers.*

By Margot Hovley

Church Magazines

Imagine that Jesus visited your ward and gave a talk. Wouldn't that be an amazing experience? I imagine we'd write down everything He said and read and ponder those words over and over again.

This month's *Come, Follow Me* chapters from the Book of Mormon contain some of what Jesus Christ said to the people in the Americas after His Resurrection. We are so blessed to have a record of what He taught there. His words to them apply to us today, just as if He were speaking to us.

One of the many important topics Jesus taught about was family history. These teachings were so important that He made sure the people wrote them down. (See 3 Nephi 24:1.) Then He shared with them words that should sound familiar from our Bible studies:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord;

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (3 Nephi 25:5–6).

Next year we'll learn about how this promise has been fulfilled—how the

prophet Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. But the work of "turning hearts" continues today through our family history work. What can we do as a family to turn our hearts to our ancestors? How can we help our children care about and learn from the examples of those who lived before us?

Here are some fun ideas that can help even the youngest members of your family learn about your heritage—all from the comfort of your home. Start by logging in to **FamilySearch.org** with your Church account.

Then look for a menu running across the top of the screen that includes the word "Activities." (If you are using the Family Tree app on your phone, you may need to tap a menu button—three horizontal bars—and then select "Family History Activities.") Here are brief descriptions of what the site has to offer:





## Where Am I From?

Explore the cultures and traditions of places your ancestors lived. Includes fun facts, customs, and even recipes! Find out where your ancestors were during historic events and ponder how these events affected their lives.



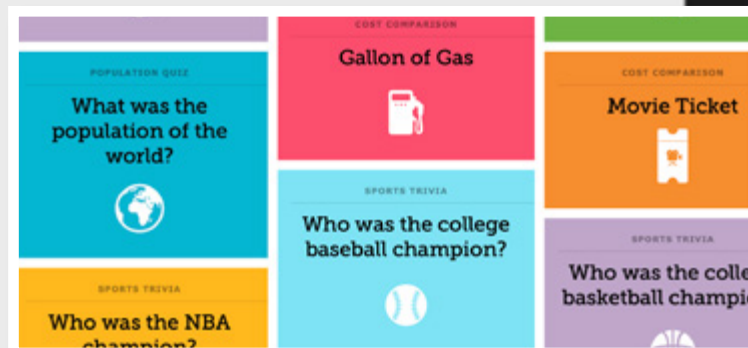
## Picture My Heritage

Want to imagine yourself in another time and place? Use the camera on your computer or mobile device to insert your face into a historical photo.



## All about Me

Do you know what your name means? Learn this as well as how many other people share your name. You can also explore interesting facts about what the world was like the year you were born—such as how much a tank of gasoline or a movie ticket cost. You might be surprised by what you learn.



## Record My Story

Use these questions to spark memories about family stories, and then type them up or find another way to record them. This would be a great activity to do with grandparents!



## Compare-a-Face

This is a chance to learn where you got your good looks! Upload a picture of yourself and see which ancestor you most resemble.

## In-Home Activities

Explore even more ideas to try together.

Let's follow the example of our Savior and treat family history as a priority. As we encourage our children to learn more about their ancestors, we help strengthen family connections that cross generations. We can all learn from the precious people who came before us, once their stories come alive in our hearts. ■







**By Elder  
Lawrence E.  
Corbridge**

Emeritus Member  
of the Seventy

# STAND ON THE Rock of Revelation

*By being grounded on the rock of revelation, we  
can find answers to the most important questions.*

**A**s part of an assignment I had as a General Authority a few years ago, I read through a great deal of material antagonistic to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and the events of the Restoration. Since that assignment changed, I have not returned to wallow in that mire.

Reading that material always left me with a feeling of gloom, and one day that sense of darkness inspired me to write a partial response to all such antagonistic claims. I would like to share some of the thoughts I recorded that day, and although what I wrote was for my benefit, I hope it will help you as well.

## **Will We Stand Forever?**

The prophet Daniel said that in the last days “shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (Daniel 2:44).

The kingdom of God is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It will “stand for ever.” The question is, Will you and I stand or “will [we] also go away?” (John 6:67). And if we go away, where will we go?

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAŁ DZIEKAN





## Deception Is a Sign of Our Time

When the Lord described the signs of His coming and the end of the world, He mentioned many things, including wars and rumors of wars, nations rising against nations, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and many other signs, including this one: “For in those days [this day] there shall also arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect, who are the elect according to the covenant” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22; see also Matthew 24:24).

I am not sure of all that is implied by the qualification “if possible, they shall deceive the very elect,” but I think it means, at least, that everyone will be challenged in our day.

There are many who deceive, and the spectrum of deception is broad. At one end we meet those who attack the Restoration, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon. Next we see those who believe in the Restoration but claim the Church is deficient and has gone astray. Others claim to believe in the Restoration but are disillusioned with doctrine that conflicts with the shifting attitudes of our day. Some without authority lay claim to visions, dreams, and visitations to right the ship, guide us to a higher path, or prepare the Church for the end of the world. Others are deceived by false spirits.

At the other end of the spectrum we come to an entire universe of distractions. Never has there been more information, misinformation, and disinformation; more goods, gadgets, and

games; and more options, places to go, and things to see and do to occupy time and attention away from what is most important. All of that and much more is disseminated instantaneously throughout the world by electronic media. This is a day of deception.

## Knowledge Is Crucial

Truth enables us to see clearly because it is the “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (Doctrine and Covenants 93:24). Knowledge is crucial to avoid deception, to discern between truth and error, and to see clearly and chart a course through the hazards of our day.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “Knowledge is necessary to life and godliness. . . . Knowledge is revelation. Hear . . . this grand key: knowledge is the power of God unto salvation.”<sup>1</sup>

People say, “You should be true to your beliefs.” While that is true, you cannot be better than what you know. Most of us act based on our beliefs, especially what we believe to be in our self-interest. The problem is, we are sometimes wrong.

Some people may believe in God and that pornography is wrong and yet still click on a pornographic website, wrongly believing that they will be happier if they do or that they can’t help but click or that they aren’t hurting anyone else. They are just wrong.

Others may believe it is wrong to lie and yet lie on occasion, wrongly believing they will be better off if the truth is not known. They are just wrong.

Someone may believe and even know that Jesus is the Christ and still deny Him not once but three times because of the mistaken belief that he would be better off appeasing the crowd. Peter wasn’t evil. I am not even sure he was weak. He was just wrong. (See Matthew 26:34, 69–75.)

When we act badly, we may think we are bad, when in truth we are just wrong. The challenge is not so much closing the gap between our actions and our beliefs; rather, the challenge is closing the gap between our beliefs and the truth.

How do we close that gap? How do we avoid deception?

## Primary Questions and Secondary Questions

There are primary questions and there are secondary questions. Begin by answering the primary questions first. The primary questions are the most important. There are only a few primary questions. I mention four:

1. Is there a God who is our Father?
2. Is Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Savior of the world?
3. Was Joseph Smith a prophet?
4. Is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the kingdom of God on earth?

By contrast, the secondary questions are unending. They include questions about Church history, plural marriage, people of African descent and the priesthood, women and the priesthood, the translation of the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, DNA and the Book of Mormon, gay marriage, different accounts of the First Vision, and on and on.

If you answer the primary questions, the secondary questions get answered too, or they pale in significance. Answer the primary questions, and you can deal with things you understand and things you don't and with things you agree with and things you don't without jumping ship.

## The Divine Method of Learning

There are different methods of learning, including the scientific, analytical, academic, and divine methods. All four methods are necessary to know the truth. They all begin the same way: with a question. Questions are important, especially the primary questions.

The divine method of learning incorporates the elements of the other methodologies but ultimately trumps everything else by tapping into the powers of heaven. Ultimately the things of God are made known by the Spirit of God, which is usually a still, small voice. The Lord said, "God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost" (Doctrine and Covenants 121:26).

The Apostle Paul taught that we cannot know the things of God except through the Spirit of God (see 1 Corinthians 2:9–11; see also Joseph Smith Translation, 1 Corinthians 2:11). He said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." We see that every day. Paul continued, "Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).







Of all the problems you encounter in life, one towers above them all and is the least understood. The worst of all human conditions is not poverty, sickness, loneliness, abuse, or war—as awful as those conditions are. The worst of all human conditions is the most common: it is to die spiritually. It is to be separated from the presence of God, and in this life, His presence is His Spirit or power.

Conversely, the best of all human conditions is not wealth, fame, prestige, good health, the honors of men, or security. The best of all human conditions is to be endowed with heavenly power. It is to be born again, to have the gift and companionship of the Holy Ghost, which is the source of knowledge, revelation, strength, clarity, love, joy, peace, hope, confidence, faith, and almost every other good thing.

Jesus said: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, . . . shall teach you all things” (John 14:26). It is the power by which we “may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). “It will show . . . [us] all things . . . [we] should do” (2 Nephi 32:5). It is the fountain of “living water” that springs up unto eternal life (John 7:38; see also verse 37).

Pay whatever price you must pay, bear whatever burden you must bear, and make whatever sacrifice you must make to get and keep in your life the spirit and power of the Holy Ghost. Every good thing depends on

getting and keeping the power of the Holy Ghost in your life.

### **“That Which Doth Not Edify”**

So, what was the gloom I felt several years ago while reading antagonistic materials? Some would say that gloom is the product of belief bias, which is the propensity to pick and choose only those things that accord with our assumptions and beliefs. The thought that everything one has believed and been taught may be wrong, particularly with nothing better to take its place, is a gloomy and disturbing thought indeed.

But the gloom I experienced as I listened to the dark choir of voices raised against the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ is different. That gloom is not belief bias, and it is not the fear of being in error. It is the absence of the Spirit of God. It is the condition of man when “left unto himself” (Doctrine and Covenants 121:38). It is the gloom of darkness and the “stupor of thought” (Doctrine and Covenants 9:9; see also verse 8).

The Lord said:

“And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.

“That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (Doctrine and Covenants 50:23–24).

Revelation from the Spirit of God supersedes belief bias because it is not premised only on evidence. I have spent a lifetime seeking to hear the word of the Lord and learning to recognize and follow the Spirit of God. The spirit associated with the dark voices that assail the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon, and the Restoration is not the spirit of light, intelligence, and truth. I don’t know much, but I do know the voice of the Lord, and His voice is not in that dark choir.

In stark contrast to the gloom and sickening stupor of thought that pervade the swamp of doubt is the spirit of light, intelligence, peace, and truth that attends the events and the glorious doctrine of the Restoration, especially the scriptures revealed to the world through the

Prophet Joseph Smith. Just read them and ask yourself and God if they are the words of lies, deceit, and delusion or if they are the truth.

### You Can't Learn the Truth by Elimination

Some who are afraid that the Church may not be true spend their time and attention slogging through the swamp of secondary questions. They mistakenly try to learn the truth by process of elimination, by attempting to eliminate every doubt. That is always a bad idea. It will never work.

There are unlimited claims and opinions leveled against the truth. Each time you track down an answer to one antagonistic claim and look up, another one stares you in the face. I am not saying you should put your head in the sand, but I am saying you can spend a lifetime desperately tracking down the answer to every claim leveled against the Church and never come to a knowledge of the most important truths.

Answers to the primary questions do not come by answering the secondary questions. There are answers to the secondary questions, but you cannot prove a positive by disproving every negative. You cannot prove the Church is true by disproving every claim made against it. It is a flawed strategy. Ultimately there has to be affirmative proof, and with the things of God, affirmative proof finally and surely comes by revelation through the spirit and power of the Holy Ghost.

To His disciples, Jesus asked:

“Whom say ye that I am?”

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him,

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

“... Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:15–18; see also verses 13–14).



The Church of Jesus Christ is grounded on the rock of revelation, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. You and I are the Church. We must be grounded on the rock of revelation, and although we may not know the answer to every question, we must know the answers to the primary questions. If we do, the gates of hell will not prevail against us and we will stand forever.

### Stand on the Rock of Revelation

There is a God in heaven who is our Eternal

Father. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. Joseph Smith was a prophet of God who laid the foundation for the Restoration of the kingdom of God. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on the earth. I know this by my experience—all of it. I know this by the evidence, and the evidence is overwhelming. I know this by study. And, most surely, I know this by the spirit and power of the Holy Ghost.

And with that, I know everything I need to know to stand forever. May we stand on the rock of revelation, particularly in regard to the primary questions. If we do, we will stand forever and never go away. ■

*From a devotional address, “Stand Forever,” delivered at Brigham Young University on January 22, 2019.*

#### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 265.



# Come, Follow Me

## Duet for piano

*With conviction* ♩ = 69–76

Music by Samuel McBurney  
Arranged by David Bauman

The musical score is for a piece titled "The Rose Tree". It is written for four parts: Primo (voice), Secondo (voice), Piano I, and Piano II. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The Primo part consists of four measures of whole rests, with the instruction "Play one octave higher" written above the first measure. The Secondo part consists of four measures of music, starting with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Piano I part starts at measure 5 and consists of five measures of music, starting with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Piano II part starts at measure 5 and consists of five measures of music, starting with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The score is divided into three systems, with measures 1-4, 5-9, and 10-14. The Primo part is written in a single staff, while the Secondo, Piano I, and Piano II parts are written in grand staves (treble and bass clefs).

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15

I

mf

15

II

19

I

19

II

23

II

*Solo, cantabile*

*f*

*sim.*

28

II





33

II

Musical notation for piano II, measures 33-36. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The melody in the right hand consists of quarter and eighth notes, while the left hand provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

37

II

*rit.*

*a tempo*

Musical notation for piano II, measures 37-40. Measure 37 begins with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. The piece returns to the original tempo in measure 39, marked *a tempo*. The right hand features chords and moving lines, while the left hand continues with eighth notes.

41

I

*mf*

1 2 5

2 4

Musical notation for piano I, measures 41-44. The right hand has rests in measures 41 and 42, followed by a melody starting in measure 43. The left hand has rests in measures 41 and 42, then plays chords in measures 43 and 44. Fingerings 1, 2, 5, 2, and 4 are indicated for the left hand.

41

II

Musical notation for piano II, measures 41-44. The right hand plays a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

46

I

1 2 3 2

Musical notation for piano I, measures 46-50. The right hand has a melody with quarter and eighth notes. The left hand has rests in measures 46 and 47, then plays chords in measures 48 and 49, and a final chord in measure 50. Fingerings 1, 2, 3, and 2 are indicated for the left hand.

46

II

Musical notation for piano II, measures 46-50. The right hand plays chords and moving lines. The left hand provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment.



51

I

II

55

I

II

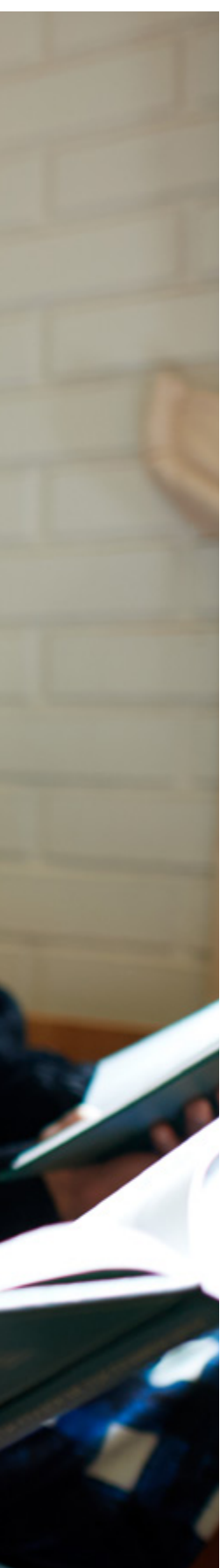
59

I

II







# Meetinghouses— Places of Reverence and Worship



**By Bishop  
Dean M. Davies**

First Counselor  
in the Presiding  
Bishopric

*The Spirit of the Lord is in our meetinghouses and will inspire us as we conduct ourselves in reverence before Him.*

A devoted colleague once shared with me an experience he had when fulfilling an assignment to put away chairs and straighten up the stake center following a stake conference. After 30 minutes of carrying out these duties, he realized that he was the last person remaining in the building. Rather than feeling alone with a rush to leave, however, he noticed that the same sweet sense of peace he had felt during the conference remained with him and was even increasing.

As he finished the assignment and exited the meetinghouse, he encountered another member who seemed to be watching him intently. Realizing what my friend had been doing, this member took him by the hand and said, “Brother, the Lord sees these small things that you do for Him, and He looks down and smiles upon them.”

Years later while serving as a bishop, this same friend found himself alone again in his ward meetinghouse. After turning out the lights in the chapel, he lingered for a moment as the moonlight shone through the windows onto the pulpit.

The familiar sense of peace again washed over him, and he sat down near the front of the chapel and reflected on the myriad sacred moments he had experienced in that setting—the many times he had observed the priests breaking the bread at the sacrament table, the occasions when he had felt the Holy Spirit accompanying him as he delivered a ward conference address, the baptismal services he had conducted, the beautiful choir numbers he had heard, and the numerous testimonies from ward members that had touched him so deeply.





Seated alone in that dark chapel, he felt overcome by the collective impact of these experiences on his life and on the lives of his ward members, and he bowed his head in profound gratitude.

My friend had been wisely and correctly taught that the most sacred places on earth are the temple and the home, but through the two experiences related above, he also came to understand the sacred nature of our meetinghouses. Because they are dedicated by priesthood authority, these facilities become settings in which the Lord pours out revelations upon his people and in which the “power of godliness is manifest” through the ordinances that take place there (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:20).

The meetinghouse combines with the home to bring about the promised joy that faithful Saints can experience on the Sabbath

day. It becomes a place where members’ collective worship causes their hearts to become “knit together in unity and in love one towards another” (Mosiah 18:21) and toward the Savior. For us to render proper gratitude and respect for the outpouring of spiritual blessings that come to us through our meetinghouses, we should enter these places of worship with an attitude of deep and sincere reverence.

### The Meaning of Reverence

In our modern Church culture, the word *reverence* has become synonymous with the word *quiet*. While soft tones are certainly appropriate for our chapels, this limited view of reverence fails to capture the full meaning of the word. *Reverence* can be traced to the Latin verb *revereri*, which means to “stand in awe of.”<sup>1</sup> Could we possibly find a term that more eloquently describes the feelings of our soul when we truly contemplate what the Savior has done for each of us?

I am reminded of the words of the beautiful hymn we sing while in our chapels: “I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me.”<sup>2</sup> That profound sense of gratitude, praise, and amazement is the essence of reverence, and it impels us to avoid any type of language or behavior that might diminish those feelings within ourselves or others.

## Meetinghouses and the Sabbath Day

From modern revelation, we know that a central part of our Sabbath worship is to “go to the house of prayer and offer up [our] sacraments upon [the Lord’s] holy day” (Doctrine and Covenants 59:9). The “house[s] of prayer” in which we gather on the Sabbath are our sacred meetinghouses.

President Russell M. Nelson has helped us to better understand the close connection between our reverence for the Savior and our feelings toward the Sabbath day. In sharing his own experience in coming to honor the Sabbath, President Nelson related, “I learned from the scriptures that my conduct and my attitude on the Sabbath constituted a *sign* between me and my Father.”<sup>3</sup>

Just as our conduct and attitude on the Sabbath are a sign of our devotion to the Lord, our conduct, our attitude, and even our manner of dress while in His house of prayer may likewise indicate the degree of reverence we feel toward the Savior.

## Meetinghouses and Ordinances

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has amplified our understanding of this concept, declaring:

“In addition to making time for more home-centered gospel instruction, our modified Sunday service . . . emphasizes the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as the sacred, acknowledged focal point



of our weekly worship experience. We are to remember in as personal a way as possible that Christ died from a heart broken by shouldering entirely alone the sins and sorrows of the whole human family.

“Inasmuch as we contributed to that fatal burden, such a moment demands our respect.”<sup>4</sup>

It is important to remember that the appointed place for this supreme moment of respect toward the Savior is the meetinghouse chapel. In addition to the reverence we feel during the weekly ordinance of the sacrament, our feelings of reverence and respect are amplified when we consider the other priesthood ordinances and blessings carried out in the meetinghouse, including the naming and blessing of children, baptisms and confirmations, priesthood ordinations, and settings apart for callings. Each of these ordinances and blessings can bring an outpouring of the Holy Spirit if those who participate and those who attend come in an attitude of reverence.





## Meetinghouses and Worship

The Sabbath day affords us the opportunity to worship the Lord during our home study and as a congregation during our sacrament and other meetings. Since the earliest days of the Church, the Saints have enjoyed coming together to socialize and form bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood. Our meetinghouses are even designed with spaces to accommodate such activities during the week. We must never lose sight of the primary purpose of these facilities, however, which is to provide a place of worship.

Worship and reverence are closely related. “When we worship God, we approach Him with reverent love, humility, and adoration.

We acknowledge and accept Him as our sovereign King, the Creator of the universe, our beloved and infinitely loving Father.”<sup>5</sup>

This central purpose of worship should therefore influence our conduct in meetinghouses even when we are engaged in social or recreational activities. Great care should be taken to minimize disorder, debris, or damage to any part of the facility resulting from Church activities, and action should be taken to promptly clean or repair it in the event of such an occurrence.

Children and youth can be taught that reverence and care for the meetinghouse extends beyond Sunday meetings. Member participation in the cleaning of the meetinghouse—particularly the combined participation of parents and children—is a wonderful means of developing a sense of reverence for our sacred facilities. As evidenced from my friend’s experience in straightening up his stake center after stake conference, the very act of caring for the meetinghouse is a means of worship and invites the Spirit of the Lord.



*Caring for our meetinghouses is a means of worship and invites the Spirit of the Lord.*



## Meetinghouses and the Savior

Under President Nelson’s prophetic direction, significant efforts are being made to ensure that the name of Jesus Christ is never excluded when we refer to His Church. In a similar way, we must not allow the Savior to be displaced from the center of our worship—including our places of worship.

We are accustomed to referring to the temple as the house of the Lord, which is an accurate and important designation. We may be more prone to forget, however, that each of our meetinghouses is dedicated by priesthood authority as a place where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell and where God’s children—both those inside and outside the Church—may come “to the knowledge of their Redeemer” (Mosiah 18:30).

The recently announced initiative to adorn our meetinghouses with artwork that respectfully depicts the Savior and the divine events of His mortal and postmortal life is designed to draw our eyes, minds, and hearts closer to Him. As you enter these houses of prayer for meetings and activities, we lovingly invite you to pause, observe, and contemplate these sacred paintings, to view them with your children, and to allow them to increase your feelings of worship and reverence toward God.

The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk declared, “The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him” (Habakkuk 2:20). May we likewise remember that the Spirit of the Lord is in our meetinghouses and will permeate each of our hearts to the degree that we conduct ourselves in reverence before Him. ■

### NOTES

1. “Revereri,” Lexico Powered by Oxford, [lexico.com](https://www.lexico.com/).
2. “I Stand All Amazed,” *Hymns*, no. 193.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 130.
4. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Behold the Lamb of God,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 45.
5. Dean M. Davies, “The Blessings of Worship,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 94.



# PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL FRAUD

*Stay safe by learning to recognize  
and avoid deception.*

**By Marissa Widdison**

Church Magazines

**I**t was a sunny afternoon in Southern California when 80-year-old Doug answered the phone.

“Grandpa, is that you?” a man said. “This is your grandson Max. I’m stuck in New York City and need help. Can you please send me some money?”

Doug had an unsettled feeling. If a family member really *was* in trouble, he wanted to help. But he didn’t recognize the voice on the phone. And he hadn’t heard about anyone making plans for a cross-country trip.

“Grandpa? I need help right away! Please?”

Even though it was difficult to turn down someone claiming to be in need, Doug decided to end the call.

“I’m going to call your dad,” he said. “If this really is Max, we’ll get you the help you need—”

He hadn’t even finished the sentence before the person on the other end hung up. Within minutes, Doug had confirmed that his grandson was safe and sound. The call had been a scam.





## NO ONE IS IMMUNE

Millions of people, including Church members, are victims of fraud each year. It's so common that there's now a "Fraud Prevention and Detection" class at Brigham Young University. In 2008, the First Presidency asked bishops in some areas to read a letter at church.

"Reports of fraud schemes and unwise investments prompt us to again counsel members," the letter stated. "We are also concerned that there are those who use relationships of trust to promote risky or even fraudulent investment and business schemes."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps you've already been a victim of fraud of some kind. If so, don't be ashamed, and don't despair—there are plenty of resources available to help you foil future fraudsters. This article will share examples of different schemes, including tips for protecting yourself. Perhaps you could share this article with loved ones and talk about a protection plan together.

It's also important to understand that fraud isn't just a temporal problem. The last part of this article will focus on avoiding spiritual fraud, with examples from Church history, which we will be studying

next year. God loves us and wants us to be safe—in *every* way!

## AVOIDING TEMPORAL FRAUD

Matt Visher, who helped train Church members and others about fraud protection while working for a credit union, said dishonest schemes tend to have a few things in common. They use a sense of urgency to pressure people into making quick financial decisions. They use shared spaces—like physically accessible mailboxes or public internet networks—to steal from others. And they use relationships of trust to take advantage of generous people.

"Know who you're dealing with," he said. "And don't believe promises of easy money."

Based on information Brother Visher shared, here are five types of common fraud today, along with tips for keeping your money and information safe.

### Mail theft

*When someone uses illegal mail activity to steal items or information.*

- **Example:** Someone steals a new credit card from your mailbox, activates it, and uses it to order packages sent to a place where they can easily snatch them.
- **Protection tip:** Check your mail daily and account statements regularly. If you go on vacation, ask someone to collect mail for you, or have the post office hold it. When you order a package online, ask that it be delivered when someone is home instead of it being left on the doorstep.

### Phishing

*When someone uses messages and links to steal private information.*





If a situation seems suspicious, take the time to do some additional research and ask for help.

- **Example:** You get an email that looks like it's from your bank. It says you need to click on a link and enter your account number and password to "verify your profile." In reality, this link leads to an imitation site designed to steal your information.
- **Protection tip:** Legitimate businesses shouldn't ask you to follow links to share sensitive information. Don't hesitate to call customer service and ask about a suspicious message. Regularly change passwords—you could make a habit of changing them each six months at general conference time. Passwords should be a combination of letters and numbers.

### Malware

*Harmful software, like viruses, that can infect your computer.*

- **Example:** You receive an email message from a friend that says, "I can't believe this is you!" with a video file attached. When you download the video, it embeds harmful software onto your computer and then forwards the same message to everyone in your contact list.
- **Protection tip:** Never open email attachments, internet files, or flash drives unless you're sure you can trust them. If something seems suspicious, contact the sender and make sure the attachment is legit. Avoid using public Wi-Fi (like at airports and restaurants) as people can use shared networks to spread malware.

### Social media scams

*When someone uses fake social media profiles, ads, or job postings to convince people to share money or information.*

- **Example:** On Facebook you see a soldier asking for donations, claiming he's trying to buy a plane ticket to visit his girlfriend during leave. In reality, this person copied the profile of an actual member of the military to con people out of tens of thousands of dollars.
- **Protection tip:** Don't set social media preferences to "public."





Generally, only be friends online with those you know in real life. Avoid posting specific details about your family on social media. Before donating money online, make sure the recipient and collection process are legitimate.

### **Pretexting**

*When someone uses a false scenario to steal money or information.*

- **Example:** Someone claiming to represent a computer company calls and says they've noticed your computer is running poorly. For a small fee, they will consolidate the memory so it runs better. Your agreeing to do this would give them access to the information and passwords stored on your computer.
- **Protection tip:** Check with multiple sources about telephone and online offers, especially if something seems too

good to be true. Don't feel pressured by claims of urgency. Before signing up for something new, and especially before sending money, involve someone you trust in the conversation.

This is a lot to take in! If you can only remember one guideline, this one will protect you from many schemes: *if a situation seems suspicious, take the time to do some additional research and ask for help*. Prayerfully consider which trustworthy friend or family member could be a “money buddy” to talk through financial decisions with you.

And if you feel like someone is taking advantage of you financially, even if it's a family member, be courageous and reach out to your bishop, civil authorities, or another trusted person for help. You deserve to be treated with respect.

## **AVOIDING SPIRITUAL FRAUD**

Satan is a master deceiver. While God gives us feelings that motivate and empower us, like guilt that prompts us to repent, the adversary bombards us with destructive counterfeits, like shame that leads to isolation. While God gives us divine opportunities, like love and intimacy, the adversary confuses us with twisted imitations, like pornography and lust. God invites us to walk an admittedly difficult but rewarding path to eternal life. The adversary plans only to cheat our souls (see 2 Nephi 28:21).

The good news is that we are more powerful than the adversary! President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, testified: “We need not become paralyzed with fear of Satan's power. He can have no power over us unless we

permit it. He is really a coward, and if we stand firm, he will retreat.”<sup>2</sup>

So how can we protect ourselves against spiritual fraud? The Correlation Department of the Church, which tries to ensure that messages from Church headquarters align with doctrine, follows a strategy that could help us. They call it “doctrinal triangulation.” When considering how a teaching aligns with the gospel of Jesus Christ, they ask:

- What do the scriptures say about this?
- What do modern Church leaders say about this?
- What is the Spirit trying to communicate about this?

There is greatest spiritual safety where these three areas agree and overlap (see Jacob 7:10–12). We could use this pattern to study gospel questions we have. This might also provide a helpful framework for exploring topics in family conversations.

### **Learning from Early Saints**

In a couple of months we will begin studying Church history together. The early Saints faced several situations where they had to discern between spiritual truth and fraud. For example, in Doctrine and Covenants 28 we read about someone other than the prophet claiming to receive revelation for the Church. And section 129 teaches us how to tell the difference between a divine angel and an evil imposter. Describing the situation in Kirtland in the spring of 1831, Joseph Smith reported, “Many false spirits were introduced, many strange visions were seen, and wild, enthusiastic notions were entertained.”<sup>3</sup>

What can we learn from these early Saints? When Joseph Smith asked God about the false spirits and deception taking place in Kirtland, he received Doctrine and Covenants 50 as a response. Verses 23–24 give good guidelines to live by:

“And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness.

“That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.”

### **DIVINE TRUTH**

Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are the ultimate source of truth and light. As we follow Them, the Holy Ghost can help us “know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). They also offer peace and healing to those of us who have already been victims of fraud or deceit. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you,” the Savior says. “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). As we try to reject deception in any form, we will enjoy the peace that comes from living in temporal and spiritual truth. ■

#### **FOR OLDER READERS**

Civil authorities warn that those over age 60 should be especially aware of fraud schemes. Seniors are prime targets because they often have good credit, some savings, and were raised to be polite and trusting. Also, they may struggle with memory lapses or other “senior moments” that make them less confident about reporting when they are victimized.<sup>4</sup> If you have already been a victim of fraud, please reach out to someone you trust for help. You are loved!

#### **NOTES**

1. First Presidency letter, Feb. 27, 2008, quoted in “Affinity Fraud,” newsroom.Church of Jesus Christ.org.
2. James E. Faust, “The Great Imitator,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 35.
3. Joseph Smith, “History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842],” 1311, josephsmithpapers.org; punctuation standardized.
4. See “Fraud against Seniors,” Federal Bureau of Investigation website, [fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/common-fraud-schemes/seniors](https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety/common-fraud-schemes/seniors).





# Hearts Pierced with Deep Wounds: Understanding Abuse in the Family

*Unhealthy patterns can develop in any relationship.  
Recognizing them can uncover abuse or stop it before it starts.*

**By Jason B. Whiting, PhD**

Brigham Young University School of Family Life

Recently I was called by a broken-hearted father. His daughter Jenna (names have been changed) was away at college in a new relationship, and it was moving fast. Her boyfriend, Jake, was pushing for marriage and limiting Jenna's communication with her parents. Jenna apologized to them, explaining it as Jake's strong love and desire to spend time as a couple.

Jenna's family became concerned when they discovered that Jake had an ex-wife and child he had not mentioned to Jenna. They called the ex-wife, who said Jake had an ugly temper and was jealous. When Jake found out he became enraged. He said Jenna's parents were "controlling" and cited a time they disapproved of a sarcastic joke he made about Jenna's intelligence. Jake ironically insisted that Jenna make her own decisions by cutting them off. Jenna's parents were desperate as their calls and texts were now going unanswered.

Everyone wants a happy family, but even when people try to live the gospel, relationships can become

hurtful. Some challenges are a result of the misunderstandings and frictions common to families. However, in healthy homes, people apologize for poor behavior and mend rifts, while in unhealthy situations, there are ongoing patterns of harshness or maltreatment that become abusive.

## Domestic Abuse and the Gospel

*"Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives and lost the confidence of your children" (Jacob 2:35).*

Abuse consists of actions intended to hurt or control. It consists of a range of behaviors that may include neglect, manipulation, verbal criticisms, and physical or sexual violence.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, abusive behaviors are common, with some scholars estimating that about a quarter of children worldwide are mistreated physically, sexually or emotionally.<sup>2</sup> Adults also have high rates of victimization, with approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men experiencing physical violence from a spouse.

Abuse can happen in any relationship, and both men and women can be perpetrators. However, men





“The voice that bears profound testimony, utters fervent prayer, and sings the hymns of Zion can be the same voice that berates and criticizes, embarrasses and demeans, inflicts pain and destroys the spirit of oneself and of others in the process. ‘Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing,’ James grieves. ‘My brethren [and sisters], these things ought not so to be’ [James 3:10].”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Tongue of Angels,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 16.



are more likely to be controlling and to commit severe physical and sexual violence, and women are more likely to be terrorized, dominated, or badly hurt by a spouse.<sup>3</sup>

Abuse harms the soul of both the offender and the victim and is contrary to the teachings of the Savior. Modern prophets have stated that those “who abuse spouse or offspring . . . will one day stand accountable before God.”<sup>4</sup> Abusers often ignore or exploit principles of the gospel. For example, I counseled a couple where the husband pursued emotional affairs and gambled away their savings, but instead of apologizing, he pressured his wife to forgive and insisted she had the “greater sin” if she didn’t forgive him. He dismissed her pain and claimed he was right with God or he wouldn’t be a temple worker. When his wife talked to Church leaders, he downplayed his betrayals and exaggerated her concerns, saying she was depressed. The husband was rejecting “principles

of . . . respect, love, [and] compassion”<sup>5</sup> and mistreating his

wife. Her efforts to live gospel principles could not fix a problem he was creating.

Each of us can give in to unhealthy behaviors. There are certain characteristics common to all types of abuse, and the more severe and frequent these are, the less healthy the relationship will be. Here are five of these typical abusive patterns that can help you recognize unhealthy behaviors in yourself and others.

### 1. Cruelty

*“With their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: . . . [their] mouth is full of cursing and bitterness” (Romans 3:13–14).*

One man came to see me for therapy against the wishes of his wife, who mocked him for “needing help.” At church she was friendly and devout, but at home her cold condescension stung like a whip. She criticized his income and called his teaching career “a girl’s job.” She told her son, “I hope you don’t end up a wimp like your dad,” and spent every day on the phone with her mother, where they disparaged their husbands. Critical

### DISCOVER MORE

Leaders can find help for dealing with abuse in Leader and Clerk Resources on [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org). All leaders and teachers of children or youth should complete the training “Protecting Children and Youth” within one month of being called. The training can be found at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/callings/church-safety-and-health](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/callings/church-safety-and-health).

people feel justified in causing pain and “love to have others suffer” (Doctrine and Covenants 121:13). These family members break Jesus’s commands to “judge not” and “condemn not” (Luke 6:37) as they belittle, show disgust, or call names.

## 2. Deception

*“Thou art possessed with a lying spirit, and ye have put off the Spirit of God” (Alma 30:42).*

Deception pervades abuse as perpetrators minimize their actions, blame others, and twist words. This bewilders victims, as one of my research participants described: “[My husband would] freak out and then do the apologizing thing and then say, ‘Well it’s your fault anyway’ . . . on and on until I started believing that.”<sup>6</sup> This denial of another’s reality is called gaslighting, and it leaves victims confused and insecure about their memories and opinions. Like other forms of deception, gaslighting is used to manipulate conversations and put forth a false front.

Those who abuse others vigorously resist admitting that they are hurtful and often will claim they are victims. When Jenna expressed unease about Jake’s criticism of her parents, he got angry and insisted she was “insulting” him. Jake was among “those who cry transgression . . . and are the children of disobedience themselves” (Doctrine



and Covenants 121:17). He not only promoted his false story but also resented the truth.<sup>7</sup>

## 3. Excuses

*“Acknowledge your faults and that wrong which ye have done” (Alma 39:13).*

A humble person feels regret at hurting others and repents and does better. Someone who is abusive resists the call of conscience with excuses. As one of my research participants recalled, “I’d feel horrible about the physical abuse, and then later I would think it might not have happened if she would have just kept her mouth shut.” His “sorrowing was not unto repentance” (Mormon 2:13) but instead was pushed aside with bitter anger and blame.

In therapy, I once told a wife that I had never witnessed her showing godly sorrow for years of criticizing her husband. Her response was not regret but sulking: “Great, here is another thing I am not doing!” Abusive people reject responsibility and are touchy and defensive. They are easily offended by small things.



#### 4. Pride

*“In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3).*

Pride includes entitlement and self-centeredness. One man lashed out at his wife and children every time he thought they were “disrespecting” him. If their opinion didn’t comply with his, they were “undermining” him or “not being obedient.” Pride is competitive and focused on power and winning. In contrast, a healthy family is cooperative, where there is a balance of fairness, and members “deal justly one with another” (4 Nephi 1:2). Spouses should be equal partners,<sup>8</sup> where each has a say and all opinions are valued.

#### 5. Control

*“When we . . . exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, . . . the heavens withdraw themselves” (Doctrine and Covenants 121:37).*

Although we value agency, it is surprising how often family members tell each other how to think, feel, and

act. Some even control through intimidation, shame, withdrawal of love, or threats. One husband had rigid expectations that his wife should prepare breakfast every day at a certain time, meet specific intimate requests, and listen to him regarding his “concerns,” which usually involved how she could improve. He monitored her spending and became angry if she didn’t quickly respond to his texts.

Another mother expressed regular disappointment to her teenage daughter any time the girl showed sadness or didn’t live up to the mother’s standards. If the expectations were not met, or if her husband expressed concerns, she icily gave everyone the silent treatment.

#### Hope and Healing

*“I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee” (2 Kings 20:5).*

Although abuse is heartbreaking, change is always possible. Victims can reach out to spiritual and professional resources and seek the power of the Savior’s



Atonement to heal their wounds. To find help, go to **abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org**.

Those who have been abusive must repent and seek help. This requires going “down into the depths of humility” (3 Nephi 12:2) and accepting full responsibility for their behavior. Change takes more than short-term promises and surface efforts. The pain of deep repentance is soul-wrenching, and some will not be willing to do it, which leaves victims with difficult decisions about how to protect themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Our Heavenly Father is concerned about us just like the anguished father who called me about his daughter. God’s love is as “wide as eternity” (Moses 7:41), and He is deeply pained when His children hurt each other. In a tender conversation with Enoch, He weeps. “These thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, . . . and [I have] given commandment, that they should love one another, . . . but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood” (Moses 7:32–33). There is weeping in heaven and on earth when bodies and souls are wounded. Yet, with humility, God’s power, and professional help when necessary, it is possible to stop damaging behavior and create a home of dignity, safety, and love. ■

#### NOTES

1. For more information on physical violence, see [abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org). For more information on sexual abuse and assault, see Benjamin M. Ogles, “Agency, Accountability, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ: Application to Sexual Assault” (Brigham Young University devotional, Jan. 30, 2018), [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu); and Chieko N. Okazaki, “Healing from Sexual Abuse” (Brigham Young University conference, Oct. 23, 2002).
2. See Maryam Ajilian Abbasi, Masumeh Saeidi, Gholamreza Khademi, Bibi Leila Hoseini, Zahra Emami Moghadam, “Child Maltreatment in the World: A Review Article,” *International Journal of Pediatrics*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2014), 353–65.
3. See Sherry Hamby, “Current Controversies: Are Women Really as Violent as Men? The ‘Gender Symmetry’ Controversy,” in Claire M. Renzetti, Jeffrey L. Edleson, and Raquel Kennedy Bergen, eds., *Sourcebook on Violence against Women*, 3rd ed. (2018), 78–82.
4. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2020, 81; see also [abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).
5. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 81.
6. Jason B. Whiting, Megan Oka, and Stephen T. Fife, “Appraisal Distortions and Intimate Partner Violence: Gender, Power, and Interaction,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (2012), suppl: 1:113–49.
7. For other scriptural examples of resenting the truth, see John 3:19–21; Acts 7:54; 2 Nephi 1:25–26; and 2 Nephi 4:13.
8. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 81; see also H. Burke Peterson, “Unrighteous Dominion,” *Ensign*, July 1989, 6–11, for more information about the doctrine of equality and questions to consider in regard to covenant relationships.
9. Those in abusive situations often are faced with choices about how to protect their own safety, or that of others, as well as whether they need to set boundaries or limit their interactions with those who are hurtful. President James E. Faust (1920–2007) discussed this difficult situation when someone is trapped in “a prolonged and apparently irredeemable relationship that destroys a person’s dignity as a human being” (“Enriching Your Marriage,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2007, 5); see also the “Help for Victims” section on the Church’s abuse prevention website for more information and options.



#### DISCOVER MORE


To find additional information or to contact professional and other helpful resources, visit the Church’s abuse website at [abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

To learn more about how to help victims, read the sidebar “How Can I Help? For Friends and Leaders” in the digital version of this article at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or in the Gospel Library app.

#### RESOURCES FOR LEADERS

Leaders who become aware of abuse where minors are involved as victims or witnesses should contact the Church’s helpline found at [counselingresources.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://counselingresources.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).






# How Do I Talk to My Kids about Abuse Prevention?

*We want to help our children be safe, but sometimes it's hard to know what to say. Here are five conversation ideas that might help.*

## **Equip children with correct vocabulary**

Knowing the correct names of body parts and which are considered private will help your kids better understand their bodies and communicate if there's a problem. Emphasize that they shouldn't take pictures of private parts and should tell you if anyone has looked at, touched, or taken pictures of their private parts.



For young children, explain that parts of the body covered by underwear are special, meaning that we shouldn't touch them on other people, and other people shouldn't touch them on us.

## Teach kids to follow the Spirit and any warning instincts

Encourage children to walk away from people or situations that give them an uncomfortable feeling and to tell an adult they trust about what happened. Emphasize that they need to be especially careful online and should not share any pictures or personal information without your permission.

Some parents of young children find it helpful to use the phrases “tricky people” to talk about potential predators and “uh-oh feelings” to talk about the warning instincts their child may experience.

## Encourage talking

When something scary or embarrassing happens, your child might not want to talk about it, but help them understand that’s precisely when they *most* need to talk with you. Emphasize that you will always love them no matter what they tell you.

Teach young children that if someone asks them to keep a secret, they should tell you right away. Reassure them that they won’t get in trouble for telling the secret.

## Help kids practice saying, “No!”

While teaching our children to be respectful and polite, we should also help them understand that it’s OK to be bold when saying no to someone or something harmful. Emphasize that they can kick and scream or do anything else to get away from someone trying to hurt them.

Practice with young children politely saying, “No, thank you,” and then role-play situations where it’s OK for them to yell, “No!”

## Explain consent

Some peer abuse occurs when one kid mistakenly thinks another is a willing participant in a sexual or physical interaction. Make sure your child understands that they can say no when they feel uncomfortable doing something. Emphasize that they also need to respect the boundaries of others and listen when someone else says no. This applies to friends and family members—respect is important inside and outside the home.

Help your children get in the habit of respecting their friends during playtime and noticing if someone isn’t having fun. Encourage empathy.

## WHAT IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED?

If you think a child has been abused, reach out to civil authorities right away. Some countries have national hot-lines that can help you connect with local resources. You may also want to talk with your bishop, who can help you access counseling professionals. Reassure your child that you love them and that Heavenly Father does too.

## ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
- “Protecting Children,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2019, 64–69.
- “Saying No, Hearing No,” *Friend*, Oct. 2020, 24–25.
- “Telling Secrets,” *Friend*, Mar. 2015, 44–45.
- “When Should I Tell?” *Friend*, Mar. 2015, 46.



# Agency and Addiction

By Ben Erwin

Program Manager, Addiction Recovery Program

*No matter what  
your current  
circumstances,  
there is hope!*

**I**n my role as a counselor and manager of the Church's Addiction Recovery Program, I have seen many people overcome the devastating effects of addiction. I have seen spouses and other family members find peace and healing. These experiences have shown me that

*there is nothing  
"too hard for the Lord"*

(Genesis 18:14). No matter what your current circumstances are, or what your loved one is going through, there is hope! Here are a handful of principles about addiction that might help you in your journey.

## An Honest Evaluation

It can be difficult to admit that addiction is present in our lives. The word *addiction* is often associated with fear, stigma, shame, anger, and pain. How do we know if the word *addiction* even describes what is happening?

To answer that question, it's important to be honest about our behaviors. Those who struggle with addiction have a tendency to lie to themselves about how much power the behavior has. "This isn't a big deal" or "I can quit anytime I want to" are common phrases people hide behind to avoid facing the truth. The Church's Addiction Recovery Program is adapted from 12-step programs used in secular addiction recovery meetings. In all of them, honesty is the first step. It is so important to

*be honest about our  
problems and admit  
we need help.*

Only when we are honest will we be empowered to finally access what we need.

It's important to mention that some of us may believe we are addicted when, in fact, we are not. Addiction is not the same as feeling curious after accidentally viewing pornography, for example, or succumbing to an occasional bad habit. "If behavior is incorrectly classified as an addiction, the user

may think he or she has lost agency and the capacity to overcome the problem,” taught President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency. “On the other hand, having a clearer understanding of the depth of a problem—that it may not be as ingrained or extreme as feared—can give hope and an increased capacity to exercise agency to discontinue and repent.”<sup>1</sup>

If you have questions about whether you have a habit, a compulsion, or an addiction,

*prayerfully reach out  
to someone you trust.*

Talk to them about your concerns. Consider asking your bishop to help you connect with counselors in your area. Secrecy is not the answer to any of these problems. Choose now to start healing.

### **Each Choice Is a Chance**

Addiction is a disease which compromises our ability to choose. As President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, once taught: “Addiction has the capacity to disconnect the human will and nullify moral agency. It can rob one of the power to decide.”<sup>2</sup>

However, while addiction restricts freedom, I don’t think we ever really lose our God-given agency completely. No matter where

an addiction has taken us, we can still choose to turn to Heavenly Father for direction and help. For example, while we can’t control when or where cravings or compulsions come, or how powerful they might be, we can control other simple choices, such as:

- What will I pray about today?
- How can I point my heart to God?
- What healthy coping skill could I practice right now?
- Which support group meeting should I participate in today?

We don’t have to be overwhelmed. We can simply

*ask God to help us see  
the next right decision*

and ask for the power to do it. Little by little, we can use our agency to move us closer to God and recovery—or not. If we misuse our agency, we move further from Him and back into our addictions.

### **Many Parts Need Healing**

Addiction hurts us in many different ways. It impacts our minds as we depend on addiction to manage hard situations. It damages our spirits as we choose behavior that goes against the commandments of God. Addiction often walks hand in hand with difficult emotions and damaged relationships. All of these parts of us need healing.



## The good news is that recovery is possible

for our mind, heart, and body. Similar to the way someone with diabetes acknowledges they must monitor their blood sugar, take medication, and see a doctor when needed, we need to get the best help we can. The healing process involves developing new skills, strengthening meaningful connections with others, and relying on the Lord. Sometimes, seeking help from a counselor or doctor is necessary. In addition, the Church's Addiction Recovery Program offers free confidential support groups. Those with addiction are not bad people learning to be good; they are ill people learning to be healthy.

### Change Is Possible

Some of us who have addiction find it helpful to identify ourselves as an “addict” because this label can remind us of where we’ve been. We realize that we will be vulnerable to addiction throughout our life and accept that we must stick to the routines that protect us. As we come unto Christ, we strengthen our faith and confidence that we are sons and daughters of God. Focusing on our divine identity helps us progress in recovery and fully heal, while labeling ourselves by any mortal standard can be harmful.

The mentality of “once an addict, always an addict” can prevent us from allowing Jesus Christ to change us. The second step in the Addiction Recovery Program is hope. As the workbook states, “Come to believe that the power of God can restore you to complete spiritual health.”<sup>3</sup> We should

## never limit the Lord's ability to heal.

As the scriptures testify, “mighty change” is possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Ghost (see Mosiah 3:19; 5:2). We all have to endure challenges here on earth, but God can ultimately heal us from any pain we experience.

### Moving Forward Together

Let's all work together to reduce the shame and stigma surrounding addiction. We can do this by making sure we understand—and help those around us understand—our divine identity and purpose on earth. We can also be honest about our struggles and create a safe environment for others to be honest as well. Perhaps most important, we can honor the power and ability of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ to heal every single person. Because of Them, there is *always* hope! ■

#### NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Recovering from the Trap of Pornography,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2015, 34–35.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “Revelation in a Changing World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14.
3. *Addiction Recovery Program: A Guide to Addiction Recovery and Healing* (2005), 7.

#### READ MORE

For additional information, see “How can I tell if I am addicted?” at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/study/manual/help-for-me/recognizing-addiction](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/study/manual/help-for-me/recognizing-addiction).



# The Tempest

By Lisa Hains Barker

The angry noise, the howling wind,  
The fearful, growing dissonance—  
As thund'ring waves meet thund'ring sky,  
A full-fledged storm is coming on.

Against the gale my pleas are lost . . .  
Blown . . . scattered. Is there none to save?  
No quieting? Thou carest not  
If I fall prey to roiling wave?

But by the Father set apart,  
My echoed cries He hears, He wakes;  
And graciously with patience starts  
To still the tempest in my heart.

*The author lives in Colorado, USA.*



# What Church Leaders Are Saying about Healing

## The Healing of Broken Hearts

“When sore trials come upon us, it’s time to deepen our faith in God, to work hard, and to serve others. Then *He will heal our broken hearts*. He will bestow upon us personal peace and comfort. Those great gifts will not be destroyed, even by death.

“The gift of resurrection is the Lord’s consummate act of healing. Thanks to Him, each body will be restored to its proper and perfect frame. Thanks to Him, no condition is hopeless. *Thanks to Him, brighter days are ahead*, both here and hereafter. Real joy awaits each of us—on the other side of sorrow.

“I testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ—the Master Healer.”<sup>1</sup>

—President Russell M. Nelson, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

### Seeking Healing in Holy Places

"When we stand in holy places—our righteous homes, our dedicated chapels, the consecrated temples—we feel the Spirit of the Lord with us. We find answers to questions that trouble us or the peace to simply set them aside. That is the Spirit in action. These sacred places in the kingdom of God on earth call for our reverence, our respect for others, our best selves in living the gospel, and our hopes to lay aside our fears and **seek the healing power of Jesus Christ** through His Atonement.

"There is no room for fear in these holy places of God or in the hearts of His children. Why? Because of love. God loves us—always—and we love Him. Our love of God counters all fears, and His love abounds in holy places."<sup>2</sup>

—Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



### We Can Be Made Whole

"As you study Christ's life and teachings in a myriad of ways, your faith in Him will increase. You will come to know that **He loves you individually and understands you perfectly**. In His 33 years of mortality, He suffered rejection; persecution; bodily hunger, thirst, and fatigue; loneliness; verbal and physical abuse; and finally, an excruciating death at the hands of sinful men. In the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary, He felt all of *our* pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, and infirmities.

"No matter what we have suffered, He is the source of *healing*. Those who have experienced any manner of abuse, devastating loss, chronic illness or disabling affliction, untrue accusations, vicious persecution, or **spiritual damage from sin or misunderstandings can all be made whole by the Redeemer of the world**. However, He will not enter without invitation. We must come unto Him and allow Him to work His miracles."<sup>3</sup>

—President Jean B. Bingham, Relief Society General President

### Suited to Our Individual Needs

"Healing blessings come in many ways, each suited to our individual needs, as known to **Him who loves us best**. Sometimes a 'healing' cures our illness or lifts our burden. But sometimes we are 'healed' by being given strength or understanding or patience to bear the burdens placed upon us."<sup>4</sup>

—President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency





### The Savior Can Heal Our Spirits

"Jesus Christ can heal more than just our physical bodies. He can heal our spirits as well. Throughout scripture we learn how Christ helped those whose spirits were weak and made them whole. As we ponder these experiences, our hope and faith in the Savior's power to bless our lives increases. *Jesus Christ can change our hearts, heal us from the effects of injustice or abuse we may experience*, and strengthen our capacity to bear loss and heartache, bringing us peace to help us endure the trials of our lives, healing us emotionally."<sup>5</sup>

—Elder Matthew L. Carpenter of the Seventy

### Seeking Help from God and Others

"Black clouds may also form in our lives, which can blind us to God's light and even cause us to question if that light exists for us anymore. Some of those clouds are of depression, anxiety, and other forms of mental and emotional affliction. They can distort the way we perceive ourselves, others, and even God. They affect women and men of all ages in all corners of the world.

"... When our minds are suffering, it is appropriate to seek help from God, from those around us, and from medical and mental health professionals. . . .

"I testify to you that 'thru cloud and sunshine' *the Lord will abide with us*, our 'afflictions [can be] swallowed up in the joy of Christ' [Alma 31:38], and 'it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do' [2 Nephi 25:23]."<sup>6</sup>

—Sister Reyna I. Aburto, Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

### We Are All in Need of Repair

"If you feel small and weak, please simply come unto Christ, who makes weak things strong. . . .

"... The God of Creation, who breathed life into the universe, surely has the power to breathe life into you. Surely He can make of you the genuine, spiritual being of light and truth you desire to be. . . .

"But this cannot happen if we hide behind personal, dogmatic, or organizational facades. Such artificial discipleship not only keeps us from seeing ourselves as who we really are, but it also prevents us from *truly changing through the miracle of the Savior's Atonement*.

"The Church is not an automobile showroom—a place to put ourselves on display so that others can admire our spirituality, capacity, or prosperity. It is more like a service center, where vehicles in need of repair come for maintenance and rehabilitation.

"And are we not, all of us, in need of repair, maintenance, and rehabilitation?

"We come to church not to hide our problems but to heal them."<sup>7</sup>

—Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

### Our Good Samaritan

"The Savior is our Good Samaritan, sent to 'heal the brokenhearted' [Luke 4:18]. *He comes to us when others pass us by*. With compassion, He places His healing balm on our wounds and binds them up. He carries us. He cares for us. He bids us, 'Come unto me . . . and I shall heal [you]' [3 Nephi 18:32]."<sup>8</sup>

—Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

## Hope and Peace Are Always Available

"Like you, I have witnessed friends and family face challenges caused by:

- The death of a loved one.
- A bitter divorce.
- Perhaps never having the opportunity to marry.
- A serious illness or injury.
- And even natural disasters, as we have recently witnessed around the world.

"And the list goes on. Although each 'change' may be unique to our individual circumstances, there is a common element in the resulting trial or challenge—*hope and peace are always available through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ*. The Atonement of Jesus Christ provides the ultimate corrective and healing measures to every wounded body, damaged spirit, and broken heart."<sup>9</sup>

—Bishop W. Christopher Waddell, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Jesus Christ—the Master Healer," *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 87–88.
2. Ronald A. Rasband, "Be Not Troubled," *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 19.
3. Jean B. Bingham, "That Your Joy Might Be Full," *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 86.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, "He Heals the Heavy Laden," *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 7–8.
5. Matthew L. Carpenter, "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?" *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 102.
6. Reyna I. Aburto, "Thru Cloud and Sunshine, Lord, Abide with Me!" *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 57, 59.
7. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "On Being Genuine," *Ensign*, May 2015, 82, 83.
8. Neil L. Andersen, "Wounded," *Ensign*, Nov. 2018, 85.
9. W. Christopher Waddell, "Turn to the Lord," *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 95.





# She Is Still Ours

Vinaisi Maca Naquere, Lautoka, Fiji

*My husband and I were going to be sealed, but this sacred ordinance was much bigger than the two of us.*

After seven years of hoping and waiting for children, my husband and I were finally blessed with a daughter. Alicie was the light of our lives, but she lived for only five months before dying of pneumonia.

That was the hardest experience of my life. Every day I would come home from work and sit and cry. My in-laws often sat with me to give me strength. I kept praying for another child, but none came. I was lost in sadness.

My in-laws started encouraging my husband and me to travel to the Suva Fiji Temple to be sealed. We had never been to the temple, and we decided that this was the best way for us to find hope and healing.

Nothing could have prepared me for what I felt that day! I knew that my husband and I would be sealed together for eternity. This knowledge filled me with gratitude and love. But I hadn't understood that this sacred ordinance was much bigger than the two of us.

At the temple, I learned that Alicie could be sealed to us. I cried tears of joy as I came to know this sacred



doctrine. Our daughter would be ours for all eternity! I testify that God has provided everything we need for happiness in His holy house.

In the years since, my husband and I have been blessed with a son and three adopted children. Yet we can never forget Alicie. Because of the ordinances of the temple, our daughter is a part of our family forever.

When I meet someone who has lost a child, I feel their pain with

them. But I also know that this pain is not the end. Through losing Alicie, as well as experiencing other trials, I know that God is there for me. When I get discouraged or complain about things, I know that God is always there.

I know I will see Alicie again, and that truth continues to fill my husband and me with deep joy. ■



# He Put Me Back Together

Alaina Dunn, Utah, USA

*My friend heard that I was sick and sent a homemade puzzle made especially for me.*

I had always thought of myself as a healthy person. So I was shocked when I woke up one morning feeling like my chest was being squeezed so hard it was about to explode. I was rushed to the hospital, but after hours of testing, doctors couldn't find the problem. They sent me home, even though I still suffered excruciating pain. Thus began a seven-month-long ordeal of doctor's appointments, hospital stays, and the worst pain I've ever felt in my life.

I started to become depressed. I had to drop my college classes and move back in with my parents. I couldn't go out with friends. I hurt too much to do any of my hobbies. I felt that everything I cared about—my aspirations, my relationships, my talents—had been shattered, and now the pieces of my former self seemed impossible to put back together. And I started to wonder: How could Heavenly Father let this happen to me? Didn't He love me?

After yet another disappointing and painful doctor's appointment, all I wanted to do was curl up in a ball and cry. But as I arrived home, I saw something strange on the porch: an old, tattered shoebox covered in tape and addressed to me.

A letter on the box revealed that the package came from one of my friends. She had heard that I was sick and wanted to cheer me up. When I opened the shoebox, I found that it was full of little pieces of Styrofoam. It was a homemade puzzle made especially for me.

As I put the puzzle together, I began to cry. The puzzle formed my name, surrounded by sweet messages of love and encouragement. I felt that the shattered pieces of myself were now being put back together as I assembled my friend's gift.

A short time later, I started taking a medication that reduced my symptoms and helped the doctors make a diagnosis. I had a rare but treatable condition, and with the proper medicine, I could return to normal life.

Even as my body healed, I knew I would never forget what I had learned. Because of my friend's sweet gift, I knew that I was loved and that Heavenly Father had not forgotten me. After months of feeling shattered, thanks to the kindness of a friend and the love of my Father in Heaven, I became whole again. ■



# “Do You Have a Blue Book with Gold Lettering?”

Michael Jacobson, Oregon, USA

*Sometime after throwing the book away, I was curious to know what was in it.*

Years ago, I received a blue book with gold lettering on the cover from missionaries serving on the military base where I was receiving training for my job in the United States Navy.

As I started to read the book, someone told me that it was false because it was copied from the Bible. This caused me to doubt the book’s authenticity, but I held onto it. I read a little of it, put it in the bottom of my seabag, and then forgot about it.

Over a year later, I decided to clean out my seabag. I found the

book but no longer had any interest in it, so I threw it away. But sometime later, I grew curious about what was in that blue book with gold lettering. I now believe that this feeling came from the Spirit, “which leadeth to do good” (Doctrine and Covenants 11:12).

In 2005, a newfound friend invited me to listen to the missionaries. At first, I had questions and doubts about what they taught, but the missionaries were confident and gave answers that made sense to me.

When I realized that these missionaries were like the ones I had met years before, I anxiously asked them, “Do you guys have a blue book with gold lettering?”

“Yes, we do!” one of them replied. “It’s called the Book of Mormon!”

I was excited to have the Book of Mormon again. In fact, I was so excited that I read it more than once in less than two weeks! As I read and prayed, I came to know that it is the word of God.

Elder Rubén V. Alliaud of the Seventy said something in general conference that relates to my experience with the Book of Mormon: “Any reader who commits to a sincere study of [the Book of Mormon], with the spirit of prayer, will not only learn about Christ but will learn *from* Christ—especially if they make the decision to ‘try the virtue of the word’ [Alma 32:5] and not reject it prematurely due to prejudiced unbelief by what others have said about things that they have never read.”<sup>1</sup>

By reading the Book of Mormon, praying, and trusting in the Spirit, I have seen great things come to pass in my life. ■

#### NOTE

1. Rubén V. Alliaud, “Found through the Power of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 37.





# The Purpose of My Baptism

Rui Cong Hong, New Taipei City, Taiwan

*Before my baptism, I sat alone and prayed that my friends would miraculously appear.*

As a child living in the suburbs of Taipei, Taiwan, I never knew about the missionaries. So the first time I came in contact with them, I was curious about their message. It didn't take long before I was eager to follow their teachings and put the gospel into practice in my life. I felt that this was a way for me to find out if there really is a God.

Within a month, I had been taught the gospel and the commandments that are taught before baptism. Peace came to me through prayer, I received personal revelation from studying the scriptures, and I never missed a Church meeting. I decided that I should be baptized.

The biggest challenge I faced at that time were problems that had emerged in my relationships with some of my friends because they opposed my involvement with the Church. I prayed a great deal about these problems, but our relationships seemed to only get worse.

I invited my friends to my baptism, but they completely disregarded my invitation. I really did not know what to do. Before my baptism, I sat alone on the sofa in the foyer of the chapel, praying that my friends would



miraculously appear so I could tell them about the positive changes I had made in my life and prove to them that I was making the right decision by being baptized.

My friends never showed up, but while I poured my heart out to God, I felt an impression. At that point, I felt great love from my Heavenly Father. I knew that He was there and had truly listened to my prayer.

I originally wanted to be baptized

simply because of all the wonderful things happening in my life, but at that moment, I came to understand the purpose of my baptism.

The impression I received was like the voice of the Lord speaking tenderly and directly to me, saying, "You don't need to prove anything to anyone. You just need to prove to me that you are willing to come unto me and stay true to my gospel for the rest of your life." ■

# Young Adults

## In This Section

- 70 **Is Addiction the Same as Rebellion?**  
By Destiny Yarbro
- 72 **7 Tips for Overcoming Pornography Use**  
By Richard Ostler
- 76 **Helping Loved Ones through Addiction without Enabling**  
By Thomas G. Kimball, PhD
- 80 **Insights from Young Adults on Overcoming Addiction**

## Digital Only

### Supporting My Mom on Her Journey to Sobriety

By Onnastasia Cole

### We All Need Help Changing

By Hailey Boden

### Addicted? You Still Belong in the Gospel

By Stephen Edgington

### Finally Understanding the Savior's Grace Helped Me Overcome Pornography

By Cassandra Hulse

### Stop Making "Dead Man's Goals"

By Eliza Broadbent

## You Can Find Freedom


**A**re you or is someone you love caught in the cycle of messing up, repenting, recommitting, and messing up again? Many wonderful young adults I worked with while serving as a young single adult ward bishop were trapped in the same cycle. **But many also found freedom through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.** The messages about addiction in this month's section offer helpful insight to finding freedom—for yourself and others.

The most important thing we should remember is that **we are all beloved children of Heavenly Father.** Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught, "[God] is not waiting to love you until you have overcome your weaknesses and bad habits. He loves you today with a full understanding of your struggles. . . . He knows of your remorse for the times you have fallen short or failed. **And still He loves you**" ("Living the Gospel Joyful," *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 123; emphasis added).

On the other hand, Satan will try to convince you that you are beyond and excluded from Heavenly Father's love and the Savior's power to transform and cleanse you. Satan will try to keep you in a whirlpool of shame and self-loathing, but don't believe his lies.

Instead, turn to Heavenly Father. **Don't be afraid** to open up to your bishop or branch president and others who love you. As you read the stories of hope from other young adults who have been affected by addiction, act on the impressions you receive. **Be patient with yourself, remember your divine nature, take one day at a time, and believe in the healing power of Jesus Christ.** He and so many resources will help us succeed in finding the freedom we desire. Don't ever give up.

Your friend,  
Richard Ostler



## Share Your Story

Do you have an amazing story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? If so, we want to hear from you! You can submit your articles or your feedback at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).





# Is Addiction the Same as Rebellion?

A better understanding of addiction can help us trust that, one day, the Lord will deliver us from bondage.

By Destiny Yarbrow

In our fallen world, addiction is a frustrating and life-altering reality for some. When we use something excessively to escape life, such as food, prescription drugs, social media, gossiping, pornography, lying, gambling, or even exercising, we can easily find ourselves stuck in an addictive cycle.

As I have watched wonderful, loving people around me struggle with addiction—not just succumbing to wrong choices—I’ve turned to the scriptures and to current research on addiction to better understand these neurological impulses and compulsions.

## The Weeds of Addiction

Navigating an addiction can be like tending a garden. We don’t weed once and expect to be done. We know more weeds will pop up, so we carefully and regularly pull out the weeds to protect the plants.

If we are struggling with an addiction, we might become discouraged when we relapse even after repenting

and seeking help. We may be surprised and frustrated that these temptations are especially strong after very happy or very sad periods of our lives. (Just like even more weeds tend to grow after a refreshing rain or a heavy storm.)

## Addiction versus Willful Rebellion

I’ve found that Satan uses addiction as “proof” that we inherently desire evil, that we are doomed from the start, or that the Lord has given up on us. The devil uses shame to discourage us, pointing out that no matter how many times we repent, the temptations continue to pop up.

There are many reasons why people are prone to addiction, but addiction often begins with an attempt to satisfy “deep and unmet needs.”<sup>1</sup> So while rebellion *can* lead to addiction and addictions *can* cause sin, they are often sown in or magnified in weakness rather than willful rebellion.<sup>2</sup>

Thankfully, we know that weakness can give us the opportunity to learn about grace and develop deep faith in Jesus Christ’s healing power.<sup>3</sup>



## Until Deliverance from Bondage

We find insights into navigating and escaping the captivity of addiction from two groups of people in the Book of Mormon: Limhi's people and Alma's people.

Both groups were in bondage for a significant period of time. Both realized that "there was no way that they could deliver themselves out" of captivity (Mosiah 21:5). Both, with time, turned to the Lord for help.

Limhi's people were in bondage for transgression reasons. Without seeking the Lord's help, they battled their oppressors "in anger" three times. They lost each battle. When they began to humble themselves, "the Lord was slow to hear their cry . . . [but He] *did* hear their cries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens" (Mosiah 21:15; emphasis added). They were blessed for their increasing humility, but "the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage" until much later.

Alma's people were in bondage despite their righteousness, but they "did pour out their hearts to [God]." Even knowing their righteous desires, God allowed time between their captivity and deliverance. As they continued to rely on Him, He promised He would "ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are [still] in bondage." In turn, they "did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord" (Mosiah 24:12, 14, 15).

Both groups were eventually delivered. And we too are promised that if we turn to the Lord in our bondage, we "may stand as witnesses for [Him] hereafter" and will "know of a surety that, the Lord God, [does] visit [His]

people in their afflictions" (Mosiah 24:14)—and their addictions!

## Be of Good Comfort

If you are struggling with addiction, remember that with the Lord's help, this time can be rich soil for cultivating Christlike attributes. As you increase in humility, you will be able to learn patience, compassion, and meekness.

Meet with your priesthood leaders and those who can offer support, and use the many tools Heavenly Father has provided to help you find freedom. Rely on the Lord; as you follow Him diligently, He can transform this disheartening and frustrating challenge into a powerful opportunity for spiritual refinement.<sup>4</sup>

An early Australian Latter-day Saint, when comparing her past with her present, said: "My past life [was] a wilderness of weeds, with hardly a flower Strewed among them. [But] now the weeds have vanished, and flowers Spring up in their place."<sup>5</sup>

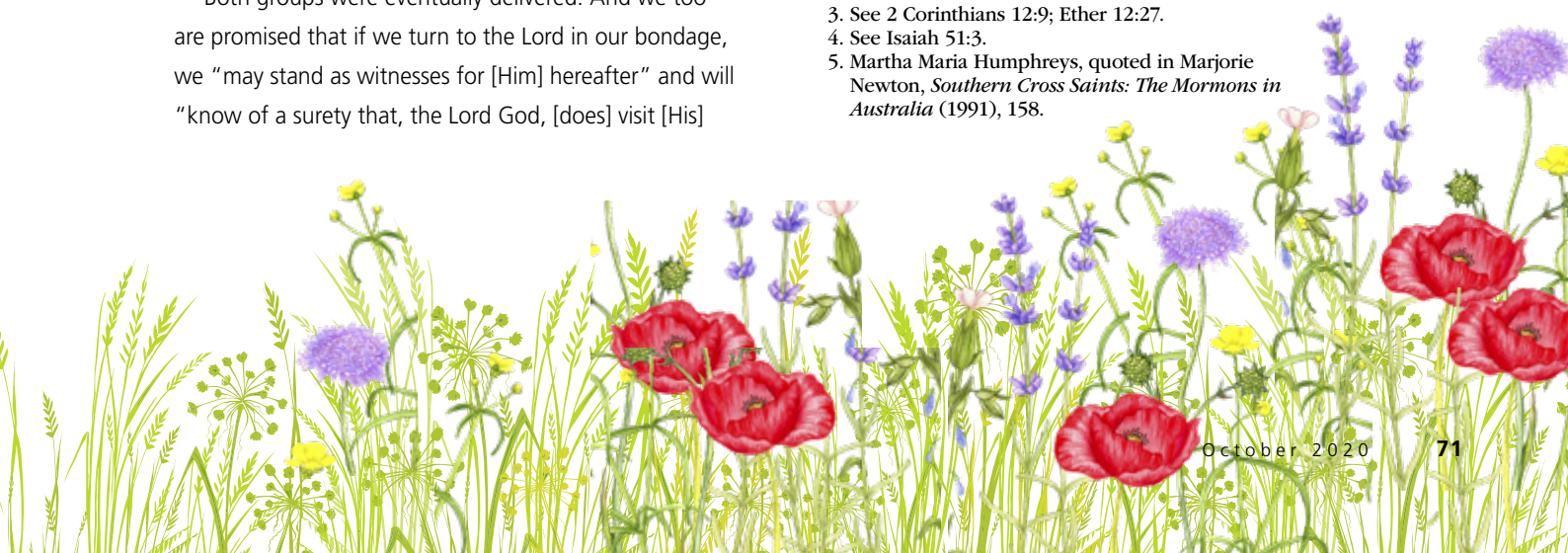
As you and I consistently weed our garden and turn to the Lord in our trials, we will receive the promise given to Alma's people: "Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver you out of bondage" (Mosiah 24:16).

Keep weeding—the harvest is worth it! ■

*The author lives in Texas, USA.*

### NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, "Jesus: The Perfect Leader," *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 5.
2. See 1 Corinthians 15:42–44.
3. See 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ether 12:27.
4. See Isaiah 51:3.
5. Martha Maria Humphreys, quoted in Marjorie Newton, *Southern Cross Saints: The Mormons in Australia* (1991), 158.



# 7 Tips for Overcoming Pornography Use

In working with young single adults trying to overcome compulsive pornography use, I've found some tips that you might also find helpful.



By Richard Ostler

When I was set apart as a new bishop of a young single adult ward, there was a line of young single adults outside my office door waiting to meet with me. Guess what we discussed in that first interview?

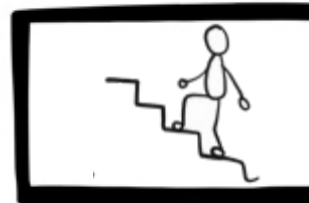
Pornography.

And for the next three years, trying to help young adults overcome a compulsive habit was a big aspect of my calling, so I knew I needed to learn as much as I could. I fasted, prayed, attended the temple, counseled with other leaders, reviewed all available resources, attended addiction recovery classes, and learned from those working to find recovery. I want to share some hope-filled thoughts about what I've learned.

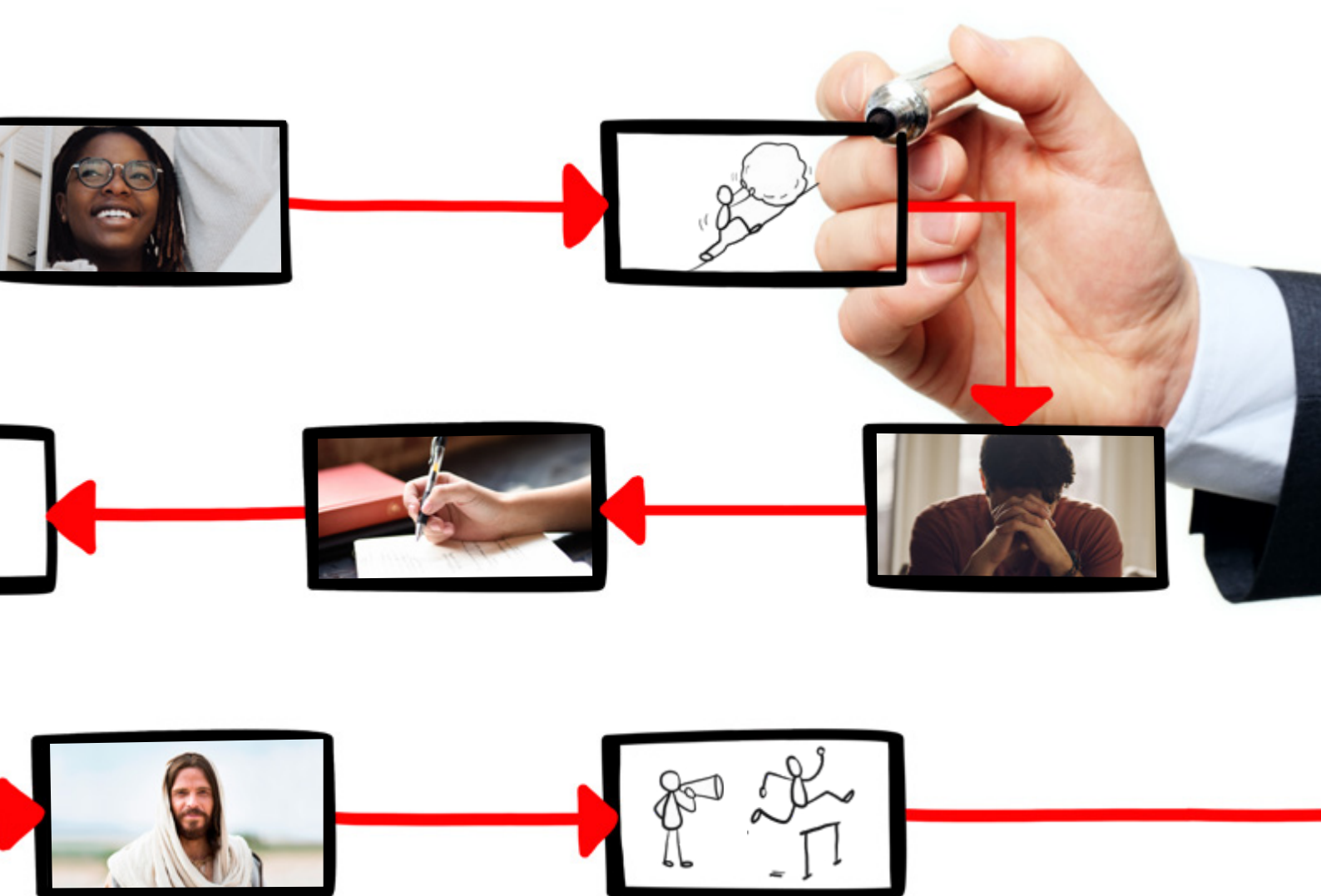
## 1. Know That You Are a Child of Heavenly Parents Who Love You

If you are working to overcome compulsive pornography use, you might feel like pulling away from Heavenly Father because you think you're not worthy of love or help until you solve it. This is exactly what Satan wants—to isolate you from everyone who loves you with the idea that you can overcome pornography on your own and only then you'll be worthy of love.

Because of your divine nature, you are always worthy to receive hope, inspiration, and personal revelation from Heavenly Father and the healing power of Jesus Christ to overcome pornography.<sup>1</sup> Don't pull away from Them or from the people who love you.







## 2. Remove Shame

I've learned that removing shame is vital to overcoming pornography. Shame is feeling like you are broken, damaged, or a bad person. Believing these damaging ideas about yourself can actually keep you trapped in an addiction cycle. Feeling remorse for something you have done is part of the repentance process and can help you change your behavior. But shame makes you feel like your entire character is bad and that you are beyond help from the Savior.<sup>2</sup>

Heavenly Father wants you to have full hope in Jesus Christ and the blessings of His Atonement. Shame looks backward keeping you in a whirlpool of lies and self-loathing. Please stay off the shame road.

## 3. Don't Be Quick to Use the Label of "Addiction"

Many people label themselves as "addicted" to pornography. I caution you to not take on that label incorrectly. Most young people who struggle with pornography are actually *not* addicted.<sup>3</sup> And

incorrectly using this label may make it harder to end pornography use because of the shame, decreased hope, and self-loathing that comes with it.

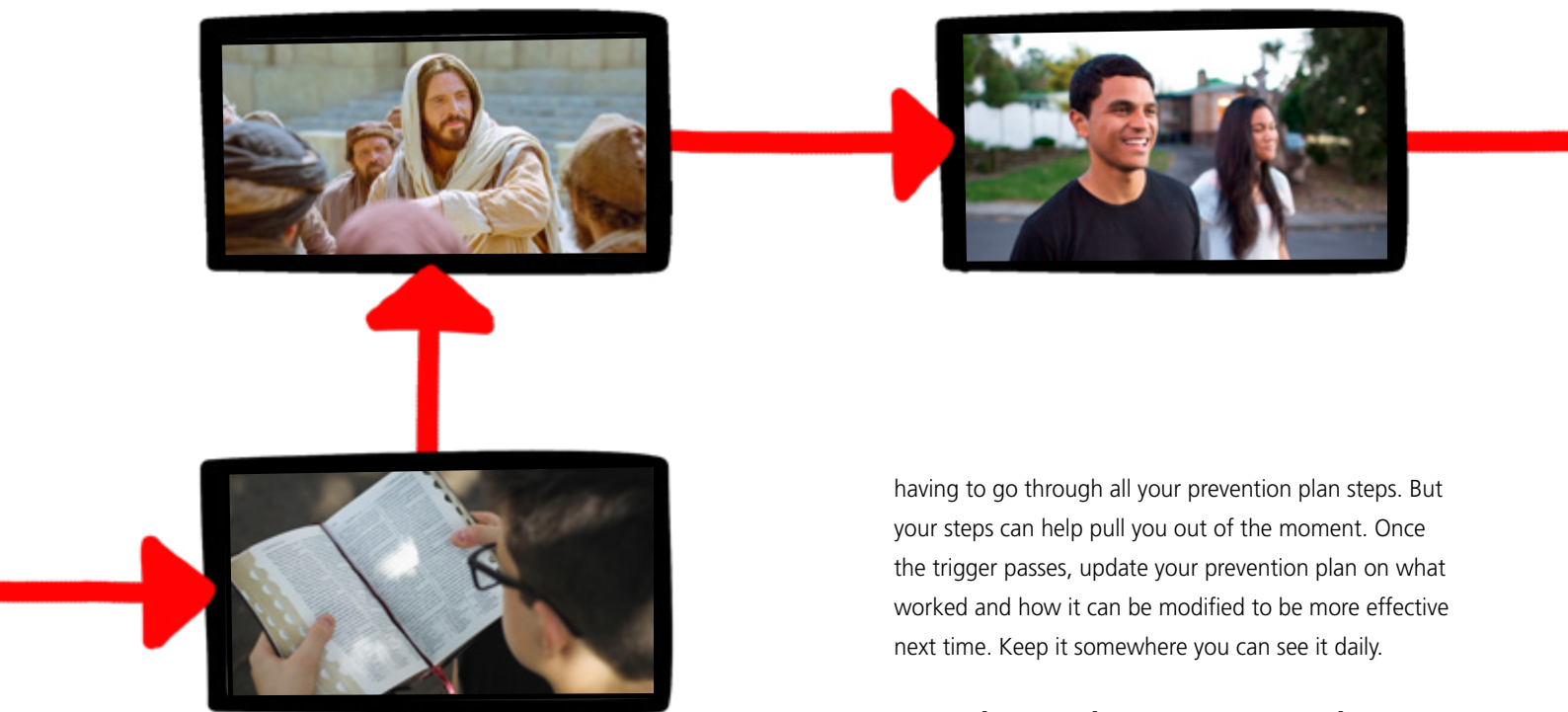
## 4. Create a Written Personal Prevention Plan

A personal prevention plan is a three-part document that can help you overcome pornography.

*Part 1:* List your triggers. Being triggered is the first step in the cycle that leads to viewing pornography.

There are several types of triggers:

- **Situational:** environments that create a trigger because of past thoughts or behavior (like being in the same room or at a certain time of day)
- **Stress/anxiety/loneliness/traumatic events:** difficult emotions or situations that trigger you to turn to pornography as a way to escape and deal with these feelings
- **Visual:** innocent exposure to something not pornographic but triggering via social media, movies, photos, etc.



*Part 2:* Make a plan for how to reduce triggers.

For example, if you have a situational trigger like feeling vulnerable late at night, turning off your phone 30 minutes before bedtime or sleeping without your phone in your room can be helpful. If pornography is a way that you cope with difficult feelings, find ways to better deal with these emotions. Could exercise or medication help you reduce your stress or anxiety levels? Could going out with friends or enrolling in an institute class reduce loneliness? Consider what you're struggling with and what options might be helpful to you.

Also, **don't underestimate spiritual tools.** Prayer, scripture study, service, and church and temple attendance are powerful tools that are vital in reducing triggers and helping you stay strong.

*Part 3:* Plan out what you will do when you are triggered. For each trigger, write out your multiple-step plan.

For example, when you are triggered, you might turn off your phone quickly, text or call someone, go for a walk or exercise, read from the Book of Mormon, or do anything else that might help you redirect your thoughts.

Write down steps that work for you! Sometimes triggers will pass without

having to go through all your prevention plan steps. But your steps can help pull you out of the moment. Once the trigger passes, update your prevention plan on what worked and how it can be modified to be more effective next time. Keep it somewhere you can see it daily.

## 5. Understand Lapse versus Relapse

A lapse is where you mess up, but you quickly recover and use it as a learning experience to improve your prevention plan. A relapse is where you give up, binge, and don't care.

Know that lapsing is part of improving your prevention plan. Don't conclude you have lost all your progress or all the work you've done doesn't count—because it does. Look forward with a positive attitude and know that you are one day closer to recovery.

When you have a lapse, ask yourself:

- What happened?
- Why was this trigger different?
- Have you been stressed out lately? How were you feeling emotionally?
- Did going some time with no scripture study weaken you?
- Have you not exercised a lot recently?
- Is something in your prevention plan not helpful?
- What can you do differently next time?

Write down what you are learning and keep going!



## 6. Believe in the Savior's Healing Power

Jesus Christ can help you in the growing process of repentance, and He has the power to enable you as you strive to overcome pornography. He understands how you feel and is waiting to take that burden from you. Don't think that turning to Him adds to His burden. He has already paid the price for you. Instead, do your best, come closer to the Savior, and ask Him to help you heal, to change your desires, and to give you more strength to move forward.

As Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "As we continually strive to overcome our challenges, God will bless us with the gifts of faith to be healed and of the working of miracles. He will do for us what we are not capable of doing for ourselves."<sup>4</sup>

## 7. Don't Do This Alone

Connection and friendship can also give you power and help you succeed. You should have someone who can help you keep yourself accountable and see you through your best and worst days. They should support you without judging you. And you could also provide the same support for them. Seek out counsel from your Church leaders or family members. And if needed, a therapist or professional mental health counselor can also help you discover the underlying reasons why you might be struggling with pornography.

## Remember That You Are the Parents and Leaders of Tomorrow

You are the first generation managing 24/7 access to pornography. I believe this challenge is peaking with your

generation because you will have better tools and wisdom to lead others away from or out of this trap when you are parents and leaders one day. "Heavenly Father did not put us on earth to fail but to succeed gloriously."<sup>5</sup>

Although these tips can help in your efforts to overcome pornography, don't be afraid to turn to other resources as well. Everybody's journey to recovery looks different. Find what helps you. Don't give up. Take this one day at a time. You can do this. You truly can (see Philippians 4:13). And you will become who you were meant to be. ■

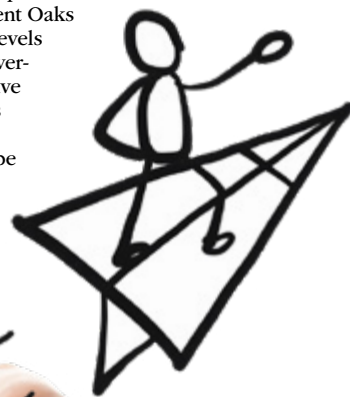
*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

### DISCOVER MORE

Read about one young adult woman's journey of recovery in "Finally Understanding the Savior's Grace Helped Me Overcome Pornography" in the digital version of this issue.

### NOTES

1. Sister Joy D. Jones explained the difference between worth and worthiness in "Value beyond Measure," *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 14.
2. See Wendy Ulrich, "It Isn't a Sin to Be Weak," *Ensign*, Apr. 2015, 33; "Shame versus Guilt: Help for Discerning God's Voice from Satan's Lies" (digital-only article), *Ensign*, Jan. 2020.
3. See Dallin H. Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," *Ensign*, Oct. 2015, 34. President Oaks describes the distinction between different levels of involvement with pornography: "(1) inadvertent exposure, (2) occasional use, (3) intensive use, and (4) compulsive use (addiction)." It's helpful to recognize that not everyone who uses pornography is "addicted." There is hope for overcoming pornography, regardless of what level of involvement you're at.
4. Ulisses Soares, "Take Up Our Cross," *Ensign*, Nov. 2019, 114.
5. Richard G. Scott, "Learning to Recognize Answers to Prayer," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 30.





# Helping Loved Ones through Addiction without Enabling

Does someone you love struggle with addiction? Starting with addressing your own fears may be the best way to help.

**By Thomas G. Kimball, PhD**  
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Addiction recovery is completely real and possible—as a therapist, I’ve seen it. Nevertheless, watching someone we love suffer from addiction can be terrifying. And when fear or stress affects us, we don’t usually perform at our best. We often make impulsive decisions motivated by fear that can even end up enabling the addiction.

In those circumstances, it’s helpful to look at the motivation behind our problematic behaviors. Better understanding ourselves and our family members will help us make good choices in the long run, strengthen our relationships, and support those we care about as we move toward recovery together.

## Recognizing Enabling or Fear-Based Behaviors

Enabling behaviors include protecting the person struggling with addiction from the consequences of their actions. Co-suffering family members or friends

who participate in these fear-based behaviors may think that they’re being helpful, or they may care so much about their loved one’s approval that they lose their sense of identity and perspective.

Examples of these types of behaviors could include loved ones keeping secrets for the person with addiction, making excuses for their bad behavior, blaming others for their actions, paying their debts, tolerating abuse from them, or not following through with boundaries that have been created. These can be detrimental to recovery.

## Understanding the “Why”

It can be easy to get frustrated with family members—or with yourself—for behaving this way. But it’s important to understand that behaviors we often label as “codependent” or “enabling” are motivated by fear, not by some personality flaw. It’s natural for someone to feel afraid, frustrated, angry, or anxious when they want to protect a loved one from harm.

It’s also easy to blame yourself, others, or family dynamics as the reason behind your loved one’s struggle. But you shouldn’t place blame on anyone—addiction is formed from a complicated set of biological, psychological, and social factors. Realizing that you are having a natural reaction of fear to chaos can bring you a measure of peace and help you understand how to move forward.



### So, How Can You Help?

I'm often asked, "What can I do to help my loved one who is struggling with addiction?" And the answer usually starts with addressing fear. Here are a few ways to do that:

- **Find your own healing.** Reaching out for help is important for both your loved one and you. You can start walking your own path to recovery by finding a therapist trained in addiction recovery, exploring the Church's Addiction Recovery Program materials, talking to a trusted Church leader about your situation, or attending an addiction-recovery group for families. Reaching out for help isn't always easy, but doing so will help you understand your loved one's circumstances, find healing, and make better decisions for your own life.





- **Work on loving yourself.** Taking care of yourself allows you to have the energy and strength to show love and support to others in healthy ways. Think of it like watering seeds of self-compassion and self-kindness that will later bloom into something nourishing to others. One way to show love for yourself is by developing more powerful ways to cope with fear and stress. Meditation, exercise, good nutrition, and a positive hobby can help you overcome impulsive behaviors and unhealthy responses to your loved one's addiction.



- **Stick with boundaries.** Healthy relationship boundaries are an important part of the journey to recovery. They make expectations clear and define respectful behavior. An example of a financial boundary is deciding not to give money to someone struggling with addiction until they are ready to accept professional help. An example of an emotional boundary is distancing yourself immediately whenever someone is insulting, angry, or lashing out.

What areas of your relationship might need healthy boundaries? While creating boundaries can be difficult and frustrating, they can end up being the most loving and helpful thing you can do for someone caught in addiction. They are vital to recovery and success. Be patient with yourself and your loved one as you start using boundaries in your relationship—it takes practice!

- **Find strength in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.** The prophet Mormon teaches that “perfect love casteth out all fear” (Moroni 8:16). Love is powerful! And the embodiment of perfect love is our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ (see John 3:16; Doctrine and Covenants 34:1–3). They empower us to cast fear from our lives—this minute, this hour, this day, and throughout our lifetime. Strengthening our relationship with Them gives us the strength and hope we need to reach out for help, find our own recovery, and support those we love. With Their guidance, we “can do all things” (Alma 26:12).




## Holding On to Hope

Although addiction can be devastating, it can also give us an opportunity for spiritual refinement. We can develop courage as we help suffering family members to heal. We can develop patience as we walk the path of recovery.

Regardless of where you and your loved one are right now, don't give up! The courage it takes for individuals who suffer from addiction and co-suffering family members to heal and walk the path of recovery is awe-inspiring. I have witnessed miracles and successes with many who have embarked on this spiritual journey. Keep holding on to hope. As you move toward recovery, you can learn to love yourself and others more fully and find a purposeful, peaceful, and Christ-centered life. ■

For a list of additional resources, see the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).





“ If you are  
lonely,

PLEASE KNOW  
*you can find  
comfort.*

If you are  
discouraged,

PLEASE KNOW  
*you can find  
hope.*

If you are  
poor in spirit,

PLEASE KNOW  
*you can be  
strengthened.*

If you feel you  
are broken,

PLEASE KNOW  
*you can be  
mended.”*

ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND  
of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
“Broken Things to Mend,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 71.

# INSIGHTS

*from* YOUNG ADULTS

*on overcoming addiction*



“Have an accountability partner. **Tell someone you trust** about your struggle and then **set a plan** with them to overcome it. Check in every so often with them.”

—Kaitlin Chan, Alabama, USA

“Normalize the struggle. We are all human. **Openly communicating and showing love** does so much more than you know.”

—Mackenzie Molewyk, Western Australia, Australia

“Going to the Church’s Addiction Recovery Program meetings helps a lot! We can **be vulnerable and share our experiences.**” \*

—Emma Mecham, Idaho, USA

“Communication, accountability, and **self-care.**”

—Tristen Foster, Utah, USA

*from* CHURCH LEADERS

“Always remember, with the Savior’s help, you can break free from addiction. It may be a long, difficult path, but the Lord will not give up on you. He loves you. Jesus Christ suffered the Atonement to help you change, to free you from the captivity of sin.

“The most important thing is to keep trying—sometimes it takes several attempts before people find success. So don’t give up. Don’t lose faith. Keep your heart close to the Lord, and He will give you the power of deliverance. He will make you free.”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Are You Sleeping through the Restoration?” *Ensign*, May 2014, 61.

\* See [addictionrecovery.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://addictionrecovery.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)

## Share Your Insights

Do you have an experience to share about something you learned from this month’s general conference? Send us your response at [ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://ensign.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) by October 31, 2020.

# Come, Follow Me Shareable Scriptures

Download these picture quotes from October's *Come, Follow Me* readings and share them on social media—or send them to those you minister to, your Sunday School class, or your family: [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/102081](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/102081).

SEPTEMBER 28–OCTOBER 11



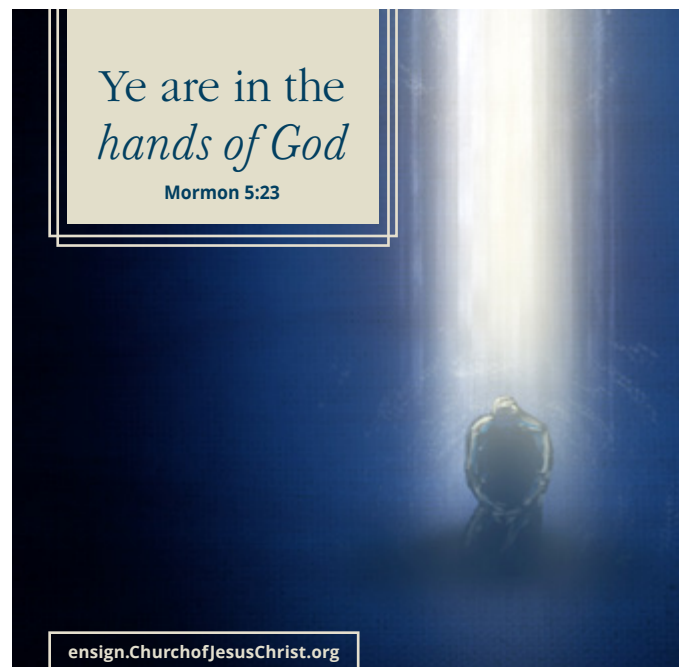
OCTOBER 12–18



OCTOBER 19–25



OCTOBER 26–NOVEMBER 1







## YOUNG ADULTS

*Do you or someone  
you know struggle with  
addiction? There's hope  
for change.*

68

LIVE IN TRUTH

**AVOIDING  
TEMPORAL AND  
SPIRITUAL FRAUD**

42

AGENCY AND ADDICTION

**MOVING CLOSER TO  
GOD AND RECOVERY**

56

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

**FINDING STRENGTH  
IN SACRED PLACES**

36

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upcoming changes, visit  
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