



By Elder  
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Of the Seventy

# CAN WE LIVE

*“after the Manner of Happiness”?*

**T**he one thing we all have in common as children of God is our desire to be happy. Is it possible to live “after the manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27) when confronted with the challenges of daily life?

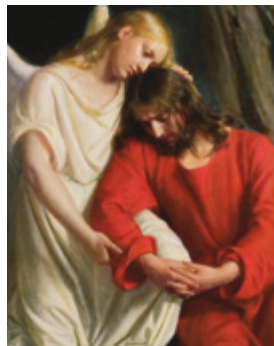
My wife, Marcia, and I have been young single adults, and we have been young married adults. We have watched our six children go through high school, serve missions, date, attend college, marry, seek employment, and have children. We have learned that there are obstacles that may detour us from living “after the manner of happiness.” May I offer a few suggestions to help you along the way?

In our premortal life the Father explained His plan to us. He told us we would come to earth and receive a body. We learned that we would have appetites and passions that would be difficult to control and that we would sin. We also learned that to return to the Father, we had to be clean.

We had a serious dilemma: by entering mortality we would certainly sin, but how could we also be clean? The Father promised us He would provide a Savior who would come and atone for our sins. We “shouted for joy” (Job 38:7).

## **Let the Savior’s Redeeming Power Cleanse You**

The Savior came in the meridian of time and atoned for our sins. Do you want to be free? Do you want to live “after the manner



As we make our way through life, the Savior’s Atonement can make our burdens light and allow us to live “after the manner of happiness.”

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH; RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHALABALA/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

of happiness” with no fear? Let the Savior, through His redeeming power, take your sins.

We profess a belief in the Savior and in His Atonement, but we may have doubts that the Atonement will actually work for us. So we carry our own sins. We worry, we doubt, and sometimes we despair. That is not God’s plan for us.

From the very beginning, the Father told us the Savior would atone for our sins if we would repent. Let Him do it. There is no reason for you to carry your own sins. If you

will allow the Savior to do this, you will be free to act for yourself (see 2 Nephi 2:26; 10:23; Helaman 14:30).

I learned a lesson from a faithful missionary I interviewed during a mission tour a few years ago. He was obedient and faithful, but he carried some things he had done that he could not get over. As I spoke with him, he shared with me a past serious transgression. I asked if he had confessed it to his bishop and stake president before his mission. He had. I asked if he had asked forgiveness from those he had hurt or offended. He had. I asked if he



had sought forgiveness from his Heavenly Father. He had. Then I asked him: “Why do you want to pay for your sins when the Savior has already paid for them? He is standing at the door knocking. He is inviting you to come and partake of the fruit of His Atonement. Turn it over to Him. Let it go. Let Him take it.” (See Mosiah 3:7; Revelation 3:20; Alma 5:33–34; 22:18; D&C 88:33.)

As we talked and shed some tears, he finally understood. He left behind in the office that day a huge burden he had been carrying. He was free to live “after the manner of happiness.”

If you are trying to pay for your sins, understand that you are missing the very essence of God’s plan for you. The Savior has paid the price already. Only Satan wants you to think you can’t be forgiven and that you have to pay for your own sins. Let them go, and do it today. Your daily happiness comes as you free yourself from thinking and worrying about your past sins.

You may ask, “But what if I sin again?” Then you repent again. Let the redeeming power of the Savior’s Atonement work for you as you make repentance a daily part of your life.

### **Embrace Your Trials**

What else might stand in the way of living “after the manner of happiness”? Perhaps it is the difficult trials you confront. These trials may come from physical or emotional illness, family difficulties, schoolwork, dating, employment, or lack of money. How can you possibly live “after the manner of happiness” while facing trials?

In our premortal life the Father explained that we would come to earth to be tested and tried. Facing trials is not only a part of our earthly existence but also essential to our progression. It is how we *become*. Years ago a General Authority told me if I didn’t have trials in my life, the plan wasn’t working for me.

When I was young, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) was the prophet. During his ministry as an Apostle and then as Church President, he had many health challenges. He suffered from heart problems. He had cancer

of the larynx and had to learn to speak again. He suffered three subdural hematomas (a collection of fluid outside the brain). After all of his trials and difficulties, and just days after an operation to treat his first subdural hematoma, do you know what he taught at general conference? He said, “‘Give me this mountain,’ give me these challenges.”<sup>1</sup>

I was stunned. Why, after all he had been through, would he ask for another mountain, for more challenges? He taught us with the example of his life that we grow through trials.

I find it fascinating to think that our pioneer ancestors, who lost limbs and lives and loved ones as they crossed the plains, said after all their suffering, “We became acquainted with [God] in our extremities.”<sup>2</sup>

If we know we are going to live eternally with the Father after our mortal life, can we find freedom and happiness in knowing that our trials are learning experiences? They forge our souls and help us become more like God. You may not feel you are ready to pray for challenges, as did President Kimball, but if you will embrace your trials, ask yourself what you can learn for your eternal life from those trials, and exercise faith in Jesus Christ, He will lift you, direct your paths, and help you overcome. His invitation in Matthew is:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . .

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28, 30).

Don’t let your trials own you. You own them. Look in the face of adversity with faith and ask this powerful question: “What can I learn from this?”

Joseph Smith was taught this lesson in Liberty Jail: “Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good” (D&C 122:7).

Embrace your trials and move forward with faith.

### **Access the Savior’s Enabling Power**

You might then ask, “What can I do in the moment to obtain the strength to overcome sin and to make it through difficult trials?”



We know that through the infinite Atonement, the Savior has paid for our sins. But we must also know that as we make our way through life, the “enabling power”<sup>3</sup> of the Savior’s Atonement can make our burdens light and allow us to live “after the manner of happiness.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has stated: “Do we also understand that the Atonement is for faithful men and women who are obedient, worthy, and conscientious and who are striving to become better and serve more faithfully? I wonder if we fail to fully acknowledge this strengthening aspect of the Atonement in our lives and mistakenly believe we must carry our load all alone—through sheer grit, will-power, and discipline and with our obviously limited capacities.”<sup>4</sup>

Alma learned this lesson as he and his people faced a trial that required them to literally carry heavy physical burdens on their backs. Alma and his people prayed to the Lord, but He did not change their circumstance at first. Rather, He did something unexpected. We read in Mosiah 24:15: “It



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came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.”

When you face burdens in life, the key to access the Savior’s enabling power is to submit cheerfully and with patience to the will of the Lord. Allow the enabling power of the Savior to make your burdens light.

As you struggle with sin and pass through trials, can the Lord really make your burdens light? Yes. We see it every day. How do young single adults go to school, work, serve others, date, keep the commandments, and still live “after the manner of happiness”? They do it through the enabling power of the Savior’s Atonement. How do young married couples go to school, work two jobs, have children, serve in the Church, and still live “after the manner of happiness”? They do it through the enabling power of the Savior’s Atonement.

If you “endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7). Knowing the end, free yourself from sin, embrace your trials with faith, and allow the Savior’s enabling power to make your burdens light so you and your family can live “after the manner of happiness.” ■

*From a devotional address, “The Truth Shall Make You Free,” given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on November 10, 2014. For the full address, visit [web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches](http://web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches).*

#### NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, “Give Me This Mountain,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 79.
2. In David O. McKay, “Pioneer Women,” *Relief Society Magazine*, Jan. 1948, 8.
3. Bible Dictionary, “Grace”; see also David A. Bednar, “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign*, May 2014, 90.
4. David A. Bednar, “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” 89.