

APRIL 2021

Liahona

Pointing Us All to Jesus Christ



COME UNTO
CHRIST

GOSPEL BASICS

Why We Need a Savior, page 6

MAKING YOUR WAY TO CHRIST

Be Not Afraid in Times of Trial, page 8



Piriápolis, Uruguay

Elsa Castillo De Aicardi and her grandson often walk on the beach near their home. In this photo they typify three common passions of Uruguay: family, *fútbol*, and the beach. In many Uruguayan families, grandparents help care for grandchildren. In Uruguay the Church has:



107,103 members



134 congregations



2 missions, 1 temple

Nurturing Children

In the capital city of Montevideo, Andrea Rodriguez cares for her baby girl while her husband, Marcos Sormani, plays with their other children. “Living prophets teach us that parents have a sacred responsibility to nurture children,” she says.





"Be not troubled, for, when all these things shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled."

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 45:35



Trusting the Savior's Promises

We all have troubles in life. Some are small and temporary, while others are significant and enduring. Throughout these challenges, Christlike friends help us feel loved and strengthened.

On page 32, you can meet one of my dearest friends, Heather, who has strengthened me with love over decades of friendship. She is a woman of remarkable faith who doesn't let mortal challenges—like her daily struggle with cerebral palsy—overpower her hope or discourage her good works. She is just one of many of our brothers and sisters who, although diagnosed with some sort of medical disability, are able to build God's kingdom in powerful ways.

I have heard Heather testify many times of the trust she has in the promises of the Savior. That message seems especially poignant during this Easter season, which invites each of us to pause and ponder what is possible because of Jesus Christ. His love can transform our struggles into stepping-stones. Because of His Atonement, there is no pain, sickness, or limitation of ability that He does not understand. He offers complete healing. That is the joy we celebrate at Easter.

With love,

Marissa

Marissa Widdison

Gospel Living App Assistant Managing Editor



"We must not let the cares of the world distract us from obeying the Lord."

Elder Hans T. Boom
of the Seventy,
page 18

FEATURE

Official magazine of The
Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints

April 2021
Vol. 45 No. 4
Liahona 17467

COVER



Finisher of Faith, by
J. Alan Barrett

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Distribution Director: Nelson Gonzalez

Mailing address: Liahona, Fl. 23,
50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT
84150-0023, USA.

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Caregiver? Take Care of Yourself Too

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The Impact General Conference Made in My Conversion

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The Gospel of Happy Endings

By Mindy Selu

Learning from Early Saints: Putting Aside the Cares of the World

By Matthew Godfrey

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50 E. North Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-0023 USA



The *Liahona* (a Book of Mormon term meaning “compass” or “director”) is published in Albanian, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Cebuano, Chinese, Chinese (simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Marshallese, Mongolian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Slovenian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese. (Frequency varies by language.)

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For Readers in the United States and Canada: April 2021 Vol. 45 No. 4. LIAHONA (USPS 311-480) English (ISSN 1080-9554) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. USA subscription price is \$10.00 per year; Canada, \$12.00 plus applicable taxes. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. Sixty days’

notice required for change of address. Include address label from a recent issue; old and new address must be included. Send USA and Canadian subscriptions to Salt Lake Distribution Center at address below. Subscription help line: 1-800-537-5971. Credit card orders (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa) may be taken by phone or at store.ChurchofJesusChrist.org. (Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431)

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 507.1.5.2). NONPOSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Jesus Christ Saved Us from Sin and Death

Because of His sacrifice, we all have the chance to find eternal peace and joy.



We refer to Jesus Christ as our Savior. That is because He paid the price for our sins and overcame the power of death. He saved us! His sacrifice for us, called the Atonement, is the most important event that ever happened. Because of Him, death is not the end. Because of Him, we can be forgiven of our sins, become clean again, and grow better each day.

Jesus Christ Was the Firstborn

Before coming to earth, we lived with our heavenly parents. As the Firstborn, Jesus Christ helped create this beautiful world. He was chosen to be our Savior and agreed to be born on earth so He could set a perfect example, teach His gospel, and complete the Atonement for us.

Jesus Christ Paid for Our Sins

When Jesus knew He would soon die, He went to a garden called Gethsemane to pray. During that prayer, He began to pay the price for our sins. He willingly suffered so that we don't have to—if we repent. As we turn away from our sins and follow the Savior instead, we can find forgiveness and healing. Because of the Savior, we can progress spiritually in this life and have eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

Jesus Christ Overcame Death

After His prayer in Gethsemane, Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and sentenced to death by crucifixion. Even though He was all-powerful, Jesus allowed Himself to die on the cross. His followers lovingly placed His body in a tomb. They didn't realize that although His body was dead, His spirit was still alive in the spirit world. Three days later, Jesus came to life again and visited them, proving that He could conquer death. This completed the Atonement. Because Jesus was resurrected, each of us will live again after we die.



The Meaning of Christmas and Easter

Much of the world celebrates two holidays that help us remember the Atonement of Jesus Christ. During Christmas, we remember with gratitude that Jesus was willing to accept the mission of coming to earth, even though that included suffering and dying for us. Easter celebrates the Savior's victory over sin and death, which gives us hope for an eternal future of joy.

What Do Scriptures Say about the Savior's Atonement?

Jesus suffered pains, sicknesses, and temptations of every kind. Because He knows us perfectly, He can “succor,” or help, us. (See Alma 7:11–12.)

The Savior understands our sorrows and grief (see Isaiah 53:2–5).

God sent Jesus to save us because God loves each one of us (see John 3:16–17).

Jesus prayed for His followers, including us, to be protected from evil and to be one with Him and Heavenly Father (see John 17).

Our Savior invites us to follow Him and return to His presence (see Doctrine and Covenants 19:16–19, 23–24; 132:23).

Words to Remember

We hope you have enjoyed learning about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Here are some other gospel words from this issue:

Grace: Help or strength given to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see page 10).

Full-time mission: When members of the Church accept an assignment to leave their daily life and do gospel work each day for a period of time (see page 21).

Adversary: Another name for Satan, the devil (see page 22).





**By Elder
Jeffrey R.
Holland**

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

Pursuing the Fulness of Christ

May I offer a few thoughts about the personal quest each of you will make in seeking “the fulness” of Christ’s stature (see Ephesians 4:13). I hope they will be of some value to you in your life and in the circumstances in which you find yourselves.

Some of you are where you want to be, or you at least know where you want to go with your lives. Some of you seem to have many blessings and wonderful choices ahead of you. Others of you feel, for a time and for whatever reason, less fortunate and with fewer attractive paths lying immediately ahead.

But wherever you are going and however you work through your challenges in getting there, I ask you to come unto the Savior, Jesus Christ, as the imperative first

*This Easter season,
make your way to
Jesus Christ and seek
His reassuring voice
of peace.*

step in getting to your personal destination, in finding your individual happiness and strength, and in achieving your ultimate destiny and success (see

1 Nephi 10:18; 2 Nephi 26:33; Omni 1:26; Doctrine and Covenants 18:11).

All of that can be yours if the answer to the question “Where goest thou?” (Moses 4:15) is “Wherever you are, Lord.”

Life can be challenging. We have pain and regrets and real problems to work through. We have disappointments and sorrow, all kinds of highs and lows. But the Lord and the prophets have spoken enough encouraging words about how to face those problems to fill a cosmic journal.

“Peace I Leave with You”

The Savior’s benediction upon His disciples even as He moved toward the pain and agony of Gethsemane and Calvary is the most moving of these words. On that night, the night of the greatest suffering that has ever taken place in the world or ever will take place, the Savior said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

What a stunning view of life in the most agonizing of hours! How can He possibly say that, facing what He knows He is facing? He can say that because His is the Church and the gospel of the happy endings! For us, the victory is already won. He is taking the long view; He is sharing the big picture.

I think some of us, however, must still have in us that clichéd remnant of Puritan heritage that says it is somehow wrong to be comforted or helped, that we are supposed to be miserable about something all of the time. I submit that to “be of good cheer” (John 16:33) in the quest for “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”



Don't worry about Christ running out of miracles to help you. His "grace is sufficient."

(Ephesians 4:13) may be the commandment that is, even in the hearts of otherwise faithful Latter-day Saints, almost universally disobeyed; and yet surely nothing could be more grievous to the Lord's merciful heart.

As concerned as I would be if somewhere in their lives, one of my children were seriously troubled or unhappy or disobedient, nevertheless I would be infinitely more devastated if I felt that at such a time that child could not trust me to help or thought his or her interest was unimportant to me or unsafe in my care.

In that same spirit, I am convinced that none of us can appreciate how deeply it wounds the loving heart of God the Father or His Son, the Savior of the world, when They find that people do not feel confident in Their care or secure in Their hands or trust in Their commandments. My friends, for that reason alone, we have a duty to be cheerful!

His "Grace Is Sufficient"

Another piece of counsel about seeking Christ and the measure of His fulness occurred after Jesus had performed the miracle of feeding the 5,000 from five loaves of bread and two fishes (see Matthew 14:13–21). (By the way, don't worry about Christ running out of miracles to help you. His "grace is sufficient" [2 Corinthians 12:9]. That is a spiritual, eternal lesson of this miracle. He has plenty of blessings to go around with several baskets full left over! Be believing and enjoy His offer of "the bread of life"! [John 6:35].)

After Jesus had fed the multitude, He sent them away and put His disciples into a fishing boat to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He then "went up into a mountain apart to pray" (Matthew 14:23).

As the disciples set out in their boat, it was toward evening, and the night was stormy. The winds must have been ferocious from the

start. Because of the winds, these men probably never even raised the sails but labored only with the oars—and labor it would have been.

We know this because by the time of “the fourth watch of the night” (Matthew 14:25)—somewhere between 3:00 and 6:00 a.m.—they had gone only a few miles (see John 6:19). By then the ship was caught up in a truly violent storm.

But, as always, Christ was watching over them. Seeing their difficulty, the Savior simply took the most direct approach to their boat, striding out across the waves to help them.

“Be Not Afraid”

In their moment of great extremity, the disciples looked and saw in the darkness this wonder in a fluttering robe coming toward them on the ridges of the sea. They cried out in terror at the sight, thinking that it was a phantom upon the waves. Then, through the storm and darkness—when the sea seemed so great and their boat seemed so small—there came the ultimate and reassuring voice of peace from their Master: “It is I; be not afraid” (Matthew 14:27).

This scriptural account reminds us that in coming to Christ, seeking His fulness, or in His coming to us to bring us that fulness, the first step may fill us with something very much like sheer terror. It shouldn’t, but it sometimes does. One of the grand ironies of the gospel is that the very source of help and safety being offered us is the thing from which we may, in our mortal shortsightedness, flee.

For whatever the reason, I have seen investigators run from baptism. I have seen elders run from a mission call. I have seen sweethearts run from marriage. I have seen members run from challenging callings. And I have seen people run from their Church membership.

Too often we run from the very things that will save us and soothe us. Too often we see gospel commitments as something to be feared and then forsaken.

Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) said: “Into every adult human life come experiences like unto the battling of the storm-tossed voyagers with contrary winds and threatening seas; oftentimes the night of struggle and danger is far advanced before succor appears; and then, too frequently the saving aid is mistaken for a greater terror. [But,] as came unto [these disciples] in the midst of the turbulent waters, so

comes to all who toil in faith, the voice of the Deliverer—‘It is I; be not afraid.’”¹

Come unto Him

The wonderful thing about this invitation to receive the Savior, to come to Him and pursue the fulness of His stature, is that anybody can do it. That doesn’t mean everyone you know wants to keep the commandments, or that everyone you bump into will be keeping the commandments. But what it does mean is that it is possible to keep the commandments without any special gift or inheritance to do so.

I dearly plead for faith that is “shining and bright and pure and robust,” for Christ to “be brought into every square inch of [our] culture,”² and for the stature of Christ to be at full measure in our lives (see Ephesians 4:13).

Life will challenge you. Difficulties will come. Heartbreaks will strike. Loved ones will die. So, wherever you are going, make your way to Jesus Christ first. Remember that His suffering and Resurrection make possible our victory over difficulty and death. Make your covenants with Him and keep them as you journey on.

In all my weakness, which I readily acknowledge, I yearn for us to achieve “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” I want to come unto Him. I want Him, if possible, to come unto me. And I truly want that blessing for all of you. ■

From a multiregional young adult devotional address, “The Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ,” given in Stanford, California, USA, on February 9, 2020.

NOTES

1. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (1916), 337.
2. Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (2010), 248.

Mom's Empty Chair

By Catherine McDermott, Utah, USA

Each Sunday in Relief Society, my mother always sat in the same place on the front row.

My husband and I lived in the same ward as my angel mother. Each Sunday, as a member of the Relief Society presidency, I sat at the front of the Relief Society room, facing the sisters. My mother always sat in the same place on the front row.

I enjoyed watching her responses to the lessons and hearing her comments. After each meeting, she kissed my cheek and squeezed my hand. My mother and I were close, so it broke my heart when she passed away unexpectedly.

After her funeral, my emotions remained tender. When Sunday arrived, my husband asked if I would be all right attending church without him. His calling often took him away from our ward.

"I will be all right until I see Mom's empty chair," I said. "I don't know if I can see that empty chair and keep my emotions under control."

My husband suggested that I try not to look at the chair. I decided to do my best.

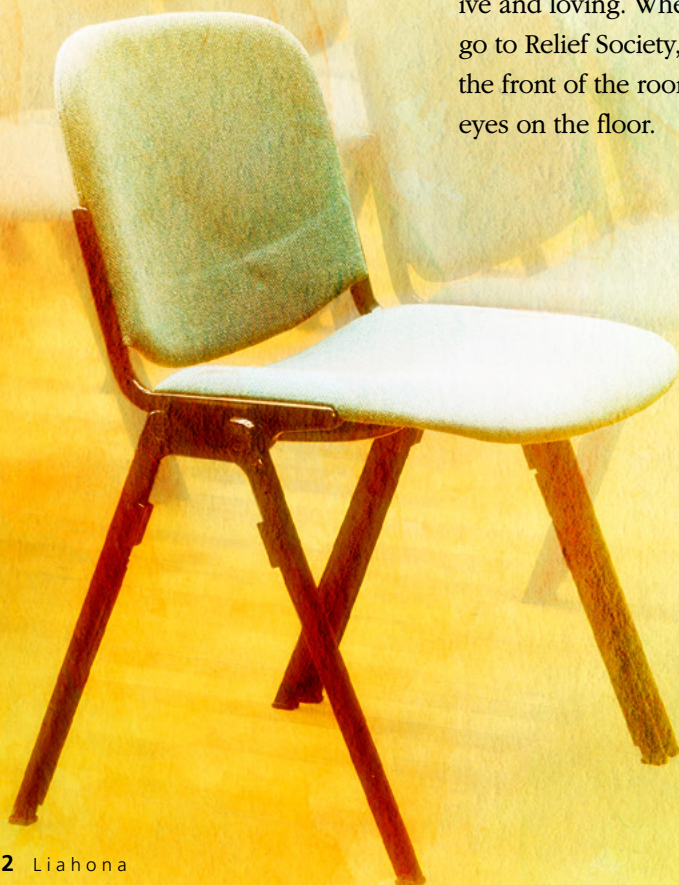
Everyone at church was supportive and loving. When it came time to go to Relief Society, I took my seat at the front of the room, but I kept my eyes on the floor.

As the lesson began, however, I couldn't help but look toward my mother's usual spot. I expected to see her empty chair, but instead I saw my ministering sister sitting in her place. She smiled at me. I felt relief and gratitude for her kindness. I was able to get through the meeting without being overcome by grief. After the meeting I thanked her.

"Seeing Mom's empty chair was the one thing I knew I couldn't handle today. How did you know?" I asked her.

"When I walked into the room today, I had a feeling that seeing her empty chair would be hard for you," she replied. "So I decided to sit there."

This kind act meant more to me than she knew. I am thankful she was in tune with the Spirit's prompting. I know that even small acts can have a healing effect on those we minister to. I believe this is how the Savior would have us minister to each other. ■



A photograph of a woman, Josie Delgada, smiling and holding a young child. The woman is wearing a red and white striped shirt. The child is wearing a red shirt. They are standing in front of a background of green leaves.

Josie Delgada Trinidad

Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

Perhaps my calling in this world is to take care of those that don't have mothers or are far away from their mothers.

I used to feel sad about being single and longed for children of my own, but motherhood is a special calling God gives to every woman. Maybe you do not have your own children, but you can still be a mother.

DISCOVER MORE

- Read Josie's story at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42113](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/42113).

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLOTTE LARCABAL

"Sister, I Love You"

By Bill McGraw, Oklahoma, USA

We should never feel embarrassed for acting on a prompting.

During an interview while I served in an elders quorum presidency, I asked a fellow quorum member if he had ever felt and acted on a spiritual prompting. He thought for a moment and shared an experience.

One afternoon he was washing dishes when he received a strong impression to go knock on a neighbor's door. He did not understand why, but the prompting was powerful and urgent. He stopped what he was doing and left right away.

He arrived at his neighbor's door, not knowing what to do or say, and knocked. No one answered. He knocked again. There was still no answer. Concluding that no one was home, he turned to leave but then felt another prompting.

He walked back to the door and simply said, "Sister, I love you." Then he departed.

He thought this experience was unusual, and he felt a little embarrassed by it. I told him that the Lord does not always tell us the reasons for promptings, but we should never feel embarrassed for acting on them. This brother moved away shortly after our interview.

During a fast and testimony meeting a year later, a sister I did not know walked to the stand to bear her testimony. Through tears, she explained that she had been away from the Church for several years, and during that time she became so depressed that she felt she could not go on any longer.

"Heavenly Father, if You really exist and if You really love me," she prayed, "tell me now so I understand!"

Almost immediately, she heard a knock on her door and then another. When she didn't answer, she heard a voice say, "Sister, I love you."

She said feelings of love overwhelmed her, and she found new strength to face her troubled life. She said things were still not great, but her life was improving.

I had no part in this experience, but I have still been blessed. I gained insight into how two seemingly unrelated acts of faith demonstrated that our Father in Heaven knows all of us, and He calls upon us to act on promptings to help His children. I am grateful for, and cherish, this knowledge. ■

Here for a Reason

By Matt Morrell, Utah, USA

Heavenly Father loves us and wants to bless us, sometimes in ways we don't expect.

I had been on my mission in the Netherlands and Belgium for over a year when my mission president called to inform me that I was being transferred to a new area.

He told me where I was going and who my companion would be and thanked me for my willingness to serve. I had hoped to go to a different area, but I moved across the country to my new area and did my best to forget myself and go to work.

From the moment I arrived, I wondered why I had been assigned there. One day my companion said we had an appointment with a less-active woman from Puerto Rico. She spoke only Spanish. Fortunately my companion spoke Spanish, because I sure didn't!

At the appointment, while my companion spoke with the sister, I just smiled and nodded. Before giving our message, my companion asked the sister if she had a Book of Mormon in Dutch that I could use to follow along. We had given away our last copy earlier that day. She grabbed a book from her top shelf.

My companion opened the book and read the cover page. He looked



at me and asked, "Do you know this person?"

He showed me the cover page, which had a testimony written by another Elder Morrell. I recognized the address that accompanied the message.

Years earlier, my cousin had served in this sister's ward as a missionary in Puerto Rico. When he and his companion learned she was moving to the Netherlands, they gave her a Dutch Book of Mormon with their written testimonies.

After reading my cousin's testimony, I received a strong prompting.

"You are here for a reason," the Spirit seemed to say. "There are people in this area who are waiting to be brought to the gospel through you."

When we explained that the elder who wrote his testimony and I were cousins, this sister said she felt that God was reaching out to her to show her how much He loved her and wanted her to come back to church.

Heavenly Father loves us and wants to bless us, sometimes in ways we don't expect. I felt humbled to be an instrument in the Lord's hands to bless this sister's life. ■

How to **Not** **Single Out** the **Singles**

By Jacob Call

As we start the next ward conference meeting, please move to sit with your families.”

Comments like this always make me cringe a little. As a male Church member who is single, where should I sit? Sometimes I feel that other people aren't sure where I should sit—or fit in—either. What can we do as a gospel family to help everyone, whether they're married or not, feel welcome and included?

Following are three ideas that may help.

Here are some suggestions to help you and your ward help single members feel more at home in church.



Reconsider Ward Habits

The restored gospel helps us understand beautiful doctrines about eternal families. But I've seen how some cultural habits surrounding the doctrine leave unmarried people feeling like fringe members of the Church.

For example, I've attended wards that ask only married couples to give the opening and closing prayers at meetings. I've heard ward members express concern when a single man is called to the bishopric. These and other small actions can create an emotional barrier for unmarried people to overcome before they feel at home in church.

Are there any habits you or your ward could change to be more inclusive? This might be a good question for a bishopric or ward council to consider.

Be Careful of Unintentional Exclusion

Sometimes even those of us who think we practice inclusion can be unintentionally exclusionary. For example, when I served as a nursery leader, I often missed announcements that were shared during the second hour of Church meetings. When I told a leader about this concern, he said, "But doesn't your wife hear the announcements in Relief Society?"

At the time, I just laughed. But this good man's response represented a mindset that excluded me. Do we view our fellow Church members



as part of a "family ward," made up of married men and women with children? Or do we view one another as part of a "ward family," made up of individuals who care for and strengthen one another? Both views are important. While remaining aware of families in our ward, we can also get to know people individually—their circumstances, interests, needs—and perhaps prevent unintentional exclusion.

Expand Your Family Circle

After the bishopric member invited families to sit together during ward conference, someone tapped me on my shoulder.

"I guess you're in my family for the next hour," a kind sister said, inviting me to sit with her husband and children. I am grateful for people like her who show they care about me and want me to feel welcome. Another such person was a bishop who regularly invited me to weekly home evening with his family.

Who could benefit from your family expanding their circle of fellowship? Your efforts don't have to be perfect. A simple invitation can make a big difference.

Single Saints: A Powerful Force for Good

I have a full life with many meaningful relationships, but I have plenty of lonely, empty moments when I long for more. Based on my conversations with other unmarried Saints, I believe these feelings are common.

However, I try not to feel sorry for myself. We unmarried people can be a powerful force for good in the lives of others. We can help strengthen friends, the families we love, and entire wards and stakes. The Church needs us! We shouldn't leave the responsibility for connection in the hands of others. We can introduce ourselves in our wards, volunteer to serve, and speak up for what we need.

Lonely, empty moments will come no matter where we are in life or what kind of relationship we're in (or not in). The closer we are to our Heavenly Father and the more we can feel His love, the more power we will have to do good, find joy, and connect with our brothers and sisters. ■

The author lives in Alabama, USA.

EACH IS WORTHY

"We should not be classified as married or single but as members of the Church, each worthy of the same attention, the same care, the same opportunities to be of service."

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008),
"A Conversation with Single Adults," *Ensign*,
Nov. 1997, 18.

*I spent all afternoon on my bicycle, going from
one business to the next, looking for a job.*





By Elder
Hans T. Boom
Of the Seventy

OVERCOME THE CARES OF THE WORLD

The cares of the world must not distract me from obeying God's word.

Even when we are promised great blessings, if we worry about the cares of the world instead of the will of the Lord, we will lose those blessings. This is clearly demonstrated by the experience of a man in the early days of the Restoration.

James Covell had been a minister in another faith for 40 years, but after hearing the restored gospel, he “covenanted with the Lord that he would obey any command that the Lord would give to him through Joseph the Prophet” (Doctrine and Covenants 39, section heading). Through Joseph, the Lord told Covell, “Hearken to my voice, which saith unto thee: Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on my name, and you shall receive my Spirit, and a blessing so great as you never have known” (Doctrine and Covenants 39:10).

However, Covell soon “rejected the word of the Lord, and returned to his former principles and people” (Doctrine and Covenants 40, section heading). Speaking of Covell, the Lord said that “he received the word with gladness, but straightway Satan tempted him; and the fear of persecution and the cares of the world caused him to reject the word” (Doctrine and Covenants 40:2). Because of his worry over worldly cares, Covell lost the blessing He had been promised by the Lord.

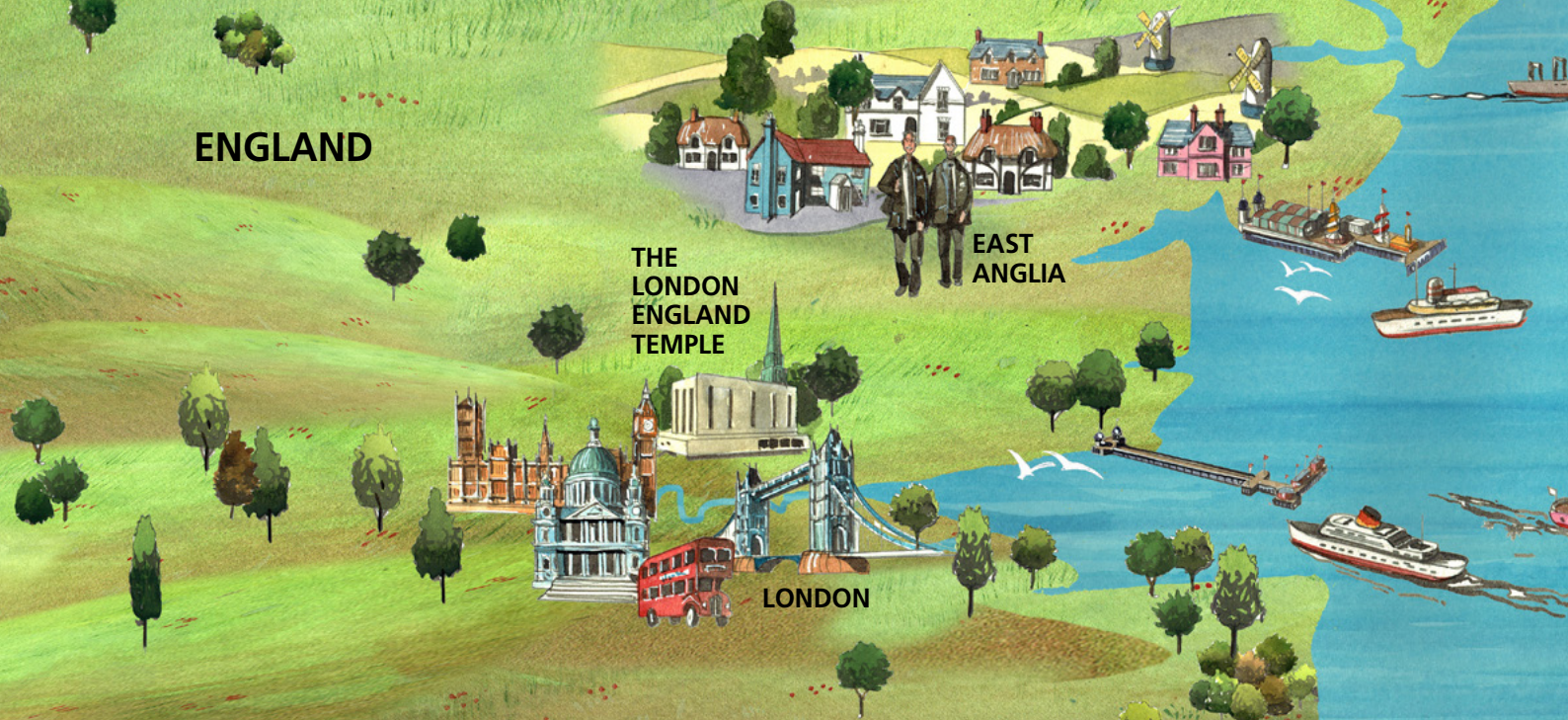
Should I Stay or Go?

In my own life, I have learned that we must not let the cares of the world distract us from obeying the Lord. I grew up in a wonderful and loving home where my parents taught us well in the gospel, and their love for us reflected Heavenly Father's love for His children.

At the age of 16, I was invited to work on a ranch in the United States, with the possibility to one day build my own home there. That appealed to me, since my homeland, the Netherlands, is just a small country, crowded with inhabitants.

In fact, my ancestors on my father's side all felt a similar desire to live in another place. They moved to Indonesia, which used to be a Dutch colony. I could totally understand why. In Indonesia, the weather is nice, the landscapes are beautiful, and space is abundant. My genes contained the same wanderlust that inspired my ancestors. Should I also leave my native land in search of success and adventure?

During that decision-making time, my dad handed me a copy of a letter written to him and his sisters many years before by their mission president, Donovan van Dam. President van Dam asked them to stay in the Netherlands and build the Church there. My dad told me that he had



decided to do exactly that. And since the Boom family name was on the letter, it was now my turn to find out what to do.

In the years after World War II, many Church members had emigrated to America and Canada. That was still going on in the 1970s, despite encouragement from Church leaders for members to stay in their own countries and strengthen the Church where they lived. Prayerfully, I also made the decision to stay and build the Church in the Netherlands, not fully understanding what that would mean in the future.

Decisions, Decisions

When I finished high school in the late 1970s, the Dutch economy was in turmoil. Unemployment rates were high. All in all, things looked pretty dismal. It was difficult for graduates to decide what to do next.

My father was serving as branch president. Now and then he discussed with me the possibility of serving a full-time mission. Of course, that would be a wonderful thing to do. I had been looking forward to that my whole life.

But I didn't see how serving a mission could help me provide for my future family. Since childhood I had always had a great desire to one day find the love of my life and to build our family together.

I was 17 at the time, and not knowing what to do next, I started my next level of education. But after several weeks I found that this field of study was not going to

make me happy. I had questions about whether it would even provide me with a stable job. I thought about quitting school.

My parents were not happy about this. They told me I could only quit school if I had a job. They probably thought that I would never find one because of the financial crisis. I spent all afternoon on my bicycle, going from one business to the next. Finally a company hired me to work in their warehouse.

My Plan

Even though I took this temporary position, I had a plan. I was going to be a policeman. Working for the government would be a stable way to provide for my future family and everything would work out.

I remember the day that I went to take the exams to get into the police school. I took the train early in the morning and spent all day doing all kinds of tests. At the end of the day I was called into the office. They told me I passed all the exams and they would love to have me, but because I was 17, I was too young. They told me to try again in a year.

My world was shattered, and all the way home I was thinking, "What next?" At home my dad listened to my frustration and offered to give me a blessing. I expected that the Lord was going to tell me that everything would work out and I would be admitted to the police academy in a miraculous way. Instead the Lord told me that if I would



Elder and Sister Boom's family in 2019. Since that time, another granddaughter has been born.

choose to put Him first, I would always have bread on my table and the means to take care of my future family.

A Better Plan

In response to my prayers, I received the answer that, for me, putting the Lord first meant serving a full-time mission. I had always intended to do that but had not seen how one step would lead to another. Now I knew that serving a mission was what I was going to do, and I wanted to do it as soon as possible.

Back then, the cost for a mission was 10,000 guilders in old Dutch currency, or about a year's wages. I carried on working in the warehouse and by the summer of 1981, I had my 10,000 guilders. I had also turned 18. My father, the branch president, told me I was too young for a mission, as did the district president and mission president. At that time, you needed to be 19. But on my 18th birthday I went to the doctor and the dentist all by myself and had them fill in their parts of my missionary application.

Somehow, I managed to get my leaders to interview me and submit my application. Then we waited. I didn't know that my father, as branch president, had received a letter. The application was returned to him with the notification that I was too young. But he hadn't wanted to share that with me yet, so he carried it around in his suit pocket for weeks without letting me know. Fortunately, in the meantime he had received another notification. It said that in some situations the Brethren were willing

to let young men go earlier when they were well prepared. Soon I was called to serve and was assigned to the England London East Mission. My mission became the blessing of a lifetime.

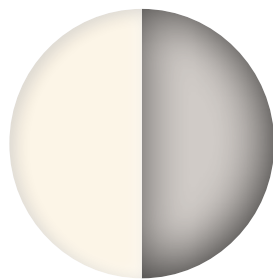
Blessings from the Lord

Three months after I returned from my mission, I did meet the love of my life. A year later we were married and sealed in the London England Temple. The economy was still not in good shape, but I have always been able to have a job and provide for my family. There has always been bread on the table and a roof over our head.

As a missionary, this became one of my favorite scriptures: "Inasmuch as ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall prosper in the land" (Alma 36:1). With that as a guide, I decided to do what my father had done—to stay in the Netherlands and build the Church in my native land.

Today the tiny branch where I grew up is now a wonderful ward where our grandchildren enjoy the company of many friends, gathered in a large Primary. Our sons have good professions and are blessed with bread on the table. I see that my decisions have had an impact on the next generation, who also desire to put the Lord first in their lives.

I am grateful that I learned early in my life that the right decision is to overcome the cares of the world and put Heavenly Father first. He has given me blessings that otherwise I never would have known. ■



THE STRIKING CONTRAST BETWEEN the Savior and the Adversary

*Comparing the differences between Jesus Christ
and Satan helps us appreciate
the Savior's mission and love all the more.*

By Kathryn Thomas

Seminaries and Institutes

Consider the majesty of the gift our Savior gave all of God's children when He willingly offered to fulfill the Father's plan. In the premortal council, when our Heavenly Father said, "Whom shall I send?" the Savior meekly answered, "Here am I, send me" (Abraham 3:27) and further declared, "Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever" (Moses 4:2).

It was because of His love for us that Jesus Christ offered to be our Savior.¹ Satan's response to the Father's plan, however, was selfish. Although he claimed he would "redeem all mankind" (see Moses 4:1), he "was not volunteering to be our savior. He was not interested in suffering or dying for anyone. He wasn't going to shed any of his blood. He wanted the glory, honor, and power of God without paying any price. . . . He would be supreme, and no one else could advance."²

In shining contrast, all that Christ does and will do is motivated by His perfect love for us (see 2 Nephi 26:24) and desire to honor Heavenly Father (see John 8:28–29). It is humbling and inspiring to think that "Jesus Christ was filled with unfathomable love as He endured incomprehensible pain, cruelty, and injustice for us. Through His love for us, He rose above otherwise insurmountable barriers . . . so we too may rise above the pain and cruelty and injustice of this world and help and forgive and bless."³ Is it any wonder we sing, "Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me enough to die for me"?⁴

The scriptures contain countless comparisons between the character of Jesus Christ and the adversary. Examining them can help us understand the scope of our Savior's perfect love.



SATAN

"The devil, as a **roaring lion**, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8) and "goeth up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men" (Doctrine and Covenants 10:27).

"He rebelled against me, saying, **Give me thine honor**, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency" (Doctrine and Covenants 29:36).

He "**spread the works of darkness** and abominations over all the face of the land, until he dragged the people down to an entire destruction, and to an everlasting hell" (Helaman 6:28).

He "sought to destroy the agency of man" (Moses 4:3) and "**seeketh that all men might be miserable** like unto himself" (2 Nephi 2:27).

JESUS CHRIST

"I am the **good shepherd**: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. . . . And I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself" (John 10:11, 15, 17–18).

"I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me. . . . I do always those things that please him. . . . **I honour my Father**. . . . And I seek not mine own glory" (John 8:28–29, 49–50).

"I am **the light of the world**: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10) and "**to heal the brokenhearted**, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18).



He “**will not support his children** at the last day” (Alma 30:60), “flattereth them, and leadeth them along until he draggeth their souls down to hell” (Doctrine and Covenants 10:26), “until he grasps them with his awful chains” (2 Nephi 28:22).

“I am in your midst, and am **your advocate with the Father**” (Doctrine and Covenants 29:5), “even Jesus Christ, your advocate, who knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted” (Doctrine and Covenants 62:1).

“He **stirreth up the hearts of men** to contend with anger, one with another” (3 Nephi 11:29), and “he stirreth them up to iniquity against that which is good” (Doctrine and Covenants 10:20).

“Peace I leave with you, **my peace I give unto you**: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

He “blinded the minds of them which believe not” (2 Corinthians 4:4), “thinketh to overpower your testimony” (Doctrine and Covenants 10:33), and “cometh and **taketh away light and truth**” (Doctrine and Covenants 93:39).

“If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal. . . . Therefore, he that lacketh wisdom, let him ask of me, and **I will give him liberally** and upbraid him not” (Doctrine and Covenants 42:61, 68).

May we consistently “contemplate [the Savior’s] lasting grace, [His] boundless charity” and cherish the truth that because of Him, “to us the gift of life was giv’n for all eternity.”⁵ ■

NOTES

1. See Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Never Give Up,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 10.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “A Message at Christmas” (Brigham Young University devotional, Dec. 12, 2017), 4, speeches.byu.edu.

3. John H. Groberg, “The Power of God’s Love,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 11.
4. “I Stand All Amazed,” *Hymns*, no. 193.
5. “As Now We Take the Sacrament,” *Hymns*, no. 169.

Jane Rejoiced through the Journey

Are we, like Jane Manning James, determined to complete our journey with faith?

Jane Manning James was tired of walking, but she refused to stop.

Her eldest son, Sylvester, was big enough to walk next to the wagon. But baby Silas, who had been born along the trail, still needed to be carried. It was 1847, and the James family would soon be among the first pioneers to arrive in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

Jane was no stranger to long journeys.

Four years earlier, her family had left their home in an eastern city to join the Saints in Nauvoo, on the edge of the western frontier. The trip should have taken just a few days by river. But because many black people were slaves in the United States at the time, Jane's family frequently had to show papers proving their freedom. And some places had strict laws preventing people of color from traveling through the



area—including charging up to \$500 per person for passage.

Perhaps because of this outrageous fee or perhaps because of other prejudices, the riverboat crew refused to take Jane and her family members any farther. Undeterred, they left behind many of their possessions and set out on foot with whatever they could carry.

Jane's family walked for more than 800 miles (1,287 km). They walked through humid days and pitch-black nights. Once they trudged through a forest, sleeping under the open sky. When they awoke, their clothes were white with frost.

"We walked until our shoes were worn out, and our feet became sore and cracked open and bled," Jane recollected. "... We asked God the Eternal Father to heal our feet and our prayers were answered."¹

While enduring this hard journey, Jane sang hymns with her parents and siblings, praising God. Finally, after nearly three months of walking, they arrived in Nauvoo. Years later, when faithful Saints left to cross the plains, Jane was among the first pioneers to start walking the trail. ■

NOTE

1. "The Autobiography of Jane Manning James," history.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/article/jane-manning-james-life-sketch.



Easter

MARCH 29–APRIL 4

What did Joseph Smith teach about death and resurrection?

Joseph Smith learned through revelation that everyone who dies will be resurrected and live again because of Jesus Christ (see Doctrine and Covenants 29:26). Here are some of the hopeful doctrines he shared.

There is hope even in mourning.

"My heart mourns for those who have been taken from us, but not without hope, for I shall see them again and be with them."¹

Death is part of God's plan.

"It has been hard for me to live on earth and see [my brothers Alvin and Don Carlos] . . . taken from us in the midst of their youth. . . . Yet I know we ought to be still and know it is of God, and be reconciled to His will; all is right."²

Death is temporary.

"[Our] relatives and friends are only separated from their bodies for a short season."³

The righteous need not fear.

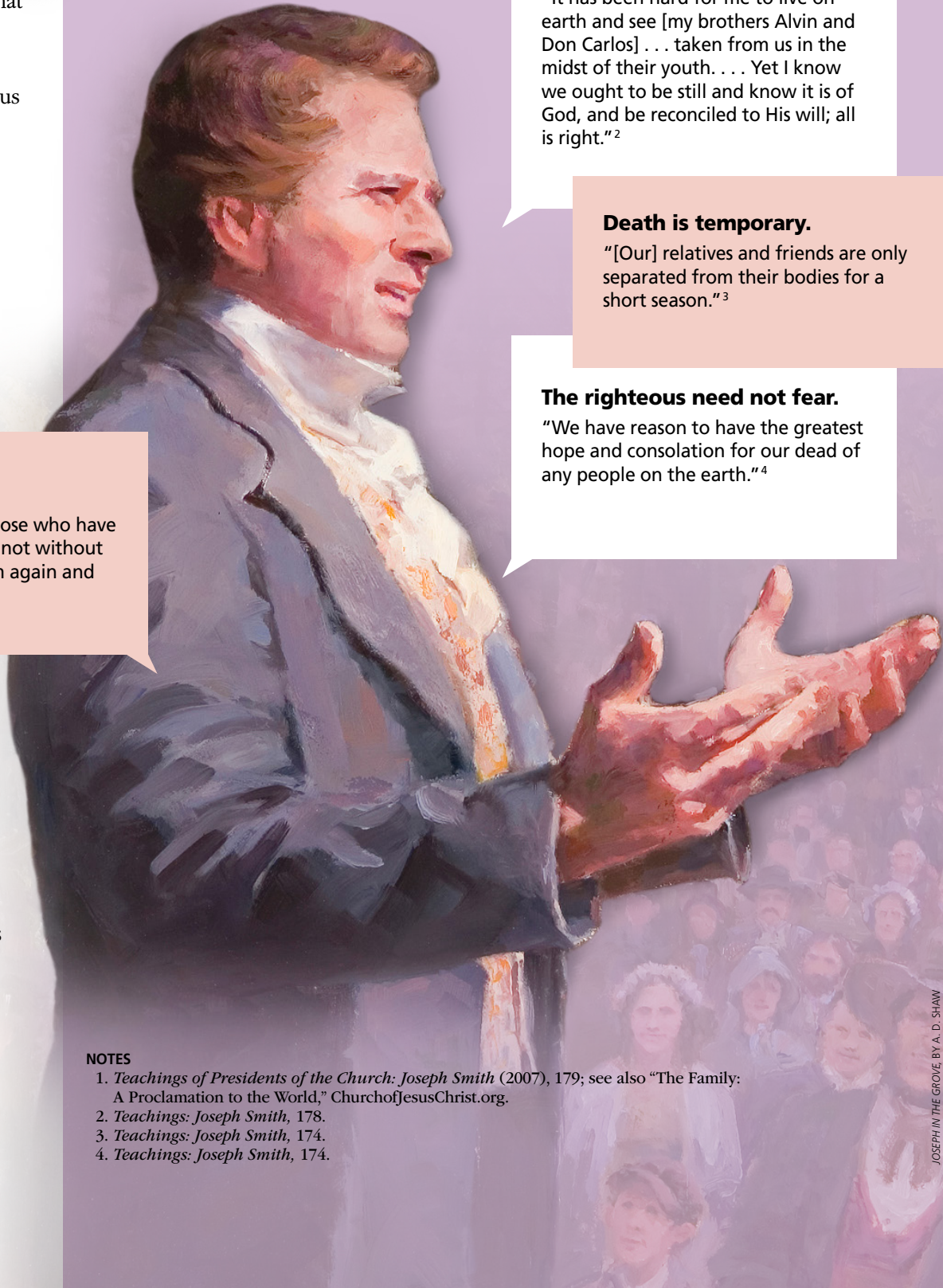
"We have reason to have the greatest hope and consolation for our dead of any people on the earth."⁴

Discussion

How do the promises of the Resurrection give you hope and peace? How will you share these truths with others?

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 179; see also "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 178.
3. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 174.
4. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 174.



JOSEPH IN THE GROVE BY A. D. SHAW



Doctrine and Covenants 30–36

APRIL 5–11

After being called to leave his family to serve a mission, Thomas B. Marsh was promised many blessings for the sacrifices he made to serve (see Doctrine and Covenants 31:2, 5, 7).

Along with Brother Marsh, many have received blessings as they have sought to establish the Lord's restored Church throughout the world. One example is Johann and Theresia Huber, who helped establish the Church in Austria in the early 1900s.

Discussion

How has the Lord blessed you and your family as you have served Him?

NOTE

1. See "The First Branch in Austria," [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/study/history/global-histories](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/study/history/global-histories).

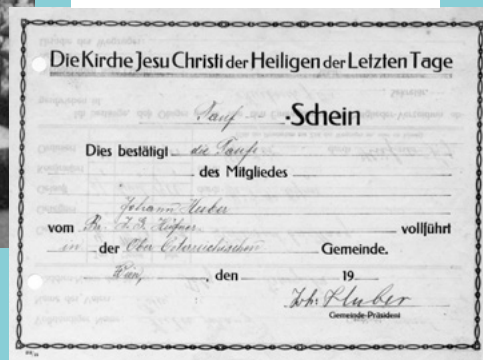
How does the Lord bless those who serve Him?



Johann and Theresia Huber with their children in about 1898.

Faith in the Face of Afflictions

When the Huber family was baptized into the Church and left Catholicism, the dominant faith of Austria, many social and legal issues arose. When people learned that the Huber children weren't attending confession, they threatened to remove the children from their home. Some even told Theresia to leave Johann.



Johann Huber's membership record.

Blessings and New Opportunities

After World War I, previous religious constraints dissolved, allowing people to practice their faith more freely. The Lord watched over the Huber family as they continued to share the gospel, and soon a small branch began to meet in the Hubers' barn. Johann was called to serve as the first branch president in Austria. He served for 25 years.¹



The first Latter-day Saint worship services in Austria were held in the Hubers' granary pictured here.



Doctrine and Covenants 37–40

APRIL 12–18

How does God gather us?

The Savior has commanded us to “be one.” He said, “If ye are not one ye are not mine” (Doctrine and Covenants 38:27). One way we become one is through gathering.

President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has taught, “Our Heavenly Father is anxious to gather and bless all of His family.”¹ Here are three ways we can gather and become united in faith.



1. Gathering in one place

In the earliest days of the Restoration, God commanded His Saints to “be gathered in unto one place . . . to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things” (Doctrine and Covenants 29:8).

Early Latter-day Saints gathered in many places, such as Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, Utah, and England. Gathering together helped strengthen members and build the Church.



2. Gathering where you are

Over time, Church leaders began to encourage members to gather and build the Church in their homelands. No matter where members gather together, they can participate in gathering scattered Israel. The Lord declared, “I have a great work laid up in store, for Israel shall be saved” (Doctrine and Covenants 38:33).

Discussion

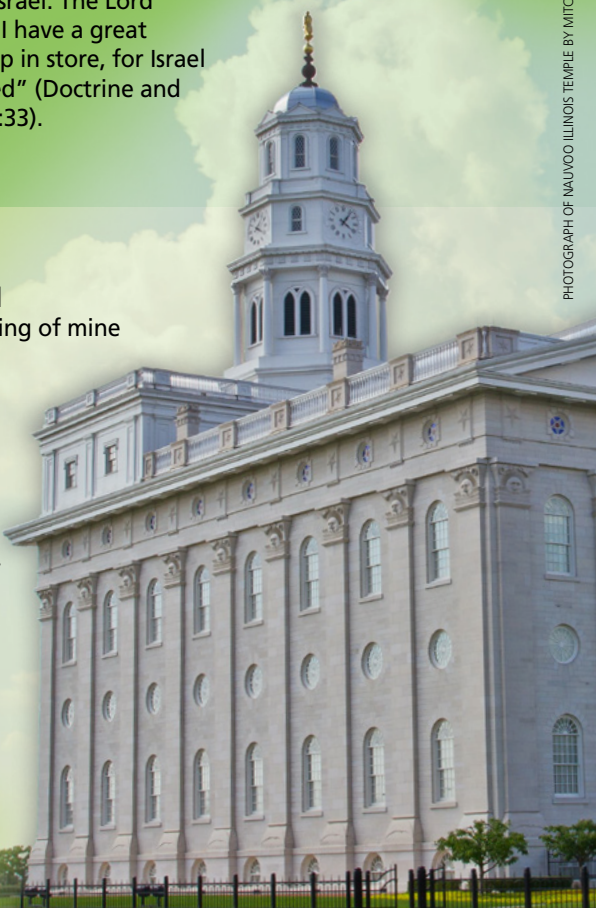
What blessings have you received through gathering with other Saints? How have you been blessed by helping God gather His children?

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, “Gathering the Family of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 20–21.
2. Dale G. Renlund, “Family History and Temple Work: Sealing and Healing,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 49.

3. Gathering on both sides of the veil

God has called us “to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect” (Doctrine and Covenants 29:7). This includes those we gather through missionary work and those we gather on the other side of the veil. Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “When we gather our family histories and go to the temple on behalf of our ancestors, God fulfills many . . . promised blessings simultaneously on both sides of the veil.”²



PHOTOGRAPH OF NAUVOO ILLINOIS TEMPLE BY MITCHELL PALMER



Doctrine and Covenants 41–44

APRIL 19–25

How can we be like Edward Partridge?

Edward Partridge was the first bishop of the restored Church of Jesus Christ. With his firm testimony, he was willing to sacrifice everything he had and endure hardship after hardship, for he knew the Church to be true.

What was he like?

The Lord said that Edward's "heart is pure before me, for he is like unto Nathanael of old, in whom there is no guile" (Doctrine and Covenants 41:11). This means Edward had no desire to deceive or cheat others; his intentions were pure. Why is this quality important for Church leaders to have?

What sacrifices did he make?

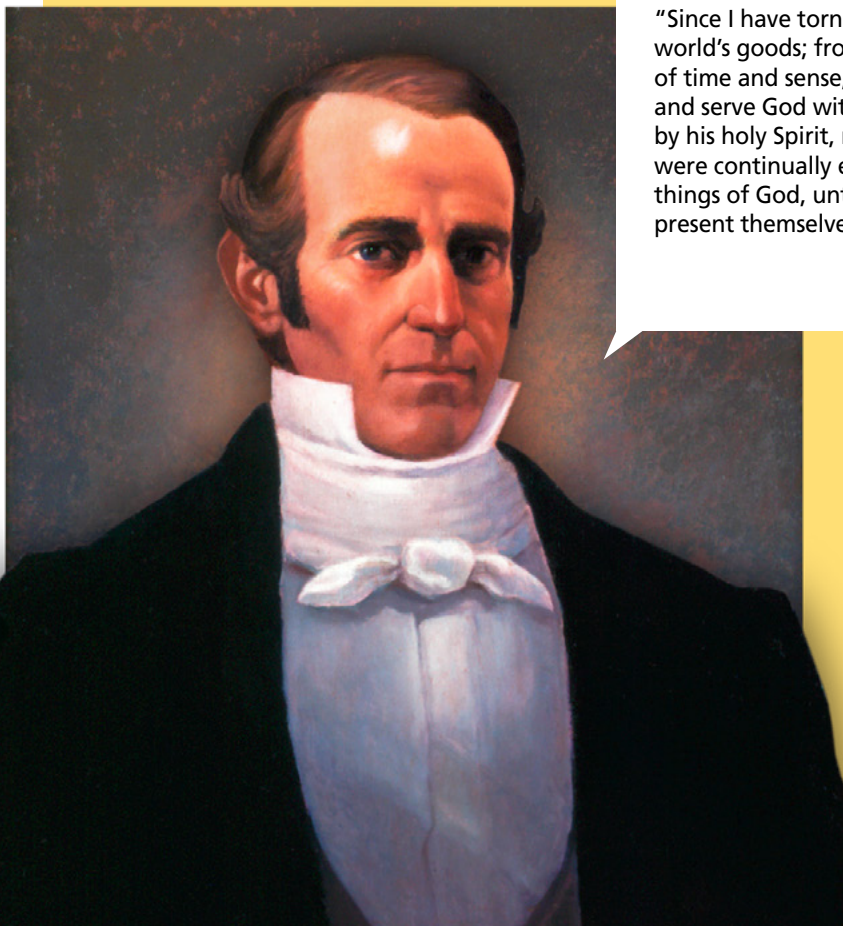
When Edward joined the Church, his father's family rejected him. As bishop, he handled the Saints' consecrated property. He also sacrificed his own property (see Doctrine and Covenants 41:9) and endured extreme poverty with his family. He was tarred and feathered, persecuted, and imprisoned for his faith. While some Church leaders dissented, he remained faithful. He served the Lord with all his might until his death at age 46 (see Doctrine and Covenants 124:19).



Discussion

Why was Edward Partridge able to endure so much hardship? How can his example help us as we serve the Lord?

"Since I have torn my affections from this world's goods; from the vanities and toys of time and sense, and been willing to love and serve God with all my heart, and be led by his holy Spirit, my mind has been as it were continually expanding—receiving the things of God, until glories indescribable present themselves before me."¹



NOTE

1. Edward Partridge, letter to Painesville friends and neighbors, *Messenger and Advocate*, Jan. 1835, 61.

Ministering to Those with Disabilities

Don't be afraid to reach out and learn how you can help.

Ministering to friends and neighbors who have disabilities can be daunting. Although we want to reach out in a Christlike way, sometimes we simply aren't sure how.

While living in New Canaan, Connecticut, USA, the Thompsons were blessed with twin girls. When the girls were born prematurely and with Down syndrome, their ward came to the rescue, supporting them during the twins' open-heart surgeries and months of hospital stays. Some of those early needs were easy to see. Members organized meals, childcare, house cleaning, help with Christmas, and more.

But the loving help didn't stop as the children grew and the needs became less apparent. Loving friends, leaders, and ministering brothers and sisters made the effort to counsel with the Thompsons about how they could help.

"A friend asked me what was hard," Sister Thompson said. "I mentioned that Sundays were difficult because my husband and I were often busy in our callings and had to leave our oldest daughter in charge alone. My friend immediately offered to take the twins for a few hours each Sunday. She did so for many months."

When the twins reached their teens, leaders regularly sat down with the parents to plan activities that were inclusive and fun for the twins as well as for the rest of the young women. Another friend invited the girls to her house so that the Thompsons could participate in choir practice.

After the Thompsons moved to Utah, a couple was assigned to minister to their family. "They always asked before visiting what our needs were and what kind of message would best suit our family," Sister Thompson said. "They took time to know every

member of the family, which is important because the siblings of those with special needs often get overlooked." The couple often invited the twins out for special activities, giving the family a break.

Sister Thompson would advise ministering brothers and sisters not to be afraid to ask the parents what is hard for them and how to help. "Just reach out. The more you get to know someone, the more you will understand how to best minister to them."



CENTER: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY NANCY ANN KIRKPATRICK;
RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION FROM GETTY IMAGES



Suggestions for Ministering to Individuals with Disabilities and Their Families

1. Get to know the individual as a person, separate from their disability. Ask them what they would like you to know about them. What are their interests?
2. Speak to them in a way you would speak to others their age. Be sure to show respect through your tone of voice and actions. Be sure to speak to them directly.
3. Don't ignore someone with a disability. Acknowledge and include them. Counsel with the member and their family about how they might like to contribute and serve.
4. For younger individuals with disabilities, saying things like "Tell me more about David" allows the family to share what they are comfortable with.
5. Offering to spend time with disabled children can give parents a break to focus on other children or take care of other needs. It also builds understanding of the load that caregivers shoulder.
6. Help can be given even when you can't be there in person. Notes of encouragement or a friendly voice can mean a lot. You could even shop online for birthdays or for other needs. ■

HELPFUL RESOURCES

1. Find out more about what caregivers experience in "Special Needs, Special Lessons," *Liahona*, June 2020, 28–31.
2. Consider 3 Nephi 22:13: "And *all* thy children shall be taught of the Lord" (emphasis added). Why do you think God included the word *all* there? What does that mean to you as you minister to His children?
3. [Disability.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.Disability.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) contains a wealth of information in 10 languages.

Faith at All Levels of Ability

By Marissa Widdison

Assistant managing editor, Gospel Living app

Each person on earth has different strengths and weaknesses, areas of ability as well as limitations. This article features three members of the Church who live with conditions that are medically defined as disabilities. Their good works prove that, especially when it comes to following the Savior, they are certainly *able*—able to help build His kingdom, able to make a difference, and able to set an example for others to follow.

Every one of us can help build God's kingdom in unique and powerful ways.

Ministering with Love

President Juan Medina is serving as branch president for the second time, but this experience is a bit different. This time, he can't see those he is ministering to. "I lost my vision little by little, but I did not lose the capability to serve that the Lord has always offered me," President Medina said from his home in Sonora, Mexico. "Being able to minister to my brothers and sisters is a privilege."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, President Medina called each member of his branch to see how they were doing. He said that this not only helped others but



Juan Medina



also helped him feel less stressed and depressed. “It is through ministering, whether someone has ministered to me or I am ministering to others, that I come to know the true love of Christ.”

President Medina said he especially loves working with newly baptized members. “You can see a clear difference between their lives before and after baptism,” he said. “Love changes them.”

When asked about the challenges he faces, President Medina didn’t mention his visual impairments at all. Instead, his comments focused on the people who are missing from sacrament meeting each week and how he wants them to know how much they are missed.

“The biggest blessing I have received is that my life has changed through the gospel,” he said. “Being blind has not changed that.”



Bringing Hundreds to the Temple

There are few places Heather Nilsson would rather be than at the temple.

“It’s a wonderful place because it is literally the house of the Lord,” she said.

The Los Angeles California Temple is especially dear to her because it’s where she served a mission. Much of the ordinance work she completed there was for members of her own family.

“I was never able to meet my grandfather in person, but I got to know him in the temple,” she said.

Living with cerebral palsy makes many aspects of life difficult. Sister Nilsson said she sometimes feels discouraged about what this birth defect prevents her from doing, like drive a car or sprint around the block. But her trust in God’s plan gives her a hope more powerful than despair. She vividly remembers the day when she first learned about the Resurrection. She was six years old at the time and had been adopted into a Latter-day Saint family.



Heather Nilsson



“The things that I can’t do now I will be able to do later because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ,” she testified.

In the meantime, Sister Nilsson continues to help God save souls using her talent for family history work. She has researched and helped complete ordinances for hundreds of people in both her adoptive and biological families. When hard days come, she reads her patriarchal blessing. It refreshes her faith and reminds her to view current challenges with an eternal perspective.

Sister Nilsson said that she hopes every person who reads this article knows how much they are loved. “If there’s one message I would share, it’s that you are not alone, even if it feels like that sometimes. Heavenly Father loves you. You are His child.”

Spreading Confidence and Encouragement

As Bridger Pons began looking forward to helping bless the sacrament, there was something he was dreading too: reading and memorizing the sacrament prayers. Bridger has dyslexia, a learning disability where reading and spelling are hard to do.

“I’ve worked really hard to become a good reader, but I still get nervous when I have to read out loud in front of a group,” Bridger said. “When I’m nervous, I make mistakes, which makes me even more nervous.”

So Bridger and his mother printed a version of the sacrament prayers that was easier to read. It used a larger font and was separated into short phrases. After lots of practice, he was able to recite the prayers without any mistakes.

“Being able to overcome the challenge of reading in front of a large group may not be a big deal for a lot of people, but for me it was important,” Bridger said.

His extra effort ended up blessing others in unexpected ways. After the meeting, several ward members came to him and said that his slow, intentional speaking helped them focus on the Spirit during those sacred prayers. Additionally, while helping leaders



Bridger Pons



understand his challenges, Bridger learned that other young men in the stake need similar help. A fear of reading was affecting their Church participation and their confidence in preparing for missionary service. Now the Pons family shares reading resources with others whenever possible.

Bridger said he hopes more people will realize that how well a person reads does not reflect their level of intelligence. He also shared these words of encouragement for those who have reading challenges like he does: “You’re not alone. And you *are* smart.”

Building Zion Together

The scriptures teach that every person has been given a spiritual gift from God (see Doctrine and Covenants 46:11). This includes people of all ability levels. For example, perhaps one day we will learn of silent prayers our brothers and sisters who are nonverbal offered on our behalf or an extra portion of the Spirit they invited into our homes.

We have the opportunity to continue building Zion together, contributing whatever abilities we have to offer. Only when *all* are included and appreciated will our Church family be complete. ■

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What does the gospel teach about disabilities?

In ancient days, Jesus clarified that having a disability is not the result of sin or any sort of punishment from God (see John 9:1–3). Modern prophets and apostles have emphasized that diverse people, including those of all ability levels, are important and needed in the Church. “We need your unique talents and perspectives,” said Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “The diversity of persons and peoples all around the globe is a strength of this Church.”¹

I’m a leader. What suggestions do you have for including people who have disabilities?

Welcome those with disabilities just as you would any member of your congregation. Meet with them and, when appropriate, their caregivers. Get to know them, learn about their talents, and prayerfully identify ways they could serve in the Church. Learn what needs they have. Help them connect with others, and encourage a climate of inclusion and compassion in your ward family. Instead of viewing accommodations as a burden, view these requests as an invitation to learn how to better reach more of Heavenly Father’s children. Often, accommodations made for one end up blessing the lives of many.

My child has a disability. Are there any gospel resources to help me and my family?

Some wards or stakes have disability specialists with callings to help support individuals with disabilities and their families. Additionally, many Church resources—including accessible formats of Church materials, inspiring messages, policy clarification, and more—can be found at disability.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

NOTE

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Come, Join with Us,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 23.

While Caring for Others, Take Care of Yourself

By Koji Okumura

I grew up in a family where three generations—my grandparents, parents, two younger brothers, and one aunt—all lived together under the same roof. My grandmother took care of my aunt, who had both intellectual and emotional challenges. After my grandmother passed away, my mother took full responsibility for my aunt and cared for her in our home night and day.

My aunt eventually moved into a community center. Even though it was a long distance away, my mother visited her regularly. After my mother's death, I became my aunt's main source of family support. I came to understand how devoted my mother had been. I also became extremely grateful for the attentive people who watched over my aunt.

Caregiver Fatigue

My own family experience has helped me to understand that caregivers face a variety of challenges. Cultural expectations, family relationships, availability of facilities—all may affect caregivers. But there's one challenge just about every caregiver faces at some point: fatigue. This can be particularly true when one older person is taking care of another, usually one spouse taking care of the other. In fact, research indicates that caregivers ages 66–96 who are experiencing stress have a 63 percent higher risk of mortality than noncaregivers.¹

First and Second Commandments

We can, in fact, learn a lot about Christlike caregiving by studying the first and second great commandments.

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

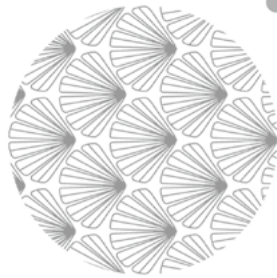
“This is the first and great commandment.

“And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:37–39).

In these verses, I believe the Lord is providing a guide that is particularly helpful to caregivers. First of all, love the Lord. Don't neglect the simple things that recharge you spiritually. Pray. Read the scriptures. Find peace in your heart. Feel the power and strength of Heavenly Father's love for you.

“You have to have fuel in the tank before you can give it to others.”
—Elder Jeffrey R. Holland





You are probably already filled with love for your neighbor—in this case, the person you care for. But do you also love yourself, in a righteous way?

It's a Two-Way Street

In my experience, both as a counselor and in my own family, I have found that caregivers often feel they must do everything on their own. This is simply not true. Caregivers who won't accept help almost always "burn out" at some point. They need to allow others to assist them. They need to counsel with family, friends, and ward or branch leaders and ministering brothers and sisters. Those who are eager to help a caregiver need to respect the caregiver's desires to bless and watch over their loved one.

Here are some items that might be helpful to discuss together:

- What support is available from family members?
- What would provide opportunities for the caregiver to rest for a few minutes, or even an hour or two?
- How often are visits helpful? What kinds of visits?
- How can the caregiver find time to renew covenants by attending

the temple, going to church, and receiving the sacrament?

- How might the caregiver benefit from just talking to someone?
- Is there a need for help with food, transportation, or government programs?

If you are a caregiver, keep in mind this advice from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"For those of you who earnestly seek to bear another's burdens, it is important that you refortify yourself and build yourself back up when others expect so much of you and indeed take so much out of you. No one is so strong that they do not ever feel fatigued or frustrated or recognize the need to care for themselves. . . .

"The caregivers have to have care too. You have to have fuel in the tank before you can give it to others."² ■

The author lives in Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan.

For additional tips and information, see the longer version of this article in the Gospel Library app or at liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

NOTES

1. Richard Schulz and Scott R. Beach, "Caregiving as a Risk Factor for Mortality: The Caregiver Health Effects Study," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 282, no. 23 (Dec. 15, 1999), 2215–19.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, "Bearing One Another's Burdens," *Ensign*, June 2018, 27–28; *Liahona*, June 2018, 29–30.

TO THINK ABOUT

Do you know anyone who is a caregiver? How could you strengthen them this month?

SHARE WITH US

Are you a caregiver? What helps you keep your faith and energy strong? Share your thoughts and experiences at facebook.com/liahona.

Teaching about Overcoming through Jesus Christ

Dear Parents,

This month's issue includes important topics such as Jesus Christ and His Atonement, overcoming the cares of the world, and ministering when you or a friend is disabled. Use the articles listed below and their images to open up conversations with your family and help them understand these and other aspects of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

Come, Follow Me Support

See page 25 for a brief account from the life of Jane Manning James, a faithful woman of the early Restoration.

See page 26 for material to support your family's weekly *Come, Follow Me* study.



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES

GOSPEL DISCUSSIONS

Focus on Christ

During this Easter season, we can focus more on the Savior and His atoning sacrifice for us. Use "Gospel Basics" on page 6 and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's article on page 8 to teach your children about what Jesus Christ has done for you and for them. Together, you could create a list of ways that Christ's example, teachings, life, death, Atonement, and Resurrection bless you and your family today. Enhance your discussion with the article on page 22 about the stark differences between the Savior and Satan.

Consider ways that your family can do something Christlike this Easter season.

Overcome the Cares of the World

The will of the Lord should matter more to us than the cares of the world. Read the article on page 18 from Elder Hans T. Boom and discuss as a family these questions: What cares of the world are getting in your way? How can you focus more on the Lord's will? Have you had an experience similar to Elder Boom's? What did you learn?

Disabilities and Ministering

Read the articles on pages 30 and 32. Pull out the key concepts that seem most applicable to your children. If someone in your family experiences a disability, focus on the good he or she can do. If you minister to someone with a disability, discuss how these principles might change the way you can help that person.

FAMILY STUDY FUN

United as One

Doctrine and Covenants 38:24–31

In Doctrine and Covenants 38:27, the Savior says, "I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine." We are encouraged to be one that we "might escape the power of the enemy" (Doctrine and Covenants 38:31).

1. Stand together in the center of the room.
2. Choose one person to walk through the middle of the group.
3. Repeat the exercise but this time as a group stand closer together, linking arms and hands if possible.

Discussion: How are we more protected from outside influences as we stand stronger and closer together? How does greater unity protect us?

Idea contributed by Brenda Slade

IN THIS MONTH'S FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH MAGAZINE

"How I Failed at Failure"

It is easy to get down when we think we've failed. But when we involve the Lord in our plans, it is impossible to fail! Share this article with your family and discuss different ways to measure success.

Church History Figure

Learn together about fearless Phebe Carter, who left her home and family to join the Church in Ohio in 1830.

Questions and Answers

Share with your teens some suggestions on how to keep their thoughts clean from the negative influences around them. Also in this article is a question about the law of consecration and how it affects each of us personally.

"Picture-Perfect Unity"

This article teaches how each of us is a unique individual and how we can come together in an attitude of unity and love.



IN THIS MONTH'S FRIEND

Help with *Come, Follow Me*

Read this month's scripture story for young readers to learn about some of the first missionaries in this dispensation.

The True Meaning of Easter

Read how Isabella found comfort after her little brother died.

Pioneer in South Africa

Learn about Julia Mavimbela,

a community leader, gardener, and faithful convert who chose love over bitterness during civil unrest.

Courage to Serve

Read how service helped a boy from Brazil gain a testimony that we are all children of God. You can also help your children do this month's "Helping Hands Challenge"!

Church History Cards

Use this month's cards to teach your children about Jane Manning James and Parley P. Pratt and the roles they played in the Restoration.



Faithful Parenting in Today's Changing World

You can have a powerful influence on your children, no matter what society teaches them.

By Denise Dunlop

My own childhood is a testament of the powerful influence a Christian adult can have on the life of a child. My mother died when I was four years old, and my grandmother helped care for me and my siblings. She belonged to the Salvation Army church, and she taught us to pray, love our enemies, and treat others kindly. Her guidance during those few critical years laid the foundation for my future choices.

Now I've spent more than 40 years as a mother and childcare professional, and I've seen the values and norms of society become more and more opposed to the Saviour's teachings. Evil seems to influence everything from books and music to daily language. But we need not feel overwhelmed. The Lord will guide us to know how to teach, protect, and strengthen our children in this current cultural climate. Here are three specific lessons I have learned that might also help your family.

1. Focus on Relationships, Not Just Rules

Having grown up without the "ideal family" as a model, I constantly doubted myself and my abilities whilst raising our children. This quote from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles comforted me: "If you . . . will strive to love God and live the gospel yourselves; . . . if you try your best to be the best parent you can be, you will have done all that a human being can do and all that God expects you to do."¹ Doing our best will require the Saviour's help—and if ever there was a time in history when parents needed to rely on Him, it is now!

Instead of worrying about lots of rules and whether our children fulfil them perfectly, we can focus on building our relationship with them and with the Saviour. Our beloved prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, said it this way: "Do not try to control your children. Instead, listen to them, help them to learn the gospel, inspire

them, and lead them toward eternal life. You are God's agents in the care of children He has entrusted to you. Let His divine influence remain in your hearts as you teach and persuade."² From my experience, this advice rings true.

2. Have Fun Together

One way we built relationships with our children was through family activities. These were often simple times, like going for a walk or having fish and chips at the beach. Our children knew we genuinely loved spending time with them.

We tried to listen to our children so they would feel comfortable talking to us about their problems. When a family challenge would arise, we would sit down with our children, discuss our concerns, listen to their responses, and try to come to a decision together.

3. Set an Example of Gospel Living

I was not a member of the Church when my children were little—it took me 18 years to decide to be baptized—but my husband was. He helped our children build a relationship with Heavenly Father through family prayer, scripture study, and family home evening. We were far from perfect, but my husband was persistent and patient.

I believe that my husband's example of living the gospel was the biggest influence on our children. They saw him read scriptures, pray, and attend church—even if on his own. This had an impact far more powerful than anything we formally taught.

Even if you do not have an ideal family environment, you can still guide your children. Do not get disheartened.

We Can Start Today

As parents, each of us will eventually need to let go of our children, trusting them to make their own choices. Hopefully at that time, we will feel confident in echoing the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves.”³ We can start today to be a source of gospel guidance to our children, no matter what is being taught in the world around us. ■

The author lives in Western Australia, Australia.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Because She Is a Mother,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 36.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Salvation and Exaltation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 10.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 284.





Staying Strong When Loved Ones Leave the Church

I was shocked when my brother decided to leave the Church, but I found ways to continue a loving relationship and keep my own testimony strong.

By Frederik Hegner Odgaard

I hadn't been home from my mission for very long when my parents told me that my 19-year-old brother didn't want to go to church anymore. I was shocked—I had never imagined my brother would leave the Church.

I remember emailing him about gospel topics while I was on my mission and asking him if he wanted to serve a mission. He was never sure, and looking back on these emails, I realized there had been signs that he wasn't certain about the gospel.

I started thinking about what I could have done differently. And I questioned why this was happening right now. I was upset because I really wanted him to have a testimony for his own sake, but I also realized I maybe wanted it for me. I wanted him to attend church with me, as well as go on a mission, so we could talk about our experiences together. So it was challenging for me when he didn't want any of those things.

I had just spent two years on my mission talking about religion and beliefs with people, so I didn't understand why it was so much harder to talk to my

own brother about these things, but it was. It challenged my faith in a new way. On my mission, the challenge was to work hard, to enjoy every day, and to have faith that everything was going to turn out well. But with my brother, it felt completely different.

My mission had taught me to ask inspired questions and ask for understanding. But I didn't know the people I had taught on my mission beforehand. My only relationship with them was one of teaching and helping them come closer to Christ. I had known my brother for his whole life, and I had never had a relationship of trying to help bring him closer to Christ.

I remember a conversation we had one day when I asked him about the Church. He said he didn't have a testimony about some of the teachings. If this had been someone I met on my mission, my response would have been one of respect and acceptance that he or she simply wasn't ready at the time, and maybe some other missionaries would teach them later. But because of my love for my brother, it was harder to show that same level of understanding. I just wanted

him to know what I knew, and I wanted him to feel the same Spirit and love from God as I had felt. It was hard for me to accept that he didn't choose the gospel.

It took some time for me to get used to the situation, but now, almost two years after I've returned from my mission, my relationship with my brother is still good. We don't talk about the gospel much, but we talk about other things. I still wish that we could have the gospel in common, but we do have a lot of other things in common. We still hang out and do things together, and I love him for who he is, because he's a really good guy.

Small acts of faith and worship can have a powerful influence on your testimony.

Things I've Learned

Throughout this time, there are a few things I've learned that might be helpful if you're struggling with a loved one leaving the Church, to help you not only maintain a good relationship with them but also keep your testimony strong during what might be a spiritually challenging time for you.

- Remember that everyone has their agency and that it isn't your fault if someone leaves the Church.
- Strengthen your relationship with them. Always show them love. Try not to let their relationship with the Church affect your relationship with them.
- Spend time together doing things you both enjoy.
- Although you can't make choices for other people, you can be an example and support them.

- Pray about the situation. Heavenly Father knows His children, so you can be sure that He will know best how to help you get through this.
- Search the scriptures. Examples from the scriptures helped me a lot, and I realized that my situation is fairly common. Even in the scriptures, many families had one or more people who didn't believe or were even against the Church, but their family still showed love toward them.
- Talk openly about how you feel with your family members who are active in the gospel. They might have similar thoughts, and they might need someone to share with as well. Help one another.
- Finally, don't neglect your own spirituality.

Keeping Your Testimony Strong

When people close to you leave the Church, it can be challenging for your own faith, especially if the person who left is someone you looked up to in a gospel setting. You might begin to question certain areas of your testimony. I know I struggled a bit with questions when my brother left. But that's why it is so important to look after yourself and your testimony. If you build and maintain your own testimony, you don't need to fear what choices others make.

Remember that we're all susceptible to having our faith weakened if we don't work to strengthen it. Most people don't go from being strong one day to leaving the Church the next. But if you forget to do the little things to strengthen your testimony every day, you might find yourself drifting further and further away from the gospel without even knowing it. Going back to the basics like studying your scriptures, praying daily, and performing all those small acts of faith and worship can have a powerful influence on your testimony.

Above all, if your loved one leaving the Church is affecting your own testimony and causing doubts or questions in your mind, remember the wise advice to "doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith"¹ and to "hold fast to what you already know."²



Strengthen
your relation-
ship with them.
Always show
them love.

Always Seek to Hear Him

I think it's important for young adults to have a plan for their life, like knowing where they want to go and what they want to do. But we need to ponder and include the Lord in those plans and in our daily lives. It can be hard to do when we have so many other responsibilities each day, but we can always make time for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. And if we do that, we will always be able to withstand the storms of life. I think of the scripture in Romans 8:31: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

President Russell M. Nelson has taught how in coming days, we won't be able to survive spiritually without the Spirit and receiving personal revelation for our own lives.³ I have always known that receiving personal revelation is important, but I haven't always been the best at seeking it. I know that I can do better at inviting the Spirit into my life each day.

Personal revelation is just as it describes—it's personal. And we can begin learning how the Lord speaks to us by

asking Him for help in recognizing His voice and His hand in our lives. He is the best teacher.

We can't always control the actions of others, especially when it comes to matters of strengthening our faith or living the gospel. But I know that even if those we love most in the world have challenges of faith, when we prioritize God and follow His will and strive to hear Him, we will always be blessed with answers, with a strong testimony, and with the spiritual revelation we need to keep following Him. ■



Frederik Hegner Odgaard is 22 years old and lives in Aalborg, Denmark. He served a mission in the England Birmingham Mission. He is now studying medicine and loves science and solving problems. He enjoys spending time with his family and going to church.

NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Come, Join with Us," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 23.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, "Lord, I Believe," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2013, 94.
3. See Russell M. Nelson, "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 96.

Inspired Changes to Missionary Work Blessed My Family

By Lara Agustina Chaves

The changes to missionaries' communication with their families helped me share gospel truths with my mother.

I have been a member of the Church for eight years now, along with my father and two of my sisters. Since being a member, I have seen the wonderful blessings that my Heavenly Father has prepared for my life and my family. The gospel has really blessed my life and helped me find that happiness I was looking for!

When I first started reading the Book of Mormon, the story about Lehi's vision of the tree of life spoke to my heart (see 1 Nephi 8; 11). I could relate because I also wanted my whole family and everyone I love to be able to taste the fruit of the tree and feel the love of God in their lives.

For that reason, I prepared myself to serve a full-time mission and was assigned to labor in the Guatemala City Guatemala Mission.

During my mission, I got to see so many people change for the better because of the gospel. And it filled my heart with joy every day. But every time my companion and I taught families, I was reminded of my own family, especially my mother, who was not a member of the Church. Every preparation day, I tried to encourage her through my emails to meet with the missionaries. I prayed that Heavenly Father would prepare her heart to receive the gospel.

An Inspired Opportunity

I was still on my mission when the inspired change occurred regarding missionaries' communication with their families.¹ When I first heard the news, the Spirit let me know that this was an opportunity to invite my mother to learn more about the gospel. I felt a lot of joy about that change and that feeling. During the week, I asked the Lord to help me know what He would have me share with her.

When preparation day arrived and I saw my mother through my computer screen, I had a strong impression that we should say a prayer. I expressed that feeling to her, and she agreed. During the video call, I explained to



her the main message I was trying to share as a missionary: that the gospel of Jesus Christ had been restored. I testified with all my heart that I knew it was true. I also invited her to pray and ask God about these things to know for herself. We finished our conversation with a prayer that she offered. We both felt the Spirit so strong that it pierced our hearts. After the call, I sent a referral to the missionaries in her area.

I waited anxiously for the next week to hear from her again. Just as we had done the first time, we started our video chat with a prayer, and then I listened to the Spirit to know what to share with her. We did this for weeks. Eventually, to my surprise, she started to meet with the missionaries. And I noticed a new glow in her eyes.

Heavenly Father Can Work Miracles through Us

When I returned home, I went with my mother to her lessons with the missionaries. In one of those lessons, she, with a smile on her face, expressed her desire to make covenants with the Lord. I was shocked to hear how she had received the answer that the gospel was true! Again, the Spirit filled the room and testified to our hearts that we were witnessing truth.

And so, just a few weeks after returning home, I witnessed one of the greatest miracles of my mission: my mother entered the waters of baptism and made a covenant with Heavenly Father.

Tears ran down my face when I saw her go down into the water. When I hugged her afterward, we were both feeling a lot of emotions, but mostly we felt God's love for us. She looked me in the eyes and said, "I felt like God hugged me and welcomed me. I know that He was waiting for me."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that sometimes missionary work can be done when you "understand that it's not your job to convert people. That is the role of the Holy Ghost. Your role is to share what is in your heart and live consistent with your beliefs. . . .

"Follow this path, and God will work miracles through you to bless His precious children."²

As I heard my mother's words, my testimony was further strengthened, and I knew then with all my heart that Heavenly Father hears our prayers and can help us share the fruit of the tree with others—especially our own family. ■



Lara Agustina Chaves is 22 years old and from Buenos Aires, Argentina. She likes listening to music, playing the piano, and spending time outdoors. She really enjoys visiting her favorite place—the temple.

NOTES

1. See "Missionaries Now Have More Options to Communicate with Families," Feb. 15, 2019, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Missionary Work: Sharing What Is in Your Heart," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 17.

MORE FOR YOU!

You can find more articles specifically for young adults in the digital version of the April *Liahona* in the Gospel Library (at ChurchofJesusChrist.org or in the mobile app).

This month, you'll find more articles about loved ones leaving the Church, loving others who believe differently than you, and staying strong in your faith when you're the only member in your family.

DIGITAL ARTICLES

Are You the Only Member of the Church in Your Family? You're Not Alone

How My Heart Changed When My Brother Left the Church

By Anja Dögg Mathiesen, Hafnarfjörður, Iceland

What You Can Do When Others Don't Believe

By Hanna Jacobson, Utah, USA

An Unexpected Lesson from Ammon for Today's Challenges

By Drew Pearson, California, USA

Maintaining Hope and Keeping Your Marriage Strong If Your Spouse Leaves the Church

Name withheld

Questions to Ask Yourself before You Talk about Less-Active Members

By Sydney Squires, West Midlands, England

YA WEEKLY

You can also find new articles each week in YA Weekly, located in the Young Adults section of the Gospel Library (at ChurchofJesusChrist.org or in the mobile app).

From the Mission Field:

Dealing with Homesickness on My Mission

By Heather White Claridge, Utah, USA

Life Skills:

Managing Unrealistic Expectations

By Holly Hudson, Utah, USA

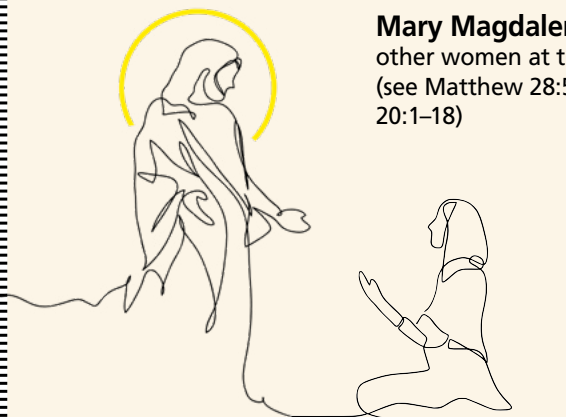


He Is Risen:

Who Saw and Will See the Resurrected Christ

Here are some of the people who saw the Lord after He conquered death. How does knowing that others have seen the resurrected Savior strengthen your faith in Him? What spiritual experiences have confirmed to you the truth of His Resurrection?

AD 33



Mary Magdalene and other women at the tomb (see Matthew 28:5, 9; John 20:1–18)

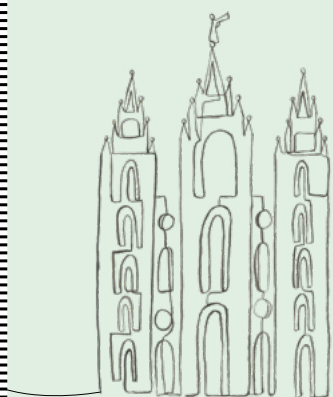
Disciples in Galilee (see John 20:24–29)

Over 500 people at once (see 1 Corinthians 15:6)

About 2,500 Nephites at the temple at Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 11:10–17)

Lost 10 Tribes of Israel (see 3 Nephi 17:4)

PRESENT DAY (1820s ONWARD)



September 2, 1898
President Lorenzo Snow in the Salt Lake Temple

Spring 1820

Joseph Smith in New York (see Joseph Smith—History 1:16–20)

February 16, 1832

Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon in Hiram, Ohio (see Doctrine and Covenants 76:19–24)

April 3, 1836

Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 110:1–10)

FUTURE



The whole world at the Second Coming (see Doctrine and Covenants 101:23)

Those at Adam-ondi-Ahman (see Doctrine and Covenants 27:5–14; 116:1)

Those in New Jerusalem in America (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:66–67)

The Jews in Jerusalem (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:48, 51–53)



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