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## REASONS We Really *Do* Need — the — CHURCH!

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**H**ave you ever heard someone ask why we have a church? Or maybe why we need one? Why can't they just be spiritual on their own—go to the mountains or the beach or another special place and feel close to God—and call it good?

It's certainly true that you can be close to God wherever you are (in fact, it's a really good idea!), but Heavenly Father has *so much more* in store for you than generic spirituality. He wants you to become the best you can be. In fact, He wants you to inherit all that He has and gain eternal life. And He has a plan and an organization so you can do that. The plan is the plan of salvation, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the organization—"the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth" (D&C 1:30).

Here are six reasons why we really do need the Church.



### 1. To Learn and Participate in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

One of the blessings of being a member of the Church is that we can learn the fulness of the gospel (see D&C 1:17–23). If we have a sincere desire to learn, and if we are humble, prayerful, diligent, and obedient, we can gain a testimony and have hope in the Resurrection and in the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Through Church leaders and Church materials, we also learn about other essential doctrine, including the Restoration of the gospel, the calling of prophets today, and the true nature of the Godhead. Living in accordance with true doctrine brings us joy and happiness.

## 2. To Receive Essential Ordinances and Covenants

Heavenly Father's work is to "bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). But sometimes we might forget that His work requires some work on our part too! We qualify for the blessings of eternal life by obedience to the ordinances and covenants of the gospel. President Russell M. Nelson has said: "We cannot *wish* our way into the presence of God. We are to obey the laws upon which those blessings are predicated [see D&C 130:20–21]."<sup>1</sup>

The ordinances we participate in and the covenants we make are necessary for us to return to the presence of our Heavenly Father and live with Him. Those ordinances and covenants require the priesthood—which is available only in God's true Church. Without those covenants, we'd be lost.

We have the Church so we can be enlightened and have the truth made known. It has given me the knowledge that I need to know—the knowledge of the plan of salvation.

*Nicholas M., Ohio, USA*

## 3. To Help Each Other Along the Way

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "A major reason the Lord has a church is to create a community of Saints that will sustain one another in the 'strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life' [2 Nephi 31:18]."<sup>2</sup>

At church, we can develop caring relationships with others. We can help each other get through tough times as we lead, guide, and walk beside each other (see "I Am a Child of God," *Hymns*, no. 301; Ephesians 2:19). Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, "We are all children of God, and we must teach each other; we must help each other 'find the way.'"<sup>3</sup> The Church is the perfect place to do that!

Through the Church we can receive ordinances, make covenants, and have our families sealed forever. It is Heavenly Father's organisation on this earth with priesthood power and authority. To teach people of the truth of the gospel and to come unto Christ and to prepare people for exaltation.

*Shantelle M., Australia*

We have the Church to create an environment where members can gather and help each other learn and grow. The Church exists to help members become more Christlike by encouraging everyone to look to others and lift the burdens of those we love and care about. It also creates a safe place where people may live their beliefs.

*Jeremy P., Illinois, USA*

Through the Church I can have an eternal family, with my parents, sisters, and one day my own family.

*Wilford P., São Paulo, Brazil*

The Church helps us to spread love and the gospel across the globe and to bring light to a world in moral darkness.

*Kenzi B., Washington, USA*

Through the Church we can walk the path to immortality and eternal life where we can live with our Heavenly Father and our families forever.

*Emma W., New Hampshire, USA*

## 4. To Help Families Qualify for Eternal Life

Another major reason we have the Church is to help families qualify for eternal life. The sealing ordinance in the temple allows families to be together forever. For that to happen, we have to live worthy to receive those blessings. The Church helps families help each other do that.

As Elder Christofferson has taught, “The point of gospel teaching and priesthood ordinances administered by the Church is that families may qualify for eternal life.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, the Church helps us live up to those covenants—and helps us support each other along the way.

## 5. To Bless People All over the World

Elder Christofferson said that as we work together in the Church, Heavenly Father can “achieve needful things that cannot be accomplished by individuals or smaller groups.”<sup>5</sup>

Did you know that every year for the past 30 years, the Church has donated US\$40 million worth of welfare and humanitarian aid and service projects? The generous donations and volunteer service that Church members offer accomplishes things that could be done in no other way.

Through our extraordinary missionary program, missionaries share the light of the gospel with people all over the world. Nearly 105,000 missionaries (including young adults and seniors) are serving. Wow! That’s more people than the population of some cities!

And because of members’ charitable donations, the Church has the resources to build temples all over the world. As of April 2018, there were 182 temples in operation, under construction, or announced.



The Church helps us to maintain organization, teachings, and to create a support system for members. By establishing a church, the Lord ensures that the correct doctrines are taught. The Church provides members with revelations, standards, and guidelines that help us live as Christ would have us live.

*Rachel F., Arizona, USA*

## 6. To Establish the Kingdom of God on the Earth

One of the most important reasons God established a church is that it is the kingdom of God here on the earth (see D&C 65). The Lord bestowed upon Joseph Smith and all the prophets and apostles since him the keys of the priesthood. Elder Christofferson taught, “In the authority of these keys, the Church’s priesthood officers preserve the purity of the Savior’s doctrine and the integrity of His saving ordinances.”<sup>6</sup>

Through the Church leaders, the Lord can administer His work and minister to His children. Without such leadership, all kinds of false ideas and teachings would threaten to lead us into dark, forbidden paths. In other words, to help us know how to achieve eternal life, we need the protection provided by truly called and ordained prophets and apostles. That happens only in His Church. ■

Through the Church, things can be accomplished that couldn’t be through individuals.

*Emma W., Utah, USA*

The Church helps us because Heavenly Father knew these were troubled times. He knew we needed a prophet here on the earth to guide us. He knows us.

*Matthew P., New Hampshire, USA*

### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Now Is the Time to Prepare,” Apr. 2005 general conference.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church,” Oct. 2015 general conference.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Teaching and Learning in the Church,” *Ensign*, June 2007, 90.
4. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church.”
5. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church.”
6. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church.”