

# From a Testimony of Tithing to Temple Covenants

By Michael R. Morris  
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For Ted and Carol Hyatt, the spiritual aspects of the Church's self-reliance initiative have made an eternal difference in their lives.

Carol Hyatt will never forget the day her bishop asked her to facilitate a self-reliance class on personal finances. She and her husband, Ted, had only recently returned to activity in the Church after a 42-year absence, and she was naturally shy.

Carol had known her bishop, Todd A. Josi, since he was a boy. Decades earlier, he had attended her Sunday School class.

"Now, Bishop," she frankly told him after she and Ted had begun attending church again, "I don't want to give a talk. I don't want to do a calling. I just want to come to church."

But two years later, Bishop Josi was sitting in the Hyatt home talking about the Church's Self-Reliance Services initiative—something Sister Hyatt had never heard of. After introducing it, the bishop asked her to facilitate a 12-week class on principles of successful financial stewardship. Then he gave her a copy of the *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance* manual.



"I don't know why I said yes," Sister Hyatt recalls. "It's frightening for me to be around people I don't know—and to think I had to be there one night a week

for 12 weeks with Church members who were certainly more ingrained in the gospel than I was. I didn't know if I'd even be able to help them."

## “It Hit Me So Hard”

Bishop Josi wasn't surprised that Sister Hyatt accepted the assignment despite her hesitation. He says that during a stake self-reliance committee meeting in Forest Grove, Oregon, USA, a short time before, “It came to my mind that Sister Hyatt needed the blessing of facilitating the personal finances group. It just hit me so hard.”

Bishop Josi hoped that by facilitating the class, Sister Hyatt would overcome a major stumbling block to her spiritual progress: paying tithing. “As I drove home that evening,” he says, “I had a strong spiritual impression that as Sister Hyatt went through this class, she would come to understand the importance of paying tithing.”

Feeling nervous and ill-prepared, Sister Hyatt began facilitating her class in October 2017. As she led class discussions on managing finances, creating and sticking to a budget, preparing for hardship, getting out of debt, managing financial crises, and investing in the future, Sister Hyatt became comfortable as a facilitator but uncomfortable with her personal example.

When she read the manual in preparation for her third class, she learned that the “self-reliant approach to financial stewardship” includes paying tithes

and offerings.<sup>1</sup> She also learned that the foundation principle of that approach is repentance and obedience.<sup>2</sup>

“During one of the later lessons, I admitted to everybody that I was probably the only one in the whole group who wasn't paying tithing,” she recalls. That admission prompted support from her 13 class members and discussions and testimonies about the blessings of the law of tithing.

“I don't know why I was so troubled before about tithing, but I realized that I needed to get serious about getting a testimony of it,” says Sister Hyatt. “As I listened to encouragement from my group and from my husband, the Spirit said, ‘You can do this!’ I gained that little extra faith I needed, and I realized that I would be a better facilitator if I was doing what I was asking my class to do.”

## The Windows of Heaven

A few days after her 11th class, Sister Hyatt approached Bishop Josi at church, took his hand, and told him she was ready to live the law of tithing. “He was so excited,” she says.

Brother Hyatt, who was attending his wife's class, was also excited. As he paid his own tithing during the previous year, he often encouraged Sister

Hyatt by reminding her of a blessing she longed for. “We won't get to the temple unless you pay your tithing,” he would say.

On May 26, 2018, the windows of heaven opened and poured out a blessing on Ted and Carol Hyatt that they had not imagined possible months before when Sister Hyatt began facilitating her class. On that day, the day before their 58th anniversary, they made covenants and were sealed in the Portland Oregon Temple.

The Hyatts describe that experience as “a beautiful day and a marvelous blessing” for which they will always be grateful. Sister Hyatt adds that she will also always be grateful for an encouraging husband, an inspired bishop, and a class of students who, she feels, helped her more than she helped them. To show their love and support, nearly every member of her class attended the Hyatts' sealing.

“People can gain so much from the Church's self-reliance initiative, especially the spiritual part of it,” says Sister Hyatt. “It's the spiritual part that makes it so valuable. For my husband and me, it has made an eternal difference.” ■

## NOTES

1. *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance* (2016), 42.
2. See *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance*, 36–37.