

Liahona

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THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Rome Italy





When the Rome Italy Temple is dedicated on March 10–12, 2019, Latter-day Saints around the world will rejoice, especially the Saints in Italy. What more meaningful edifice could the “eternal city” receive than a house of the Lord?

The temple, the first in Italy, is located in the northeast section of Rome. It is part of a religious and cultural center that includes a multifunctional meetinghouse (with a cultural hall and facilities for conferences), a visitors’ center, a family history center, and patron housing, all surrounded by gardens.

Missionary efforts in Italy began in 1850, but progress was interrupted by anti-Church activity and heavy legal requirements. The Church was allowed to resume missionary efforts in 1964. In 1993, Italy granted formal legal status to the Church. In 2012, the Church received official status as a “partner of the state,” which allows the Church greater freedom to do more good, both as a church and as a social institution.

- Today nearly 27,000 Latter-day Saints in Italy meet in 101 congregations.
- President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) presided at the 2010 groundbreaking for the Rome Italy Temple, which was also attended by the vice mayor of Rome.
- There are two missions in Italy: the Italy Milan Mission and the Italy Rome Mission.





Connecting Daughters of God with His Priesthood Power
Barbara Morgan Gardner

34



I Have So Much to Learn about the Priesthood

As a young woman and later as a missionary, I remember wondering if certain verses in the scriptures applied to me as a female, especially those which referred to missionary work and priesthood. Now in my various Church callings and as a religion teacher, others have asked me similar questions about how the priesthood applies to them.

As I note in my article on page 34, Church leaders in the last few years have asked members to better understand the priesthood. President Russell M. Nelson voiced a concern that “too many of our brothers and sisters do not fully understand the concept of priesthood power and authority.”¹

The saying is true that “information inspires inspiration.” As I have studied the priesthood and taught university students about it, I have not only come to realize how little I know but have also had my mind and heart opened to eternal truths regarding the priesthood.

I hope that as you learn more about the priesthood in this issue, you’ll come to understand that our Heavenly Parents desire to bless us with the priesthood and that latter-day prophets are pleading for us to take advantage of these privileges—perhaps especially those given to worthy men and women in the temple.

Sincerely,
Barbara Morgan Gardner

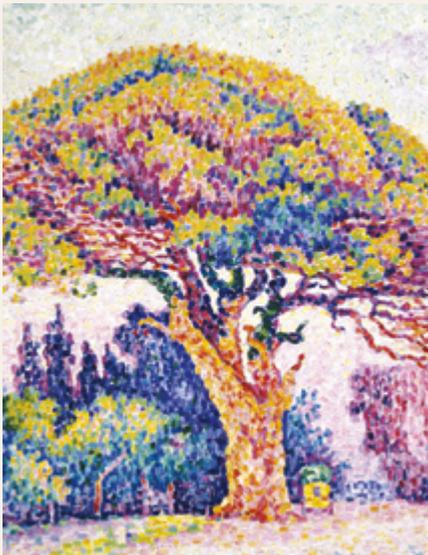
NOTE

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



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Photograph by
Matt Reier.

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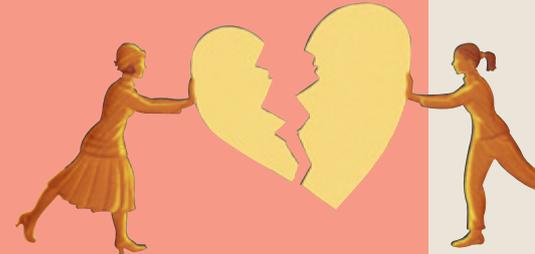
Learn how to better prepare for, understand, and keep your **temple covenants**.



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ARTICLES



Stained Glass in the Rome Visitors' Center
By Heather White Claridge and Chakell Wardleigh

The head artist who helped create the stained glass mural in the Rome Italy Temple Visitors' Center explains the significance and symbolism of this piece.



5 Reasons Singles Should Participate in Temple Sealings

By Alex Hugie

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Good Enough for the Temple?

By Zariah Inniss

A young adult from Barbados learns she doesn't have to be perfect to be worthy to enter the temple.

**MARCH 2019 VOL. 43 NO. 3
LIAHONA 18603**

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

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Mailing address: *Liahona*, Fl. 23, 50 E. North Temple St., 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,

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For Readers in the United States and Canada: March 2019 Vol. 43 No. 3. 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. 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.lds.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.



THE SOURCE OF PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY

The priesthood is the power and authority of God, which He gives to us to help carry out His work of salvation (see *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], page 8). The Lord has given His priesthood to chosen servants since the days of Adam. Because the priesthood is given to worthy men by the laying on of hands and a record is kept of those ordinations, priesthood holders today can trace their line of authority back to Joseph Smith, who received the Melchizedek Priesthood from Apostles of Jesus Christ.



PRIESTHOOD KEYS

PRIESTHOOD KEYS ARE THE AUTHORITY GOD HAS GIVEN TO PRIESTHOOD LEADERS TO DIRECT THE USE OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

1. Peter, James, and John

During His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ gave His priesthood authority to His Apostles, including Peter, James, and John (see Matthew 10).

2. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery

On May 15, 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to give them the Aaronic Priesthood. A few weeks later, the ancient Apostles Peter, James, and John gave Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the Melchizedek Priesthood (see Doctrine and Covenants 27:12; 128:20; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 81, 101).



on earth, including how the priesthood is passed from one priesthood holder to another. For example, only a bishop, who holds the priesthood keys for his ward, can authorize a man or young man in his ward to receive the Aaronic Priesthood. In April 1836 the Prophet Joseph Smith received important priesthood keys from Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 110). ■

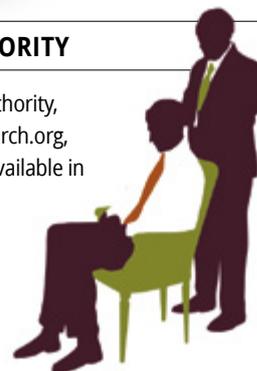
3. Latter-day Apostles and Leaders

The Prophet Joseph Smith gave the priesthood to other worthy men, who, under the Prophet's direction, gave it to other worthy men, and so on, up to the modern day.

PRIESTHOOD LINE OF AUTHORITY

To receive your priesthood line of authority, send an email to lineofauthority@ldschurch.org, with the letters PLA in the subject line (available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish).

To learn more about the priesthood, see "Connecting Daughters of God with His Priesthood Power" on page 34.





Jason and Jackie Wong

Hong Kong, China



Views on gender roles can vary widely from culture to culture, but the challenge of becoming united as newlyweds seems to be universal. Jason and Jackie learned some important lessons as they worked together.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Jason:

I grew up thinking that girls were supposed to do all the housework. I quickly learned that was not realistic. Jackie was very busy and under a lot of pressure with her job. While I'm under a lot of pressure too, I realized that I should start doing more to help.

Jackie:

Being a newlywed has been a change. Honestly speaking, God is super important within our relationship. Without God, we might have broken up!

Jason:

We realized that we needed to spend more time together. So now we do housework together. This helps us get it done, and we are able to be with each other.

Jackie:

We also try to take time in the evenings to talk about our day; then we pray and read the scriptures before we sleep. Living the gospel has blessed our marriage.

FIND MORE

President Russell M. Nelson testifies of the blessings of celestial marriage at lds.org/go/031906.

Find resources to strengthen your marriage and family at lds.org/go/031907.

Find more "Portraits of Faith" in the Media Library at lds.org/go/18.

Ministering Principles

HOW TO **SHARE** TESTIMONY **MORE NATURALLY**



MINISTERING IS TESTIFYING.

THE FLEXIBILITY OF MINISTERING CAN INCREASE OUR OPPORTUNITIES
TO SHARE TESTIMONY IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL WAYS.

We have covenanted to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9). Sharing our testimonies is part of standing as a witness and is a powerful way to invite the Holy Ghost to touch someone’s heart and change their life.

“Testimony—real testimony, born of the Spirit and confirmed by the

Holy Ghost—changes lives,” said President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.¹

But sharing our testimony can be intimidating or uncomfortable for some of us. That may be because we think of sharing our testimony as something we do in fast and testimony meeting or when teaching a lesson.

In those formal settings, we often use certain words and phrases that seem out of place in natural conversation.

Sharing our testimonies can become a more regular blessing in our lives and the lives of others when we understand how simple it can be to share what we believe in everyday settings. Here are a few ideas to help you get started.

Keep It Simple

A testimony doesn’t need to begin with the phrase, “I’d like to bear my testimony,” and it doesn’t need to end with, “In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” A testimony is an expression of what we believe and know to be true. So to visit with your neighbor on the street about a problem she is having and to say, “I know that God answers prayers,” can be as powerful as any testimony shared from the pulpit at church. The power doesn’t come from flowery language; it comes from the Holy Ghost confirming truth (see Doctrine and Covenants 100:7–8).



The Savior’s Example

Weary from a journey through Samaria, the Savior paused to rest at a well and met a woman there. He started a conversation about drawing water from the well. Using this everyday task that the woman was engaged in gave Jesus the opportunity to testify of the living water and eternal life available to those who believe in Him (see John 4:13–15, 25–26).

Fit the Flow of Natural Conversation

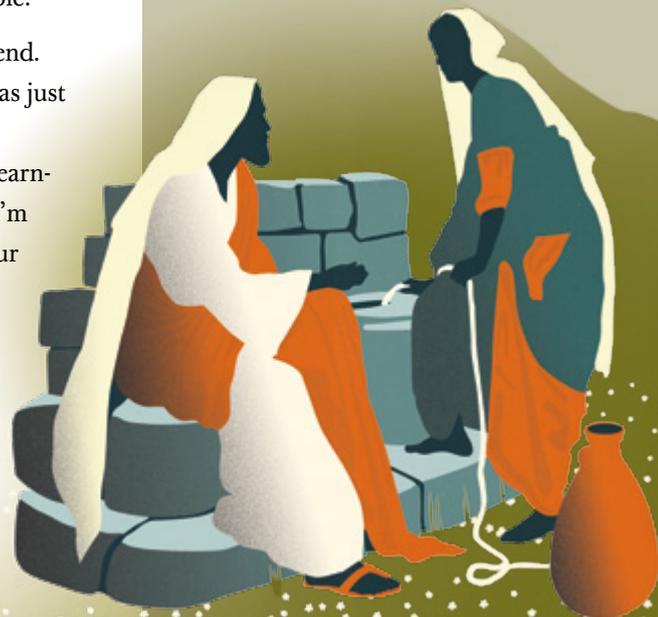


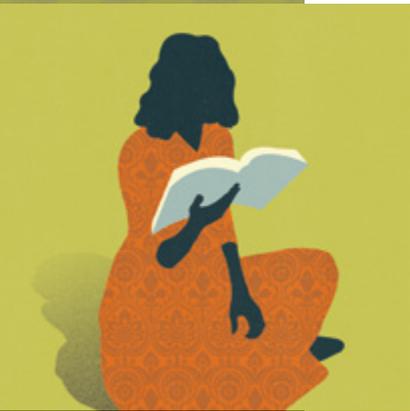
If we’re willing to share, there are opportunities all around us to fit testimony into everyday conversations. For example:

- Someone asks you about your weekend. “It was great,” you reply. “Church was just what I needed.”
- Someone expresses sympathy after learning about a challenge in your life: “I’m so sorry.” You reply: “Thanks for your

concern. I know that God will see me through. He’s been there for me before.”

- Someone remarks: “I hope this awful weather changes soon,” or “The bus sure is late,” or “Look at this traffic.” You might respond: “I’m sure God will help everything work out.”





Be Prepared

For some of us, sharing testimony on the spur of the moment can be intimidating. There are ways we can plan ahead and “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us]” (1 Peter 3:15).

First, being prepared can mean looking at how we live. Are we inviting the Holy Ghost into our lives and strengthening our own testimonies each day through righteous living? Are we giving the Spirit opportunities to speak to us and give us the words we need through prayer and scripture study? As the Lord counseled Hyrum Smith, “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed” (Doctrine and Covenants 11:21).

Second, being prepared can mean looking ahead and considering opportunities you might have that day or that week to share your testimony. You can prepare for those opportunities by thinking about how they might give you a chance to share what you believe.



Share Your Experiences

We often talk with each other about our challenges. When someone tells you about what they are facing, you might share a time when God helped you in your trials and testify that you know He can help them too. The Lord said

He strengthens us in our trials so “that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions” (Mosiah 24:14). We can stand as witnesses of Him when we testify of how He has helped us in our trials.



Stay Centered on the Savior and His Doctrine

President Ballard taught, “Although we can have testimonies of many things as members of the Church, there are basic truths we need to constantly teach one another and share.” As examples, he listed: “God is our Father and Jesus is

the Christ. The plan of salvation is centered on the Savior’s Atonement. Joseph Smith restored the fulness of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Book of Mormon is evidence that our testimony is true.” As we express those heartfelt truths, we invite the Spirit to bear witness that what we have said is true. President Ballard emphasized that “the Spirit cannot be restrained when pure testimony of Christ is borne.”²



A Simple Testimony Can Change Lives

President Russell M. Nelson has told of a nurse who asked then-Dr. Nelson a question after a difficult surgical procedure. “Why are you not like other surgeons?” Some surgeons she knew could be short-tempered and profane as they performed such high-pressure procedures.

Dr. Nelson could have answered in any number of ways. But he simply replied, “Because I know the Book of Mormon is true.”

His answer prompted the nurse and her husband to study the Book of Mormon. President Nelson later baptized the nurse. Decades later, while presiding over a stake conference in Tennessee, USA, as a newly ordained Apostle, President Nelson enjoyed an unexpected reunion with the same nurse. She recounted that her conversion, brought about by his simple testimony and the influence of the Book of Mormon, helped lead to the conversion of another 80 people.³

Invitation to Act

Don't be afraid to share your testimony. It can bless those to whom you minister.

How will you use these ideas or your own to share your testimony today? ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, “Pure Testimony,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 40.
2. M. Russell Ballard, “Pure Testimony,” 41.
3. In Jason Swensen, “Be Ready to Explain Your Testimony Using the Book of Mormon, President Nelson Says,” Church News section of LDS.org, Feb. 6, 2018, news.lds.org.



“Ministering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences as you have ministered to others or have been ministered to. Go to liahona.lds.org and click “Submit an Article or Feedback.”



How can
those who face
challenges
still be
cheerful,
strong, and
at peace?



Sources of Peace and Power



By Elder
Carlos A. Godoy
Of the Presidency
of the Seventy

One of the most touching experiences I have had as a General Authority was to serve among our dear Saints in Venezuela. People there, including Church members, live in difficult circumstances. However, although this reality exists, I could also see, in my frequent visits to the country, that there was a difference between the general population and the Latter-day Saints.

The Venezuela Experience

The Saints in Venezuela are doing their best. It is true that many are suffering and struggling, and the Church has been active in supporting those in need through fast-offering funds, welfare programs, and self-reliance initiatives. But while the Saints could easily find reasons to be sad, even with all the challenges they face, they are a happy people—at peace with themselves, often smiling, and hoping for better days ahead.

This is true for youth of the Church in Venezuela. Their personal and family challenges are making them stronger and preparing them for the future. And this is also true for our Venezuelan missionaries. They need to be strong

for themselves, for their investigators, and for their families. And they are. They remind us of the 2,000 stripling warriors of Helaman. Though small in numbers, they are “exceedingly valiant for courage” (see Alma 53:20–21). In Venezuela the Lord is preparing a strong generation of mothers, fathers, and leaders. Whenever we are among the Saints there, we find ourselves filled with faith in the gospel and in the future.

Peace in Times of Troubles

How can these members, who face such challenges, still be cheerful, strong, and at peace? I believe what is happening with many of them is that they are becoming more dependent on God. As a consequence, they are receiving strength from the source of all strength. They recognize the blessings they receive from Heavenly Father, they rely on the power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, and they are comforted, supported, and strengthened by the Holy Ghost. As a result, their burdens become lighter, their sorrow is relieved, and they find peace in the midst of their trials.

The Venezuelan members are experiencing a modern example of what took place among Alma and his people in the Book of Mormon:

“And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:15).

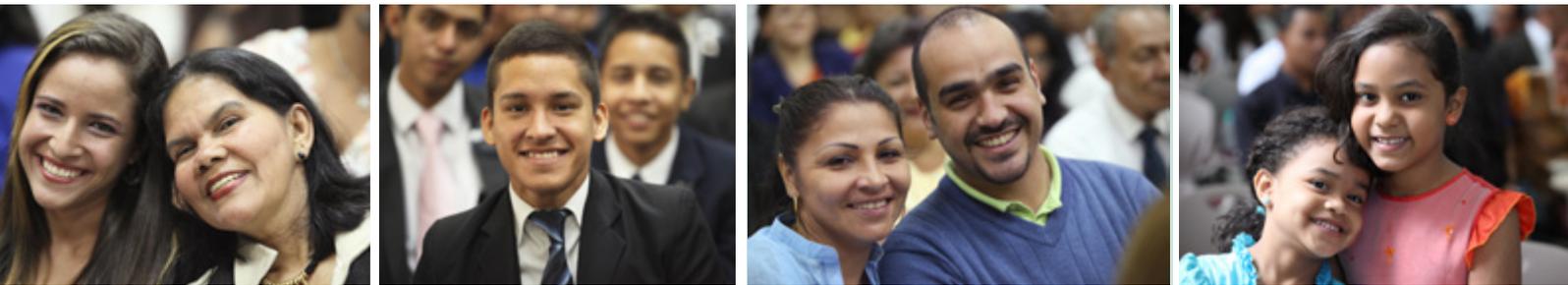
The Atoning Power of Jesus Christ

My testimony of God’s desire to bless us has become stronger by spending time among our members in Venezuela. As in the experience of Alma and his followers, the Saints in Venezuela

The Saints in Venezuela are a happy people—at peace with themselves, often smiling, hoping for better days ahead.

What has happened to them is the same process that should happen to each of us. We will all have challenges and trials in our lives. When we do, we should ask ourselves:

- Are we looking to God to help us overcome those difficult times?
- Are we willing to pay the price to become a better person and to develop Christlike attributes so necessary to our progress?
- Do we understand that through the power of the Savior’s Atonement, we can find strength and hope?



One way they stay strong is by listening to the counsel of prophets and apostles, as these Saints did when Elder Quentin L. Cook spoke in Caracas, Venezuela, in 2013.

have been strengthened, and their increased capacity has lightened the burdens they bear. The Savior invites us to come unto Him if we have heavy burdens, and we will find rest (see Matthew 11:28–30). These good members have been empowered to carry their burdens in the strength of the Lord.

As a consequence of their trials, and as a blessing for putting their trust in the Savior and His grace, they have experienced a change of heart and they each have become “as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon [them], even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19).

In summary, through trials they have developed Christlike attributes all disciples of Christ hope to attain.

How and why is the Savior able to provide such comfort and power? The scriptures tell us: “And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:11–12).

The Lord Knows

As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “The Savior has suffered



A yoke enables animals to pull together with power, just as the yoke of Jesus Christ connects us to His redeeming and enabling power.

not just for our iniquities but also for the inequality, the unfairness, the pain, the anguish, and the emotional distress that so frequently beset us. . . . You and I in a moment of weakness may cry out, ‘No one understands. No one knows.’ No human being, perhaps, knows. But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He felt and bore our burdens before we ever did. And because He paid the ultimate price and bore that burden, He has perfect empathy and can extend to us His arm of mercy in so many phases of our life” (“The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2012, 47; *Liahona*, Apr. 2012, 19).

Elder Bednar then quotes this scripture, which helps us understand that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, each of us can find peace:

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

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

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

I want to add my testimony to Elder Bednar’s words. I also know through personal experience that we can find strength and peace in the loving arms of our Savior. The Savior’s redeeming and enabling power is not just the source of the forgiveness of our sins but also a powerful source of hope, peace, strength, comfort, talents, inspiration, and all that is necessary to help us go

through our journey in this life and succeed. We can truly rely upon “the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8).

Our Own Life Application

How can we access this source of strength? What do we have to do to get the help we need?

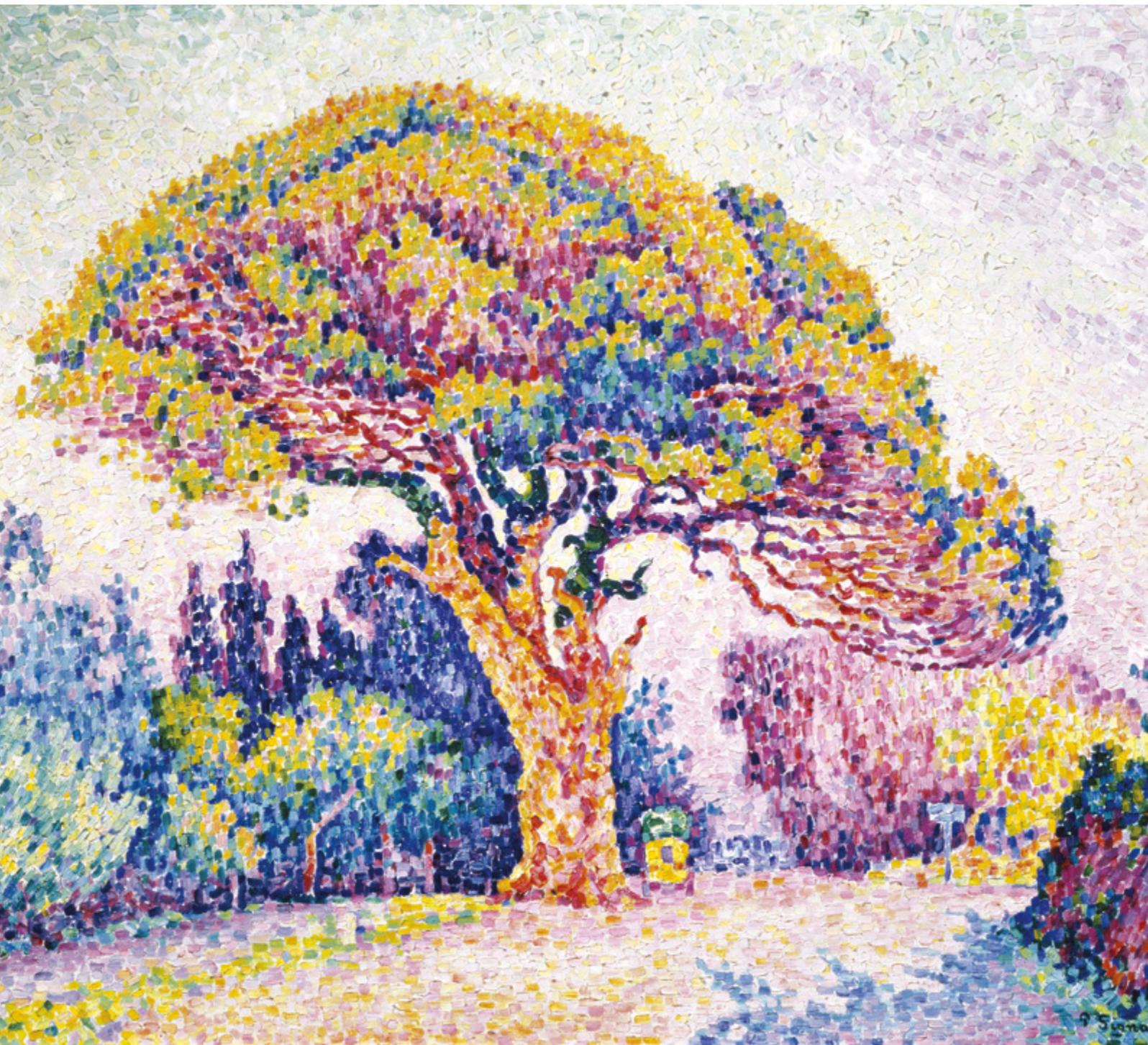
First, we should have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Atonement. We need to understand that He and His Father are the sources of peace and power. They make everything possible.

Then, we must act and do our best with whatever we are going through. We may be working to overcome a weakness, seeking relief from sorrow, or striving to develop a talent. Even if our best seems insufficient sometimes, if we really give our best, the Lord through His grace will bless us with what we need.

“As you and I come to understand and employ the enabling power of the Atonement in our personal lives,” Elder Bednar said, “we will pray and seek for strength to change our circumstances rather than praying for our circumstances to be changed. We will become agents who act rather than objects that are acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:14)” (“The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Ensign*, 44; *Liahona*, 16).

We should also remember that when we are doing our part, the Lord is by our side. Our part of the battle doesn’t need to be fought alone. He will be with us, from the very beginning to the very end. I testify that the words of Isaiah are true: “For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee” (Isaiah 41:13). That is true for the Saints in Venezuela, and it is true for Saints everywhere in the world. ■

*Remember that when we are doing our part, the Lord is by our side.
Our part of the battle doesn’t need to be fought alone.*





By Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

Your Adventure through Mortality

Believe—and God will be with you. Incline your heart to Him—and He will guide you on your journey.

From a worldwide devotional for young adults, “The Adventure of Mortality,” delivered by Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf and Sister Harriet Uchtdorf in the Conference Center on January 14, 2018.

It is so good to be with you today and to feel your spirit, your strength, your energy. I am very happy that you had a chance to hear from Sister Uchtdorf. Harriet is indeed the sunshine of my life. Everyone who knows her, loves her. She is the kind of person who makes those around her better and happier. She has certainly had that influence on me.

We just celebrated our 55th wedding anniversary. When we look at our two children and their spouses, our six grandchildren with their families, and our four great-grandchildren, we are amazed at the great adventure our life has been.

The Age of Instant Answers

An interesting thought occurred to me as I was preparing for this event. Yes, it’s true, the years when I was ages 18 to 30 are barely visible in my rearview mirror, but despite my current age, I still feel young inside. In fact, most of us older people consider ourselves to be young people who have just been living a very long time.

When you look at us, the “older generation,” you could be surprised how much more we have in common with your generation than you might suppose. I believe that the differences between Heavenly Father’s children, whatever their age, are minor compared to the similarities. For instance, many of you have questions about God and about yourself—deep, fundamental questions that are similar to those asked by people much older than you:



“Receiving [heavenly] answers often requires sacrifice, work, and patience,” said Elder Uchtdorf, pictured with Sister Uchtdorf and young adults in the Conference Center.

- “Does God really exist? Does He care?”
- “Am I on the right path?”
- “Why do I sometimes feel empty, overwhelmed, overlooked, or lonely?”
- “Why hasn’t God intervened in my life?”
- “Why didn’t He answer a prayer?”
- “Why did He allow me to experience this sadness, illness, or tragedy?”

These can be difficult questions to answer.

In this age of instant answers—where seemingly absolute and unsailable knowledge is merely a Google search away—we sometimes get frustrated when answers to our most personal, important, and urgent questions are delayed. We lift up our hearts to heaven, and all we seem to get is a frustrating, spinning “wait cursor.”

We don’t like waiting.

When we have to wait more than a few seconds for a search engine to respond, we might suppose the connection is down or broken. In our frustration, we might even abandon the search. But when it comes to eternal questions, matters of the soul, we must be more patient.

Not all answers are of equal worth. Answers that come from worldly wisdom or popular opinion are easy to come by, but they lose their worth

quickly when new theories or trends emerge. Heavenly answers—eternal answers—are priceless. Receiving these answers often requires sacrifice, work, and patience.

These answers are worth the wait.

My purpose is to offer my certain witness that your Father in Heaven knows you, hears you, and will never abandon you. As you incline your hearts to Him and strive to follow His way, He will intervene in your life and direct your path as you journey through this great and exciting adventure of mortality.

Connecting the Dots

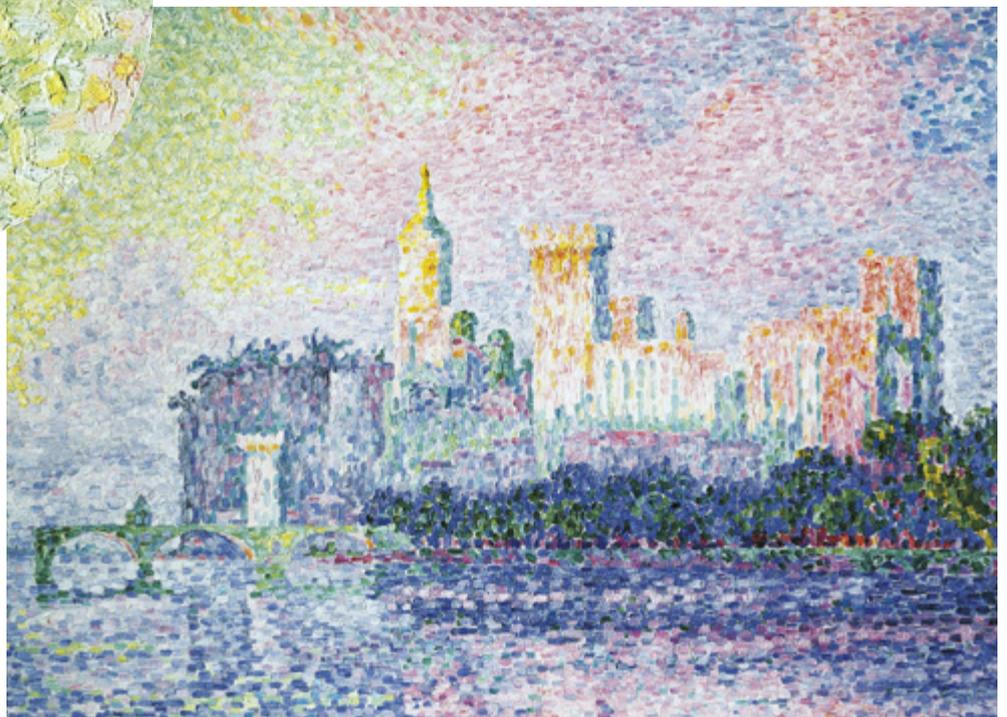
One of the great innovators of our time, Steve Jobs of Apple, had this insight: “You can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future.”¹

*When we look at our lives
in the frame of the gospel
of Jesus Christ, we can
begin to see how the
various dots in our lives
interconnect.*

What did he mean by that? In the late 19th century, artists such as Georges Seurat and Paul Signac began painting in a new style that would become known as neo-impressionism. Their technique consisted of dotting canvases with small specks of color. Close up, these dots appear unconnected and random. But when you take in the entire painting, you can see how the dots blend into colors and how the colors form shapes that reveal a beautiful pattern. What once seemed arbitrary and even confusing begins to make sense.

Sometimes our lives are like neo-impressionistic art. The dots of color that make up the moments and events of our days can appear unconnected and chaotic at times. We can't see any order to them. We can't imagine that they have a purpose at all.

However, when we step back and take an eternal perspective, when we look at our lives in the frame of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can begin to see how the various dots in our lives interconnect. We may not be able to see the entire picture just yet, but with patience we can see enough to trust that there is a beautiful, grand design. And as we strive to trust God and follow His Son, Jesus Christ, one day we will see the finished product, and we will know that the very hand of God was directing and guiding our steps.





You have to ask yourself, “Can I muster enough faith to believe God? Am I willing to trust that He loves me and wants to guide my path?”



We will know that the Master Artist had a plan for those random dots all along. We will see that He amplified our talents, prepared opportunities, and introduced us to possibilities far more glorious than we ever could have imagined or accomplished on our own. I have certainly seen this in my own life.

My Adventure of Mortality

When I was very young, my family was twice forced to flee our home and leave everything behind. On both occasions, it became apparent that people in our new locations considered us as “less” than them. Among the children my age,

my accent marked me as an outsider, and it was a rich source of ridicule and laughter for them.

The trauma and stress of our relocations caused me to fall behind in my studies, and I lost one full school year. In East Germany, I had studied Russian as a second language. It was difficult, but I managed. Now, in West Germany, I was required to learn English.

This seemed impossible to me! I believed that my mouth was simply not made for the English language.

During my teenage years, I had a crush on a most amazing girl with beautiful large brown eyes. Unfortunately, she didn’t seem the slightest bit interested in me.

So there I was, a rather insignificant and struggling young man living in post-war Germany who didn’t seem to have much chance of success in life.

However, I had a couple of good things going for me. I knew that my family loved me. In school and in church, teachers encouraged me to always set my goals high. I still remember when a young American missionary taught this principle from the scriptures: “If God is for [you], who can be against [you]?”²

There was something about this that struck me with great power. “If that’s the case,” I thought, “then why should I fear?”

So, I believed. And I trusted God.

For a time, I was in an apprenticeship program. One of my teachers challenged me to aim higher and attend night school to study mechanical engineering. It took a great deal of extra work, but it led me to discover my great passion for aviation! It came as a shock when I learned that to become a pilot, I needed to know English. But I wanted to become a pilot, and somehow miraculously my mouth seemed to change, and English no longer was such an impossible language.

With new motivation, a fresh commitment to work hard, and trust in Heavenly Father, I took small steps that helped me to build the confidence that I could do it. Of course, that didn't mean things always went smoothly.

When I was 19, I traveled to San Antonio, Texas, USA, to begin my air force pilot training. On the airplane, I sat next to a man who spoke with a Texan accent. I realized to my horror that the English I had worked so desperately to learn was not the same English he spoke!

At pilot training school, things were difficult too. It was an extremely competitive program, with everyone vying for the top spot at graduation. I knew right away that I was at a disadvantage because most of my classmates were native English speakers.

My flight instructors cautioned me about another potential disadvantage—I spent a lot of time at church. The local members welcomed me into their branch and into their homes, and we even built a chapel in Big Spring, Texas, together. My instructors worried that such activities were impairing my chance at a high ranking. I didn't think so. So I trusted God and did the best I could.



Eventually, I did learn English, though I'm still working on it. I completed my pilot training—and finished first in my class. I became a fighter pilot and later an airline captain. And that beautiful, brown-eyed girl of my dreams became my wife.

Do Small Things Perfectly

Is there a lesson in this? I think there are several!

One might be this: Don't get overwhelmed by the many large, difficult tasks of life. If you commit to doing the "easy" things—the "small" things God asks you to do—and you do them as perfectly as you can, big things will follow.

Some of these small and easy things you could do perfectly are study the scriptures, live the Word of Wisdom, attend church, pray with real intent, and pay tithes and offerings.

Do these things even when you don't want to. These "sacrifices" may appear to be small, but they are important, for "sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven."³

In a sense, your small and simple sacrifices are the dots of daily living that make up the masterpiece painting of your life. You may not see how the dots connect now, and you don't need to yet. Simply have faith enough for the moment you are living in now. Trust in God, and "out of small things [will come] that which is great."⁴

Trust in God

Now, you may be thinking: "Yes, Elder Uchtdorf, that's all very nice for you. But you are an Apostle. I'm just a regular member of the Church. My prayers are not answered. My life is not directed. If there is a plan for me, it's a thrift store version. A hand-me-down plan. A pat-on-the-head-just-be-content-with-what-you-have plan."



My dear friends, you are children of the living God, the God of the universe. He loves you, He wants you to succeed, He has a plan prepared for your success. Remember what Steve Jobs said: “You cannot connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward.”

When I was your age, I had no idea where my life would take me. I definitely didn’t see any dots connecting in front of me.

But I did trust God. I listened to the advice of loving family and wise friends, and I took small steps of faith, believing that if I did the best I could in the moment, God would take care of the big picture.

He did.

He knew the end from the beginning when I did not.

I could not see the future, but He could.

Even during those times of hardship when I thought I was abandoned, He was with me—I see that now.

In Proverbs we find this great promise: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”⁵

I don’t believe there is a question mark at the end of that verse. No, I think there should be an exclamation point!

So you have to ask yourself, “Can I muster enough faith to believe God? Am I willing to trust that He loves me and wants to guide my path?”

In fact, you might do very well on your own in many things. But I urge you to believe that your life will be infinitely better if you rely on God to guide your steps. He knows things you cannot possibly know, and He has a future prepared for you that you cannot possibly imagine. The great Apostle Paul testified, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.”⁶

Do you want your Heavenly Father to guide you, bless you, and uphold you?

Then believe.

Love Him.

Seek Him with all your heart.

Walk in His ways—which means keeping the commandments, honoring your covenants, following the teachings of the prophets, and hearkening unto the promptings of the Spirit.

Do this and God will “increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised!”⁷

I understand that for some this may seem easy

to say and hard to do. You don't have to go far in today's culture to hear contradictory voices that discourage or even ridicule belief in God generally, and in our religion specifically.

Such voices are amplified in our day by unmatched advances in communication. That is your challenge, but it also is your privilege.

I am confident that you will find means to deal with it the Lord's way! It is part of your adventure of mortality. How you do it will greatly influence your future and the part you play in God's work here on earth.

Nevertheless, what you are experiencing in life is not all that uncommon. Yours is not the only generation whose faith in God has been challenged and ridiculed. In fact, this seems to be part of the mortal test for all of God's children.

"If ye were of the world," Jesus told His disciples, "the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."⁸

You might as well accept the likelihood that once you make the commitment to follow the Savior, the residents of the great and spacious building will disapprove—quite vocally, at times.⁹ They may even attempt to bully and shame you.

But remember that you do not answer to them. You answer to God. One day you will stand before Him to account for your life.

He will ask what you did to overcome the temptations of the world and follow the path of righteousness. He will ask if you followed the Savior, if you loved your neighbor, if you earnestly tried to stay on the path of discipleship.

Remember, we can't have it both ways. We cannot receive the incomprehensible blessings of discipleship while at the same time maintaining our membership records in the Babylon First

Ward. Dear friends, now is the time to commit to Christ and follow His path.

One day all of God's children will know what is right—including those who now mock the truth. They will bow the knee and confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Redeemer, the Savior of the world.¹⁰ They will know that He died for them.

On that day it will be clear that His is the only voice that ever really mattered.

You will know with certainty how blessed you are because you kept the faith, kept God's commandments, served your fellowmen, and built God's kingdom here on earth. My beloved friends, believe—and God will be with you. Incline your heart to Him—and He will guide you on your journey through this great and exciting adventure of mortal life.

"It Mattereth Not"

When we speak of letting God guide our lives, I would like to clarify one thing. You might not like what I'm about to tell you. When you ask God what to do about decisions in your life—including some important decisions—He may not give you a clear answer right away. The truth is that sometimes it just doesn't matter what you decide, as long as you stay within the fundamental covenants and principles of the gospel.

In many cases, the decisions you make may not be as important as what you do after making the decisions.

For example, a couple may choose to get married even though some in their own families do not consider them a perfect match. However, I have great hope for such a couple if, after they make their decision, they stay totally committed to each other and to the Lord with all their heart and mind. By treating each other with love and kindness and by focusing on one another's emotional, spiritual, and temporal needs—by doing the little things consistently—they become the perfect match.

In contrast is the couple who think they picked the "perfect" person and then assume that all the heavy lifting is over. If they quit courting each other, stop communicating one-on-one, and slide into egotism and a self-centered life, this couple is on a path that leads to sorrow and regret.

The same principle applies to vocational choices. I have great hope for those who pick a less prestigious occupation but who do the best they can and find ways to make their work interesting and challenging.

I have less hope for those who choose impressive-sounding occupations but along the way lose that inner fire necessary to make them

successful at their work. In fact, successfully adapting to changes in the workplace will be one of the prime attributes your generation will have to develop to cope with the future.

So how does the Lord want you to approach key decisions?

His instructions to Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith have helped me. The Lord told them, “You must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right.”¹¹

Heavenly Father has given you a brain and a heart. If you trust Him, He will help you to use both of them properly in your decision making.

For many decisions, you have more than one good option to choose from. When this happened to Joseph and his companions, the Lord used an interesting phrase as they sought His guidance: “It mattereth not.”¹²

But the Lord immediately added, “Only be faithful.”¹³

Your work is to make the best decisions you can based on



the information available to you, grounded in the values and principles of the gospel. Then strive with all your might to succeed in the things you undertake—and be faithful.

Do that, and the dots will connect.

Perhaps it’s disappointing to hear that God won’t necessarily give you a detailed itinerary for your life’s journey. But do you really want direction in every detail of your life? Do you really want someone giving you the cheat codes to life before you have a chance to figure things out for yourself? What kind of adventure would that be?

My dear friends, you pass through the adventure of mortality only once. Wouldn’t an individually tailored walk-through complete with spoilers and answers to all of life’s great questions take away your great feeling of accomplishment and your increase of confidence in the Lord and in yourself?¹⁴

Because God has given you your agency, you can choose many directions to go and still lead a fulfilling life. Mortality is an open-ended, choose-your-own-adventure story. You have commandments, you have covenants, you have inspired prophetic counsel, and you have the gift of the Holy Ghost. That is more than enough to lead you to mortal happiness and eternal joy. Beyond that, don’t despair if you make some decisions that are less than perfect. That is how you learn. That’s part of the adventure!

No, adventures never go smoothly from start to finish, but if you are faithful, you can be assured of a happy ending. Consider the example of Joseph of Egypt. In many ways, his life was disastrous. He was sold into slavery by his brothers. He was cast into prison for a crime he did not commit. Despite all the terrible circumstances forced upon him, he maintained his faith. He trusted God. He made the best of it. Year after year—even when it appeared that he had been overlooked and abandoned—he believed. Joseph always inclined his heart to God. And God showed that He is able to turn negatives into positives.¹⁵

Today, 4,000 years later, we still find inspiration in Joseph’s story.

Your adventure may not be quite as dramatic, but it will have its ups and downs. So, remember Joseph’s example.

Remain faithful. Believe. Be honest. Don't become bitter. Don't be a bully. Love God. Love your fellowmen. Trust the Lord, even when things appear bleak.

You may not see it until much later, but you will look back and know that the Lord did indeed direct and guide your path. And the dots did connect.

Five Things to Remember

Until then, may I ask you to remember five things?

First, know that God's answers to your most profound questions may take a little time and may come in ways you don't expect. God's answers are of eternal value. They are worth the wait.

Second, have a little faith. Incline your hearts to God. Believe that you are important to God, and trust that He will make more of you than you can possibly make of yourself. Learn of Him. Love Him. Believe Him. Speak with Him regularly, intensely. Listen for His voice.

Third, walk as best as you can on the path of discipleship. Don't get overwhelmed. Just do the small things as perfectly as you can, and the big things will fall into place.

Fourth, don't let discouraging voices dissuade you from your journey of faith. Remember, you don't answer to your critics. You answer to your Father in Heaven. His values count.

Fifth, make the best decisions you can by following the promptings that come to your heart and mind. Give your best efforts to follow through. Have faith, and God will consecrate your honest efforts for your eternal good.¹⁶

Do this and, in the end, all will be well.

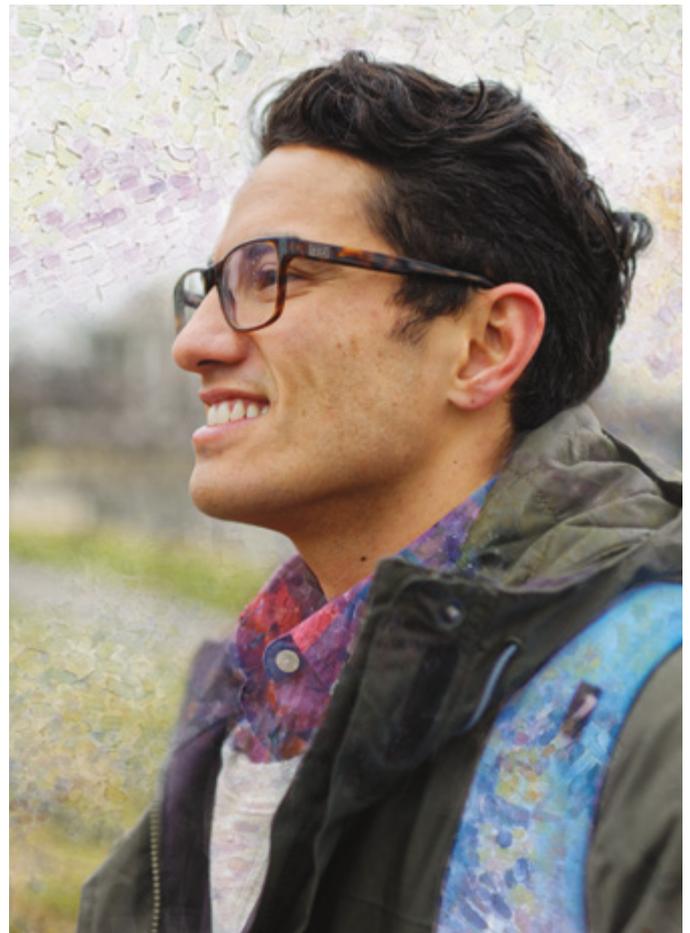
As you seek to follow your Savior, your confidence will grow.¹⁷ And as you walk in faithfulness and open your heart to the Light of Christ, your love of God will mature and your ability to love your neighbor will be refined.

And all this will bring you happiness and joy.

It will bring you peace.

One day, it will bring you eternal glory.

On that future day, you will look back on this cherished and exciting adventure of mortality, and you will understand.



You will see that the dots really did connect into a beautiful pattern, more sublime than you ever could have imagined.

With unspeakable gratitude, you will see that God Himself, in His abounding love, grace, and compassion, was always there watching over you, blessing you, and guiding your steps as you walked toward Him. ■

NOTES

1. Steve Jobs, Stanford University commencement address, June 12, 2005.
2. Romans 8:31, New International Version (1984).
3. "Praise to the Man," *Hymns*, no. 27.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 64:33.
5. Proverbs 3:5–6.
6. 1 Corinthians 2:9, New International Version.
7. Deuteronomy 1:11, New International Version.
8. John 15:19.
9. See 1 Nephi 8:26–28.
10. See Romans 14:10–12; Philippians 2:10.
11. Doctrine and Covenants 9:8.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 60:5; 62:5; 80:3.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 62:5.
14. See Doctrine and Covenants 121:45.
15. See Genesis 37, 39–46.
16. See 2 Nephi 32:9.
17. See 2 Nephi 32:9.



By the Sunday School General Presidency

Learning a New Way of Learning

As we move forward, consider these five principles that guide learning and teaching the gospel.

It has been two months since we began using *Come, Follow Me* for Primary, Sunday School, and the home. What are your first impressions? How have these new resources helped you and your family?

Think about your answers to these questions as you read the following principles that can help us successfully use these new resources. We will discuss how these five principles can apply to both learners and teachers.

PRINCIPLE 1:

The new curriculum is about elevating learning in the home.

For the learner:

There are 168 hours in a week, and only a few of those hours are spent at church. So while you may be learning a lot in your Church classes, you will also want to strive to learn and live the gospel throughout the week. Think of spiritual learning like exercise: you will see greater benefits if you exercise several times a week than if you exercise just one day a week. And to the extent that you study the scriptures at home, you will be filled with insights and spiritual understanding that will bless your life and the lives of others as you share what you are learning.

For the teacher:

It may not be enough simply to give a good lesson on Sunday. One of the goals of a teacher should be to encourage personal and family study of the scriptures. What experiences did class members have studying the scriptures this week? What insights can they share? You might find it helpful to view your role like that of a choir director teaching singing and bringing out all of the voices into one beautiful harmony. You can teach a lesson, direct the discussion, and bring all you know to the experience, but you won't make inspiring music if class members don't share their own insights and inspiration.

PRINCIPLE 2:

The Lord wants us to learn and grow in our doctrinal understanding.

For the learner:

When you study the scriptures, you can find gospel truths—doctrine—that help you know God better and find greater understanding to face your challenges. You may also find that some gospel truths are stated directly in the text while others are implied. Think of your search for truth like a search for buried treasure. You may need to dig a bit to uncover and discover truth, but in the end, you will have “the brightest prize to which mortals or Gods can aspire.”¹

For the teacher:

Teachers are more than facilitators and moderators; they have an obligation to teach doctrine—to testify, guide, and inspire. As you prepare to teach by studying, pondering, and praying, you will be prepared to help those you teach better understand and act on an inspired doctrine. Have confidence in your role as a teacher in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. With concerted effort, you can teach more like the Savior.





PRINCIPLE 3:

Personal revelation is central to gospel learning and teaching in the Church.

For the learner:

President Russell M. Nelson recently invited Church members to “increase [their] spiritual capacity to receive revelation.”² As you study God’s word, you show Him that you want to receive revelation. Personal revelation often comes when you are studying revelation that the Lord has already given to His prophets. Paraphrasing the ninth article of faith: when you study all that God “has revealed,” you prepare yourself to receive all that “He does now reveal” and all that “He will yet reveal.”

As you receive revelation, develop the habit of recording your impressions and acting on them. Not only does this show the Lord that you value the things He is teaching you, but to be changed by what we learn, we must apply it.³

For the teacher:

Revelation about what to teach in class can come to you in many ways. It may come as you study the scriptures for yourself. Or it might also come as you review the *Come, Follow Me* resources for the home or for Church classes. When inspiration comes, record and act on the impressions you receive.

Even after you make plans for what you might do in class, do not be afraid to respond to inspiration during class to meet the needs of those you teach.

PRINCIPLE 4:

The new materials are resources, not the source.

For the learner:

The word of God is a source of spiritual knowledge and strength. *Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families* is meant as a resource to support your personal and family scripture study. Use it as a guide or aid as you study the New Testament. If you are a parent, you can use it to plan inspiring family home evening experiences and support your family in studying the scriptures together. Single adults could gather and use it for scripture study as a group. Use the resource in any way that helps you and your family draw on the power that comes from learning and acting on the word of God.

For the teacher:

Remember that members of your class are having powerful experiences as they study at home. Spend time in each class finding out what they are learning. The *Come, Follow Me* resources for Sunday School and Primary provide suggested activities to help you create engaging learning experiences for those you teach. But don't feel bound by what is written on the pages. Modify or create activities that you feel will build on the faith, understanding, and testimonies of class members. If some learners do not feel the desire to share much, that is OK. Help them know that their faith is also expressed by being there and desiring to hear the word of God.

PRINCIPLE 5:

We can improve our efforts to minister to others.

For the learner:

Your efforts to minister to others can be blessed by what you learn in the scriptures. You may find something in your study that you can share with someone else. In the New Testament especially, you will find scriptural examples of how the Savior and others ministered in powerful ways. The Lord's invitation to "come, follow me" (Luke 18:22) is about what you will do after you have studied—putting into practice the things you are learning and feeling. So as you study the life of Jesus Christ this year, look for what His life teaches you about how to minister to others and how your own ministry can bless the lives of those around you.

For the teacher:

A teacher is responsible for serving not just the people who come to class but also those who don't attend. As a teacher, be aware of who is in class and who isn't. You can minister to members outside of class by visiting them in their homes, calling them on the telephone, or sending them an electronic message, and encouraging them to participate in learning the gospel at home and at church. Your influence is greater than you know, and your love and concern for others will make all the difference.

As we stay focused on the guiding principles behind the new *Come, Follow Me* curriculum, we will be more successful in making it part of our lives and allowing it to change our lives in the ways God intended. ■

NOTES

1. "Oh Say, What Is Truth?" *Hymns*, no. 272.
2. Russell M. Nelson, "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 96.
3. See Richard G. Scott, "To Acquire Spiritual Guidance," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 6–9.

You can find the curriculum and related resources at comefollowme.lds.org.

It's Not about the Chairs

No one was at the church when, as Young Women president, I arrived to set up chairs in the cultural hall the night before a Young Women activity. I was seven months pregnant, and I had to set up the chairs almost all by myself. But soon my secretary and a counselor arrived and helped me finish. Then we started hanging decorations.

That's when a lady poked her head in. "I'm sorry," she said, "but the Relief Society has this room reserved for our yoga class tonight."

We asked if there was another room they could use, but the other rooms were occupied. So we did the only thing we could: we took down the chairs. I went home that night feeling tired, knowing that in the morning I would need to set up chairs again.

Sometimes life feels this way. With a new baby and four little ones, I feel like I spin my wheels all day and then wake up to do the same thing the next day. At any given moment, there are tummies to fill and piles of clothes, toys, and dishes to put away—I put up the chairs and take down the chairs. That is my life.

But is it about the chairs? As I took down the chairs after the Young Women activity, I couldn't help but smile as I thought about those fun and wonderful girls I have come to love dearly. I was grateful for the time I had spent with them.

It is the same at home. It's not about the peanut butter smudges on the couch or the socks that never seem to have a match. It's about my little family, who swells my heart with joy.

The Lord said: "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:33).

The small things have come to mean so much to me: hugs, made-up songs, crayon drawings, skipping to the mailbox and back, and eating burnt toast because it was made just for me.

We may do mundane things day after day, like set up chairs and take them down again. But it's not about the chairs—it's about the people we love who sit in them. It's not about the task at hand—it's about the people we serve. When I think of them and how much I love them, I thank the Lord for the beauty of life and for tomorrow, when I'll get up and gladly set up those chairs again. ■

Janessa Orgill, Iowa, USA

We may do mundane things day after day, like set up chairs and take them down again. But is it about the chairs?



Do You Think You'll See Your Brother Again?

It was late at night, I was the only cashier on duty, and there wasn't another soul in the entire grocery store. As I wiped down the checkout counters, I began humming.

My humming quickly turned into singing. I started singing "Come, Come, Ye Saints" (*Hymns*, no. 30). I don't usually sing hymns for fun, but I sang energetically until the sight of someone stopped me.

An older man approached.

"I *know* that song," he said. "How do you know it?"

"It is a hymn we sing in my church," I said.

"Are you a Mormon?"

I responded that I was.

He told me his wife had been a Latter-day Saint and had passed away from cancer in 2011. He said "Come, Come, Ye Saints" was sung at her funeral. I expressed my condolences and told him my older brother passed away in 2011 while serving a mission in Chile. We also sang that hymn at his funeral. The Spirit touched our hearts as we marveled at this "coincidence."

"So do you think you'll see your brother again?" he asked.

I had asked myself the same question countless times. In the difficult months after my brother died, I struggled with

doubts. Eventually, Heavenly Father blessed me with a sweet knowledge that families are forever. I still had questions, but I met the man's gaze and declared, "Yes, I do!"

"You have a lot of faith," the man said. "My wife used to say we should have 'a perfect brightness of hope.'"

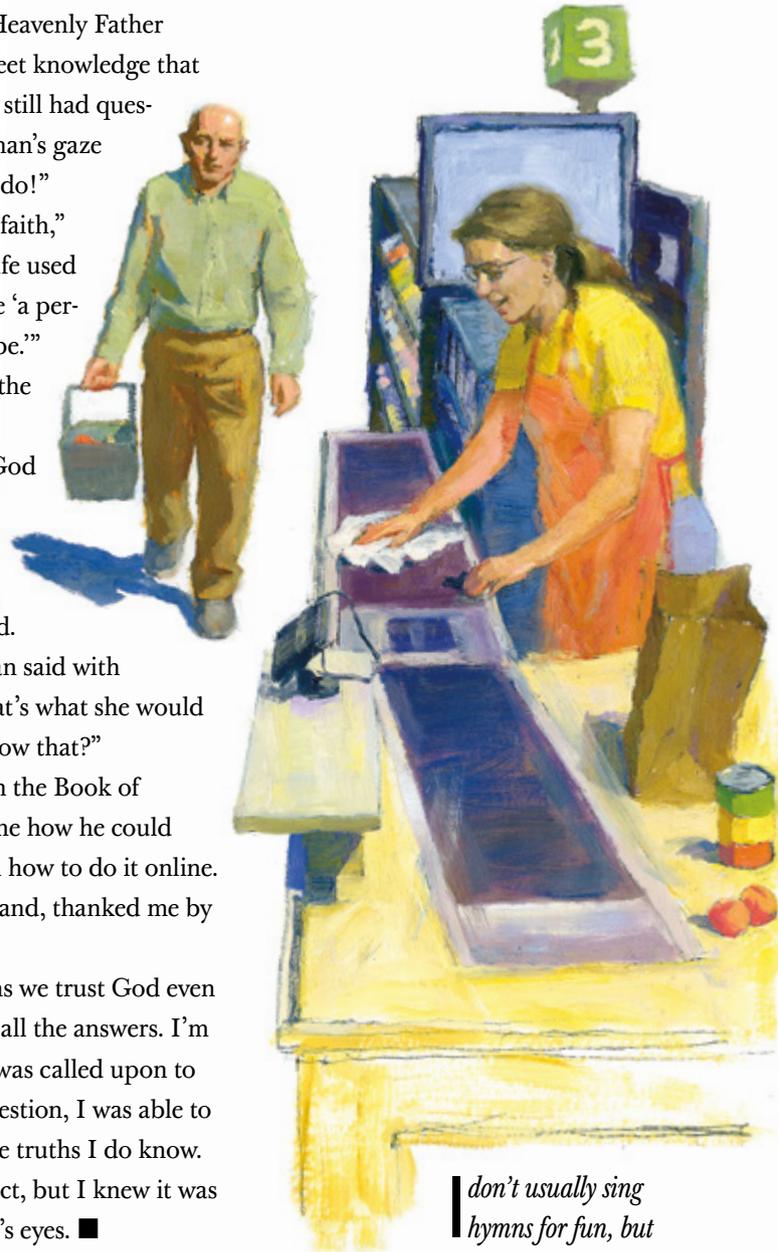
I agreed and quoted the rest of 2 Nephi 31:20, that we should love God and all men, press forward, feast upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end.

"That's it!" the man said with tears in his eyes. "That's what she would say! How did you know that?"

I told him it was in the Book of Mormon. He asked me how he could get a copy. I told him how to do it online. The man shook my hand, thanked me by name, and left.

Having faith means we trust God even when we don't know all the answers. I'm grateful that when I was called upon to answer that man's question, I was able to rely on my faith in the truths I do know. My faith wasn't perfect, but I knew it was sufficient in the Lord's eyes. ■

Wendy Jennings (as told to Leah Barton), Utah, USA



I don't usually sing hymns for fun, but I sang energetically until the sight of someone stopped me.



One night, about a year after I quit attending church, I had a dream.

Tomorrow, I'll Go to Church

Two years after my wife, Madeleine, and I were baptized and confirmed, I became less active and quit going to church. Every Sunday morning, she would encourage me to get up and go with her, but I would say no.

"I'm tired. Let me sleep," I would say. And later I would go play soccer.

Madeleine would get up by herself and head to the chapel with our

son, Lucas. In the rain or the cold, she always went.

Looking back, I realize that Satan was attacking me. He convinced me that I was fine without the Church. He told me, "You're good, you're calm, you're comfortable." But in reality, I had lost blessings, progress, and happiness. Thankfully, my wife and my Heavenly Father helped me see things clearly.

One Friday night about a year after I quit attending church, I had a dream. I dreamed that I was in a beautiful countryside, walking hand in hand with my wife and my son. We were very happy.

But then it began to grow dark. It became so dark that I couldn't see anything. Suddenly, I noticed that I was no longer holding hands with my wife and son. I called their names, hoping they

A Driving Lesson

would return. I wanted them back, and I wanted the darkness to disappear.

At that moment, I experienced what it means to be truly miserable. I had lost Madeleine and Lucas. They had moved ahead without me, leaving me alone, surrounded by darkness.

When I awoke the next morning, I realized that my Father in Heaven had given me a sign. If I didn't return to church and take my wife and son to the temple to be sealed, I would lose them. I would not have them in the next life. I would be in a lost, miserable state.

"Tomorrow," I told Madeleine, "I'll go to church."

Every Sunday morning since then, I have gone to church with my family. I have not missed a single meeting since that dream five years ago. We were eventually sealed in the temple in September 2016.

I'm thankful for all my blessings. I'm especially grateful for my family and for my wife's courage, strength, and example. I'm grateful that she and my Heavenly Father never gave up on me. I am the man I am today thanks to them. ■
Harmin Toledo Gonzalez, Chiloé, Chile

I was driving home from a young-adult meeting on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. I felt relaxed and unhurried as I thought about the messages I had heard about developing our potential as children of God. I asked myself what I could do to develop the potential that is in me.

My route home took me through a narrow, two-way stretch of road. A long line of cars came from the opposite direction, but no one was behind me. Then, all of a sudden, I heard the repeated blaring of a car horn. There was now a driver behind me. He flicked his headlights on and off and yelled at me to get out of the way. It appeared he wanted to drive faster.

I thought that this person needed to learn patience and respect for others, so I slowed down. As we went past a number of streets, he kept blowing his horn and flicking his lights. He then turned off the road and stopped. I looked in my rearview mirror to see his reaction at not being able to go faster. I felt good about having taught him a lesson.

Suddenly, the driver jumped out of

his car and opened the passenger door. A woman emerged quickly with a baby in her arms. I looked to see where they were going. In the distance, I saw the lighted letters: "Hospital Emergency Room."

"What have I done?" I asked myself. I arrived home, fell to my knees, and with tears in my eyes, I asked God to forgive me.

That day I learned that the actions of those around us can be motivated by things we cannot always see or understand. Today, when I see someone act in a way I judge to be wrong, I prefer to think that I do not quite understand what they are going through. I try to show the love and compassion that Jesus Christ has asked us to have toward others and to focus on understanding and helping those around me.

How can I develop my potential as a child of God? I can respond to the actions of others with love and understanding. Doing so has enabled me to feel more of the Savior's love in my own life and enables others to feel my love for them. ■

Julio Meza Michel, Chihuahua, Mexico

I felt relaxed and unhurried as I drove home. Then, all of a sudden, I heard the repeated blaring of a car horn.





CONNECTING Daughters of God WITH HIS Priesthood Power

By Barbara Morgan Gardner

Associate professor of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University

I've come to recognize as never before the importance of understanding the priesthood and its associated blessings for women. We're living in a day when equality, power, fairness, and tolerance are touted—often above other virtues. What's more, identity, authority, spirituality, and even God are topics of great confusion for many.

Many women, not knowing what blessings they have access to, are not taking full advantage of the spiritual feast available to them. Many men are also confused on the topic.

How can we better understand the connection women have with priesthood power and help them “to step forward,” to “take [their] rightful and needful

place in [their] home, in [their] community, and in the kingdom of God—more than [they] ever have before”?¹ First, we can humbly seek to understand truths associated with the priesthood, especially the most recent teachings of Church leaders. Second, we can seek to understand why some women don't fully realize their access to God's priesthood power.

WOMEN ARE ESSENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORK GOD ACCOMPLISHES THROUGH HIS PRIESTHOOD POWER.

Third, we can be aware of how we can help women more fully participate in the work God accomplishes through His priesthood power.

1. What Truths Have Been Clarified Regarding Women and the Priesthood?

Apostles and general women auxiliary leaders have recently given more emphasis to the relationship of women and the priesthood. The following are some truths that are vital to understand and teach correctly.

The priesthood is the power and authority of God.

The priesthood is the power through which God accomplishes His great work of salvation, bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Both men and women have an important role in God’s work, and both men and women have access to His power to accomplish His work.

Women play an official and critical role in the work of salvation.

Bonnie L. Oscarson, former Young Women General President, declared: “All women need to see themselves as essential participants in the work of the priesthood. Women in this

Church are presidents, counselors, teachers, members of councils, sisters, and mothers, and the kingdom of God cannot function unless we rise up and fulfill our duties with faith.”²

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught, “God has given the women of this church a work to do in building his kingdom. That concerns all aspects of our great triad of responsibility—which is, first, to teach the gospel to the world; second, to strengthen the faith and build the happiness of the membership of the Church; and, third, to carry forward the great work of salvation for the dead.

“Women in the Church are associates with their brethren in carrying forward this mighty work of the Lord. . . . Women carry tremendous responsibilities and they are accountable for the fulfillment of those responsibilities. They head their own organizations, and those organizations are strong and viable and are significant forces for good in the world. They stand in an associate role to the priesthood

[holders], all striving together to build the kingdom of God in the earth. We honor and respect you for your capacity. We expect leadership, and strength, and impressive results from your management of the organizations for which you are responsible. We uphold and sustain you as daughters of God, working in a great partnership to assist him in bringing to pass the immortality and the eternal life of all of the sons and daughters of God.”³

Both women and men are delegated power and authority by those who hold priesthood keys.

Priesthood keys are “the authority God has given to priesthood [holders] to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth.”⁴ President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, explains, “Every act or ordinance performed in the Church is done under the direct or indirect authorization of one holding the keys for that function.”⁵

Women have authority to perform their callings, under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys, just as men do. President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, stated, “Those who have priesthood keys . . . literally make it possible for all who serve faithfully under their direction to exercise priesthood authority and have access to priesthood power.”⁶

President Oaks said: “We are not accustomed to speaking of women having the authority of the priesthood in their Church callings, but what other authority can it be? When a woman— young or old—is set apart to preach the gospel as a full-time missionary, she is given priesthood authority to perform a priesthood function. The same is true when a woman is set apart to function as an officer or teacher in a Church organization under the direction of one who holds the keys of the priesthood.”⁷

When teaching this concept to my students, I often ask, “If a stake is having a joint Young Men and Young Women presidency meeting, who presides?” Because both the stake Young Women president and the stake Young Men president were called and set apart by one holding priesthood keys (the stake president), with their callings, both have the same priesthood authority and therefore neither presides over the other. It would make sense for them to take turns in conducting meetings.

The Lord blesses women and men equally through His priesthood.

The Lord provides many blessings through His priesthood that may come to all members who make and keep sacred covenants. President Ballard taught, “All who have made sacred

Sister missionaries are an example of women being set apart and given priesthood authority to perform a priesthood function.

covenants with the Lord and who honor those covenants are eligible to receive personal revelation, to be blessed by the ministering of angels, to commune with God, to receive the fulness of the gospel, and, ultimately, to become heirs alongside Jesus Christ of all our Father has.”⁸

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) instructed: “The blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out upon . . . all the faithful women of the Church. . . . The Lord offers to his daughters every spiritual gift and blessing that can be obtained by his sons.”⁹

And as women go about their Father’s work, they too will be blessed to be “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17; see also verse 16).

Both women and men (single and married) may be endowed with priesthood power in the temple.

In 1833 the Lord promised Joseph Smith that the Saints, both men and women, would be endowed with “power

from on high” (Doctrine and Covenants 95:8). President Ballard clarified: “The endowment is literally a gift of power. All who enter the house of the Lord officiate in the ordinances of the priesthood. This applies to men and women alike.”¹⁰ All worthy members who have received their endowment and keep the covenants they have made in the temple have priesthood power. Thus, women, married or single, can have priesthood power in their homes regardless of a visit from a priesthood holder.

Sheri Dew, former counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, asked, “What does it mean to have access to priesthood power? It means that we can receive revelation, be blessed and aided by the ministering of angels, learn to part the veil that separates us from our Heavenly Father, be strengthened to resist temptation, be protected, and be enlightened, and made smarter than we are—all without any mortal intermediary.”¹¹ What is the most important outcome of this power and how is it received? The Lord has revealed that



“the power of godliness,” including the power to become like Him, is manifested through priesthood ordinances (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:20).

Priesthood authority sometimes functions differently in the Church than in the family.

The Church organization is hierarchical; the family is patriarchal. President Oaks taught that there are “some differences in the way priesthood authority functions in the family and in the Church.”¹² By divine design, the husband and wife may have some different responsibilities, yet they work together as “equal partners.”¹³ Elder L. Tom Perry (1922–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “Remember, brethren, that in your role as leader in the family, your wife is your companion. . . . Since the beginning, God has instructed mankind that marriage should unite husband and wife together in unity. Therefore, there is not a president or a vice president in a family. The couple works together eternally for the good of the family. They are united together in word, in deed, and in action as they lead, guide, and direct their family unit. They are on equal footing. They plan and organize the affairs of the family jointly and unanimously as they move forward.”¹⁴

What happens then when a spouse dies? President Oaks taught: “When my father died, my mother presided over

our family. She had no priesthood office, but as the surviving parent in her marriage she had become the governing officer in her family. At the same time, she was always totally respectful of the priesthood authority of our bishop and other Church leaders. She presided over her family, but they presided over the Church.”¹⁵



2. Stumbling Blocks

What are some of the stumbling blocks that can keep women from fully realizing their access to God’s priesthood power?

Confusion by both men and women regarding the priesthood.

President Oaks taught: “The Melchizedek Priesthood is not a status or a label. It is a divine power held in trust to use for the benefit of God’s work for His children. We should always remember that men who hold the priesthood are *not* ‘the priesthood.’ It is not appropriate to refer to ‘the priesthood and the women.’ We should refer to ‘the *holders* of the priesthood and the women.”¹⁶

By saying, “The priesthood will now sing a song,” or “we need priesthood volunteers to go to Young

Women camp,” we are doing ourselves and others, no matter how well intended, a disservice by instigating and perpetuating confusion and minimizing God’s power.

Thinking that the priesthood does not have to do with women.

When invited to study the priesthood, some sisters respond, “I don’t need to get into that topic. It doesn’t apply to me.” But because the priesthood blesses all of God’s children, we all benefit from a greater understanding of it. We would all benefit from a greater understanding of the priesthood. Think of how the Church and our families would be blessed if both the women and the men of the Church were equally well-versed in understanding and teaching truths



3. What Can We Do?

regarding the priesthood.

Linda K. Burton, former Relief Society General President, emphasized that women as well as men need to study the topic of the priesthood. “Sisters, we cannot stand up and teach those things we do not understand and know for ourselves.”¹⁷

Putting limits on women that aren’t really there.

It’s clear that some callings in the Church require ordination to priesthood office, but we must be careful not to limit our women simply based on culture, history, false perceptions, or traditions. For example, women can be capable leaders and teachers, important voices in Church councils, and powerful examples of discipleship to members of all ages.

Here are some ways each of us can help our sisters in the gospel participate more fully in the work God accomplishes through His priesthood power.

Be up-to-date on the words of the Brethren and our women leaders.

Over the last several years, senior members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have spoken specifically on the role of women in the Church. Are we carefully listening to these talks?

For example, in 2015, President Russell M. Nelson exclaimed, “The kingdom of God is not and cannot be complete without women who make sacred covenants and then keep them, women who can speak with the power and authority of God!”¹⁸

Help all members understand the unique role of women in the work of the priesthood.

President Ballard reminded the women of the Relief Society that their “sphere of influence is a unique sphere—one that cannot be duplicated by men. No one can defend our Savior with any more

persuasion or power than can you—the daughters of God who have such inner strength and conviction. The power of the voice of a converted woman is immeasurable, and the Church needs your voices now more than ever.”¹⁹

Bonnie L. Oscarson declared: “[Women] of the Church need to see themselves as essential participants in the priesthood-directed work of salvation and not just as onlookers and supporters.”²⁰

Give credence to women leaders.

Justifiably, we give great attention to what is said by those we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators. They hold the keys of the kingdom, and the Lord directs His work through them. In addition to their teachings, female leaders of the Church have been set apart and given priesthood authority to speak to both men and women of the Church. We want to listen to their teachings as well and hear what counsel God would give us through them.



Involve women in councils, not only by title but with action.

President Ballard said: “Any priesthood leader who does not involve his sister leaders with full respect and inclusion is not honoring and magnifying the keys he has been given. His power and influence will be diminished until he learns the ways of the Lord.”²¹

Do not give “authoritative” answers to questions the Lord Himself hasn’t answered.

President Oaks has cautioned Church members to avoid answering questions the Lord has not answered: “Don’t make the mistake that’s been made in the past, . . . trying to put reasons to revelation. The reasons turn out to be man-made to a great extent. The revelations are what we sustain as the will of the Lord

and that’s where safety lies.”²²

President Ballard gives a perfect example of this: “Why are men—and not women—ordained to priesthood offices? . . . The Lord has not revealed why He has organized His Church as He has.”²³ President Ballard also warned us “not to pass along faith-promoting or unsubstantiated rumors or outdated understandings and explanations of our doctrine and practices from the past. It is always wise to make it a practice to study the words of the living prophets and apostles; keep updated on current Church issues, policies, and statements through mormonnewsroom.org and LDS.org; and consult the works of recognized, thoughtful, and faithful Latter-day Saint scholars to ensure you do not teach things that are untrue, out of date, or odd and quirky.”²⁴ Remember that sometimes, “I don’t know”

really is the best answer. We must search diligently in the light of faith to learn divine truth.

Help women and men better understand the priesthood.

Helping both men and women become confident in their ability to study and learn about the priesthood is critical. Some scriptures that can help in this process include, but are not limited to, Alma 13 and Doctrine and Covenants sections 2, 13, 20, 76, 84, 95, 107, 110, 121, and 124. Attending the temple for the purpose of seeking faithfully not only for answers but especially for inspired questions regarding the topic cannot be overemphasized.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles instructed: “This doctrine of the priesthood—unknown in the world and but little known even in the Church—cannot be learned out of the scriptures alone. . . .

“The doctrine of the priesthood is known only by personal revelation. It comes, line upon line and precept upon precept, by the power of the Holy Ghost to those who love and serve God with all their heart, might, mind and strength. (See D&C 98:12.)”²⁵

4. Conclusion

Help women understand that they must stand with the Lord and His prophets.

The world is becoming more divisive and cynical. Women, in many ways, are being pitted against each other. Opinions are strong and emotions run deep. Imagine the influence for good in this world if all members of the Church could see that they, like Esther, have been reserved “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14) and that they, individually and as a united whole, are needed to lead, not follow, the world.

Emma Smith stated: “We are going to do something extraordinary. . . . We expect extraordinary occasions and pressing calls.”²⁶ These pressing calls, even pleas, have come from the leaders of the Church to the sisters over the last several years as never before. As we better understand the truths associated with the priesthood, recognize possible reasons why many women are living below their privileges, and act on the knowledge we gain regarding women and their opportunities to participate in the work of the priesthood, we may “find the joy and the peace that comes from knowing through your teaching that you have touched a life, you have lifted one of Heavenly Father’s children on his or her journey to one day be embraced once again in His presence.”²⁷ ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “A Plea to My Sisters,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 97.
2. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Rise Up in Strength, Sisters in Zion,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 14.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Gordon B. Hinckley* (2016), 101.
4. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 2.1.1.
5. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 49.
6. M. Russell Ballard, “Men and Women in the Work of the Lord,” *New Era*, Apr. 2014, 4; *Liahona*, Apr. 2014, 48; see also *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 138–39.
7. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” 51.
8. M. Russell Ballard, “Men and Women in the Work of the Lord,” *New Era*, 4–5; *Liahona*, 48–49.
9. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Fielding Smith* (2013), 163. For a more in-depth discussion on the blessings of the priesthood, see Bruce R. McConkie, “The Ten Blessings of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 33–35.
10. M. Russell Ballard, “Let Us Think Straight” (Brigham Young University devotional, Aug. 20, 2013), 7, speeches.byu.edu.
11. Sheri Dew, *Women and the Priesthood: What One Mormon Woman Believes* (2013), 125.
12. Dallin H. Oaks, “Priesthood Authority in the Family and the Church,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 26.
13. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2017, 145.
14. L. Tom Perry, “Fatherhood, an Eternal Calling,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2004, 71.
15. Dallin H. Oaks, “Priesthood Authority in the Family and the Church,” 26.
16. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 65.
17. Linda K. Burton, “Priesthood: ‘A Sacred Trust to Be Used for the Benefit of Men, Women, and Children’” (Brigham Young University Women’s Conference, May 3, 2013), womensconference.byu.edu/transcripts.
18. Russell M. Nelson, “A Plea to My Sisters,” 96.
19. M. Russell Ballard, “Men and Women and Priesthood Power,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2014, 33; *Liahona*, Sept. 2014, 37.
20. Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Rise Up in Strength, Sisters in Zion,” 14.
21. M. Russell Ballard, “Men and Women and Priesthood Power,” *Ensign*, 31; *Liahona*, 35.
22. Dallin H. Oaks, *Life’s Lessons Learned: Personal Reflections* (2011), 68–69.
23. M. Russell Ballard, “Men and Women and Priesthood Power,” *Ensign*, 31; *Liahona*, 35.
24. M. Russell Ballard, “The Opportunities and Responsibilities of CES Teachers in the 21st Century” (address given to Church Educational System Religious Educators, Feb. 26, 2016), broadcasts.lds.org.
25. Bruce R. McConkie, “The Doctrine of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, May 1982, 32.
26. Emma Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 14.
27. M. Russell Ballard, “The Opportunities and Responsibilities of CES Teachers in the 21st Century.”



Thirsting for Greater Understanding

One time I went on a first date with a girl in my ward. The next morning, we were the only two who showed up for our ward's temple trip. We offered to help with whatever ordinance needed the most patrons . . . which turned out to be sealings.

I was so nervous, but to my surprise, doing vicarious sealings with a girl less than 12 hours after our first date wasn't nearly as awkward as I thought it would be. If anything, that experience gave me more **perspective on how important each aspect of temple work is**—including sealings (read more in my digital article).

All of our situations are unique, but if we **strive to better understand the covenants** we make in the temple, those ordinances will be less like items to be crossed off our spiritual checklist and more like much-needed sources of **"living water" that can give us spiritual strength** (see Doctrine and Covenants 63:23). And in the hectic world we live in, we need all the strength we can get!

In this issue, **young adults share their experiences with the temple**. Kealohilani shares how faithfully

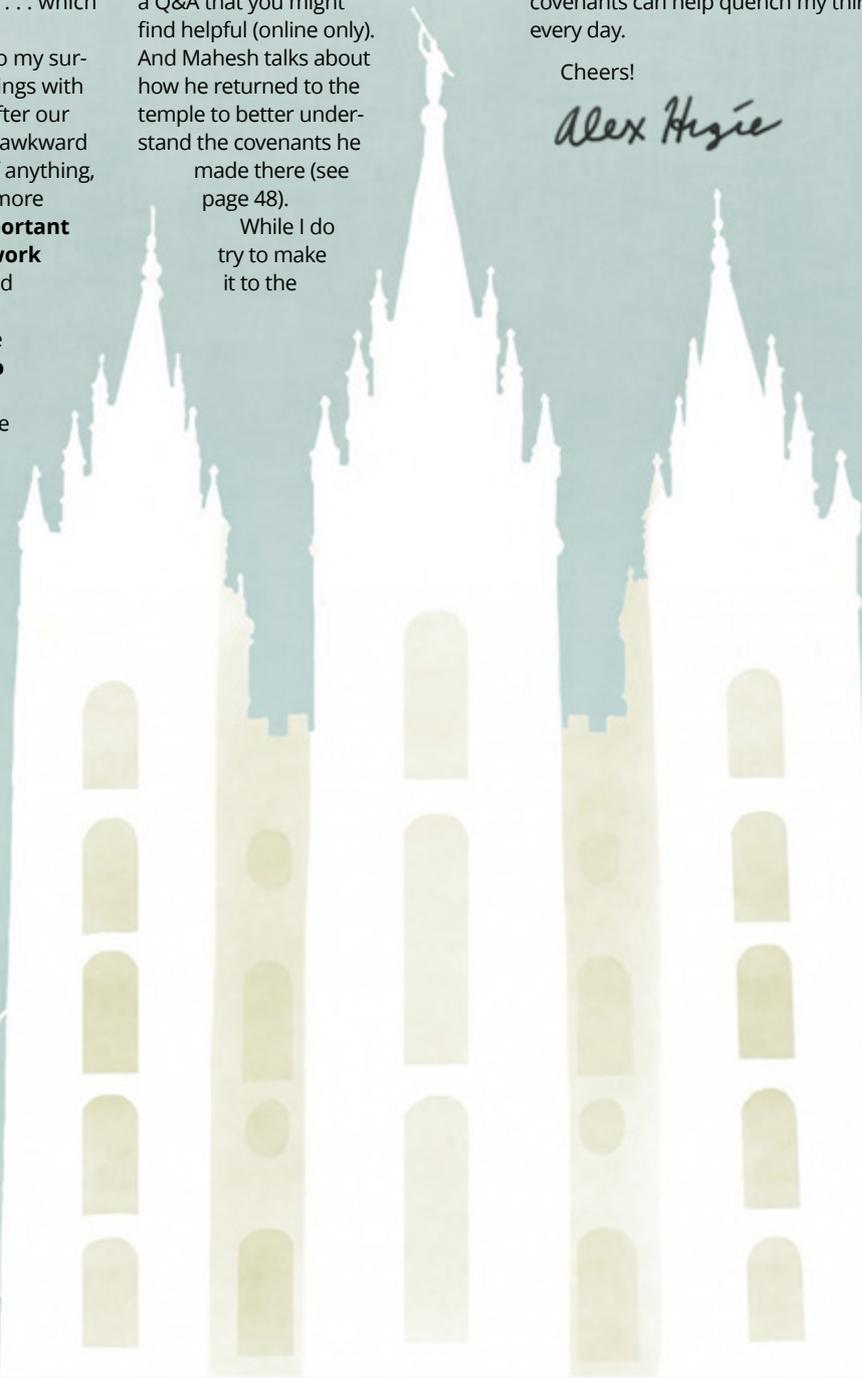
wearing the temple garment has blessed her life (see page 44). In a digital-only article, Zariah shares her fears about not feeling good enough to enter the temple. If you're also preparing to attend the temple for the first time, we compiled a Q&A that you might find helpful (online only). And Mahesh talks about how he returned to the temple to better understand the covenants he made there (see page 48).

While I do try to make it to the

temple as often as I can to **fill my spiritual reservoir**, what matters most is that **I allow the Spirit in the temple to teach me and change me** both within and outside its walls. Then the "living waters" that flow from the temple and through my covenants can help quench my thirst every day.

Cheers!

Alex Hozie



BEST ADVICE . . .

Young adults share the best advice they've ever received about making the temple a part of their lives.

"My bishop told me that the temple would be as sacred of an experience as I wanted it to be. It is always up to me to decide how big of an impact the temple can have on my life."

—**Jasmyn Nye, Utah, USA**

"Having a temple nearby is great, but if members never attend the temple, then it will always be far away. We must stay close to the temple, no matter how far away it might be."

—**Cole Murphy, California, USA**

"Have a purpose. Go with a question, do work for an ancestor, seek peace, or listen for promptings."

—**Sydney Orton, Utah, USA**

What's the best advice you've ever received about making mistakes and trying again? Send us your response at liahona.lds.org by March 31, 2019.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Do you have an amazing story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? If so, we want to hear from you! You can submit your articles or your feedback at liahona.lds.org.

ABOUT THE YOUNG ADULT AUTHORS

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DIGITAL ONLY

Temple Endowment Q&A

Good Enough for the Temple?

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5 Reasons Singles Should Participate in Temple Sealings

By Alex Hugie



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The power and protection promised to those who faithfully wear the temple garment doesn't come from magic; it comes from God.

Shielded by Covenants

By Kealohilani Wallace

My love for wearing the temple garment cannot be fully expressed in words. Though the physical material that the garment is made from is light and barely noticeable once I got used to it, what the garment represents, the blessings that come with it, and the ever-present outward expression of my inner commitment to God—and of my love *for* God—make wearing it every day a beautiful and spiritual experience. It is peace. It is strength. It is tranquility. It is power. It is holy. It is as much of a blessing in my life as I treat it.

Sometimes people consider the garment as mere underwear or simply a measure of modesty, meant to show them what they can and cannot wear—an arbitrary line of what is decent and indecent. And while proper wearing of the garment certainly does encourage modesty (especially by the world's standards), the garment of the holy priesthood represents so much more.

Powerful Eternal Perspective

I received my own endowment at age 19 in preparation for my temple marriage. And while unfortunate

circumstances brought that marriage to an end, I had been faithful to my covenants, and those covenants I had made with the Lord remained. I clung to them and they sustained me. I was not left alone in my trials and I was made stronger for them.

I have received numerous blessings for continuously holding a temple recommend, for properly wearing the garment as instructed, and for keeping the covenants I made in the temple. Though it would be impossible to single out every blessing from this obedience, the most obvious ones I have noticed are the ability to maintain a heavenly perspective and the constant physical reminder to make correct choices even when others around me are not—and even when the choices of others cause me pain.

A *lot* went wrong in my life during the past 11 years (the lowlights of which include divorce, painful financial struggles, and frustrating career and personal setbacks), but consistently wearing the



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES



garment and regularly attending the temple helped me know that there is more to this life than whatever trial I was experiencing at the moment—no matter how difficult or painful each moment was.

Because these two constants helped me stay close to the Spirit, I have been led out of physical danger with internal promptings I chose to follow—and I have also been given a strong sense of hope and an eternal perspective that have guided me through dark points when I didn't feel like I had the strength to take one more emotional or physical step forward on my journey. This peace continues to sustain me as new challenges and trials arise.

Blessings from the temple that I have experienced range from the day-to-day blessings we sometimes overlook (like inner peace and promptings), to the dramatic, everlasting, and obvious (like being forever sealed to our families). Each individual's experience is unique and personal—but blessings always come to us in the Lord's perfect



timing when we keep our covenants (see Doctrine and Covenants 82:10). And wearing the garment is an important, personal way of showing the Lord that we remember our covenants.

Constant Spiritual Protection

President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained one of the blessings we can expect when we wear the garment properly: “The garment represents sacred covenants. It fosters modesty and becomes a shield and protection to the wearer.”¹

This shield can protect us from what Nephi called the “fiery darts of the adversary” (1 Nephi 15:24). If we could calculate how many darts Satan throws at us every single day, I imagine the number would be astronomical. We live in a world

that actively seeks to destroy what we believe. Inappropriate images and messages surround us everywhere, along with pressure to use harmful substances or break the law of chastity. Even more rampant is the pressure and temptation to argue and to be unkind, either in person or especially online; to mock or belittle others for expressing their opinions or beliefs; or to tease a person for something as small as a grammatical mistake. These spiritual attacks, if heeded, dull our senses and reduce our ability to sense warnings from the Holy Ghost.

The list of “fiery darts” that Satan throws at us is literally endless and always dangerous. Elder Taniela B. Wakolo of the Seventy said, “The many distractions and temptations of life are like ‘ravening wolves.’” So how are we to protect ourselves? Later in that same

talk, he added, “I promise that participating in ordinances and honoring the associated covenants will bring you marvelous light and protection in this ever-darkening world.”²

If the “darts” Satan throws at you every day were literal sharp objects that you could both see and feel, would you leave a shield at home? Would you ignore the knowledge of how to defend yourself—or of the path to a place of refuge? Would you put off making or keeping covenants with God when He promised that those covenants would help you be victorious?

The Power of Covenants in Our Progression

The protection the garment gives doesn’t come from any sort of magic in the physical garment itself, as some

mistakenly believe. Rather, the promised protection is the protection the Lord provides both physically and spiritually when we keep our covenants and express our faithful commitment to Him every day.

Temple covenants and the garment are *not* for perfect people. They are meant to help shield and protect imperfect people who are trying their best to become better. People who repent when they fall and keep going forward. People like you and me.

Just as we physically partake of the sacrament every week to remember and renew our baptismal covenants, wearing the garment every day serves as a physical reminder of the covenants we have made in the temple. These are things that we need on our journey to becoming more Christlike.

Beyond divine protection, keeping our covenants and wearing the garment are ways to show God every day how much we love Him and that we will follow His commandments *because* we love Him—and it is a way for us to receive the numerous blessings God wants to give us. He truly loves us more than we can understand and He wants us to be safe and have the protection that He has promised.

Blessed Every Day

We all fight on a spiritual battlefield every day, whether we realize it or not. Covenants made in the temple and kept in our daily lives will help us win the war

against sin and Satan, but it is up to us to prepare—and then to be faithful.

I am so glad for my decision to go to the temple—and for the subsequent decisions I've made to keep my covenants. I am blessed every day for my choice and for properly wearing the garment, as I covenanted to do. It keeps me safe. It reminds me of my covenants. And it shows God that I love Him more than the world and that I will do what He asks me to do. ■

The author lives in Hawai'i, USA.

NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 75.
2. Taniela B. Wakolo, "Saving Ordinances Will Bring Us Marvelous Light," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 40, 41.

DISCOVER MORE

- Learn more about temples, temple preparation, and temple ordinances at temples.lds.org.
- Watch a Church-produced video that can help explain temple garments to others at mormonnewsroom.org/article/temple-garments.





I realized that I needed to return to the temple to better understand and remember the covenants I had made.

LOOKING AGAIN TOWARD the Holy Temple

By Mahesh Kumar Vedurupaka

Four years ago, my institute teacher, Brother Suresh Natrajan, asked the class, “How many of you have gone to the temple?” Because my wife, Anantha, and I had made the 10-hour trip to the Hong Kong China Temple for the first time the year before, I raised my hand proudly. Then he asked another question: “Do you remember what covenants you made in the temple?”

His question was thoughtful. There was so much to take in during my first time in the temple. While I had tried to be attentive, after all that time, I realized I had forgotten the covenants that I made in the temple. At that very moment, I made the decision to go back to temple for the second time and this time to pay attention to and remember the covenants I made and other things that are essential for my salvation.

Time passed. I was facing terrible trials in my life. But I was enrolled in an

institute class, and one day we had a lesson on the prophet Jonah. Jonah didn't do what the Lord commanded him to do. One of the verses that caught my attention was Jonah 2:4: “Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.”

This scripture touched my heart, and I prayed to Heavenly Father to give me and my wife another chance to visit the temple.

After four years, Heavenly Father blessed us to again enter His house, this time in the Taipei Taiwan Temple.

While there, I had the opportunity to perform ordinances on behalf of my uncle who had died of cancer. When I was being baptized for him, I thought about the blessings he would receive through this temple ordinance. I was so happy, and I recognized what the temple president told me when I had come to the temple for the first time and had been a little bit confused. He told me, “Brother, you may not understand all



of what you are doing right now, but a day will come when you will feel you have done great things here.”

I got my answer. It has taken me four years to understand by visiting the temple for the second time.

Now while partaking of the sacrament each and every week, I remember how powerful the Atonement of Jesus Christ is and how sacred the covenants I have made in the temple are.

This year is mine and my wife’s 10th wedding anniversary. I want to celebrate it in the temple and perform sealing ordinances for my ancestors. To do this, I have been working a second job apart from my regular job, one that doesn’t affect my time with my family.

I know and I feel that temple work is real. Nothing can replace it, and it’s worth any sacrifice to attend the temple and do Heavenly Father’s work for ourselves and for souls who are on the other side of the veil. ■

The author lives in Andhra Pradesh, India.



Mahesh and Anantha Vedurupaka in front of the Taipei Taiwan Temple.

TEMPLE ENDOWMENT Q&A

If you are preparing to go to the temple for the first time, read our Q&A in the digital version of this article in the Gospel Library or at liahona.lds.org. Below is one of the five questions you’ll find.

What can I do to better understand the temple endowment and the covenants I make there?

Focus on the teachings and covenants of the temple in your personal study. Look for references to the principles and covenants of the endowment found in the scriptures, general conference addresses, and other Church materials. Reviewing these truths in your personal study will help you grow in your understanding of temple ordinances and covenants. When studying the law of chastity, for example, how can Joseph’s integrity when tempted by Potiphar’s wife bless your commitment to obey this law? (see Genesis 39). How can Nephi’s commitment to obey the commandments of God apply to the way you approach your service in your calling? (see 1 Nephi 3:7).

Return to the temple as often as your personal circumstances allow.

“We all receive the same instruction, but our understanding of the meaning of the ordinances and covenants will increase as we return to the temple often with the attitude of learning and contemplating the eternal truths taught.”

Silvia H. Allred, former First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, “Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 113.

Go to lds.org/go/031949 to read an article that can help you understand the covenants we make with God.



I Love Family History!

I didn't always appreciate family history work. That changed when I was baptized for one of my ancestors in the Chile Santiago Temple.

I was a deacon the first time I went to the temple. When I was about to enter the baptismal font, I felt the presence of someone enter the room. I looked up and saw an old man dressed in old clothes. I felt his love and gratitude for me because I was doing his vicarious work. After I was baptized for him and came up out of the water, I looked around for him, but he was no longer there.

I used to think that the temple would provide the names for temple work, so I wasn't interested in doing family history research. But this experience got me excited about looking for my own family names.

One day I got on my computer and saw that I had received an email from the Church with a family name. I felt that I needed to research more names, so I asked my mother how I could effectively look for names and gather more information about my ancestors.

So far, I've found 11 family names, and I know I can find even more. These people never had the opportunity to be baptized while they were on earth, and they have waited a long time for their temple work to be done. I'm glad I can help them through temple and family history work.

Lucas,
16, Santiago, Chile

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**By Elder
Carl B. Cook**
Of the Presidency
of the Seventy

WHAT IS TRUE

I recently met a remarkable young woman, 17-year-old Caylee, as she shared her heartfelt feelings in a stake conference. She declared that God is real, the Church is true, and President Russell M. Nelson is God's prophet. She also bore strong witness that the negative things some say about the Church and the gospel of Jesus Christ are false.

I was impressed by Caylee's conviction and her ability to discern what is true and what isn't.

But I was even more impressed when I spoke with Caylee after the meeting and discovered that her discernment and conviction had not come easily. In fact, she had endured a serious challenge to her faith.

Here is what she shared.

Struggling to Find Answers

Caylee has always been active in the Church. However, as she began to think deeply about the gospel and the Church, some serious questions arose in her mind. She felt guilty for questioning and began searching for answers.

"My problem," Caylee says, "was I searched in all the wrong places. Rather than searching scriptures or conference talks and talking to my parents, I came upon different articles online claiming they had the answers to my questions."

Initially, Caylee thought the online articles were shining light on her questions. However, she says, "As I continued investigating my questions, everything I read filled me with more and more questions and more and more doubt."



and WHAT ISN'T?

Caylee began losing both faith and hope. “The light from my testimony was flickering,” she remembers, “and I gradually stopped doing things I had been taught—reading the scriptures, praying, and attending seminary.”

She eventually became overwhelmed by the darkness and confusion she felt. She says, “I couldn’t determine what was from God and what was a crazy idea twisted and created by someone to throw me off. I could no longer discern what was truth and what was deception. It was tearing me apart.”

Caylee compares her situation to Joseph Smith’s when he said, “At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to ‘ask of God’ [James 1:5], concluding that if he gave

wisdom to them that lacked wisdom, and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture” (Joseph Smith—History 1:13).

Talking to People She Trusts

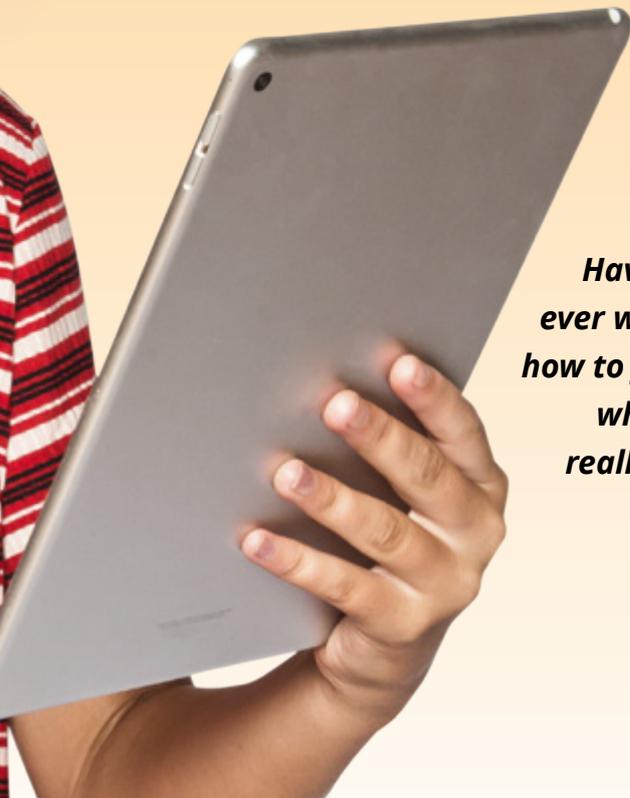
At this critical point, Caylee reached out to her seminary teacher, her grandmother, and her mother. Her seminary teacher assured her that her feelings weren’t wrong and that she wasn’t the only person with questions. Her teacher shared her testimony and recommended reading material that could help Caylee in her search.

Caylee’s grandmother didn’t preach. She simply urged her to consider which sources of information uplifted her—the online information or Church doctrine? Caylee began comparing: “Which one uplifted me? Which one brought joy and peace to my soul? Which one taught me that I would be with my family forever in a state of never-ending happiness if I followed God’s commandments? Which one put nagging voices in my head?”

Seeking God through Prayer and Scriptures

Caylee’s mother encouraged her to pray. Eventually, Caylee went to her room and poured out her soul to God. She explains: “Nothing happened. No angels came down. My heart didn’t fill up with peace and gratitude. I went back to my mom. We prayed together, and she encouraged me to read the Book of Mormon for 10 minutes. As I read, I felt a promise in my heart that if I continued to do this, I would see blessings. I would be able to see clearly and know which teachings were from God and which were not.”

Caylee began to pray every day and read the Book of Mormon. She stayed away from Twitter and the websites that started her



***Have you
ever wondered
how to figure out
what is
really true?***

doubts in the first place. She went to seminary with the intent to learn, not to look for negative things about the Church.

Discerning What Is True

After about two weeks of consistent effort, she felt the negative voices get quieter. School went better. Work was more enjoyable, and she had a better relationship with her parents. She was happier.

Because of that happiness, she says, “I finally saw my answer. I was able to discern what was from God and what was not because I saw firsthand what He was doing for me when I did what He asks.”

“That,” she concludes, “is the only way you can truly discern what is truth from God and what is not. We can study and ponder and question all we want, but until we do as James directs and what Joseph Smith did—ask and act—only then can we truly know what is true and what isn’t.”

So what do we learn from Caylee’s experience? Here are a few ideas:

- We shouldn’t feel bad if we have questions.
- We should never cease praying as we search for answers.
- We should study and ponder the Book of Mormon.
- By carefully choosing what we read and listen to, we can turn off loud voices of technology and media that draw us away from truth and intend to destroy.
- We should counsel with people we know, love, and respect—rather than seeking help from strangers.
- God will eventually answer our questions in His own way and in His own time. He loves us.
- Answers will come as we do what our Heavenly Father asks—not when we do what the world suggests.

I am inspired by Caylee and you young women and young men God has prepared for this time. She, like so many of you, exemplifies the kind of person President Russell M. Nelson envisioned: “We need women with the gift of discernment who can view the trends in the world and detect those that, however popular, are shallow or dangerous.”¹

You are truth seekers, covenant keepers, and kingdom builders. With God’s help and through the power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, you can receive the gift of discernment and know, live, and share what is true. ■

NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson (quoting Boyd K. Packer), “A Plea to My Sisters,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 96.



LA SAINTE BIBLE

When I prayed for a testimony of the Book of Mormon, nothing happened—until I started reading the Bible.

By David Muanda

When I was about 12, I wanted to know for myself that the Book of Mormon was true. In a talk, I could testify that the Book of Mormon is the word of God because my Primary teacher had said it. But inside I knew the promise of Moroni that meant if I read, pondered, and prayed, I could know also (see Moroni 10:3-4). I read for weeks and felt at peace, but it didn't produce anything spectacular—no light, no angels, no voice. In the end, I quit reading the Book of Mormon. One day while studying Exodus, I read that when the Israelites lacked food, God sent manna to them. Each person was to take a certain amount each day. He sent them food, but they had to figure out how to gather it. Nephi's words came to me: "The Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Nephi 3:7). From this I understood that God had commanded the Israelites

to leave Egypt and planned to provide for their hunger. This Book of Mormon scripture enlightened my understanding of the Bible, and I concluded that the Book of Mormon was the word of God.

As Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, personal revelation resembles more the gradual rising of the sun than the light that is suddenly produced when we flip a switch.¹ I began to see the Book of Mormon in a different way. During the months that followed, I knew more surely than ever that the Book of Mormon was the word of God. The impression I felt numerous times through the voice of the Spirit was "It's true, it's true, it's true."

I still read the Book of Mormon almost every day, and every time, I hear these words: "It's true." ■

The author lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

NOTE

1. See David A. Bednar, "The Spirit of Revelation," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 87-90.

"It's True,
IT'S
TRUE"

LE
LIVRE
DE
MORMON

GETTING INTO THE CONFERENCE HABIT

It comes every April and every October. You've gotten used to the semiannual rhythm, perhaps. But how can you make sure it's really part of your life—for the rest of your life?

In the future, when you're on your own, what will you be doing every six months when conference rolls around? Make the choice now to harness the power of this twice-a-year event by joining in. Don't just say, "I'll watch it online sometime." Make it a special event and a habit in your life.

Here are some things you might do to get into the general conference habit for good:

1

SET A GOAL.

Hearing from living prophets and apostles is one of the most important things you can do. Try to watch every session as soon as you can. Try setting a date and time by which you'll watch all of them.



2

SAVE THE DATE.

As much as possible, set aside time to experience conference and clear your calendar of any sports games, activities with friends, or other conflicts. If you can't listen to general conference when it's live, you can still make it an event and set a date to watch it.

3

HAVE SOME TRADITIONS.

Some meaningful traditions can include family discussions of favorite talks, family prayer before a session, or compiling a personal quote collection. Fun traditions could involve food—meals or snacks with some fun, conference-related names (conference crisps, nachos grandes de conferencia, inspiration ice cream, or conference carrots).



4

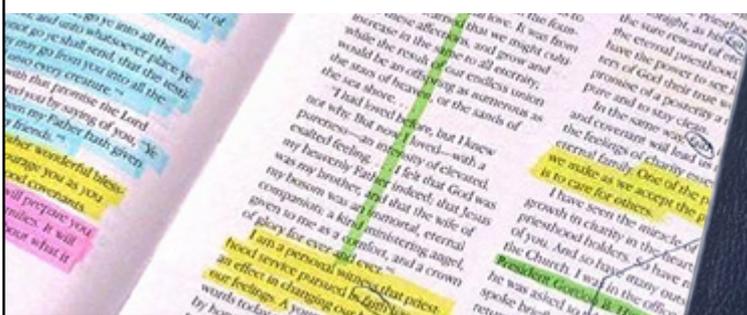
HAVE A POST-CONFERENCE PLAN.

Make the conference talks part of your regular gospel study. You could read a conference talk every Sunday for the next six months, listen to one on the bus or in the car every day for a couple of weeks, or look up all the scriptures from conference during personal scripture study. Whatever you decide, make a plan to do it. ■



“Study the messages of this conference frequently—even repeatedly—during the next six months. Conscientiously look for ways to incorporate these messages in your family home evenings, your gospel teaching, your conversations with family and friends, and even your discussions with those not of our faith.”

President Russell M. Nelson, “Let Us All Press On,” Apr. 2018 general conference.





*Learning about
my ancestors gave
me courage to fight
my spiritual battles.*

REASSURED

Name withheld

When I was about 11 years old, I was exposed to pornography. That one instance developed into a greater problem that became the defining struggle of my teenage years. By the time I was in high school, I had turned away from pornography and toward Jesus Christ's Atonement. Although I experienced a miracle in having the filth erased from my mind, I still felt overwhelming guilt in my heart.

Around this time, my grandma lent me my great-great grandmother Thea's handwritten autobiography. Within days I felt deeply connected with Thea Martina Waagen (1883–1967). Thea's father tragically died just a few months before her birth, so she was raised by her widowed Norwegian immigrant mother. Growing up was difficult, but she found joy in picking wild strawberries and playing the organ at her local Lutheran church. Thea's mother remarried, and with her stepfather's help, she attended college. Later in life, Thea and her family converted to the Church and moved to Utah, USA. Things weren't easy for Thea. She and her husband divorced. She experienced great heartache and severe depression, yet she remained true to her testimony.

As I learned about Thea and her choice to persevere through adversity, I was overwhelmed with an intense love that reassured me of my worth

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX NABAUM



OF MY WORTH

and helped me overcome my paralyzing guilt. I realized that if she could do hard things, I could too.

I went on LDS.org and requested Thea's patriarchal blessing. I was further touched when I read, "The seed of thy womb shall rise up and call thee blessed among the women in Zion." I realized that my profound respect for her was a fulfillment of that simple sentence. Thea's love helped heal my heart of guilt and turn my heart to my ancestors. This was my first witness of Elder David A. Bednar's promise that by participating in family history work, I would "be protected against the intensifying influences of the adversary" ("The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 27).

I feel an added measure of strength and clarity in my life as I continue to search out my family and learn their stories. By consistently participating in family history activities, I feel like I gained an entire army of allies who help me fight my spiritual battles. I can live without fear because "they that be with us [our ancestors] are more than they that be with them [Satan's followers]" (2 Kings 6:16).

Although I haven't found thousands of family names to take to the temple, I have learned my ancestors' stories and sought out their families through careful research. I have taken the time to remember their lives and respect their legacies. I know that I have been strengthened and protected against Satan as I've filled my life with the light of my family. ■

Finding **Miracles** in Everyday Life

By Breanna Call Herbert,
Alex Hugie, and
Aspen Stander
Church Magazines

*If we view life through
a lens of faith in Jesus
Christ, our eyes will be
opened to the many
miracles all around us.*

SOME REASONS GOD PERFORMS MIRACLES

- To manifest His power
- To teach a spiritual principle
- To confirm a previous revelation
- To confirm and strengthen faith
- To advance His work

What Is a Miracle?

We all know what a miracle is, right? Moses parting the Red Sea. The Savior giving sight to a blind man. A woman being cured from a terminal illness. One of the most extraordinary miracles is the Atonement of Jesus Christ—no miracle has ever been so far-reaching or powerful. But are those the only types of experiences that could be considered miracles?

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said, “Many miracles happen every day in the work of our Church and in the lives of our members.”¹ But when was the last time you moved a mountain or saw a few fish and a few loaves of bread feed thousands? Most of us probably haven’t seen anything like that. So how can President Oaks’s statement be true?

➤ According to the Bible Dictionary, miracles are “manifestations of divine or spiritual power.”² With that definition, let’s open our eyes to the many miracles that surround us—miracles that we might not even recognize.

We definitely see God’s hand in the lives of His people through the miracles in the scriptures. But we can also see

➤ day, and we can now communicate with almost anyone anywhere. God’s power can be seen in every detail of our lives.

Why Does God Perform Miracles?

Miracles come in many forms, but God performs them for the same overall purposes. Sometimes miracles heal, comfort, or physically protect God’s

There are miracles that we tend to forget: the sun rises and sets each day; small seeds grow into mighty trees.



His spiritual power when we receive an answer to a prayer, strengthen our testimonies, or have a change of heart.

Still, there are other miracles that we tend to forget: The sun rises and sets each day; small seeds grow into mighty trees; the many components of our body work together, enabling us to breathe, run, dream, and eat. Inspired advances in medicine and technology are happening every

children, but these outward effects are not the only reason for miracles. Often, a miracle doesn’t prevent suffering or tragedy at all. God performs miracles for two basic reasons: to strengthen faith and to accomplish good.

Often, miracles manifest God’s power to His children or teach a spiritual principle. The Bible Dictionary says that Jesus Christ’s many miracles “were intended to

be a proof to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ” and to teach principles such as accountability, repentance, faith, and love.³

Other times, miracles can confirm a previous revelation, such as the signs of Christ’s birth in the Americas. God can also use miracles to advance His work—family history work, missionary work, and more.

But if we seek miracles for the wrong reasons, we can run into trouble. The most common problem comes if we seek signs as proof of God’s existence. If we don’t add any faith to the equation, these signs won’t ever lead to real, lasting conversion. Just look what happened in the Book of Mormon: many people saw signs and miracles, but without faith, their obedience was short-lived.

It would also be wrong to seek miracles for popularity or money, for pursuing revenge, or for trying to change God’s will.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) taught, “Miracles . . . are not for the unbeliever; they are to console the Saints, and to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who love, fear, and serve God.”⁴ Understanding why God performs miracles can help us recognize them in our own lives.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Spend some time reflecting on the past week. Have you witnessed ordinary miracles in your daily life? If the miracle you expected didn’t happen, was there another experience that provided you with comfort, spiritual growth, or a chance to draw closer to the Savior?

How Can I Recognize a Miracle?

Miracles happen only according to the will of God and our faith in Him. The prophet Moroni wrote, “And neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore, they first believed in the Son of God” (Ether 12:18). Having faith allows us to see the good things that happen in our lives as the work of God rather than coincidences or good luck. Recognizing a miracle is part of the miracle itself! If we view life through a lens of faith in Jesus Christ, our eyes will be opened to the many miracles all around us.

However, the size, timing, and result of a miracle are not measures of our faith. Let’s say two families each receive news that one of their children has cancer. Both families pray for the loved one

to recover quickly. Both families exercise faith in the healing power of Jesus Christ.

The child of the first family makes a full recovery, defying the doctor’s predictions that she has only months left to live. The child of the second family suffers through treatment after treatment and finally passes away, but the entire family is overwhelmed with peace and comfort rather than despair.

The first family was not necessarily more faithful than the second. Both families received miracles in their own way, and both miracles are part of a pattern of continual reassurance that God has a plan for each of His children.

The Lord performs both seemingly ordinary and extraordinary miracles in our day. Faithful followers of Jesus Christ in every dispensation have experienced dramatic healings and unexplainable successes. However, we should not overlook the everyday events that act as reminders of God’s hand in our lives. Sometimes we just have to recognize them! ■

NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Miracles,” *Ensign*, June 2001, 6.
2. Bible Dictionary, “Miracles.”
3. Bible Dictionary, “Miracles.”
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 254.

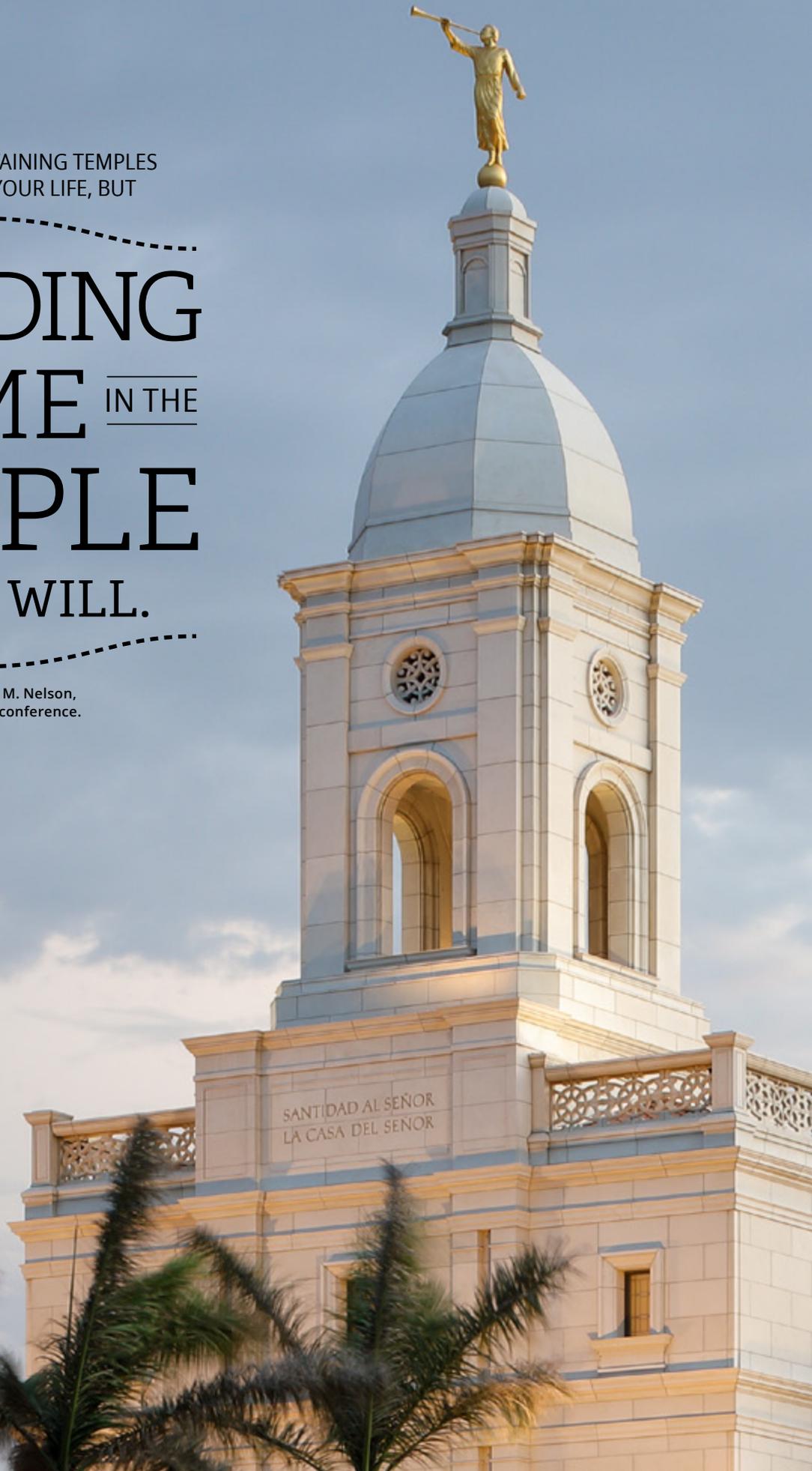
“Miracles . . . are not for the unbeliever; they are to console the Saints, and to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who love, fear, and serve God.”

—President Brigham Young

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING TEMPLES
MAY NOT CHANGE YOUR LIFE, BUT

SPENDING
YOUR TIME IN THE
TEMPLE
SURELY WILL.

President Russell M. Nelson,
Oct. 2018 general conference.



Hearing the Voice of the Lord at General Conference

By Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I give you my witness that Jesus is the Christ, that He guides the affairs of this sacred work, and that general conference is one of the very important times He gives direction to His Church and to us personally.

As we prepare to meet under the direction of President Russell M. Nelson, we anticipate hearing “the will of the Lord, . . . the mind of the Lord, . . . the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation” (Doctrine and Covenants 68:4). We trust in the Lord’s promise: “Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (Doctrine and Covenants 1:38).

In the commotion and confusion of our modern world, trusting and believing in the words of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve is vital to our spiritual growth and endurance.

We come to general conference having prayed and prepared. For many of us, there are pressing worries and earnest questions. We want to renew our faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ, and to strengthen our ability to resist temptation and avoid distractions. We come to be taught from on high.

I promise you that as you prepare your spirit and come with the anticipation that you will hear the voice of the Lord, thoughts and feelings will come into your mind that are customized especially for you.

There is a treasure chest of heavenly direction awaiting your discovery in the messages of general conference. The test for each of us is how we respond to what we hear, what we read, and what we feel.

I promise that as you hear the voice of the Lord to you in the teachings of general conference, and then act on those promptings, you will feel heaven’s hand upon you, and your life and the lives of those around you will be blessed. ■

From an October 2017 general conference address.

Speaks **English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.**



As a freshman at Brigham Young University, he worked as a **janitor cleaning the bathrooms** at 4:00 a.m. before attending classes.



Elder **NEIL L. ANDERSEN**



In high school he went to a **student government conference** with teenagers from 37 countries! He told others about the Church.



Was elected **student body vice president** at BYU.



Loved to **play basketball** with his family after coming home from work.



Graduated from **BYU** and from Harvard School of Business.

Married Kathy Williams on March 20, 1975, in the **Salt Lake Temple.**



Grew up on a **dairy farm** in Pocatello, Idaho, USA.



One of his favorite jobs on the farm was helping **take care of the rabbits.**

Took each of his children to **breakfast once a month** so he could give each of them his undivided attention.



Called to serve in the **France Mission** and later served as president of the France Bordeaux Mission.



Sustained to the **Quorum of the Twelve Apostles** in April 2009.



Born on August 9, 1951, in **Logan, Utah.**

Has **four children** and **17 grandchildren.**

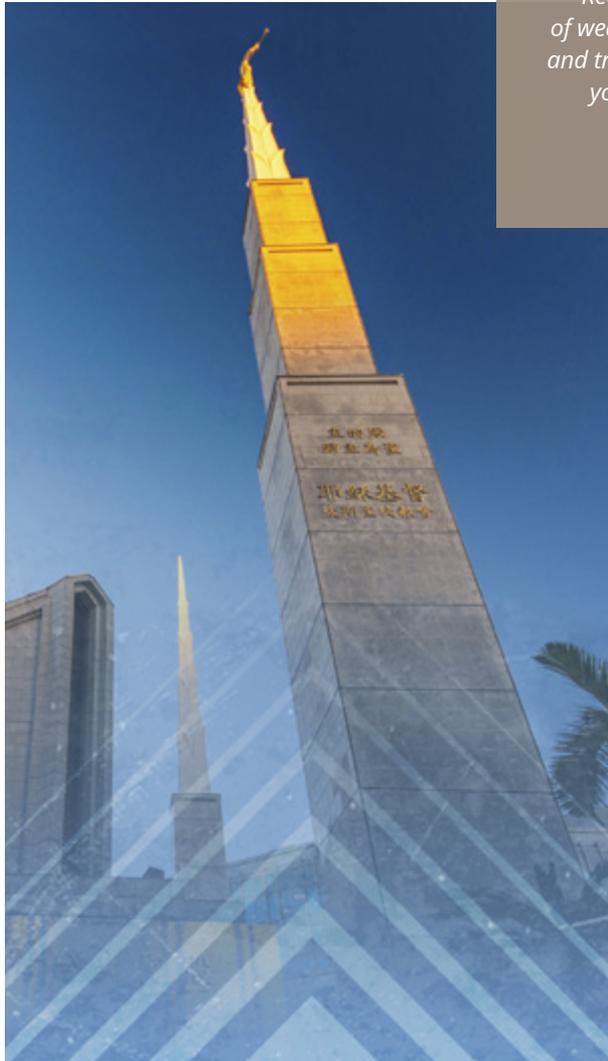


YOUNG ADULTS

**WORSHIPPING IN
THE TEMPLE**

*Read about the blessings
of wearing the temple garment
and trying to better understand
your temple covenants.*

42



YOUTH
**HOW TO KNOW
WHAT'S TRUE**

52,55

SUNDAY LESSONS
**WHAT DOES
A MIRACLE
LOOK LIKE TODAY?**

60

GENERAL CONFERENCE
**ARE YOU
READY?**

56,64

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



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02186 03000 8

ENGLISH

8

the Friend



A new temple in **ITALY!**

See pages 8-11



**By President
Henry B. Eyring**

Second Counselor in
the First Presidency

To Be Like Jesus

One Sunday I watched a group of Primary children sing:

*I'm trying to be like Jesus; I'm following in his ways.
I'm trying to love as he did, in all that I do and say.
At times I am tempted to make a wrong choice,
But I try to listen as the still small voice whispers,
"Love one another as Jesus loves you.
Try to show kindness in all that you do.
Be gentle and loving in deed and in thought,
For these are the things Jesus taught."*

Each child was leaning forward, almost to the front of his or her chair. I could see light in their eyes and determination in their faces. Jesus Christ was their example. To be like Him was their goal.

We can all become like the Savior, Jesus Christ, by living His gospel. I hope you will look for opportunities to do as He did and to love as He loves. Love is the way He leads us along to become like Him. None of us is perfect yet. But we can know that we are following His way. He leads us, and He wants us to follow Him. ●

From "Our Perfect Example," Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2009, 70–73.



How can you show your love for others? Send us a flower for our kindness garden! Email it to liahona@ldschurch.org.

The Sermon on the Mount

The scriptures teach us about a special talk (or “sermon”) that Jesus gave called the Sermon on the Mount. Look up the scriptures below and match them with what Jesus taught. ●



Matthew 6:6-15



Matthew 5:44; 7:12



Matthew 5:14-16

Matthew 7:7-11



Matthew 5:2-11



Prayer Power

Who can you pray for today?

By David Dickson

Church Magazines

Based on a true story

“Pray one for another” (James 5:16).

Dad called everybody to the computer. Lucy dropped the stuffed giraffe she was playing with and hurried over. What was going on? Was it time to call Grandma online?

Dad pointed to the computer screen. “I wanted to show you part of a talk from general conference.”

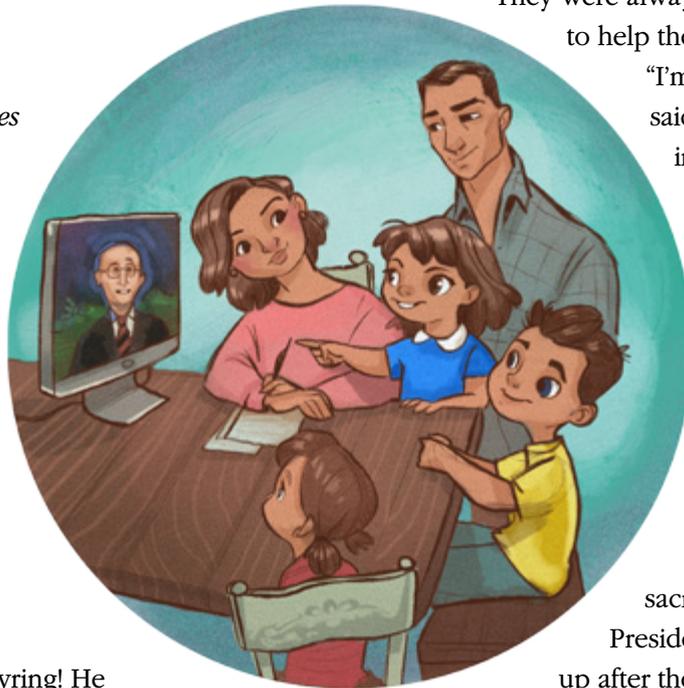
Lucy squinted. It wasn’t Grandma. It was President Eyring! He was in the First Presidency.

Dad pushed play. President Eyring taught about supporting your Church leaders. He explained how Church leaders need us to pray for them.

“That’s why we pray for the prophet, right, Dad?” asked her little brother, David. Dad and Mom both nodded.

“Yes, we do,” Dad said. “But I also keep thinking about our branch presidency. I think President Alvarez and his counselors need our prayers too.”

Lucy loved President Alvarez and his counselors.



They were always so nice to her. She wanted to help them!

“I’m going to pray for them,” Lucy said. “And we can pray for them in our family prayers too!”

“I think that’s a great idea,” Mom said. “Let’s do it.”

For the next few days, Lucy tried hard to remember to pray for the branch presidency whenever she said a prayer. It only took a few extra seconds each time. Easy!

The next Sunday in sacrament meeting, President Alvarez stood up after the hymn. Then he said something that made

Lucy’s eyes get wide.

“As a branch presidency, we wanted to thank you for praying for us,” he said. “We have felt very real strength from those prayers. We really need your faith and prayers to do our callings. Thank you!”

Lucy grinned. She looked over at David. He was smiling too. She couldn’t believe it! She was so excited



“When I pray, I feel closer to Heavenly Father and to Jesus.”

**Lorena Eduarda N., age 5,
São Paulo, Brazil**

that she could hardly sit still. She leaned over and tugged on Mom’s sleeve.

“Mom!” she whispered. “Did you hear what President Alvarez said?!” She wanted to jump up and down. “It worked! Our prayers really worked!”

After church, Lucy and her family walked home together.

“God really does hear our prayers,” Mom said. “And isn’t it amazing to see how powerful it is for a group of people to pray for someone else?”



Lucy felt warm and happy inside. She and David skipped down the sidewalk while Mom and Dad walked behind them. She knew Heavenly Father had heard her family’s prayers. They were truly making a difference. Just by praying!

That night, Lucy got ready to say her prayers. She thought about her Primary teacher and other Church leaders who could use some extra blessings. Maybe she would pray for them too! Lucy folded her arms and bowed her head. She knew just what to say. ●

While You're Watching Conference

Listen for each of these words during April general conference and then color in the spaces when you hear them.



Close as a Quiet Prayer

Quietly $\text{♩} = 48-58$

Words and music by Sally DeFord

1. Mo - ment by mo - ment, by night or by day, My Hea - ven - ly Fa - ther is
 2. When I am thank - ful for bles - sings He sends, He smiles as I of - fer my
 3. Whe - ther I'm kneel - ing to seek Him in words, Or si - lent - ly pray - ing, my

not far a - way. And He will be near when I whis - per His name.
 prais - es to Him. And when I'm a - lone and in need of a friend,
 heart will be heard. His love will en - fold me; His pro - mise is sure.

To Coda ⌘
 He is close as a qui - et prayer, _____ Close as a qui - et

1. _____ 2. _____
 prayer. _____ prayer. _____ I can pray to my Fa - ther a -

bove an - y - time, an - y - where. _____ When I call, He will al - ways be

D.C. al Coda
 Close as a qui - et prayer.

⌘ CODA
 Close _____ as a qui - et prayer. _____

Hello from Italy!

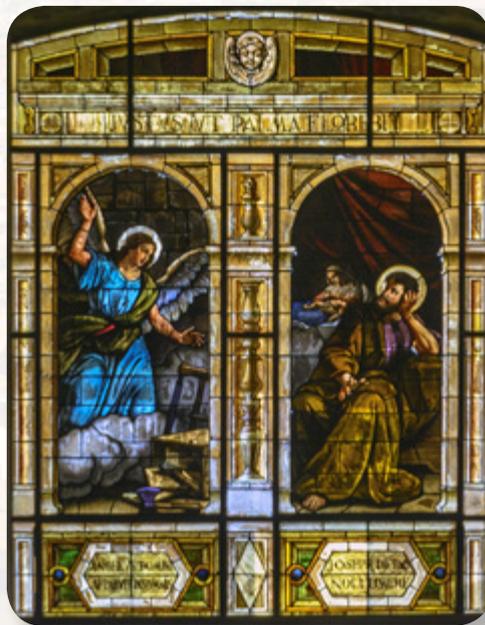


I'm Margo. And I'm Paolo.
We're traveling around the
world to learn about
children of God.
Join us as we visit Italy!

Italy is in southern Europe.
On a map, it looks kind of
like a boot! More than 60
million people live there.



Do you know how to say "I am a child of God" in Italian? *Sono un figlio di Dio*. This girl is reading the Book of Mormon in Italian.



Most Italian people belong to the Catholic church. While some of their beliefs are different from ours, they believe in Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.



Before dinner, many Italian families like to go for an evening stroll, or *passeggiata*. They wear nice clothes and walk around the plaza together. They might even stop for some gelato—Italian ice cream. *Mmmm!*



Many kids in Italy come home from school to eat with their families during *pausa pranzo*—lunch break. They might have pasta or rice and meat and vegetables.

Meet some of our friends from Italy!



This month, a temple is opening in Rome! It was announced in the October 2008 general conference. This will be Italy's first temple.

Are you from Italy? We'd love to hear from you! See the back cover to see how to write to us.



"I know that Jesus lives and that He guides the prophets. It's very important to go to church so that we can learn more about Jesus. I have started reading the Book of Mormon every day because I would like to know more things about the gospel."

Lorenzo B., age 7, Piedmont, Italy



"When I am near the temple, I think about Jesus and I feel excited. Finally we won't have to drive 12 hours to get to the temple. Now I will be able to get to the temple in just 50 minutes! When I turn 12, I will be able to go and do baptisms in the temple."

Olivia G., age 8, Lazio, Italy

Thanks for exploring Italy with us. See you next time! *Ciao!*



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KATIE MCDEE; STAINED GLASS AND PLAZA PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES; BACKGROUND PHOTOS BY ADOBE STOCK

By Marissa Widdison

Church Magazines

Based on a true story

"I love to see the temple. I'm going there someday"
(Children's Songbook, 95).

Gioele and Michele stared at the construction site across the street. They could see lots of metal beams and layers of cement.

"It doesn't look much like a temple yet," Gioele said.

"But it will someday," Michele answered.

This was the first time the brothers had seen the

place where the Rome Italy Temple was being built. Right now their family had to go all the way to Switzerland to visit the temple. But this new temple was only 30 minutes away from their home!

Michele and Gioele watched the big yellow trucks move piles of dirt.

"I think that's where one of the spires will be," Michele said, pointing to a spot near the front of the building.

Watching the Rome Temple GROW



Gioele nodded. “Look! Papà is coming,” he said. Their father was wearing his usual work outfit—church clothes with a white construction hat. He worked as an electrical engineer in the temple. They loved hearing about what he worked on each day. For example, one day he told them that the statue of Christ had arrived. Another time he told them about the baptismal font.

That night, Michele made sure to say his prayers and thank Heavenly Father for the temple. He felt warm inside whenever he prayed about it.

Weeks went by. The curved temple walls were covered with strong stone, and two tall spires grew toward the sky. A small visitors’ center was built nearby. Every once in a while, Gioele and Michele would go there to press their faces against the window and see what had changed.

Then one day they got a happy surprise.

“How would you like to see the angel Moroni statue put on top of the temple?” Mom asked. The families of the construction workers had all been invited to watch.

Gioele and Michele could hardly believe it. They were so excited!

The next morning they put on white shirts and ties. They walked around the temple with the other families. They even got to take a picture with the golden angel Moroni. It was huge!

Then the workers started moving the statue. Gioele watched the giant crane carefully raise angel Moroni to the top of one of the spires. A drone buzzed around taking a video. It was so cool!

Gioele thought about all the people who would learn about the Church by visiting the temple grounds. He thought about how lots of people were going to get married there and how people were going to get baptized for people who had died.

“Now it looks like a temple,” he told his brother. Michele smiled and nodded.

The brothers felt happy. They were excited to go inside the temple soon! Their testimony was growing right along with the building. ●

The Rome Italy Temple is being dedicated on March 10–12! Visit friend.lds.org this month to watch a video about this temple being built.





END

Say one thing you'll do to show love this week.

Draw as many hearts as you can in 10 seconds.

Make a heart shape with your arms.

Tell about when someone showed you love.

Sing "Love One Another" (Hymns, no. 308).

Say one thing you'll do to show love this week.

Draw a picture for someone.

Give someone a hug.

Make a heart shape with your hands.

Say "I Love You."

Give a high five.

Give a compliment.

Tell someone what you love.

Tell about when someone showed you love.

Give your biggest smile.

Sing "Our Savior's Love" (Hymns, no. 113).

Write a nice note for someone you love.

Elder Uchtdorf Visits Russia

The Apostles travel around the world to minister to people and teach them about Jesus Christ.

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf and Sister Harriet Uchtdorf went to Russia to help Church members there. Before he was an Apostle, Elder Uchtdorf often flew as an airline captain into Russia. ●



Russia is a huge country, and it has never had a temple before. Last year President Nelson announced that a temple will be built there. Everyone is very excited!



First Elder Uchtdorf went to Moscow, the capital city of Russia. People there loved meeting him and hearing him teach. He said we can help others know about Jesus by serving them.

Russia

St. Petersburg

Moscow

Next he went to a big city called St. Petersburg. In Russia, missionaries are called “volunteers,” and they look for people to help every day. They can teach people about the gospel only while they are inside a Church building. Elder Uchtdorf ate dinner with some of the volunteers who were finishing their missions and going home.



Although we don't know yet where or when the new temple will be built, Elder Uchtdorf encouraged everyone in Russia to get their lives ready for the day when a temple will be there.



Our hearts have to be ready for the temple.



GETTING READY FOR THE TEMPLE

What are some ways you can prepare to go to the temple someday?



Put a picture of the temple in your room.



Find someone in your family tree who hasn't been baptized yet.



Talk about the temple with someone who has been inside.

Meet Dr. Mattie

By Jordan Monson Wright

Based on a true story

Sixteen-year-old Mattie Hughes was thrilled when she heard about what the prophet had said. Becoming a doctor was her dream. And now President Brigham Young was actually encouraging women to become doctors!

Mattie knew that some medical schools were finally letting women in. Of course, she would have to get a college degree before she could go to medical school. And she would have to save a lot of money. It would take a lot of time and a lot of hard work. She knew that.

But Mattie thought of her little sister, Annie, who had died on the wagon trip to Utah. There had been no doctor to help when she got sick. Then Mattie's father had died. Here in Salt Lake City, Mattie knew lots of people who were sick or hurt. If Mattie became a doctor, she could help them.

Mattie decided to have faith. The prophet had said women should train to be doctors, and she wanted to be one of them! God would help her find a way to go to medical school.

Mattie worked hard to save money. She got a job as a typesetter for a newspaper. She had to carefully arrange

every letter of every word in the right order so the newspaper could be printed. After work, Mattie went to classes at the university to get ready for medical school.

Between home, work, and school, Mattie walked six miles (10 km) every day! She wore heavy men's boots



because her regular shoes weren't tough enough to trudge through the mud. She wished she could ride in the mule-drawn streetcar instead of walking, but she was saving every penny for school.

Mattie worried she wouldn't be able to save enough money. She knew her mother and stepfather would try to help her, but they had other children to take care of. What else could she do?

Mattie decided to hold a fundraiser and ask friends and ward members to share whatever money they could spare. They were happy to help. Mattie was only the third woman to follow President Young's call, and they wanted her to succeed and become a doctor.

After the fundraisers, Mattie had enough to go to medical school! She traveled across the country to a university and studied hard.

Two years later, Mattie held her head high and marched onto the graduation platform to receive her diploma. She was finally a doctor! She had never felt so excited.

Mattie looked into the cheering crowd of strangers. None of her family or friends from home could be there, but she knew they were proud of her. Soon she would return home to care for them and teach them what she had learned.

After coming back to Utah, Mattie worked at the Relief Society's hospital in Salt Lake City. She loved being close to the Rocky Mountains! And she loved her job as a doctor. She helped treat diseases, heal injuries, and even teach classes on how to deliver babies.

Becoming a doctor had been hard work. But Heavenly Father loved her and had helped her. Now Mattie would spend the rest of her life helping others. ●

The author lives in Michigan, USA.



Martha "Mattie" Hughes Cannon (1857–1932) was a pioneer, doctor, and politician. She was the first woman in the United States to be elected state senator. She worked hard to make life better for others.



By Elder
Massimo De Feo
Of the Seventy

A Lesson from My Parents



Later we got baptized and confirmed. I was 10 and Alberto was 11.

When I was 18, I asked my father to help me pay for my mission. At first he said, “No way. It’s too much money.” But a couple of days later, he asked me, “Do you really want to go on a mission?” And I said, “Yes. With all my heart.” My father said he would help me.

I didn’t understand why my father would pay such a great price for me. Then I realized it was because he loved me. It made me think of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for us. He paid the highest price because He loves us.

When I got back from my mission, my mother was very sick with cancer. One day she asked me to teach her to pray. She wanted to pray for me. Even in her pain, she was thinking of others. She reminded me of Jesus too. When He atoned for us, He was in great pain. But He

was praying for *us*.

Even though my parents never joined the Church in this life, they were good examples for me. I am grateful for the lessons I learned from them. We can learn a lot from our parents, teachers, and leaders if we are open to what they teach us. ●

I grew up in a small town in southern Italy. My family were not members of the Church. One day, when I was nine, two missionaries knocked on our door.

My parents weren’t interested in what the missionaries had to say, but I was. So was my brother, Alberto. Our parents let us keep meeting with the missionaries.

Show and Tell



We celebrated the anniversary of the Primary by putting on a talent show with the help of families and missionaries. Each family performed a story from the Book of Mormon.

Primary activity, Cali Colombia Colima Stake

My baptism was very special to me. I prayed with my mom that my dad would give me permission to be baptized. Heavenly Father answered my prayers, and my dad gave me permission. I was baptized, and I'm very happy to belong to the only true Church on the face of the earth, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My testimony grows every day as I learn more about my Heavenly Father.

Amy V., age 9, El Oro, Ecuador



My younger brother and sister were fighting. I reminded them that Jesus taught us not to fight. It felt good to be a good example.

Tequan K., age 10, Lusaka, Zambia

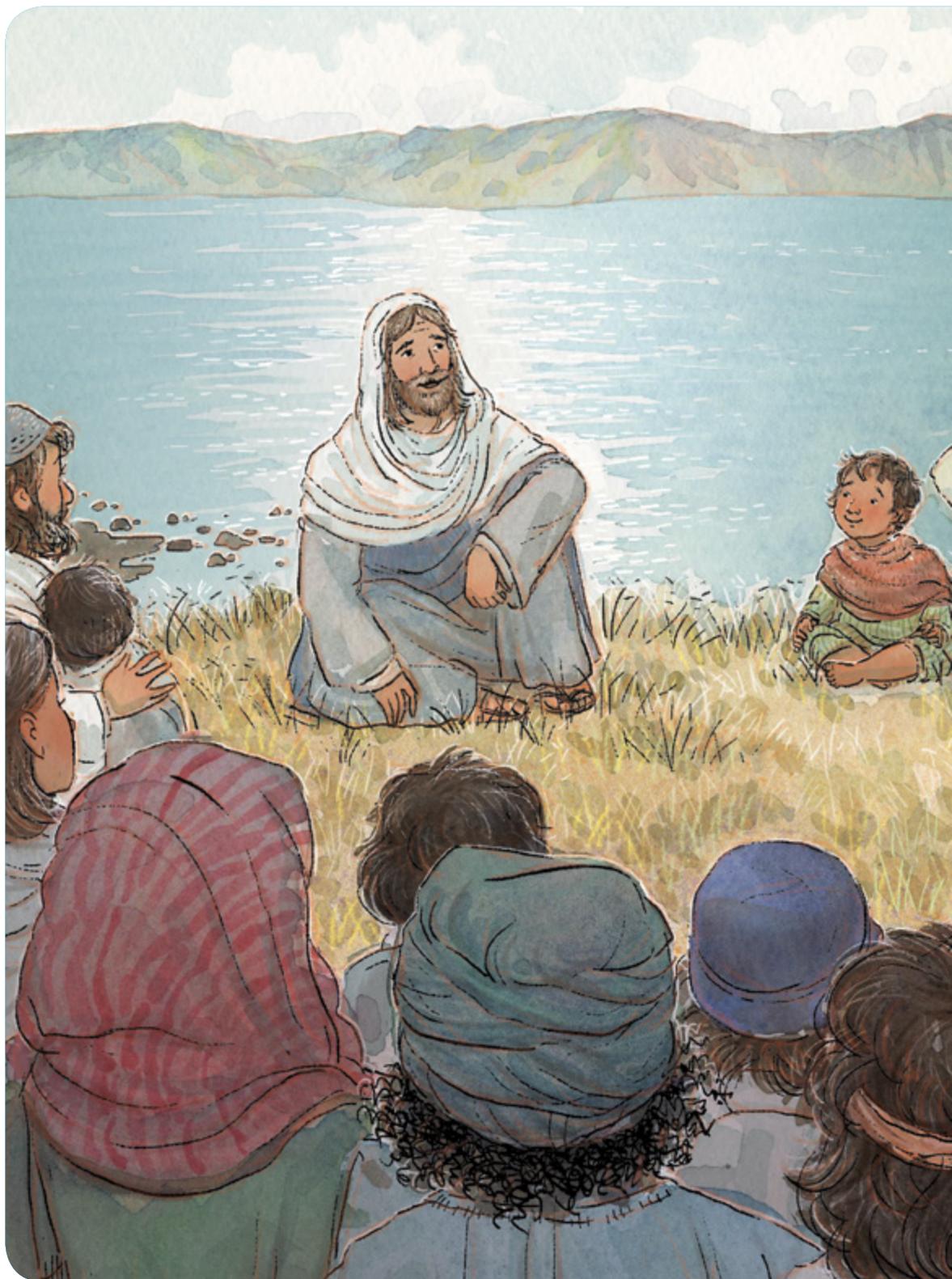


We learned about the armor of God, the Articles of Faith, the leaders of the Church, the books in the Book of Mormon, and Lehi's dream.

Primary activity, Santiago Spain District

Jesus Taught about Prayer

Jesus was teaching on a hill near the sea. He taught about being kind. He taught about being a good example. He also taught about prayer.





Jesus taught that we should talk to Heavenly Father through prayer.

We can thank God for what we have. We can ask Him for what we need.

We can pray to forgive others. We can ask God to forgive us. We can pray to make good choices.



I can be like Jesus. I can pray to Heavenly Father every day. ●

You can read these teachings of Jesus in Matthew 6:5-13.

I Can Pray



ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT

Dear Parents

Reading is a valuable skill that can open many doors. Here are ideas for using the *Friend* to help others learn to read.

- Use illustrations. Ask your child to describe what they see and then find that part of the story as they read or listen.
- Read stories out loud and have children follow along with their finger.
- When they come across a new word, explain what it means and have them write it down to practice later.
- Ask questions about the stories to help them understand. “How is Lucy feeling right now?” “What did Jesus teach about prayer?” “What do you think will happen next?”
- After you finish a story, talk about it. Ask your child to tell you what happened. What did they learn? What did they like about it?

We’d love to hear your thoughts about using these stories to teach others!

New Friend

50 E. North Temple St., room 2393
Salt Lake City, UT 84150 USA
liahona@ldschurch.org

With love,
The *Friend*

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Find the Liahona hidden inside!

ON THE FRIEND COVER
Illustration by Natalie Hoopes