

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • SEPTEMBER 2015

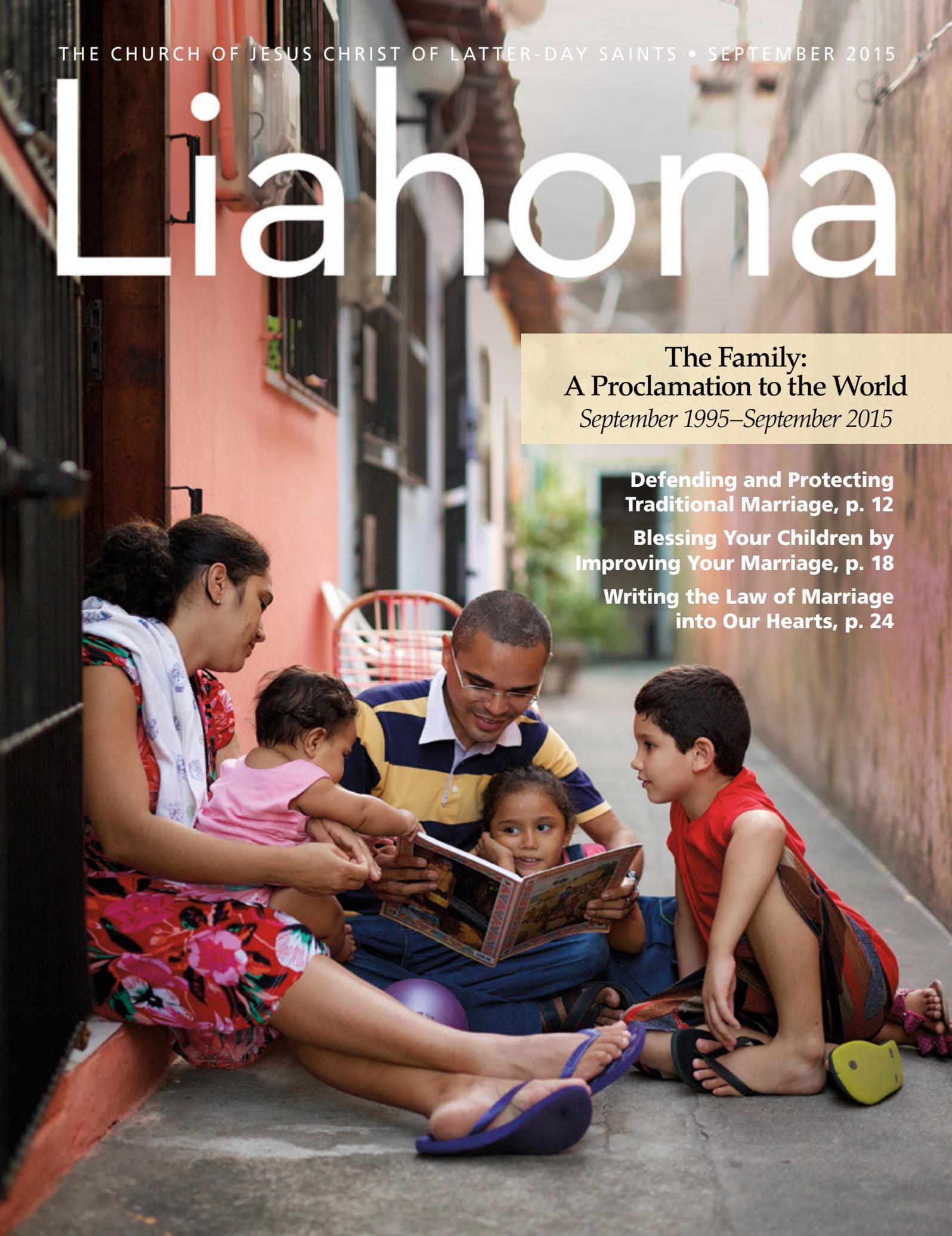
# Liahona

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*September 1995–September 2015*

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*"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?"*

*"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."*

**Luke 12:6-7**



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

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For subscriptions and prices outside the United States and Canada, go to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org) or contact your local Church distribution center or ward or branch leader.

Submit manuscripts and queries online at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org);

by email to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org); or by mail to *Liahona*, Rm. 2420, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

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

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**For Readers in the United States and Canada:**

September 2015 Vol. 39 No. 9. *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](http://store.lds.org). (Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431)

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 707.4.12.5).

NONPOSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

# Family Home Evening Ideas

*This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are two examples.*



**“Not of the World,”** page 56: Consider reading Elder Perry’s experience of deciding to hold a glass of milk at business gatherings. (For the reference to his story, see page 57.) As a family, discuss creative ways to be in but not of the world. For example, what could you do if a group of friends decides to watch an inappropriate movie or view pornography? How could you respond to someone putting down your beliefs about Joseph Smith, marriage, or the law of chastity? As you answer these questions as a family, keep in mind Christ’s example.

**“A New Feeling,”** page 78: After reading the article together, you could discuss how the Holy Ghost speaks to us. Use scriptures such as Galatians 5:22–23 (gives feelings of love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, gentleness, faith, hope); John 14:26 (teaches truth and brings it to remembrance); Alma 19:6 (replaces darkness with light); Moroni 10:5 (reveals truth); D&C 6:14–15 (enlightens the mind); 8:2–3 (gives ideas in the mind, feelings in the heart). Consider sharing personal experiences of when you felt the Holy Ghost.

## IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at [languages.lds.org](http://languages.lds.org). Visit [Facebook.com/liahona.magazine](https://www.facebook.com/liahona.magazine) to find family home evening ideas, Sunday lesson helps, and inspiring messages you can share with friends and family.

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**By President  
Henry B. Eyring**

First Counselor in  
the First Presidency

# Families AND Prayer

Once, as I sat by my father’s bedside through the night, he talked about his childhood. He spoke of the love of his parents in difficult times and of the love of his Heavenly Father and the Savior. I knew he was dying of cancer, so it did not surprise me that at times he mixed up his feelings for his Heavenly Father with the love and kindness of his earthly father. My father had often said that when he prayed, he thought he could see in his mind the smile of Heavenly Father.

His parents had taught him by example to pray as if he spoke to God and that God would answer him in love. He needed that example to the end. When the pain became intense, we found him in the morning on his knees by the bed. He had been too weak to get back into bed. He told us he had been praying to ask his Heavenly Father why he had to suffer so much when he had always tried to be good. He said a kindly answer came: “God needs brave sons.”

And so he soldiered on to the end, trusting that God loved him, listened to him, and would lift him up. He was blessed to have known early and to never forget that a loving God is as close as a prayer.

That is why the Lord taught parents, “And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:28).

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored—with the Book of Mormon and all the priesthood keys that can bind

families—because Joseph Smith as a boy prayed in faith. He gained that faith in a loving and faithful family.

Twenty years ago the Lord gave families this counsel in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” from the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”<sup>1</sup>

We owe an overwhelming debt of gratitude to the family of Joseph Smith the Prophet for his upbringing. His family exemplified not only faith and prayer but also repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.

The generations that come after you may call you blessed for your example of prayer in your family. You may not raise a great servant of God, but you can by your prayers and your example of faithfulness help the Lord Jesus Christ raise up good and beloved disciples.

Of all that you might choose to do to help the Lord, prayer will be at the heart of it. There are apparently ordinary people who, when they pray, inspire others to open their eyes to see who is there. You can become such a person.

Think of what that can mean to those who kneel with you in family prayer. When they feel that you speak to God in faith, their faith will increase to also speak with God. When



you pray to thank God for blessings they know have come, their faith will grow that God loves them and that He answers your prayers and will answer theirs. That can happen in family prayer only when you have had that experience in private prayer, time after time.

I am still being blessed by a father and a mother who spoke with God. Their example of the power of prayer in families is still blessing the generations who came after them.

My children and grandchildren are blessed every day by the example of

my parents. The faith that a loving God hears and answers prayers has been passed to them. You can create such a legacy in your family. I pray that you will. ■

**NOTE**

1. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.

### CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION ON THE FAMILY

**T**he Family: A Proclamation to the World" teaches principles that are just as timely today as when it was first presented on September 23, 1995. Consider inviting the individuals or families you teach to celebrate the proclamation's 20th anniversary by:

1. Listing principles it contains that have special significance for them. (See how President Eyring does this with prayer in the message above.)
2. Discussing how each principle can bless them today and in the future.
3. Setting specific goals to incorporate those principles into their lives and to share them with others.

## Working at Prayer

**P**resident Eyring teaches that your family can be blessed by your strong relationship with Heavenly Father. You can improve your relationship with Him by improving your prayers! Here are a few ideas of how to do so:

Before you begin your prayer, take a few moments to think about what you want to say. Consider questions you might have or things that have been bothering you—you can even write them down so you don't forget. Use this time too to clear your mind from the ruckus of the day so you can focus on the gentle impressions of the Holy Ghost. If your mind tends to wander while you pray, try to visualize Heavenly Father listening. Speak in specifics. Also, leave a few minutes at the end of the prayer to listen to the promptings of the Spirit. You might write down your impressions in your journal.

Remember that prayer has been called "a form of work" (Bible Dictionary, "Prayer"), so don't worry if it takes

practice or seems hard! Your effort in praying can help you forge a relationship with God that will bless generations.



Heavenly Father  
**HEARS  
 YOUR  
 PRAYERS.**

He loves you.  
 He knows  
 your name.

President Henry B. Eyring,  
 First Counselor in the First Presidency.  
 "Continuing Revelation," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 73.

## CHILDREN

### A Prayer Reminder

**P**resident Eyring teaches that it's important to pray with your family. You can be an example to your family by praying every day. You can also remind your family to pray together every day. Cut out the card on the left and put it where your whole family will see it. This way you can always remember that Heavenly Father wants to hear from you!



Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the divine attributes of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to [reliefsociety.lds.org](http://reliefsociety.lds.org).

## Divine Attributes of Jesus Christ: Powerful and Full of Glory

*This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring divine attributes of the Savior.*

The scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ “received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him” (D&C 93:17). Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said that by this power our Savior created the heavens and earth, performed miracles, and endured the pain of Gethsemane and Calvary.<sup>1</sup> As we come to understand this, our faith in Christ will increase, and we will become stronger.

As we make and keep temple covenants, the Lord blesses us with His power. Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, said: “Covenant keeping strengthens, empowers, and protects. . . . I recently met a dear new friend. She testified that after she had received her temple endowment, she



felt strengthened with power to resist temptations.”<sup>2</sup>

Nephi bears testimony of covenant power: “I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended . . . upon the covenant people of the Lord, . . . and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory” (1 Nephi 14:14).

### Additional Scriptures

Jeremiah 51:15; Revelation 1:6; Jacob 4:6–7; Mosiah 3:17



## Faith, Family, Relief

### From the Scriptures

Being filled with great compassion for Martha and Mary, Jesus Christ raised their brother Lazarus from the dead by the power of God He possessed.

Jesus arrived at Martha and Mary’s home after Lazarus had been in the grave for four days. They went to Lazarus’s tomb, and Jesus commanded that the stone covering the entrance be taken away. Jesus said to Martha, “Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?” He then prayed to God the Father and “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

“And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes.” (See John 11:1–45.) The Savior uses His power to redeem and empower us. Our faith in Him will increase as we remember that He is full of power and glory.

### Consider This

How does the power of God arm us with power and glory?

### NOTES

1. See M. Russell Ballard, “This Is My Work and My Glory,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 18.
2. Linda K. Burton, “The Power, Joy, and Love of Covenant Keeping,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 111.

# APRIL 2015 CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

*“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken; . . . whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).*

*As you review the April 2015 general conference, you can use these pages (and Conference Notebooks in future issues) to help you study and apply the recent teachings of the living prophets and apostles and other Church leaders.*

## DOCTRINAL HIGHLIGHT



## Believing in Marriage

“No one has ever come up with a more efficient way to raise the next generation than a household of married parents with children. . . .

“We need to remind ourselves once in a while, as I was reminded in Rome, of the wonderfully reassuring and comforting fact that marriage and family are still the aspiration and ideal of most people and that we are not alone in those beliefs. It has never been more of a challenge to find a practical balance between

employment, families, and personal needs than it is in our day. As a church, we want to assist in all that we can to create and support strong marriages and families.”

**Elder L. Tom Perry (1922–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Why Marriage and Family Matter—Everywhere in the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 41, 42.**

**For more doctrinal articles on marriage from the April 2015 conference, see Boyd K. Packer, “The Plan of Happiness,” 26; Linda K. Burton, “We’ll Ascend Together,” 29; and D. Todd Christofferson, “Why Marriage, Why Family,” 50.**

## PROPHETIC PROMISE



## God’s Grace Available to All

“The grace of God is our great and everlasting hope.

“Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the plan of mercy appeases the demands of justice, ‘and [brings] about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance’ (Alma 34:15).

“Our sins, though they be as scarlet, can become white as snow. Because our beloved Savior ‘gave himself a ransom for all’ (1 Timothy 2:6), an entrance into His everlasting kingdom is provided unto us. . . .

“Today and forevermore God’s grace is available to all whose hearts are broken and whose spirits are contrite. . . .

“. . . I pray that we will show our love for God and our gratitude for the gift of God’s infinite grace by keeping His commandments and joyfully ‘walk[ing] in [a] newness of life’ (Romans 6:4).”

**President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “The Gift of Grace,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 108, 110.**

## ANSWERS FOR YOU

Each conference, prophets and apostles give inspired answers to questions Church members may have. Use your May 2015 issue or visit [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org) to find answers to these questions:

- I believe in the Atonement of Jesus Christ, but how can I access its power in my life? See Dale G. Renlund, "Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying," 56.
- How are missionary assignments made? What can I do to make the transition from missionary to returned

missionary? How will I be blessed by attending seminary and institute? See M. Russell Ballard, "The Greatest Generation of Young Adults," 67.

- How can I be a better father? See Larry M. Gibson, "Fatherhood—Our Eternal Destiny," 77.
- What are the unique blessings of a mortal body and earth life? See Joseph W. Sitati, "Be Fruitful, Multiply, and Subdue the Earth," 126.



## GREAT STORIES FROM CONFERENCE

What catches our attention better than a great story? Following are four of many stories shared during conference:

- Why doesn't Sister Yazzie of the Chinle Arizona Stake know how many grandchildren she has? Sister Yellowhair shares the unexpected answer. —See Carole M. Stephens, "The Family Is of God," 11.
- Drama and courage describe the story of Marie Madeline Cardon, a young woman who defended her Latter-day Saint faith in 1850 against a mob in the Alps of northern Italy. She stands as an example for us today. —See Bonnie L. Oscarson, "Defenders of the Family Proclamation," 14.
- Read how fast offerings blessed the Turay family during the 1991 civil war in Sierra Leone. —See Henry B. Eyring, "Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?" 22.
- This story of courage, hope, and following the light comes from recent news headlines, but its message has eternal application for us. —See L. Whitney Clayton, "Choose to Believe," 36.

To read, watch, or listen to general conference addresses, visit [conference.lds.org](http://conference.lds.org).

# PRAYER: A MOTHER'S GIFT

Name withheld

*In spite of my son's rebellion, I never stopped praying for him.*

I never prayed so much as when one of my sons reached the age of 17. He started having some doubts about the gospel, and at times he was rebellious and didn't want to listen. My husband and I always tried to insist that he attend church, but many times he refused. We held our family home evenings, read the scriptures, and prayed as a family, but he often chose not to participate. I can't remember how many times I knelt down to ask our Heavenly Father to touch his heart and help him continue along the right path.

Over the next two years, he had many ups and downs. Church leaders supported me and they spoke with him, but nothing seemed to be of use. Eventually he left home.

All that time I never stopped praying for him. At times my husband, tired of it, said to me, "Leave him. He has his moral agency." But my reply was always the same: "No. I will not lose hope."

After a time, our son came to our home. He asked my forgiveness and told me, "Mama, I want to come home." My husband and I were wary, but after discussing it, we yielded. After he returned home, we saw his firm determination to change. He became active in the

Church and participated in activities. He was later called to serve as a Primary teacher, an experience that was quite special for him.

One day I hung up a Poster from the *Liahona* that said, "Don't let worries or doubts keep you from serving a full-time mission."<sup>1</sup> It hung in his

## HELPING YOUR CHILD

Children who stray have their agency, and they might not respond to spiritual promptings, but the gospel gives you many ways to help such a child:

- Counsel together with your spouse and other children.
- Strengthen yourself spiritually so that you can act out of faith and love, not fear.
- Be worthy of and seek personal revelation on how to help your child.
- Be a living example of a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- Express love to your child in words and actions.
- Invite him or her to participate in gospel learning at home and in family activities like vacations, holidays, and projects.
- Never give up.



### THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTS

“Parents who honor temple covenants are in a position to exert great spiritual influence over time on their children. Faithful members of the Church can find comfort in knowing that they can lay claim to the promises of divine guidance and power, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and the privileges of the priesthood, in their efforts to help family members receive the blessings of salvation and exaltation.

“ . . . Such an influence cannot override the moral agency of a child but nonetheless can invite and beckon. Ultimately, a child must exercise his or her moral agency and respond in faith, repent with full purpose of heart, and act in accordance with the teachings of Christ.”

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Faithful Parents and Wayward Children: Sustaining Hope While Overcoming Misunderstanding,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2014, 31; *Liahona*, Mar. 2014, 19.**

bedroom for a couple of months, when suddenly one day he said to me, “Mama, I want to go on a mission at the end of the year.” It was marvelous. My husband and I cried and cried, and of course we supported him as he prepared to go to the temple and serve a mission. I continued praying all the time, now thanking Heavenly Father for having touched the heart of my son.

After some time on his mission, in one of his letters he said to me, “Mama, I have a great testimony of prayer, thanks to you. I know that you were praying the whole time

for me, and now I am on a mission because the Lord touched my heart, not because I am all that good. Thanks, Mama. Share with the sisters this principle that changed my life.”

Now my son has served a faithful mission and participated in a marvelous work. I am very thankful to Heavenly Father for listening to my prayers all these years and for touching the heart of my son, which caused him to return to the right path. ■

*The author lives in Guatemala.*

#### NOTE

1. “Take the Next Step,” *New Era*, June 2009, 27; *Liahona*, June 2009, 31.



**By Elder  
M. Russell Ballard**  
Of the Quorum  
of the Twelve  
Apostles

# THE LORD NEEDS YOU Now!

*As an Apostle of  
the Lord Jesus Christ,  
I invite you to “put  
on the whole armour  
of God” and join  
the battle today.*

**T**he world in which we now live is moving rapidly away from the teachings of Christ in its laws and its customs. As a result, Satan is working overtime to confuse God’s sons and daughters and to divert the very elect from fulfilling their duty and receiving a fulness of the Lord’s blessings.

Satan wants you to stop practicing good habits you learned at home, in seminary and institute, and on your missions—such as having daily scripture study, praying daily, worthily partaking of the sacrament weekly, and giving genuine, heartfelt service. He also wants you to stand on the sidelines in today’s important and crucial battles.

Remember, we are at war—but not a war of guns and bullets. Nevertheless, the war is real, with countless human casualties. The war is in fact a continuation of the one that began in the premortal world.

Paul invited us to “put on the whole armour of God.” He said, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:11–12).

As an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I invite you to “put on the whole armour of God” and join the battle today, as the sons of Helaman did so many years ago.

Don’t wait until you get married or start your lifelong career or get older. The Church needs our youth now. The Lord needs you now!

You will recall that 2,000 stripling warriors “entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites” (Alma 53:17). The Church needs modern stripling warriors who have made a covenant “to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9).

Young women and young men are the modern daughters and sons of Helaman. May it be said of you as it was said of them: “They became now at this period of time . . . a great support” (Alma 53:19).

## **Combating Pornography**

We need you to join with us in the fight against pornography. It’s a terrible plague that is spreading across the world.

More than 180 years ago, the Lord revealed His law of health, including a warning about the use of tobacco (see D&C 89). Many people listened to the Lord’s warning, but many more did not. No one knew at that time or even when I was your age the long-term effects of smoking. Today, after decades of scientific research, we now know smoking’s contribution to lung cancer and other deadly diseases. The Lord’s Word of Wisdom was a protective blessing.



In similar ways the Lord in our day has warned us about the effects of pornography. Millions of people faithfully follow the Lord's counsel, whereas countless others do not. We don't have to wait, my dear friends, for 180 years or even for 10 years to discover the devastating effects of pornography. Current scientific research has revealed that pornography cripples young adults in several ways and poisons their chances of one day having a loving and lasting marriage relationship.

Research has shown that frequent use of pornography can lead to obsessive behaviors and can rewire the brain to capture a person in the prison of addiction. Research has also verified that pornography fosters unrealistic expectations and delivers dangerous miseducation about healthy human intimacy.

Most insidious, pornography conditions you to see people as objects that you can disregard and disrespect both emotionally and physically.

Another aspect of pornography is that it is generally a secret activity. Users often hide their use or at least minimize their use from everyone, including their romantic partners or spouses. Studies have found that when people engage in this type of self-concealment—when they do things they are not proud of and keep those things a secret from their family members and friends—it not only hurts their relationships and leaves them feeling lonely, but it also makes them more vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and poor self-esteem. Keeping secrets damages trust.

Initially, we must avoid pornography ourselves because it is deadly. It kills genuine, tender human relationships—destroying marriages and families. It destroys the spirit of the person who consumes it as surely as the most deadly poison kills the body and the mind.

Do not be deceived. Do not think that once you go on your mission or once you get married you can stop this addictive behavior. If you are involved in it now, if you are entrapped in this practice, get spiritual help now. You can overcome pornography with the Savior's assistance. Do not wait! I plead with you to leave it alone! There are many

resources on LDS.org that will help you override the darkness of pornographic images.

These are challenging days—but no more challenging than the days of Helaman and his stripling warriors when they stood to defend their families and the Church. This is your time to step forward and join the ranks of other righteous and dedicated young men and young women to fight the battle against pornography.

### **The Doctrine of Marriage**

I want you to understand the position of the Church on marriage as given us by our Heavenly Father through the scriptures and “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” That inspired document states: “The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.”<sup>1</sup>

Apostles are charged to be watchmen on the tower, to see “the enemy while he [is] yet afar off” (D&C 101:54), and to teach the doctrines of Christ. All of you know that the traditional definition of marriage is under attack today. There are those who are framing the discussion focused in terms of civil rights. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have explained the Church's position and doctrine of God's purpose and plan for His spirit children to experience mortal life, which is essential to our everlasting and eternal life.

I quote from a statement issued to Church leaders in 2014 and ask you to read carefully:

“Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife. We urge you to review and teach Church members the doctrine contained in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”



The statement continues:

“Just as those who promote same-sex marriage are entitled to civility, the same is true for those who oppose it. . . .

“As members of the Church, we are responsible to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to illuminate the great blessings that flow from heeding God’s commandments as well as the inevitable consequences of ignoring them. We invite you to pray that people everywhere will have their hearts softened to the truths of the gospel, and that wisdom will be granted to those who are called upon to decide issues critical to society’s future.”<sup>2</sup>

I know you love and support the Lord and sustain His prophets, but I also know that some of you may be confused regarding the many implications of the Church’s decision to sustain God’s revealed plan for His children.

I also know that some of our youth struggle to understand how to explain the doctrine surrounding family and marriage and still remain kind, gentle, and loving toward those who do not agree. You may be afraid

that you will be labeled as a bigot and as being intolerant.

You may know someone who struggles with same-sex attraction or has made a decision to live in a same-sex relationship. Your love for that person as a son or daughter of God can create an inward struggle as you try to love and support him or her and still stand for the Lord’s eternal plan of happiness.

Let us be clear: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes that “the experience of same-sex attraction is a complex reality for many people. The attraction itself is not a sin, but acting on it is. Even though individuals do not choose to have such attractions, they do choose how to respond to them. With love and understanding, the Church reaches out to all God’s children, including [those with same-sex attraction].”<sup>3</sup>

The Church does not teach or advocate shunning or other unchristianlike actions. We must love and strive to help others to understand that no one should ignore or discount the commandments of God.

***Our Father in Heaven knew the consequences of living in a fallen world and, therefore, provided a Savior, a “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” for His children.***

## HELP AND UNDERSTANDING

The Church offers help and understanding for those battling pornography or wrestling with same-sex attraction. It also offers resources for Church members wanting to deepen their understanding of the divine institution of marriage or to share the gospel online. Consider visiting the following online resources:

- “Overcoming Pornography through the Atonement of Jesus Christ,” [overcomingpornography.org](http://overcomingpornography.org).
- “God Loveth His Children,” [lds.org](http://lds.org).
- “The Divine Institution of Marriage,” [mormonnewsroom.org](http://mormonnewsroom.org).
- “Sharing the Gospel Online,” [lds.org/church/share](http://lds.org/church/share).

## A Witness and a Warning

In “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: “We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.”<sup>4</sup>

I am one who joined in that warning. As one of the watchmen on the tower, I am responsible to “blow the trumpet, and warn the people” (see Ezekiel 33:1–9). I do so because I love you and want you to understand that we must face the Lord and keep His commandments. That is my duty.

The Lord’s warning also comes with an invitation to come unto Him. Our Father in Heaven knew the consequences of living in a fallen world and, therefore, provided a Savior, a “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” for His children (Revelation 13:8).

In the Gospel of John we learn, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Please remember that the gospel is the “good news.”<sup>5</sup> It is a message of hope. If you are in trouble now, get help. The Lord is merciful and forgiving.

The Apostle Paul taught:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . .

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:35, 37–39).

Because of Jesus Christ, peace can replace guilt. Healthy relationships can be restored. Addictions can be overcome.

We need to let our family and our friends know this truth: God is love, “and he inviteth [us] all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him” (2 Nephi 26:33).

We need you to be engaged in the work of salvation before, during, and after your missions.

## Using Technology to Bless Lives

The Lord invites you to get involved and use the social media platforms you prefer to share the gospel and stand as modern sons and daughters of Helaman in the great battles of the last days. He wants you to become the modern stripling warriors who stand strong and united to the truth. He wants you to be courageous and stalwart in the face of the enemy’s advances. We know that in the end the Lord will win the day and Satan will be defeated.

Now, you have the opportunity to use social media wisely. Remember that there is a proper time and place for you to use social media, and sharing your thoughts and testimony of the things you are learning and feeling is one of those times. Through various



***I know some of you worry about being misjudged, ridiculed, and even harassed if you stand up for Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Church. My dear beloved young friends, don't worry about those in the large and spacious building.***

social media platforms, you can have gospel conversations with family, with friends, and, for returned missionaries, even with former investigators and new members. You can stand as witnesses to the truth and defend the kingdom.

### **Defending the Kingdom**

I know some of you worry about being misjudged, ridiculed, and even harassed if you stand up for Heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Church. I understand your concerns.

I served in the British Mission after the end of World War II as a young missionary. At that time Mormons were “a hiss and a byword” (3 Nephi 16:9), and missionaries were laughed at and ridiculed. People even threw things at us, and some would spit at us. However, we did not retreat, but we continued to bear our testimonies and share the gospel. Like Abinadi, we did not shrink; like Paul, we did not shrink; and like the Savior, we did not shrink. At the time we could not have imagined the impact of our labors. We had 14 districts and no stakes. Today, 46 stakes of Zion are found in the British Isles.

My dear beloved young friends, don't worry about those in the large and spacious building. Nephi saw that they would mock and point “their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit.” Don't

be like those who “after they had tasted of the fruit . . . were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost” (1 Nephi 8:27, 28).

You are a great and important generation, and this is a great time to be alive! The future is bright. Say to yourself, “I am helping the Lord as I reach out to share my testimony and to teach the truths God has revealed in these last days.”

May the Lord bless you with wisdom beyond your years, that you will wisely realize that we are in this battle and that we must stand together, young and old. May you never forget, in this journey you are on, that you are precious to the future of preparing the world for that day when Jesus Christ will say, “It is enough,” and will return to rule and reign as the Savior, the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the Redeemer of the world, who I testify lives. ■

*From a CES devotional for young adults, “Be Still and Know That I Am God,” delivered in California, USA, on May 4, 2014.*

#### **NOTES**

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. Letter from the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, dated Jan. 10, 2014 (United States) and Mar. 6, 2014 (outside the United States).
3. “Love One Another: A Discussion on Same-Sex Attraction,” [mormonsandgays.org](http://mormonsandgays.org).
4. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 129.
5. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Gospels.”

# Blessing Our Children

BY IMPROVING OUR MARRIAGES

**By Lori Cluff Schade**

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

One day I was conducting a therapy session with an adolescent who had recently put her own life at risk by engaging in dangerous behavior. I had previously worked with her parents and was trying to assess her perception and understanding of her family's relationships. When I asked about her parents' marriage, she looked me in the eye and without hesitation replied, "My parents don't like each other."

I asked how she knew that, since her parents had repeatedly told me that they never had conflict and had expressed certainty that their children were unaware of their marital distress. It was an assertion I heard regularly from many couples as a marriage and family therapist.

"You can just tell," she answered. She explained that she never stopped worrying about the potential collapse of her family. She tearfully revealed that it was making her physically sick and that she was struggling to sleep and to attend school. "I think about it all the time," she said.

*The quality of your marriage is influencing your children, whether you realize it or not. As you and your spouse work to improve your relationship, your children will be blessed.*





My heart broke as I sat across from her and considered the all-too-familiar scenario. I knew her parents both loved her and wanted to do anything to help her, and yet I worried that they underestimated the degree to which their difficult marriage was hurting her and their other children.

The family proclamation states that “husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.”<sup>1</sup> Sometimes I worry that the “for their children” part crowds out the “for each other” part.

In my profession, I observe members of the Church making enormous sacrifices for their children to help them succeed. These parents foster positive religious practices in their children, such as prayer, scripture study, and church attendance. They encourage educational pursuits and the acquisition of skills that will prepare children for bright futures. However, I fear that some may undervalue the valuable resource that high-quality marriages offer in preparing youth for eternal purposes.

Many couples devote their attention to causes that are worthwhile but that do little to strengthen their marriages. Some diligently adjust their schedules to attend children’s

performances but can’t seem to find time for a date with a spouse. In the whirlwind of child rearing, career building, and fulfilling Church callings, marriages are easily neglected and can sometimes even become colored with conflict, resentment, and betrayal.

As couples become more aware of the powerful influence their marriages have on their children, it becomes clear just how far-reaching the benefits can be when couples actively seek to nourish and strengthen their marriages.

### **Marital Quality Influences Children**

I believe most Latter-day Saint couples want their marriages to succeed, and I’m impressed with the levels of marital commitment most of them display. In general, Latter-day Saints who enter into the everlasting covenant of marriage (see D&C 131:2) take that covenant seriously and will often endure enormous amounts of distress to keep their marriages intact.

However, I sometimes encounter marriages that offer more stability than quality. Some couples mistakenly think

that if they simply refrain from arguing in front of their children, their children will be unaware of the disconnection in the marriage. Children are extremely intuitive and usually have a sense that something isn't going well, which can lead to deep feelings of insecurity. Absence of conflict in a marriage is a cheap substitute for secure connection.

Research on marital quality and children suggests that a high-quality marriage promotes a sense of emotional security, enhancing children's general well-being.<sup>2</sup> In my clinical practice, I am a witness to the reality that children are deeply affected by parents' marital quality. This principle is reflected in the words of President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985): "Marriage . . . has to do not only with immediate happiness, but also with eternal joys. It affects not only the two people involved, but also their families and particularly their children and their children's children down through the many generations."<sup>3</sup> I often explain to people that they aren't just creating their own marriages but in essence their children's and grandchildren's marriages as well.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles additionally stated: "The weakening of the concept that marriages are permanent and precious has far-reaching consequences. Influenced by their own parents' divorce or by popular notions that marriage is a ball and chain that prevents personal fulfillment, some young people shun marriage. Many who marry withhold full commitment, poised to flee at the first serious challenge."<sup>4</sup>

As a marriage clinician, I can affirm that adults whose parents divorced or had low-quality marriages often report insecurity in their own abilities to sustain and endure successful long-term relationships. They are often hypersensitive to any disagreement in the marriage and go to great lengths to avoid conflict, which can sometimes limit marital closeness. It is not uncommon for me to see adults weeping as they recall the emotional pain they experienced in watching the decline and fall of their own parents' marriages. Confidence in marriage is diminished in households with poor marital quality.

## Choosing to Improve Marital Quality

Improving marital quality has much to do with choice. Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles affirmed that "a couple in love can choose a marriage of the highest quality or a lesser type that will not endure."<sup>5</sup>

Popular marriage clinician and researcher William J. Doherty has written about the importance of combining commitment with intentionality, or active efforts to improve the marriage relationship: "Even if we have an unbending commitment to our mates, most of us are blind to how we lose our marriages by slow erosion if we do not keep replenishing the soil. . . . Commitment without intentionality leads to stable but stale marriages."<sup>6</sup> Numerous couples express deep commitment and stability but do little, if anything, to try to actively benefit the marriage. It is disheartening to see valuable marital capital go underutilized.

## Loving Your Spouse

When former Young Women general president Elaine S. Dalton gave a talk suggesting that the most important thing a father could do for his daughter was to "love her mother,"<sup>7</sup> I was pierced with the recognition that it was I and not my husband who needed to hear the talk; he had been far more conscientious about communicating to my children how much he loved me than I had in the reverse. I thought of the multiple times I had walked into a room and my husband had asked one of my children, "Guess what?" to which one would respond, "I know . . . you love Mom," or, "I know . . . Mom's your best friend," or "I know . . . Mom's your dream girl," or any number of similar declarations he had reinforced over the years. I realized that the immense security I felt in my marriage, and that I had taken for granted, was a direct result of my husband's generosity in expressing his love, admiration, and respect for me to our children.

The importance of Sister Dalton's instruction is underscored by the prophet Jacob in the Book of Mormon. As he chastised the Nephites for their wickedness, he pointed out



## THE POTENTIAL OF MARRIAGE

“Marriage brings greater possibilities for happiness than does any other human relationship. Yet some married couples fall short of their full potential. They let their romance become rusty, take each other for granted, allow other interests or clouds of neglect to obscure the vision of what their marriage really could be. Marriages would be happier if nurtured more carefully.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Nurturing Marriage,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 36.

that, in contrast, the Lamanite “husbands love their wives, and their wives love their husbands; and their husbands and their wives love their children” (Jacob 3:7), reinforcing the idea that the Lord considers this of great significance.

*Homefront*, a public service announcement series aired by the Church, has a popular TV spot called “By the Hour,” in which a little boy is trying to get his working father’s attention. At one point the father says, “[If] Daddy doesn’t work, Daddy doesn’t get paid,” to which the mother adds, “People like Daddy’s work so much they pay him for it.”<sup>8</sup> This is one of my favorite ads, because the mother avoids a common and ineffective triangulation in which a parent steps in and supports a child by scolding the withdrawn parent. This typically results in defensiveness in the other parent and insecure feelings in the child. With a positive and strategic statement, the mother in the ad supports both father and child. I am convinced that if more parents altered their conversations to be more like this one, overall marital and family quality would improve.

## Suggestions for Improving Marital Quality

The good news about improving marital quality is that shifts can be potentially immediate by incorporating small changes. Following are some suggestions:

*Articulate and share what you want your marriage to look like in 5, 10, or 20 years.* I’m always surprised by how many couples don’t talk about the kind of marriage they want to have. Having this conversation places the marriage on center stage and

sets couples on a course for active marital improvement and commitment for the future.

*Write down and share a positive memory in the marriage.* Negative emotions tend to be so absorbing that they often crowd out hope. When people think about and share positive memories, they make space for feeling hope again.

*Share a memory of a time that you were able to overcome a challenge together.*

Recalling these circumstances is a way to access unity as a married couple.

*Create small but meaningful rituals for when you part and come together again.*

This seems intuitive, but couples often forget the importance that a predictable kiss, hug, or verbal expression can have in generating positivity in the marriage over time.

*Introduce an element of novelty into your dating.* There is research suggesting that couples who intentionally date by seeking new experiences often achieve improved relationship quality. This requires creativity and effort, not money.

*Tell your children regularly what you admire about your spouse.* This is my favorite. When I have had couples in therapy follow through on this directive, they have reported immediate and positive results.

*Actively seek uplifting marital improvement resources.* This includes books and articles (print or audio), games, lectures, fire-sides, workshops, conferences, and more.

*Ask each other regularly if you are more or less connected as a couple than before and discuss what you can do bridge the gap.* This can be done daily, weekly, or even monthly and provides a way to refocus attention on the marriage.



*Counsel with your bishop to access professional resources if necessary.* For a variety of reasons, people often delay seeking help. I can't count the number of times I wish a couple had sought help years earlier, before so much resentment had poisoned the marriage.

*Pray.* President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, counseled: "Pray for the love which allows you to see the good in your companion. Pray for the love that makes weaknesses and mistakes seem small. Pray for the love to make your companion's joy your own. Pray for the love to want to lessen the load and soften the sorrows of your companion."<sup>9</sup> If this seems too difficult, spouses can pray to *want* to desire those things.

### **Heavenly Father Wants Us to Have Happy Marriages**

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) declared that "whatever Jesus lays his hands upon lives. If Jesus lays

his hands upon a marriage, it lives. If he is allowed to lay his hands on the family, it lives."<sup>10</sup> I have a conviction that Heavenly Father wants us to have excellent marriages of the highest quality and that He will guide us in our efforts to improve those relationships for the benefit of our families. Happy marriages supply profound blessings for us and for our children. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

#### **NOTES**

1. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. See E. Mark Cummings and Patrick T. Davies, *Marital Conflict and Children: An Emotional Security Perspective* (2010).
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 193.
4. Dallin H. Oaks, "Divorce," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 70.
5. Russell M. Nelson, "Celestial Marriage," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 92.
6. William J. Doherty, *Take Back Your Marriage: Sticking Together in a World That Pulls Us Apart*, 2nd ed. (2013), 8, 9.
7. Elaine S. Dalton, "Love Her Mother," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 77.
8. See "By the Hour" (video), *Homefront* TV spots, [lds.org/media-library/video/homefronts](https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/homefronts).
9. Henry B. Eyring, "Our Perfect Example," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 71.
10. Howard W. Hunter, "Reading the Scriptures," *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 65.



**By Elder Bruce C. Hafen**  
Served as a member of the  
Seventy from 1996 to 2010

# THE Temple AND THE NATURAL ORDER OF Marriage



This is the second of two articles by Elder Hafen that help commemorate the 20th anniversary of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” The first article was published in the August 2015 issue of the Liahona.

When a confused culture confuses us about what marriage means, we may give up on ourselves and each other much too soon. But there is hope. The temple’s eternal pattern can help us overcome the modern chaos.

Every time we go to the temple, the ordinances reorient us to the natural order of the universe, including the natural order of marriage. Like the ancient mariner, we look to the heavens to get our bearings—and we do that through the temple. Latter-day Saint scholar Hugh Nibley wrote:

“The temple is built so as to represent the organizing principles of the universe. It is the school where mortals learn about these things. . . .

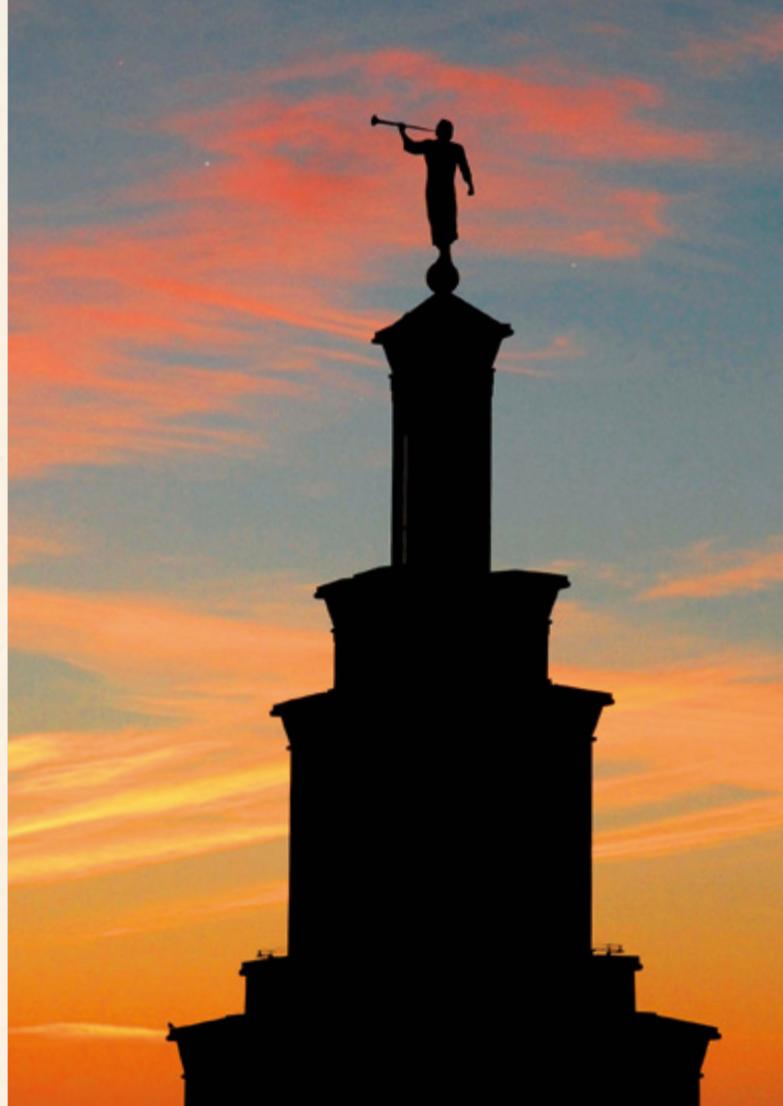
“ . . . The earth temple [is] in the middle of everything, . . . around which all heavenly motions revolve, the knot that ties earth and heaven together.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the temple has the power to etch God’s natural laws of marriage and family life into our hearts.

### The Marriage of Adam and Eve

We first learn the temple’s teachings about marriage in the story of Adam and Eve—the primal story of the temple. A friend once asked me, “If Christ is at the center of the gospel and the temple, why doesn’t the temple

*The temple is the knot that ties heaven and earth together.*



endowment teach the story of Christ’s life? What’s all this about Adam and Eve?”

I have come to feel that the life of Christ is the story of *giving* the Atonement. The story of Adam and Eve is the story of *receiving* the Atonement, amid the sometimes-formidable oppositions of mortality.

Adam and Eve were the first people to receive the Atonement of Jesus Christ. They were also the first parents to know the love a new child brings, the soul-stretching sacrifices of raising a child, and the agony of watching children use their agency unwisely.

Father Lehi gives us the doctrinal context for understanding their experience—and ours. He tells us that if Adam and Eve had not eaten from the tree of knowledge, they “would have remained in the garden of Eden. . . .

“And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. . . .



“Adam fell that men might be [mortal]; and men are [mortal], that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:22–23, 25).

So, paradoxically, sin, misery, and children help create the context for learning what joy means—a process made possible by the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Because of the Atonement, we can learn from our experiences without being condemned by them. And receiving the Atonement, as Adam and Eve did, is not just a doctrine about erasing black marks; it is the core doctrine that allows human development. Thus, Christ’s sacrifice didn’t just return them to an Eden of innocence. That would be a story with no plot and no character growth. Rather, they left the garden holding on to each other and moving forward, together, into the world in which we now live.

The temple’s primal story is quite consciously the story of a married couple who help one another face continuous mortal opposition. For only in confronting that sometimes-miserable opposition could they learn to comprehend true joy.

Let us consider two implications from the Adam and Eve story about our understanding of marriage. First is the

Restoration’s positive view about the Fall. We know that Adam and Eve chose wisely in the garden because only mortality could provide the experience needed to fulfill God’s plan for them—and for us. In contrast, traditional Christianity teaches that Eve’s choice was a tragic mistake, bringing down the wrath of God on all mankind. Some Christian churches still teach that because women are the daughters of foolish Eve, wives should be *dependent* on their husbands.

Reacting strongly against this idea, most people today would say that a wife should be *independent* of her husband. And, in fairness, they would add, a husband should also be independent of his wife. But when both spouses are independent of each other, they accept only today’s “nonbinding commitments,” and people leave their marriage when the fun stops—or when the trouble starts.

Which is correct: dependence or independence? Neither one. The restored gospel—unlike the rest of Christianity—teaches that Eve and Adam’s choice in the garden was not a mistake or an accident; rather, it was a deliberate, even glorious, part of the plan of salvation. Thus the Restoration sees Eve—and all women—as noble beings who are the complete equals of men.

So, Eve is not dependent on Adam; nor is she independent from him. Rather, Eve and Adam are *interdependent* with each other. They are “equal partners” who “help one another” in everything they do.<sup>2</sup>

### Bringing a Broken Heart to the Altar

Second, when Adam and Eve left the garden, the Lord directed them to build an altar and offer animal sacrifices. After many days an angel asked Adam why he offered sacrifices. He answered, “I know not, save

***Eve and Adam are interdependent,  
equal partners who help one  
another in everything  
they do.***

the Lord commanded me.” Then the angel told him, “This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten” (Moses 5:6–7).

Thus, the animals Adam and Eve sacrificed were symbols that pointed them toward the Father’s future redemptive sacrifice of His Son. The angel then taught them that Christ’s sacrifice and the plan of redemption would give meaning and purpose to all of their opposition—indeed, to all of their mortal experience.

Some of us go to the temple today the way Adam and Eve first offered sacrifices—simply because we are commanded, without knowing why. Simple obedience is certainly better than not performing the ordinances at all. But the Lord, who sent the angel, must have wanted them to know why—and I believe He wants *us* to know why.

Are today’s temple ordinances also “a similitude . . . of the Only Begotten”? Think of how the temple’s altars, like the altar of Adam and Eve, are altars of prayer, sacrifice, and covenants. Think of the dimensions of sacrifice in all the covenants of the endowment.

Since the time that Christ completed His atoning mission, we no longer offer animal sacrifices, but we do covenant to sacrifice. In what way? Christ taught the Nephites, “Ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:20; see also 2 Nephi 2:7).

Animal sacrifices symbolized the Father’s sacrifice of the Son, but the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit symbolizes the Son’s sacrifice of Himself. Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote that “Jesus died of a broken heart.”<sup>3</sup> In similitude, we now offer ourselves—our own broken hearts—as a personal sacrifice.<sup>4</sup> As Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “Real, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal *in us* upon the altar and letting it be consumed!”<sup>5</sup>

While serving recently as president of the St. George Utah Temple, I was about to seal a young couple. As I invited them to the altar and the groom took his bride by the hand, I realized that they were about to place upon



that altar of sacrifice their own broken hearts and contrite spirits—a selfless offering of themselves to each other and to God in emulation of Christ’s sacrifice for them. And for what purpose? So that through a lifetime of sacrificing for each other—that is, trying to live as He did—they might become ever more as He is.

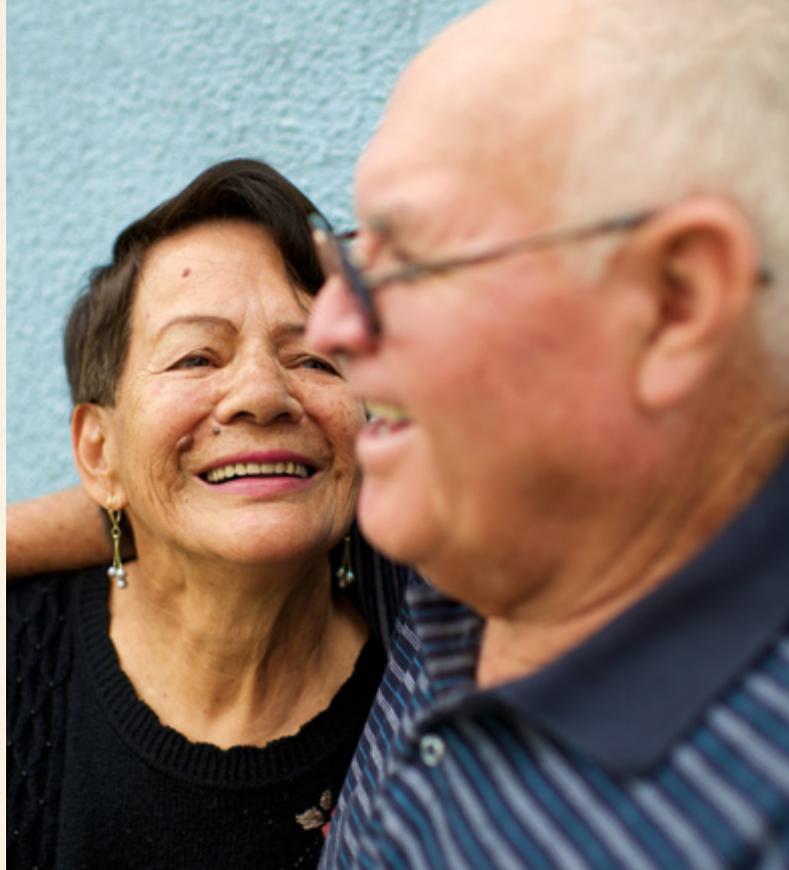
By living that way every day, they would each come closer to God, which would also bring them closer to each other. Thus, living the covenants of the sealing ordinance would sanctify not only their marriage but also their hearts and their very lives.

This understanding of marriage differs starkly and powerfully from the prevailing view of marriage today. In His parable of the good shepherd, Jesus described a hireling—someone who is paid to care for the sheep. When the wolf comes, He said, the hireling “leaveth the sheep, and fleeth.” Why does the hireling run away? Because “his own the sheep are not,” said Jesus. By contrast, He said of Himself, “I am the good shepherd. . . . I lay down my life for the sheep.” (See John 10:11–15.)

Many people today think of marriage as an informal arrangement between two hirelings. When a hireling feels threatened by some wolf of trouble, he or she simply flees. Why should a mere hireling risk comfort or convenience, let alone life?

But when we offer in our marriage a broken heart and a contrite spirit in similitude of the Good Shepherd, we promise to give our lives for the sheep of our covenant, a day or even an hour at a time. This process invites us to take selflessly upon ourselves both the afflictions and the joys of our companion and children, emulating in our own limited way how the Savior takes upon Himself our afflictions.

“Be you afflicted in all his afflictions” (D&C 30:6), said the Lord to Peter Whitmer about his missionary companion Oliver Cowdery. Isaiah echoed that phrase in describing Christ and those He redeems: “In all their affliction he was afflicted, . . . and he . . . carried them all the days of old” (Isaiah 63:9; see also D&C 133:53).



A temple worker whose wife passed away after she had suffered a debilitating illness for several years told me, “I thought I knew what love was—we’d had over 50 blessed years together. But only in trying to care for her in these last few years did I discover what love really is.”

By sharing in his wife’s afflictions, this man discovered deep wellsprings of compassion in his heart that a hireling will never know. The accumulation of such discoveries produces the sanctifying process of becoming like the Good Shepherd—by living and giving as He does. Not incidentally, that kind of living breathes irreplaceable strength into the social interests of our culture.

### **Marriage and Authentic Joy**

A friend asked recently, “How close to perfection must we live to receive the exalted promises of a temple sealing?” Husbands and wives know each other so well, especially those who seek for eternal blessings, that on some days they can honestly wonder if they are living close enough to perfection—or if their spouse is.

I like the answer given in Moroni’s farewell words: “If ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all *your* might, mind and strength, *then* is his grace sufficient for you, that . . . ye may be perfect[ed] in Christ” (Moroni 10:32; emphasis added). One way to rid

ourselves of *ungodliness* is to stay close to the temple, because in its ordinances “the power of *godliness* is manifest” (D&C 84:20; emphasis added). Further, loving “God with all [our] might” means loving to the extent of our own unique personal capacity, not to the extent of some abstract and unreachable scale of perfection.

As we deny ourselves of ungodliness and honestly love God as fully as we are able, Christ’s perfecting grace can complete the process of making us whole. A First Presidency letter written in 1902 suggests what Christ’s total sacrifice combined with our own total sacrifice will look like: “After reaching the perfected state of life people will have no other desire than to live in harmony with [righteousness], including that which united them as husband and wife. . . . Those who attain to the first or celestial resurrection must necessarily be pure and holy, and they will be perfect in body as well. . . . Every man and woman that reaches this unspeakable condition of life will be as beautiful as the angels that surround the throne of God; . . . for the weaknesses of the flesh will then have been overcome and forgotten; and both [will] be in harmony with the law that united them.”<sup>6</sup>

A woman I know was married about 50 years ago in the temple. After she and her husband had had several children, his turbulent life led to their divorce and to his excommunication from the Church. Then she gave up her own Church membership and chose some thorny paths. Later her former husband passed away. I met her when her daughter brought her to my office to explore whether the mother could ever return to the temple.

After a peaceful conversation about how we can learn from experience without being condemned by it, we discussed the processes of repentance, rebaptism, and the restoration of temple blessings. Then I told her that the restoration ordinance would also restore her temple sealing. Was she ready for that?

The daughter spoke first. “I have bipolar disorder,” she said. “My son is bipolar. We know far more about that disorder than we used to, and we take medications that help. Looking back, I believe my father was bipolar, and that probably influenced many of the hard things in our family’s life. I don’t judge him now.”

The mother answered softly, “If I really can return to the temple someday, I will be ready for my sealing to be restored.”

As I watched them walk down the hall, I realized that the temple and Elijah’s sealing power are sources of reconciliation, turning not only the hearts of children and parents toward one another but also turning the hearts of wives and husbands toward one another. I later received a message that the mother was being rebaptized.

I bear witness that the order of marriage God gave to Adam and Eve is worth whatever it takes—to find it, to build it, and to keep it in our lives. I also testify that husbands and wives who try to live like the Good Shepherd will discover, and will give to each other, a more abundant life of authentic joy. ■

*From an address, “Marriage, Family Law, and the Temple,” delivered at the J. Reuben Clark Law Society Annual Fireside in Salt Lake City on Jan. 31, 2014.*

#### NOTES

1. Hugh Nibley, *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others, and the Temple*, in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*, 19 vols. (2008), 17:312, 313; see also *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (1992), “Meanings and Functions of Temples,” 4:1458–59.
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
3. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 669.
4. “And there were gathered together . . . an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality; And who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer’s name” (D&C 138:12–13).
5. Neal A. Maxwell, “Deny Yourselves of All Ungodliness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 68; emphasis added.
6. Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund letter to Christine Eggleston, Jan. 28, 1902, LDS Church History Library.



***The temple’s eternal pattern can help us overcome modern chaos.***



# Church Handbooks

## THE WRITTEN ORDER OF THINGS

*As we follow the handbooks and use the collective wisdom they offer, the Lord will help us and those we serve to become “complete in him.”*

As a returned missionary, busy with a young family and my own company, I was called to be the president of a good-sized branch with many faithful and mature members. Did I feel prepared, trained, and educated to start serving? No! I had good counselors with whom I could discuss issues. But was their help enough? No!

The Lord expects “every man [to] learn his duty” (D&C 107:99), and He expects us to “treasure up in [our] minds . . . the words of [God]” (D&C 84:85). Then He expects us to trust the inspiration of the Holy Ghost—that special gift given to all members with the promise of continued guidance and revelation.

Thinking back on that calling and on other callings, I realize that in addition to the Holy Ghost and the scriptures, what really helped me were the Church handbooks! They were a treasure of information—as a guide to my initial learning and as a valuable reference along the way.

### Why Do We Need the Church Handbooks?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “While [the] handbooks do not have the same standing as the scriptures, they do represent the most current interpretations and procedural directions of the Church’s highest authorities.”<sup>1</sup> Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles added that those authorities—the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—are men of “seasoned maturity, experience, and extensive preparation.”<sup>2</sup>

**Thinking back on my calling as a branch president, I realize that in addition to the Holy Ghost and the scriptures, what really helped me were the Church handbooks!**



By Elder  
Per G. Malm  
Of the Seventy



## SAFETY IN HANDBOOKS

“Whether you’ve been a lifelong member of the Church or are a relatively new member, consult the handbook when you are uncertain about a policy or procedure. You may think you know how to handle the situation when, in fact, you may be on the wrong track. There is safety in the handbooks.”

**President Thomas S. Monson, “Opening Remarks,” 2010 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting.**

Thus, the Church handbooks reflect the collective wisdom—derived from tested, proven experiences—of prophets and apostles. That wisdom teaches us the best way to achieve good results in carrying out the mission of the Church over time. The Lord has counseled, “Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom” (D&C 88:118; 109:7). Certainly, the wisdom in the handbooks qualifies them as “best books.”

### The Handbooks Help Us Maintain Policies, Procedures, and Programs

President Thomas S. Monson has declared that without the handbooks, “it would be nearly impossible to maintain the integrity of the policies, procedures, and programs of the Church.” He added, “Over the years, we’ve had to correct many attempts by well-meaning leaders to change some of the programs of the Church.”

President Monson said that when leaders do not correctly follow procedures, “the First

Presidency must ratify the action or have it redone.” In other words, if we ignore the handbooks, we may end up adding to the workload of the First Presidency.

“In almost all cases,” he said, “if the leaders would only read, understand, and follow the handbook, such problems would not occur. . . . There is safety in the handbooks.”<sup>3</sup>

President Monson added that whatever our leadership calling is, the handbooks contain a treasure of information and guidance that help us minister effectively, understand the proper functioning of the Church, learn and fulfill our duties (see D&C 107:99), and prepare for future leadership positions.

### The Handbooks Teach What Is Essential

The handbooks teach that while “parents have the vital responsibility to help their children prepare to return to Heavenly Father,” the Savior’s “Church provides the organization and means for teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all of God’s children.” The handbooks also teach that the Church “provides the priesthood authority to administer the ordinances of salvation and exaltation to all who are worthy and willing to accept them.”<sup>4</sup>

The doctrinal framework for administering the Church is found in the first three chapters of *Handbook 2: Administering the Church*:

1. Families and the Church in God’s Plan
2. Priesthood Principles
3. Leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ

We should study these three chapters carefully. They remind us that the Church “was organized by God to assist in His work to bring to pass the salvation and exaltation of His children.”<sup>5</sup> It does this through activities,

opportunities, and programs for service, blessing, and personal growth that focus on divinely appointed responsibilities which support and strengthen individuals and families.

These responsibilities “include helping members live the gospel of Jesus Christ, gathering Israel through missionary work, caring for the poor and needy, and enabling salvation for the dead by building temples and performing vicarious ordinances.”<sup>6</sup>

As we understand this doctrinal framework, the purpose and role of all callings in the Church becomes clear: “Priesthood and auxiliary leaders and teachers strive to help others become true followers of Jesus Christ.” Further, “Church organizations and programs exist to bless individuals and families and are not ends in themselves.”<sup>7</sup>

The handbooks are doctrinally based in the scriptures, including the Savior’s admonition to Peter: “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32).

### The Handbooks Facilitate Revelation

While helping a less-active member return to the Church, the member’s bishop reviewed the chapter on Church discipline in *Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops*. Then, after speaking with his stake presidency, the bishop decided to hold a disciplinary council.

“We met beforehand as a bishopric and reviewed the handbook to remind ourselves of proper procedures and to identify points relevant to the case at hand,” the bishop said. “We felt strongly the Spirit of the Lord assisting us as we conversed with the member.”

Later, after the bishopric had prayed for the Lord’s help, one of the counselors felt

**The handbooks are doctrinally based in the scriptures, including the Savior’s admonition to Peter: “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32).**

impressed that they should again read aloud the relevant portions of *Handbook 1*. When they had finished, the bishop asked each counselor what he recommended.

“Bishop, you might be surprised, but this is what I feel,” said the first counselor in making his recommendation. The second counselor felt the same, as did the bishop.

“Reading the handbook to each other allowed the Spirit to enlighten our minds,” the bishop recalled. “The principles became clearer as to how they related to this situation, and each of us was guided to the same answer. We were well prepared to provide appropriate counsel to help our dear brother come back to Christ.”

As this bishopric discovered, the instructions found in the Church handbooks “can facilitate revelation *if they are used to provide an understanding of principles, policies, and procedures to apply while seeking the guidance of the Spirit.*”<sup>8</sup>



As we follow the handbooks and use the collective wisdom they offer, the Lord will help us and those we serve to become “complete in him” (Colossians 2:10).

### The Handbooks Help Us Bless Those We Serve

As we read, understand, and follow the handbooks, they become a blessing to those we serve.<sup>9</sup> A policy change outlined in *Handbook 2*, for example, helped a bishop bless and strengthen one father who thought he would be unable to ordain his 12-year-old son to the Aaronic Priesthood.

Chapter 20 states, “Bishops and stake presidents have discretion to allow priesthood holders who are not fully temple worthy to perform or participate in some ordinances and blessings,” including baptisms and Aaronic Priesthood ordinations.<sup>10</sup>

Without a temple recommend, this father thought he would be unable to ordain his son. But his bishop, “as guided by the Spirit,”<sup>11</sup> granted permission following an interview.

“That experience became a turning point in his life,” his current bishop noted. “It was part of the process of his becoming temple worthy, of being sealed with his wife in the temple, and of having their children sealed to them.”

### Flexibility and Adaptation—within Proper Boundaries

Maintaining uniformity in Church principles, policies, and procedures “will bring the influence of the Holy Ghost into the

lives of leaders and members,” said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>12</sup> But in a worldwide Church where members face a variety of political, social, and economic conditions, some branches and wards may lack sufficient membership, leadership, and resources to carry out the full program of the Church. Other units may face issues related to security, transportation, communication, and family economic circumstances.

Chapter 17 in *Handbook 2* clarifies “where uniformity is required” as well as the “circumstances that may permit local adaptation” in the staffing and programs of auxiliaries and in the format and frequency of leadership meetings and activities. Adaptation should be done, of course, only after leaders seek guidance from the Holy Ghost.<sup>13</sup>



As they do so, “all wards and branches, regardless of their size or circumstances, can experience the same abundance of the Spirit of the Lord.”<sup>14</sup>

### The Written Order of Things

The handbooks provide us with what could be called a “written order of things.”

*Handbook 1*, available to bishops and stake presidents, outlines “the general responsibilities of stake presidents and bishops” and provides “detailed information about policies and procedures,”<sup>15</sup> ranging from temples, marriage, and missionary service to welfare, Church discipline, and finances.

*Handbook 2*, available (including on LDS.org) to all Church leaders, reduces the complexity of Church programs while allowing, as noted above, for flexibility and some local adaptation. It “is a guide for members of ward and stake councils”<sup>16</sup> and their auxiliaries in administering the Church and its work of salvation.

The collective wisdom found in the handbooks is organized in such a way that it can be easily accessed and used to create a true service culture that should exist in all wards and stakes of the Savior’s Church. But to access that wisdom, we must study the handbooks, learn from them, internalize their principles, and put those principles into practice! The result will be light, understanding, and the long-term blessing of discovering the best way to serve our brothers and sisters.

Regarding our service in the Church, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has observed: “As we extend our hands and hearts toward others in Christlike love, something wonderful happens to us. Our own spirits become healed, more refined, and stronger. We become happier, more peaceful, and more receptive to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>17</sup>

### The Handbooks Help Us See the Complete Picture

During general conference in April 2015, Elder Rafael E. Pino of the Seventy related the story of how one of his sons

became frustrated while putting together a jigsaw puzzle. “He finally learned to do the puzzle,” Elder Pino recalled, “when he understood that each small piece had its place in the final picture.”<sup>18</sup>

In whatever capacity we serve in the Church, the handbooks, like the image on the box of a jigsaw puzzle, give us a vision—the final picture. That picture will guide us and give us a better understanding of what the Lord wants us to accomplish in His service. As we follow the handbooks and use the collective wisdom they offer, the Lord will help us and those we serve to become “complete in him” (Colossians 2:10).

The handbooks will remain an integral part of administering the Church and blessing its members and leaders regardless of future changes in format and content. As President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has declared, the handbooks “will become a treasure to you as you use [them] to help you lead others to choose the way of eternal life. That is [their] purpose.”<sup>19</sup> ■

#### NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Overview of the New Handbooks,” *2010 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, 2010, lds.org/broadcasts/archive/worldwide-leadership-training/2010/11.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Sustaining the Prophets,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 75.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Opening Remarks,” *2010 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*.
4. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 1.1.5.
5. *Handbook 2*, 2.2.
6. *Handbook 2*, 2.2.
7. *Handbook 2*, 1.2.2, 1.4.
8. *Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops*, v; *Handbook 2*, v; emphasis added.
9. See Thomas S. Monson, “Opening Remarks,” *2010 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*.
10. *Handbook 2*, 20.1.2.
11. *Handbook 2*, 20.1.2.
12. Quentin L. Cook, “Selected Principles from the New Handbooks,” *2010 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*.
13. See *Handbook 2*, 17.1, 17.2.
14. *Handbook 2*, 17.
15. *Handbook 1*, v.
16. *Handbook 2*, v.
17. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “You Are My Hands,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2010, 75.
18. See Rafael E. Pino, “The Eternal Perspective of the Gospel,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 117–18.
19. Henry B. Eyring, “First Presidency Message: Handbooks, Revelations, and Treasures,” *2011 Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting* (2011), lds.org/broadcasts/article/print/worldwide-leadership-training/2011/02/first-presidency-message-handbooks-revelations-and-treasures.

# NEVER ALONE

## By Norman C. Hill

President, Ghana Accra West Mission (2013 to present)  
and Sierra Leone Freetown Mission (2014 to 2015)

**H**ow would the Church survive if your country, still recovering from civil war, became infected with a deadly virus and then was isolated from other nations because of that disease? What would you do if missionaries, other than local missionaries, were withdrawn, not just once but repeatedly?

If you lived in the West African nation of Sierra Leone, you would rely on the Lord and watch the Church flourish anyway. You would see local leaders magnifying their callings. You would see members strengthening each other, missionary work continuing, and faith overcoming fear.

## Steady Growth

Despite civil war from 1991 to 2002, Sierra Leone has seen steady growth in Church membership. Full-time missionaries first arrived in this sub-Saharan country in May 1988. Two years later a district was created. At various times in the 1990s, missionaries were withdrawn because of the war, but local members kept the Church going and growing. In 2007 the Sierra Leone Freetown Mission, which included Liberia, was created. Then in December 2012, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles organized a stake in Sierra Leone's capital city, Freetown. It was the 3,000th stake of the Church.

## Battling Ebola

Then came Ebola. The outbreak of hemorrhagic fever caused by the virus originated in Guinea in March 2014. It entered Sierra Leone in May and spread rapidly. Full-time missionaries were reassigned, and the mission president in Ghana was asked to also serve as the mission president of Sierra Leone—while remaining in Accra.

“When the missionaries were gone, we worried about being left to find our own way,” said Kenema District president Jonathan Cobinah. “However, that same week we received a letter from the Africa West Area Presidency reassuring us that would not be the case.” From that time forward, the 13,000 members in Sierra Leone received area support, and as international organizations geared up to provide relief, Church Welfare Services and emergency response worked with implementing partners in various international organizations to meet community needs. (See sidebar.)

“Within a few days, we had a videoconference with the newly assigned mission president,” President Cobinah said. “He told us Church meetings and activities would require caution in order to avoid contracting the disease, but otherwise we would continue just as we had in the past.”

To prevent the further spread of the disease, in September 2014 the president of Sierra Leone announced a nationwide lockdown to begin in just a few days. During the lockdown, all citizens would be required to remain

# IN SIERRA LEONE

*Despite disease, isolation, and the lingering aftermath of war, Latter-day Saints in this African nation know that Heavenly Father remembers them.*



Latter-day Saints remained faithful in studying and sharing the gospel, conducting meetings at home when necessary to avoid spreading Ebola. Right: Cleaning supplies, provided in plastic buckets, helped fight the spread of the deadly virus.





## WORKING TOGETHER

**B**eyond giving timely help to its members, the Church reached out to battle Ebola in many communities where there were no Latter-day Saints. Through its humanitarian organization, the Church partnered with various groups to provide relief

through seven community projects. Thanks to these cooperative efforts, communities hit hard by Ebola in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Mali received food, bedding, hygiene supplies and instruction, medical and sanitation supplies, and protective clothing for Ebola workers.

indoors. Most people would have to make do with whatever food they had in their homes.

### Just in Time

Fortunately, just weeks before the lockdown was announced, the Africa West Area had begun working with Church headquarters to authorize delivery of cleaning supplies for all 7,800 Latter-day Saint families in Sierra Leone and to provide a 110-pound (50 kg) bag of rice and several liters of cooking oil to more than 2,500 LDS families on an as-needed basis. Unaware of the impending lockdown, local Church leaders still raced to deliver these supplies.

“It is hard to explain the urgency that we felt at the time,” recalled Sahr Doe, a special assistant to the mission president. “The weekend when distribution of the supplies was approved, we learned that a particular area might be quarantined. That would make it very difficult to deliver supplies, so we worked around the clock to load trucks and get them on their way to branches throughout the country. In one city, supplies arrived only hours before access restrictions were imposed. Throughout the country, we were able to deliver supplies just prior to the lockdown. It was a blessing to all of us and a modern-day miracle.”

The Ebola outbreak also brought widespread unemployment. “I was almost without hope,” said Sister Sai Kamaia of the Allentown Branch, a mother of three children who makes her living trading small goods. “All of my money was gone in September, even before the lockdown. People were afraid to trade. I did not know what I was going to do.” Like others, she shed tears of joy when she received Church supplies.

“As a widow and the head of our family, I feel so good that the Church was able to help us,” said Sister Mary Margay of the Kissy Second Branch. “We were wondering where to stay during lockdown. We felt overjoyed that we could remain at home with food to eat.”

Like Church members everywhere, the Saints in Sierra Leone strive to be self-reliant. But in this unanticipated period of need, supplies arrived just in time for many who had nowhere else to turn. “These timely interventions let the Saints here know they will never be left alone,” said Mariatu Browne, the Church’s public affairs director for Sierra Leone. During the quarantine, Latter-day Saints also shared their supplies with their neighbors, blessing many who otherwise would have had little or nothing.

### In the Lord’s Hands

Unfortunately, avoiding hunger was not the only concern. Some Latter-day Saints contracted the disease. Simon Kamara of the Teko Road Branch, who had been a member of the Church for only a year, saw his wife and son pass away from Ebola. Then he too became infected.

“My life is in the Lord’s hands,” he said while in a treatment center. “Like any father, I want the best for my children. But now that I have found the gospel and understand the plan of salvation, I have great hope for myself and my family no matter what happens.” Despite initial signs of recovery, Brother Kamara passed away. His surviving children miss their parents very much, although they are now being cared for by members and friends and are doing fine.



**Left: Rice, oil, and cleaning supplies arrived just in time for many who had nowhere else to turn. During the quarantine Latter-day Saints shared their supplies with neighbors, blessing many who otherwise would have had little or nothing. Above: Baptisms in the Naije Town Branch.**

### A Personal Miracle

Sister Haju Julloh of the Waterloo Branch is a nurse. Caring for the sick, she was exposed daily to the virus. As patient loads increased, protective gowns at the hospital where she worked were sometimes not thoroughly washed and cleaned. Shortly after she joined the Church in August 2014, Sister Julloh tested positive for Ebola and was quarantined in her home.

“I could not attend church, so branch members called and encouraged me,” she said. “Confined to my room, I decided to concentrate on studying the Book of Mormon. I read about many spiritual experiences, including miracles that happened to ordinary people like me. I wanted a miracle but did not know if I should even ask. I kept reading and talking to friends on the phone about the things I was reading. After some weeks at home, I was retested for the virus and the test results came back negative. I had to remain quarantined for another week and was then retested. Again, the results were negative. So I was allowed to leave my house and attend church as well as return to work. That was a miracle to me.”

### Hastening the Work

During stressful times, should missionary work go on? The Saints in Sierra Leone have a tradition. They continue to share the gospel no matter what.

“Rather than bemoaning our lot or remaining stagnant, we were encouraged to rally the Saints by calling branch missionaries to replace the full-time missionaries,” explained President Bai Seasy of the Kossoh Town District. “We had no time to feel sorry for ourselves; we had the work of salvation to do. We paired returned

missionaries with prospective missionaries and organized them into zones.”

“Each branch mission leader was authorized to have a phone card for proselyting purposes. They must account for its usage, but it has helped the branch missionaries remain in contact with new investigators and recent converts alike, and staying in touch has made a huge difference,” said Brian Robbin-Taylor, another special assistant to the mission president.

“We have ‘phone lessons’ with investigators and new converts,” he continued. “That supplements weekly missionary lessons held at church. We have adapted to the needs of members and investigators who otherwise might have no contact, due either to quarantine restrictions or apprehensions about getting the disease.”

Today convert baptisms in Sierra Leone are only slightly lower than when full-time missionaries were there, many less-active members have returned to activity, and growth of the Church is steady.

### Great Reason to Hope

During the outbreak, unemployment exceeded 60 percent. Crops could not be delivered to market because of quarantine restrictions. Many loved ones perished. No doubt there are many more challenges ahead in Sierra Leone.

However, despite such challenges, the Saints are faithful and the Church is thriving. As Mariatu Browne said, “We know that Heavenly Father is mindful of us. And when the Lord is with you, the Church sustains you, and you work together side by side, there is great reason for hope. As Saints in Sierra Leone, we are never alone.” ■

## STRANDED IN LIMON

During a trip to see our extended family one summer, our 12-year-old, high-mileage minivan died and coasted to a stop. We were stuck. Fortunately, we were only five miles (8 km) from the small town of Limon, Colorado, USA.

The local mechanic gave us bad news. Our transmission needed to be replaced, and we would need to wait at least five days for parts. We were short on cash but did have our tent and some camping gear, so we opted to stay in the local campground.

Hundreds of miles from family and friends, we contemplated how we might get to a store to buy the groceries we'd need to survive. We decided to look up the local branch president in hopes of finding transportation. We

called President Dawson, and within half an hour we received two calls from members of the small branch's Relief Society. We happily discovered that one family lived within a block of the campground; they came to meet us within a few hours of our call.

Over the next week, the love and care we received from that small branch on the windy plains of Colorado overwhelmed us. The family who lived close by invited us to their home for dinner that first day, and we enjoyed a great evening of conversation with the parents while our children played with their daughter. The next morning we hitched a ride with another member to go shopping for food and supplies for our stay.

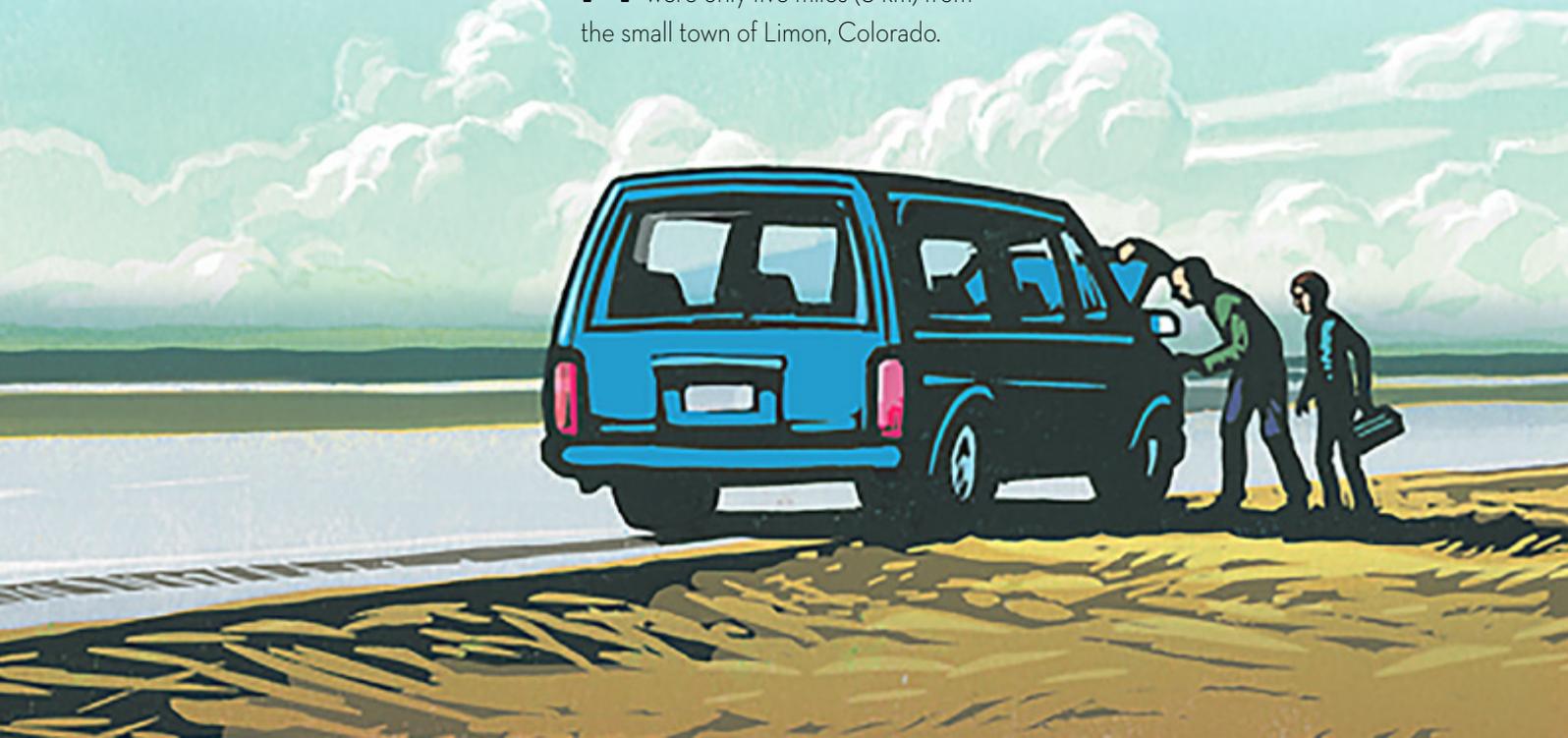
The generosity of branch members

continued beyond our original request. They picked us up for church on Sunday. They helped us make memories at the town's historic train museum. Our children took shelter in their homes during a passing hailstorm. One of the members even employed my husband for a few days to help us pay for car repairs.

Every evening, members of the small branch fed us and entertained our children in their homes. Toward the end of our stay, another family took us to their ranch, where our children learned to ride horses.

When we left Limon a week later, we left with prayers of thanks for a new group of dear friends who took us in and made us feel at home in Limon. ■  
Christina Wadley, Missouri, USA

We were stuck. Fortunately, we were only five miles (8 km) from the small town of Limon, Colorado.



## WHAT I NEEDED TO LEARN

After my first year of university studies, I began a project to better understand the Bible. I decided to study the teachings of a few religious groups I had heard were not Christian and then compare them to the teachings of the Bible.

As the next semester began, I started studying The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. One of my classes required laboratory work with a partner, and I prayed for someone with whom I could learn what I needed to learn.

I chose a lab bench, and soon a student approached and asked if I had a partner. He introduced himself as Lincoln. I didn't remember seeing him at school the year before and asked if he had transferred.

"Actually," he said, "I just returned from serving as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

I told Lincoln I had begun studying his church and had some questions. He happily agreed to answer them.

During the next three months, I asked questions about the Book of Mormon, temples, latter-day prophets, and modern revelation. Although I learned a great deal during this time, I still thought that Mormons weren't Christians.

One weekend our school lost a big game. Some teachers in the lab vigorously discussed the loss, repeatedly using the Lord's name in vain. Lincoln approached the teachers and asked them if they would please stop speaking about Jesus Christ that way.

"Does that really bother you?" they asked with some doubt.

"Yes," Lincoln replied. "Jesus Christ is my best friend."

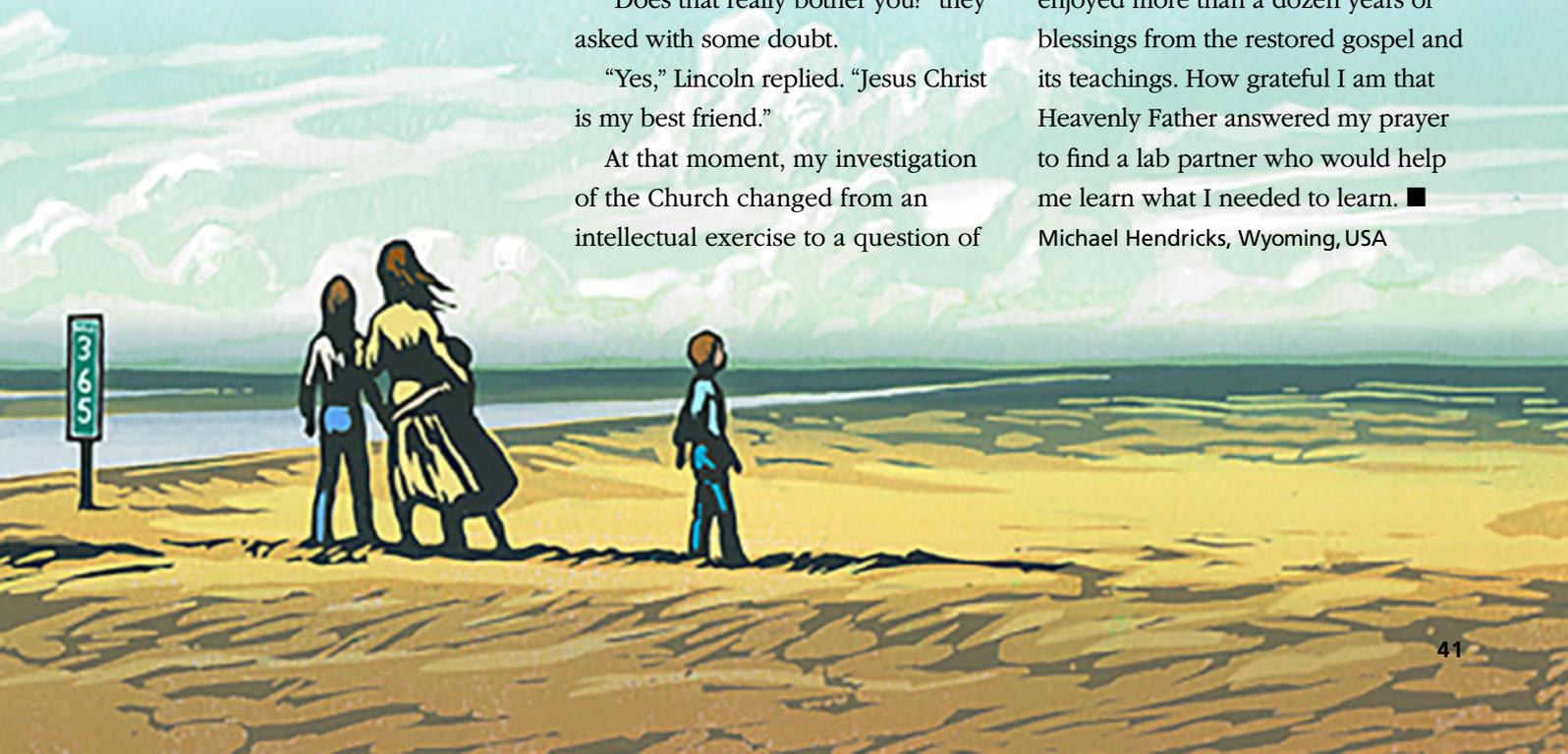
At that moment, my investigation of the Church changed from an intellectual exercise to a question of

faith. If this religion produced men like this, it was Christian in every way that mattered.

As Lincoln and I left that night, I asked if I could attend church with him sometime. After going to church, I asked him if I could have a copy of the Book of Mormon and if I could meet with the missionaries.

For two years I investigated the Church and spent time with its members. I saw a consistent pattern of sincere men and women diligently striving to be disciples of the Master. On numerous occasions the Holy Ghost confirmed to me that Jesus Christ, whom I had always tried my best to serve, really had restored His Church in our day. It was overseen by prophets and apostles and led directly by Him.

I was baptized and have now enjoyed more than a dozen years of blessings from the restored gospel and its teachings. How grateful I am that Heavenly Father answered my prayer to find a lab partner who would help me learn what I needed to learn. ■  
Michael Hendricks, Wyoming, USA





I hadn't kept the Sabbath day holy that Easter Sunday, and I tripped over a clump of weeds to remind me that I hadn't.

## SUNDAY SOWING

A few years ago, just before Easter weekend, it rained all week long. I had been in Benin, West Africa, but was coming home to spend Easter in Togo. It didn't rain on Saturday, the day I arrived, but that night it began raining again.

I knew that church started at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, but because it had been raining so much and I'd only just arrived, I decided that was too early for me.

I thought to myself, "I'll go a little bit late to church and get there at 10:00 a.m." Then I went to see my brother. "Instead of going to church at 9:00," I told him, "let's go over to that patch of land on the side of my house."

When we arrived, we noticed that the

ground was nice and wet from all the rain. I thought, "It's Sunday, and we're waiting until 10:00 to go to church. Why not plant some beans before we go?"

So my brother and I planted a little patch of land that was about 65 square feet (6 m<sup>2</sup>). Then we went to church, an hour late. The next day we went to a nearby town where I had another plot of land. There we planted corn and more beans.

Two months later when I returned home again, I went to check that little patch of land next to my house. It was empty except for a little clump of weeds that I tripped over as I walked into the field. "Oh, yeah," I said to myself, "we planted beans here on Easter Sunday!"

Out of all the seeds we sowed, the only thing that grew was a clump of weeds. The beans and corn we planted in the other field the Monday after Easter, however, grew just fine. Since that time everything we have planted in the patch of land next to my house has grown normally.

I hadn't kept the Sabbath day holy that Easter Sunday, and I tripped over a clump of weeds to remind me that I hadn't. Since then, I have remembered that I can't just do whatever I feel like doing on the Lord's day. Instead, I always remember to keep the Sabbath day holy. ■

Desire Koami Gbedjangni, Togo,  
West Africa

# I STARTED PRAYING FOR RUTH

After experiencing some unexpected financial obligations as a single woman, I knew I needed to find a second job. Soon afterward, Marty, a sister in my ward, approached me and asked for my help. She and her husband were going on a mission, so she had to give up her job. She explained that every Saturday she helped an elderly woman, Ruth, who lived in an assisted-living complex. Marty offered me her job and told me that Ruth would pay me for my work.

The following Monday, Marty and Ruth explained my tasks, and I began my work a few days later. I started by

gathering Ruth's laundry and carrying it upstairs to the laundry room. Soon after I began, Ruth rushed in and shouted at me. She told me that I was never to wash her clothes without first asking.

I was doing only what she and Marty had asked me to do. Frustrated and hurt, I fought back the tears. I told myself that I didn't need any more stress or problems in my life. I would have walked out that very moment had I not promised Marty that I would care for Ruth while she was away.

Week after week Ruth shouted angrily at me over everything I did. It seemed that I could never please

her no matter how hard I tried.

I started praying for strength to endure Ruth and her harsh words, but nothing changed. I continued to resent having to help her.

Then one day I changed my prayers. I stopped praying for myself and started praying for Ruth. I asked Heavenly Father to help me understand her needs and how I could help her.

From that day forward everything changed. My heart softened, and my love for Ruth grew. Ruth changed as well. She opened up and shared her life, her joys, and her sorrows. She told me she missed her family. She told me of the wonderful things she had done in her past but could no longer do. She told me she was lonely and sad.

I began to look forward to seeing Ruth each week, and she looked forward to seeing me.

My experience with Ruth taught me a valuable lesson. When I truly served with my whole heart, I came to understand President Spencer W. Kimball's (1895–1985) teaching that "in the midst of the miracle of serving, there is the promise of Jesus, that by losing ourselves, we find ourselves" ("Small Acts of Service," *Ensign*, Dec. 1974, 2). ■

June Foss, Utah, USA

I started by gathering Ruth's laundry and carrying it upstairs to the laundry room. Soon after I began, Ruth rushed in and shouted at me.



# I Felt the **Power** of the **Atonement** of Jesus Christ When . . .

**Young adults share  
their experiences  
applying the Savior's  
Atonement.**

## • THE SAVIOR HELPED ME IN GOOD AND BAD TIMES

My baptism day was like a dream. I was so happy and eager to begin life as a perfect person. However, I argued with my siblings just hours after being baptized. I remember feeling discouraged that it had not taken very long for me to mess up after being baptized and confirmed, but I also remember that when I repented, I felt completely whole again. I learned from a young age that the Atonement of Jesus Christ brings needed relief from sin.

As I continued to grow in my gospel understanding, I learned that the Atonement was not just something to use whenever I sinned. The Atonement could be part of my life in times of trial, joy, heartache, and success. When I struggled to feel accepted by my peers, I prayed to Heavenly Father and I was comforted to know that the Savior had struggled with these same feelings. When I did well on something, my joy was magnified when I thought of the Savior's rejoicing.

**Abby McKeon, Utah, USA**





## I LEARNED TO RELY ON THE LORD

For many years I felt alone and abandoned. I struggled with unrighteous desires that led me to sin, which eventually placed me in a cycle of guilt and shame. Thankfully, a loving bishop taught me about the role of the Savior's Atonement to cover weakness, pain, and sorrow as well as sin. My bishop rejoiced when I progressed and comforted me when I slipped.

I learned that having a conceptual knowledge of the Savior was not enough—I needed to pray to Heavenly Father and actively repent through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As I did, I grew more obedient to God's commandments and closer to the Savior.

While I still struggle with temptation, I have learned that I can rely fully on my Savior and His Atonement. While I stand on the rock of my Redeemer, my weakness can be strength. With Paul I can say: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me . . . : for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9–10).

**Jacob H. Taylor, Idaho, USA**

## I EXPERIENCED A CHANGE OF HEART

During high school my heart wasn't really in the gospel. In the mission field I slowly learned what a mission was really about and wanted the power and progress it could bring in my life if I were truly worthy. Finally, the guilt and sorrow from past transgressions bore me down, and I wanted freedom—to be clean and to be a better tool in the Lord's hand. After some discussion with my mission president, I went home to take time to repent.

Returning home was among the hardest times of my life. I began reading the scriptures differently, actually understanding and applying them. While I was doing everything "right," I still felt a great burden of guilt.

Then I started to focus my studies on Christ and His Atonement, how He could be *my* Savior and how His infinite Atonement could redeem *my* soul. One night while meditating

upon all I had learned from those prayerful studies, I felt the Spirit touch my heart, heal my soul, and comfort me. I felt secure and loved, and my guilt left.

When I first got home, I thought a change of heart was all I needed for the repentance process. Now I know that I needed time to repent—change comes line upon line, a little at a time. It requires prolonged effort to change our hearts, desires, and habits to be more like Christ. We can't make 180-degree changes instantaneously, but because of the Atonement, they can happen completely.

**Name withheld, Georgia, USA**





## I LEARNED TO FORGIVE

There was a point in my life when I was so emotionally hurt that it affected every other aspect of my life. I couldn't focus on classes or homework, my relationship with my roommates was strained, and I was constantly on the verge of tears. More than anything, I was having a hard time forgiving the person who had caused me hurt in the first place—and even madder that I was having a hard time forgiving.

Finally, I decided I was done being sad and angry. I no longer wanted to carry that burden. I pleaded with Heavenly Father to help me forgive. Before I knew it, the pain was bearable. It wasn't gone, but I could bear it. Through this experience I learned that the Savior's Atonement does not just allow us to repent; it also helps us heal. When I approached Heavenly Father with my burdens, in humility and with a sincere heart, He helped me carry the hurt, pain, and heartache I held.

**Dani Lauricella, California, USA**

## I FELT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

When my parents got divorced, I felt that all my hope of having an eternal family had ended. It was a very hard moment in my life. However, even though it wasn't easy for me to recognize, that trial brought unforeseen blessings to my family. For one, my mom got baptized!

I also was able to get to know my Savior better. To get over my sadness, I chose to visit an aunt in Peru, where I met a new friend who strengthened me greatly. That friend and I often studied the scriptures together and during one special occasion while we were discussing gospel topics, I felt the love of my Savior for me very strongly. The feeling was like the voice of my Savior telling me, "I have always been with you; you just couldn't tell."

Now I know that our Savior wants to help us and that He is always with us. Sometimes we allow our sadness to be higher than our faith and we think that He has forgotten us, but in reality, His Atonement can always help us.

**Liliane Soares Moreira, Bahia, Brazil**



## HIS PERFECT ATONEMENT

*I used to believe  
That there was a hole  
In Christ's Atonement—  
That He could save everyone—  
Except me.*

*But I was wrong.  
There is not one hole,  
But seven.*

*Two holes in  
His Hands  
Where they nailed Him  
To a cross  
At the behest of those  
He would die  
To save,*

*Two holes in  
His wrists  
Where they ensured  
The weight of His body  
Would not cause  
His hands  
To rip through  
Before His penance  
Was complete,*

*Two holes in  
His feet  
Where He stood  
As a witness to all  
Of God's unyielding love  
For each  
Of His children,*



*And one hole in  
His side  
Where they pierced Him  
To prove His work  
Was done.*

*Seven.  
Perfection.  
Seven perfect holes  
In earth's only  
Perfect Man.*

*The perfect Atonement  
To patch the holes in our lives.  
His holes make us  
Whole.*

*I was wrong.  
There is a  
Whole  
In Christ's Atonement  
For me  
After all.*

**Kasey Hammer, Utah, USA**

## I FOUND COMFORT IN HIS RESURRECTION

When I was 23, my grandmother passed away. Though she had lived a beautiful life, she was still relatively young, and her death came sooner than expected. I knew that many had lost much more than I had and that my grandma was at peace, but I still felt pain knowing I would never see her again in this life.

Through this sadness, however, I felt Heavenly Father and the Savior reaching out to me. Kind visiting teachers and friends brought sweet notes and treats, and a dear neighbor stopped by my family's house with a book she said she felt inspired to purchase for us. The book contained quotes from apostles and prophets on the plan of salvation and the reality of life after death.

As I read the words of the prophets out loud with my sister that evening, I felt the sweetest peace settle on my heart. I knew that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all of us could be made clean and able to dwell with Him in the next life. I knew that "he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead" and that all things—and people—would be restored to their proper place (Alma 40:3; see also Alma 41:2). I knew that because of the Atonement, all the members of my family, including those who have passed on, can be together forever, and for that I will be forever grateful.

**Amanda Seeley, Utah, USA**

# A Culture of Faith in Guatemala

By Lisa López

Church Magazines

In the 68 years since the Church was first introduced in Guatemala, membership has flourished. Guatemala is a country rich with rainforests and a diverse Mayan culture. Despite its beauty, Guatemala is often characterized by its poverty and political strife. This does not mean, however, that it is a country poor in spirit. Merci Arens, a 25-year-old from Guatemala City, personally feels blessed to live in a country where people, in large part, tolerate and accept different religions. “One of the key characteristics of Guatemalan culture is that, by nature, we are a religious people,” she says. “The culture and the environment are very hospitable and lively.” That being said, finding peers that share her same beliefs has not always been easy.

“My standards seem radical to the people at work and school who have never heard of Mormonism,” she says. This is not discouraging for Merci, who emphasizes the importance

of being active in Church callings and activities. “When I go to these activities, I am socializing to create relationships with people who fundamentally have my same goals and principles.” She has found that having friends to share spiritual experiences with has helped her testimony to grow. Because of these friendships, Merci has also found an unexpected blessing. “I have found dating easier because I date friends. I’ve seen them in different situations, which allows me to get to know them in a more natural way.”

On occasions Merci admits to feeling pressure to marry; however, she holds to the security that she has in her heart that everything is and will turn out fine. “I look forward to meeting a companion who, through our relationship, helps draw me nearer to God and together we build an eternal family.”

Out of all the blessings that Merci has received, there is one in

**Merci Arens finds that defending her standards is easier when she has the support of friends who share those standards.**

particular that stands out to her: “I lost my mother at 15. With her passing came a lot of questions. However, these questions and the subsequent answers to them have completely shaped my life.” Through honest prayer, Merci has been able to receive comfort that she will be able to one day give her mother the same type of hugs her mother gave her as a little girl. “The truth of the gospel illuminates my everyday life and activities,” she says. “I know I am connected to the divine love of God, and that fulfills me in every way.” ■



## MORE ABOUT MERCI

*What is your favorite Guatemalan dish?*

It's called "Hilachas"—a stew comprised of red potatoes and long strips of beef. Some people add green beans or carrots, but I prefer mine with just potatoes.

*What are some of your favorite sites?*

Guatemala is a place of natural beauty. One of my favorite places to visit is Lake Atitlan and the surrounding town, Panajachel, which exudes Mayan culture. The natives have worked hard to preserve their traditional language, and I love to admire the colors and intricacies of their hand-woven clothing.

*What is higher education like in Guatemala?*

In my country the issue of education is a complex one. Illiteracy is a problem that much of the population faces. After graduating high school, most young adults are faced with economic responsibilities that force them to choose between attending a university and working full-time. But the Church has been a wonderful tool for helping members access higher education.

## FACTS ABOUT GUATEMALA

Capital: Guatemala City

Language: Spanish

## BY THE NUMBERS

14,647,083 people (estimate as of July 2014)

21 national parks

3 active volcanoes

## THE CHURCH IN GUATEMALA

247,708 Latter-day Saints

417 wards and branches

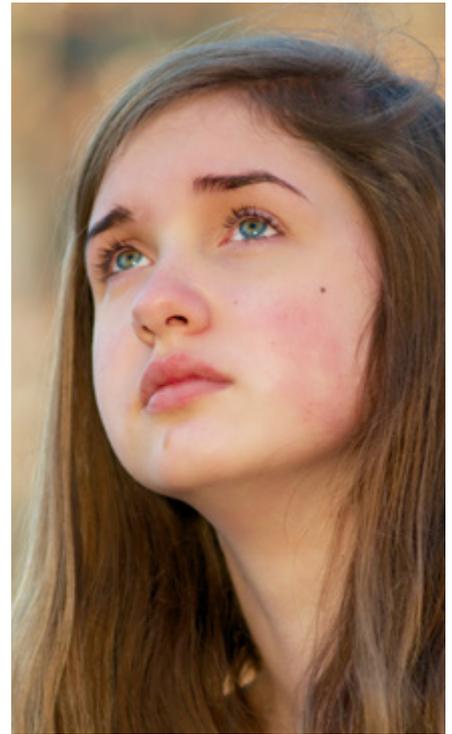
2 temples

6 missions



**By Elder D. Todd Christofferson**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



## HOW TO REALLY REPENT

Repentance is an expansive subject, but I would like to mention just five aspects of this fundamental gospel principle that I hope will be helpful.

First, the **invitation to repent is an expression of love**. When the Savior “began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17), it was a message of love, inviting all who would to qualify to join Him “and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life [itself] in the world to come” (Moses 6:59). If we do not invite others to change or if we do not demand repentance of ourselves, we fail in a fundamental duty we owe to one another and to ourselves.

Second, repentance means **striving to change**. It would mock the Savior’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross for us to expect that He should transform us into angelic beings with no real effort

on our part. Rather, we seek His grace to complement and reward our most diligent efforts (see 2 Nephi 25:23). Real repentance, **real change may require repeated attempts**, but there is something refining and holy in such striving.

Third, repentance means not only **abandoning sin** but also **committing to obedience**. The Bible Dictionary states, “Repentance comes to mean a turning of the heart and will to God, [as well as] a renunciation of sin to which we are naturally inclined” (“Repentance”). For our turning to the Lord to be complete, it must include nothing less than a covenant of obedience to Him.

Fourth, **repentance requires a seriousness of purpose and a willingness to persevere**, even through pain. Attempts to create a list of specific steps of repentance may be helpful to some, but it may also lead to a mechanical,

check-off-the-boxes approach with no real feeling or change. True repentance is not superficial. The Lord gives two overarching requirements: “By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43).

Fifth, whatever the **cost** of repentance, it is **swallowed up in the joy of forgiveness**.

I gratefully acknowledge and testify that the incomprehensible suffering, death, and Resurrection of our Lord “bringeth to pass the condition of repentance” (Helaman 14:18). The divine gift of **repentance is the key to happiness** here and hereafter. In the Savior’s words and in deep humility and love, I invite all to “repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17). I know that in accepting this invitation, **you will find joy** both now and forever. ■

*From a talk given in the October 2011 general conference.*

# SEEK THE LIVING WATER

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

(Matthew 11:28)



*When I told my  
parents I wanted  
to serve a mission,  
their response  
was unexpected.  
They asked me to  
choose my family  
or my mission.*



# TO STAY or OBEY?

By Melvin Rondilla

I can still remember the words of the missionaries who taught me: “Whatever God commands, do it, and blessings will follow.” These words made a deep impression in my heart. I was baptized at the age of 16, the only member of the Church in my family. Eight months later, I had the blessing of seeing my youngest sibling baptized into the Church.

When I turned 18, I wanted to serve a full-time mission and help in the Lord’s work. I eagerly told my parents about my plan and how I wanted to invite people to come unto Jesus Christ by helping them receive and live the principles and ordinances of the gospel. Their response surprised me. They said it broke their hearts to think of me leaving on a mission, and I had to choose: my family or my mission.

I was shocked when I heard those words. Immediately I went to the Church building near our home and entered one of its rooms to kneel and ask Heavenly Father, “What will I do? What will I choose: my family or my mission? Both are important to me.”

While on my knees, the words of the missionaries came to mind: “Whatever God commands, do it.”

I love my family and want to be with them forever. I respect their feelings. Yet the scripture says, “To obey is better than sacrifice” (1 Samuel 15:22). The Spirit of the Lord filled me, and I was strengthened. I decided to serve because I knew Heavenly Father would help my family understand.

I went home only to be sent away by my father’s angry words and told to never return. Not knowing where to go, I packed my things. I was not a bit scared, because I knew the Lord was with me, that He has a plan for every family, and that someday my family would understand this beautiful plan.

I was only a few steps away from home when my mother caught me. She embraced me and said how much she loved me. As I left, I could see her crying with all the love and pain of a mother seeing her child go.

For over a year, I stayed in the house of a returned missionary I had met when I was an investigator. The Lord was true to His promise in

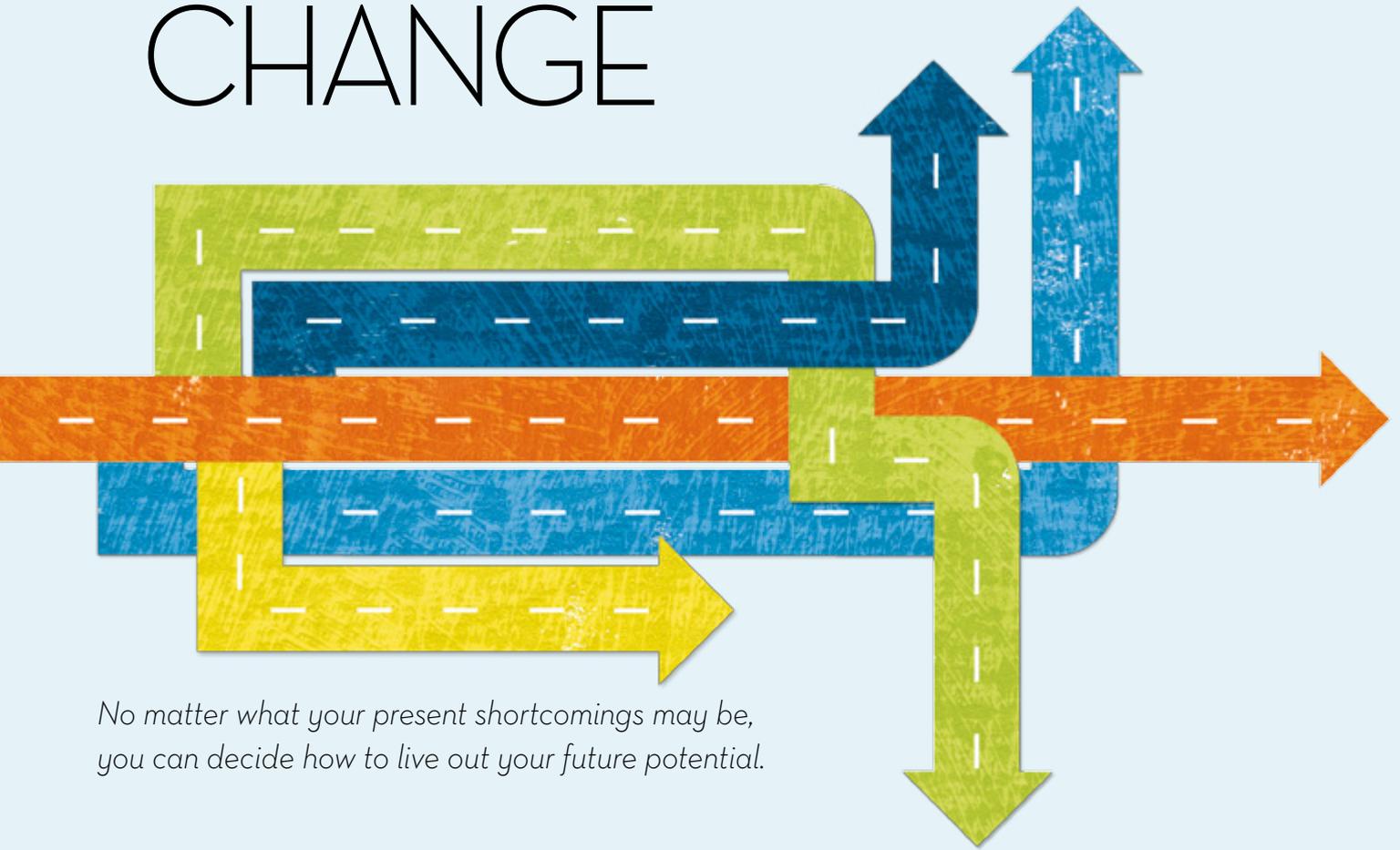
1 Nephi 3:7—He provided the way so I could obey His commandments. He sent this selfless and generous man to provide for me and to create a spiritual environment where I could prepare for my mission. I felt the hand of God sustaining me through my challenges. I felt the love of our Savior Jesus Christ through His atoning sacrifice. This love carried me through my trials until I was set apart as a full-time missionary in the Philippines Cauayan Mission.

A few months later, I received a letter from my family telling me they were waiting for my return. I never lost faith and hope that my whole family would become members of the Church, be sealed in the temple for all eternity, and be with our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, someday.

After returning from my mission, I began to see that dream come true. I was able to baptize my mother, who is now preparing to go to the temple. I see my family often, and we are closer than ever before. ■

*The author lives in the Philippines.*

# YOU CAN CHANGE



*No matter what your present shortcomings may be, you can decide how to live out your future potential.*

**By David Dickson**

Church Magazines

**D**uring high school graduation ceremony, all kinds of thoughts can zoom through your head. What happens next? Are you ready? Will you and your friends stay in touch?

Not me, though. I had only one question when it was my turn to walk up in front of everybody as they announced my name: was I *actually* going to graduate?

I wasn't exactly what you'd call a scholar. Studying pretty much never topped my ideal to-do list. And during my senior year I was doing

so poorly in one class I didn't even know if I had *passed* the class. The final exam earlier that week would seal my fate, but grades wouldn't post until a week later.

If I failed this class, I wouldn't graduate high school.

In the end, I squeaked by on the thinnest possible margin and did graduate. (Whew!) At that point I had 14 months until I turned 19, the missionary age at the time. I intended on working during that time to save money for my mission. I knew I wasn't much of a student, so

under no circumstances did I plan on attempting college.

## THE TRAP OF DEFINING

Have you ever felt like that? Like your past performance in some part of your life has proven your abilities once and for all?

Don't fall for that line of thinking. It's one of Satan's biggest lies!

"Once any of us conclude—"That's just the way I am," we give up our ability to change," taught Elder Donald L. Hallstrom of the Presidency of the Seventy. "We might as well raise the

white flag, put down our weapons, concede the battle, and just surrender—any prospect of winning is lost.”<sup>1</sup>

School can seem especially intimidating when you’re not doing well. With even a few bad grades on your record, it’s all too easy to decide that’s as good as you’ll ever get. But it’s not true.

“Who we are is not who we can become,” Elder Hallstrom said.<sup>2</sup>

## A CLEAN SLATE

Despite what nagging whispers of doubt or failure might reach our ears, we can always choose to look ahead and stop beating ourselves up over the past.

“There is something incredibly hopeful about a fresh start,” taught President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency.<sup>3</sup>

When deciding to make a fresh start, don’t forget to pray to God for help. Tell Him you want to succeed and then pay attention to promptings

and guidance from the Holy Ghost and from your leaders.

This might require a bit of priority shuffling. “Our daily conduct and choices should be consistent with our goals,” said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Many choices are not inherently evil, but if they absorb all of our time and keep us from the best choices, then they become insidious.”<sup>4</sup>

## FINDING THE NEW YOU

Fast-forward three and a half years from my high school graduation ceremony. I had worked for around a year and a half, served a two-year mission, and ultimately decided to try college after all.

I wish I could say I felt all grown-up and ready for school, but that’s laughable. I felt more intimidated than ever. If I was so bad at high school, how in the world could I handle college? This time I resolved to do my best and involve God along

the way. I prayed fervently to develop new and better study skills.

To my complete shock, I ended up doing so well that semester that I qualified for academic scholarships. Nobody was more surprised than me! Even so, I could also easily look back over the previous months and see the hand of God helping me along as I learned to become a good student.

What I believed about myself back in high school simply wasn’t true. From that point on and with God’s help, I was able to forge a completely new path that carried me through college graduation and beyond.

When we involve the Lord in our climb and decide to make a new start in any area of life, we can reach heights we never dreamed possible. ■

### NOTES

1. Donald L. Hallstrom, “What Manner of Men?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 53.
2. Donald L. Hallstrom, “What Manner of Men?” 53.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Best Time to Plant a Tree,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Jan. 2014, 4.
4. Quentin L. Cook, “Choose Wisely,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 49, 48.





SUNDAY LESSONS

This Month's Topic:  
Commandments

# NOT of the World

*Standing up as a member of Christ's Church can be tricky in today's world, but we can be in this world without becoming influenced by it.*

Have you ever wondered where the expression “in the world but not of the world” came from? It's more than just a motto or a clever use of prepositions—it actually came from Jesus Christ.

Picture the night before His Crucifixion. He met with His Apostles, washed their feet, taught them, and administered the sacrament. At one point during the night, He prayed out loud to His Father for the Apostles:

“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . .

“As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (John 17:15–16, 18).

The Savior Himself lived His whole life being in the world but not of the world. He was tempted, but He did not give in to temptation. He avoided evil. He associated with disciples and believers as well as with sinners and hypocrites. He was an example to all.

But He didn't just leave His disciples with a brusque, “If I did it, you can do it.” Instead, He was compassionate. He prayed for the Father to help them. But He didn't pray for the challenge to be taken from them. During His life on earth and through His modern prophets and apostles, the Savior has taught that it is important for us to be influences for good in the world.

Youth from all around the world are consistently faced with challenges as they roam the halls of school, socialize with friends, and participate in extra-curricular activities. But with the Savior on their side and the gospel in their hearts, they have found ways to keep themselves from being of the world. Read how some of them are choosing to follow the Savior's example.

## BE ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED

**W**hen I face temptation, I ask myself, “What would Jesus do?” or “Will this get me closer to the celestial kingdom?” I go to seminary every morning even though I’m really tired, because that helps me grow spiritually. Reading my scriptures, with the purpose of learning something new or something that can help me become a better person, is a source of guidance that helps me. As we keep the Sabbath day holy and go to our activities, we can better conquer Satan. When we are anxiously engaged with the Lord, He can help us with all the complicated situations we go through.

*Brenda H., 17, Minnesota, USA*



## BE CREATIVE IN CHOOSING THE RIGHT

When people around us don’t have the same standards we do, we might have to find creative ways to associate with them while keeping our standards. Elder L. Tom Perry (1922-2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles did just that when he found himself in an uncomfortable situation as a businessman many years ago. All the businesspeople at social gatherings he had to attend were drinking alcohol. To find out what he did, you can go to [LDS.org](http://LDS.org) and read his article “The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Aug. 2011, 30-37).

## DRAW STRENGTH FROM OTHERS

**I** keep my standards by participating in activities with my friends from church. Of course I invite nonmember friends to the activities so they can see and understand why I want to keep these standards. My parents and my big brother are good examples to me. I have a lot of good friends who do not belong to the Church who are also great examples to me. They have a lot of great attributes that I would like to develop myself.

*Celina W., 15, Germany*



## SPEAK UP

**I**n Denmark it is considered different if you go to church, do not drink, and have high standards. But I have experienced that if you are not too shy to talk about the values you stand for, you quickly gain a lot of respect from your peers. I have seen that people think it's cool when others take care of themselves that way.

*Emma K., 18, Denmark*

## THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- The next time you are faced with temptation, how would it help you to know that Jesus Christ prayed and asked Heavenly Father to “keep [you] from the evil”?
- Think about the Savior’s life. What did He do during His time in the world? How did He keep Himself from being of the world? What can we learn from His example?
- Think of a challenging “in the world” situation that you face. What are some creative things that you could do to stand for the truth? You might want to ask your friends and family for more ideas.



## SHINE YOUR LIGHT

**A** few years ago my rugby team participated in a weeklong tournament. This meant seven days away from home, parents, and Church leaders. Because we attend a Church school, everyone on my team was a member of the Church. Almost every evening that week, the other teams in our hotel would party in their rooms with loud music, dancing, drinking, smoking, and screaming harsh words at each other. Our team gathered in a room for our tradition of scripture study and evening devotionals. It felt good to do the right thing without being instructed by our parents. After the other teams observed us with surprise, we gained their respect. They were silent when they knew we were having evening devotionals. They seemed to be interested in what we were doing, and some even joined with us to read the scriptures and pray together.

We didn’t win the tournament that week, but we won in another way. We were able to shine our light, and through our examples, change hearts and minds. ■

*Elisara E., 20, Samoa*

# TO THE POINT

What does the **eighth article of faith** mean when it says, “We **believe the Bible** to be the word of God as far as it is **translated correctly**”?

**T**he Bible is not inferior to other scriptures. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “We believe, revere, and love the Holy Bible. We do have additional sacred scripture, . . . but it supports the Bible, never substituting for it” (“The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 81).

The eighth article of faith says, “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly.” In Joseph Smith’s day, the word *translate* didn’t just mean to take something from one language into another; it also could mean to transfer, convey, interpret, or explain. And although errors do appear in various renderings from the original Hebrew and Greek, the bigger issue is that in the delivery of the ancient texts to the present day, “many plain and precious things [were] taken away” (1 Nephi 13:28). So, as the Bible texts were *transmitted* to us, certain teachings were lost. That’s one reason people have so many different interpretations of the Bible, as Joseph Smith experienced (see Joseph Smith—History 1:12). So one way modern revelation helps clarify and confirm the truths in the Bible is by restoring other truths that were lost (see 1 Nephi 13:39–40). ■



**I’m a boy, and I want to encourage girls to dress more modestly. But how do I do that without appearing rude?**

**Y**ou’re right to tread carefully in this area. While some young women dress immodestly with the full intent of being immodest, many would be mortified to think someone believed they were dressed immodestly. So be sensitive and consistent. When the general topic of modest dress comes up, enthusiastically support the Lord’s standard of modesty, but don’t condemn individuals. Also, make sure your own personal dress standards and actions are consistent with your beliefs. Young women notice how you dress, and they definitely notice whether you pay more attention to immodestly dressed or modestly dressed young women. ■

# SEMINARY IS WORTH IT!



*It might require some sacrifice, but these youth know what a blessing seminary can be.*

“I don’t think of it as getting an hour less sleep; I think of it as an hour to prepare myself spiritually.”

*Megan C., 17, California, USA*

“Because of seminary, my testimony has been strengthened greatly, and I have a surer knowledge of the scriptures. My testimony of the Savior’s sacrifice in Gethsemane is stronger because of seminary.”

*Vina C., 17, Hong Kong, China*

“Seminary is the one constant place where I can feel the Spirit. In my home I am the only active member, but my parents are very supportive. Because of seminary, I am growing so much.”

*Amanda L., 17, Utah, USA*

“Seminary grounds you for what’s going on during the day. If I think that bad thoughts are coming on, I can think about the seminary lesson. It expands beyond seminary.”

*Eric G., 15, Ipswich, England*

“It’s really important to go to seminary because we can learn more about our Church and build up our relationship with Heavenly Father. The reason I like seminary is that I can know more about the history of the Church and really know that the gospel is true and that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ do love me!”

*Breck M., 17, Kentucky, USA*

“I love seminary because it helps me make decisions. In the classes I feel the Spirit of the Lord and have a confirmation that this is the gospel of Christ. There’s no way to not love it. I know that my study during these four years will help me to serve a mission.”

*Karolina O., 16, João Pessoa, Brazil*

“Even though you may not want to get up that early in the morning, you’re filled with this special spirit a little bit more every day. Your peers notice that about you, and sometimes it makes them want to know more about why you’re like that.” ■

*Karen K., 18, Maine, USA*

What’s one thing Latter-day Saint youth all over the world have in common? They are seminary students! Youth attend seminary in many different ways. Some wake up at 5:00 a.m. to go before school, while others attend in between their regular school classes. On rare occasions, some students go on the weekends or use Skype to participate.

Regardless of whether they are sacrificing sleep or weekend football games, over 390,000 youth worldwide cheerfully participate in seminary. Here’s what they have to say about the blessings of seminary:

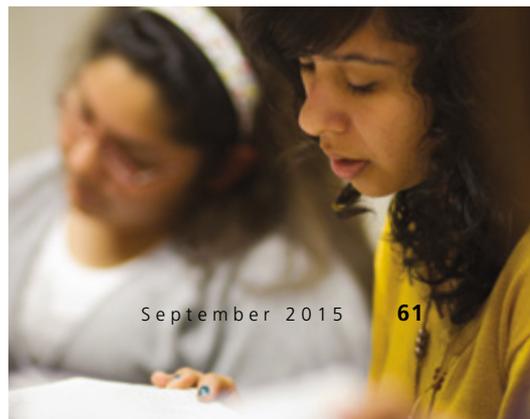




## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SEMINARY

“When you have the chance to be involved in seminary, . . . take advantage of that opportunity. . . . Much of what you take from your seminary experience depends on your attitude and your willingness to be taught. May your attitude be one of humility and a desire to learn. . . . [Seminary] played a vital role in my development and the development of my testimony. Seminary can change lives.”

President Thomas S. Monson, “Believe, Obey, and Endure,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 128.



## THE SCRIPTURES MADE A DIFFERENCE IN ME

By Maria Mahonri-Yggrazil Andaca

In the Philippines, there are science high schools for academically gifted students. Students in these schools take more subjects, spend more hours in class, and devote more effort to schoolwork.

This kind of environment was toxic for me. I gave up so many things upon entering this school. I stopped learning how to play instruments. I almost never attended Church activities, and I would occasionally miss Church services on Sundays for inter-school competitions. I struggled attending seminary, although the classes were conveniently offered during weekends.

One Saturday, my seminary teacher told us about how busy she was in high school, and yet she managed to still do her seminary assignments and study the scripture mastery scriptures. She challenged us to do the same.

Challenges enliven me, so I took this one. I carried my scripture mastery cards with me everywhere. I prayed for help to manage it with my school demands. I used every

window of time I had. I memorized scriptures while commuting to school. I chatted less and would take the cards out of my pocket. My friends noticed; shuffling the scripture cards became our new activity during breaks and lunchtime. They enjoyed quizzing me. Some started to bring their scriptures—even those who belonged to other denominations. They shared about activities at their own churches. I felt the atmosphere around me change, and school felt lighter and better.

My three younger sisters followed that lead, and now my family reaps the blessings of the scriptures in our relationships at home. It was more than just memorizing words; my seminary teacher taught me the difference the scriptures would make in me and in the people around me. I know that whatever challenge or trial comes to my family and friends, we will always find strength, guidance, and repose in the words of our loving Savior. ■

*The author lives in Metro Manila, Philippines.*



# “I Have **LEARNED** for **MYSELF**”

By Travis Searle  
Seminaries and Institutes

*Want to learn for yourself the truthfulness of the gospel? Elevate your gospel learning in seminary.*

For more information about the new graduation requirements, visit [seminary.lds.org](http://seminary.lds.org). For an example of a young adult who gained a testimony by sincerely studying the scriptures and praying, you can read Clayton M. Christensen's experience in "The Most Useful Piece of Knowledge," *Liahona*, Jan. 2009, available at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org).



“I have learned for myself” were five simple words spoken by the Prophet Joseph Smith to his mother after he experienced the First Vision (Joseph Smith—History 1:20). These words contain a powerful lesson for us today. As President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “Whether you are 12 or 112—or anywhere in between—you can *know for yourself* that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true.”<sup>1</sup>

In order to help you “know for yourself,” seminary students worldwide now complete two additional requirements to graduate from seminary: (1) read the assigned scriptures for the course and (2) pass two learning assessments during each course. Here’s how these new graduation requirements can help strengthen your testimony:

## You read and study the scriptures for the course.

As you study the scriptures, you will begin to feel the stirrings of the Spirit that will lead you to deepen your conversion. After completing the required scripture reading in her last year of seminary, one student shared that she learned much more because she “really read the scriptures—not just read them but studied them.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught what it means to study: “When I say ‘study,’ I mean . . . reading a few verses, stopping to ponder them, carefully reading the verses again, and as you think about what they mean, praying for understanding, asking questions in your mind, waiting for spiritual impressions, and writing down the impressions and insights that come so you can remember and learn more.”<sup>2</sup>

## You can use the learning assessments to evaluate what you have learned.

A learning assessment is like the question an angel of the Lord asked Nephi: “What beholdest thou?” (1 Nephi 11:14). This question prompted Nephi to evaluate and express what he had learned.

Learning assessments have three parts: multiple-choice questions and an essay question, which are graded, and a personal assessment of your beliefs, which is not graded. After taking a learning assessment, one student said, “I was looking forward to it because I wanted to see what I had taken out of seminary.” Another student commented that the learning assessment will “help you to understand where you are at in the gospel and where you need to be.”

The assessments will be even more effective when you focus on the gospel doctrines and principles that are the basis of the learning assessment questions. After a seminary class discussed the doctrines behind the questions, one student shared, “It changed the outlook of the test into more of a discussion and a testimony builder. It helped to solidify what you learned.”

## WHAT DO STUDENTS LIKE ABOUT THE LEARNING ASSESSMENTS?

Students’ comments:

“I feel like I could go on a mission and know what I’m talking about.”

“It helps you retain what you learn in seminary.”

“We are able to grasp the concepts a lot better.”

“Your confidence is strengthened.”

“We are actually going to be able to learn these things instead of just feeling good and kind of forgetting about the doctrines.”

## You can learn to love learning for yourself.

Learning for ourselves that the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is true can be one of the greatest and most joyful experiences in life.<sup>3</sup> One student said, “I have enjoyed being more engaged and realizing I have to step it up a little more every day instead of just coming and sitting in a chair and listening but not necessarily participating.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught the importance of learning: “Learning to love learning is central to the gospel of Jesus Christ, is vital to our ongoing spiritual and personal development, and is an absolute necessity in the world in which we do now and will yet live, serve, and work.”<sup>4</sup>

The more effort you invest, the more enjoyment and learning you’ll experience. ■

### NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 62.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2004, 11–12.
3. See Craig C. Christensen, “I Know These Things of Myself,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 50.
4. David A. Bednar, “Learning to Love Learning,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2010, 26.

# OUR SPACE

## OUR PURPOSE ON EARTH

**D**uring my school's values-education month, our teacher asked us to write an essay titled "Why am I here?" It had to be a 10-paragraph essay on the topic of our purpose in life. As I read the topic on the board, my heart was filled with comfort and happiness. As a member of the Church, I had known my purpose as a daughter of God for many years. But as I

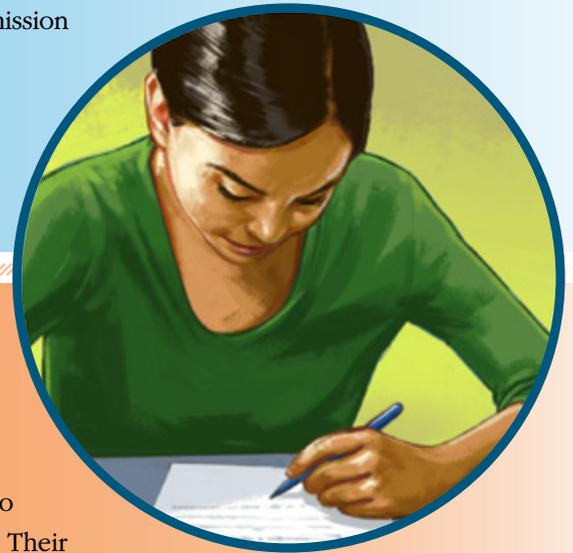
looked at my other classmates' faces, my heart was filled with sadness. Why? Because they started to murmur regarding the difficulty of the topic. They didn't have the same knowledge I did.

When I turned in my essay, I realized how blessed I am to be a member of the one true Church. From that day on, my desire to serve a mission

and share my testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ was strengthened.

I know that Heavenly Father loves me and wants me to be with Him someday. I also know that it is my purpose to serve others. ■

Jaymee A., Philippines



## HOW THE BOOK OF MORMON HELPS ME

**T**he Book of Mormon inspires us whenever we need answers to questions or when we need to feel closer to the Lord's Spirit. It contains prophecies that were received by those who were chosen by the Father because they were faithful and righteous. From this book we obtain more wisdom about the gospel, and we can see that the Lord will always be the same.

The Book of Mormon helps us now because the people in the past had difficulties that may be similar

to the difficulties that we face today, from family problems to influences from other people. Their examples give us the strength and desire to press forward in faith and righteousness without being discouraged. Like us, those ancient peoples passed through various trials but triumphed in that the adversary was not able to overcome them. This gives us more desire to remain strong and unshakeable in the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

Caroline M., São Paulo, Brazil



## SERVING WHERE WE ARE ASKED

**J**ust before the San Salvador El Salvador Temple was dedicated, my family and I decided to serve at the open house and help those who were not members become acquainted with the gospel of Jesus Christ as they visited the temple. I was assigned to be a guide and speak with people about each room in the temple, the sacred covenants we make there, and how our lives change when we keep those covenants.

My shift came, and I started my tour. I had just barely gone out of the room when someone requested an

additional guide since a large group had just arrived. I was told to go back to the greeting room to have another group assigned to me.

When I reached the room, I was again asked to change my assignment and show a video to people who were just arriving at the temple. I felt sad that I wasn't able to speak with people and tell them about the temple.

About half an hour later, a group from the United States arrived who didn't speak any Spanish. Several volunteers were running around looking for someone who spoke English and

could guide this group. That's when I understood that the Lord sends us where He needs us, not necessarily where we want to be. I was the only one who knew how to use the video and give the words of welcome in English. The Americans were glad and when they were leaving, they thanked me for receiving them so warmly.

At the end of the day, I felt thankful to the Lord for showing me that when we do things the way He prompts us, we will feel satisfied with our work. ■

Erick A., El Salvador

# The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11–32

Glue this page to heavy paper or cardboard. Then cut out the figures and attach them to craft sticks or paper bags. Store in an envelope with the scripture reference attached to the front. ■



Father



Younger Son



Older Son



You can print more copies at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org).

# Our Women Leaders

These women are wives, mothers, and grandmothers. Here are some other fun things about them! You can print more cards at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org).



 <p><b>Sister Carole M. Stephens</b>  <i>First Counselor  Relief Society General Presidency</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Linda K. Burton</b>  <i>General President  of the Relief Society</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Linda S. Reeves</b>  <i>Second Counselor  Relief Society General Presidency</i></p>
 <p><b>Sister Carol F. McConkie</b>  <i>First Counselor  Young Women General Presidency</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson</b>  <i>General President  of the Young Women</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Neill F. Marriott</b>  <i>Second Counselor  Young Women General Presidency</i></p>
 <p><b>Sister Cheryl A. Esplin</b>  <i>First Counselor  Primary General Presidency</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Rosemary M. Wixom</b>  <i>General President  of the Primary</i></p>	 <p><b>Sister Mary R. Durham</b>  <i>Second Counselor  Primary General Presidency</i></p>

- Grew up playing in the banana trees in her backyard with her four younger brothers.
- Loves swimming and reading books to her grandchildren.
- Loves to read the Book of Mormon and stories about Jesus.



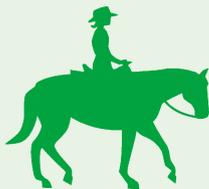
- Loved roller-skating, hopscotch, kickball, and neighborhood games as a child.
- Was called as a Primary chorister while living in New Zealand as a teen.
- Studied in college to become an elementary school teacher.



- Was sealed to her parents when she was five, after her mom was baptized and her dad started coming to church again.
- Sang in choirs and was captain of a drill team called the Bonnie Lassies.
- Taught seminary and loves religion classes. Met her husband at institute.



- Liked horseback riding as a child, and rode in the local rodeo parade.
- Was baptized when she was 22 years old.
- First job was working in a library. Later, loved reading bedtime stories to her 11 children.



- As a child, loved reading under the apricot trees and climbing trees with her two older brothers.
- Was art editor of high school magazine and studied literature and graphic design in college.
- Lived in eight different U.S. states and in Sweden twice!



- Liked reading in the farmhouse attic when she wasn't working or playing in the orchards and fields.
- Spent a summer in France as a teen.
- In college, was a student teacher in a high school English class.



- Learned not to take dares when she got her tongue stuck on cold metal.
- Studied dance in college.
- As a mother, was like a nurse, teacher, baker, and gardener, and had her own tool bag to fix things!



- Sometimes switched with her twin sister to trick people!
- Taught third grade after graduating from college.
- Loved learning about geography and now visits some countries she dreamed of visiting.



- Put out a fire and saved her brother from being badly burned on their farm in Wyoming, USA.
- Liked reading and playing sports, especially basketball.
- Taught school for two years after graduating from college.





“These are your days.  
You were born in a  
time of temples  
and technology.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
From “‘My Days’ of Temples and Technology,”  
*Ensign*, Feb. 2015, 28–35; *Liahona*, Feb. 2015, 26–33.

Watch the video “Finding Our Cousins—The Eberts’ Experience”  
to see how to find your ancestors’ names for temple work.



ILLUSTRATION BY APRIL STOTT

*“I have a surprise for you,” Dad said with a smile.*



# Lindsay's Family Puzzle

**By Jill Hacking**

Church Magazines

Based on a true story

*“And we as the children can seek out our loved ones, preserving their names and their memory”* (Children's Songbook, 90).

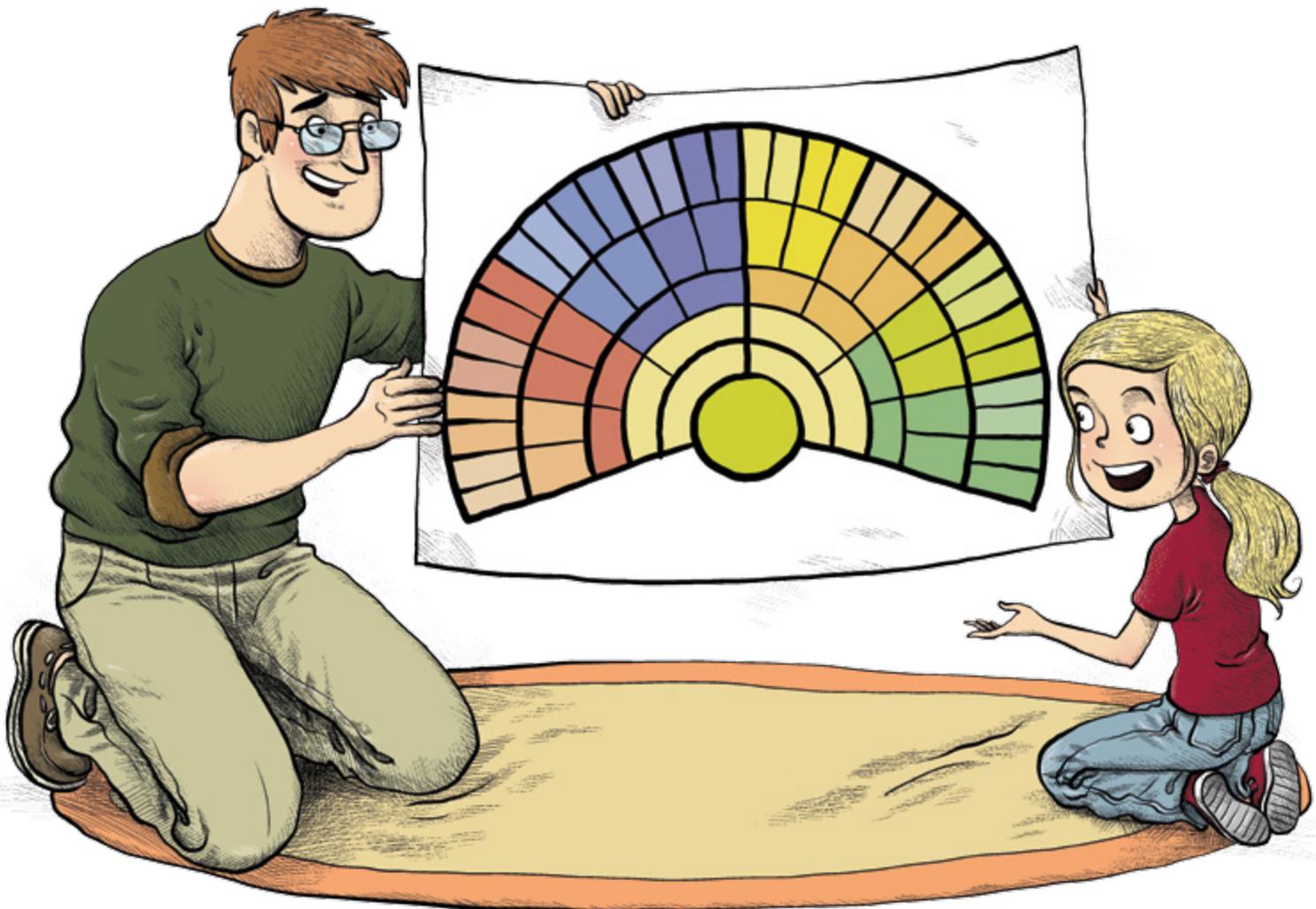
Lindsay raced downstairs when she heard Dad call her name.

Lately they had been doing a lot of family history work together. Dad would help her log on to the FamilySearch website, and together they'd look for family pictures and stories. Just the other day she'd found a really old document about Grandpa on his mission!

Lindsay reached the bottom of the

stairs where Dad was waiting. “Are we doing family history tonight?” she asked.

“Yup, and I have a surprise for you,” Dad said with a smile. He handed her a long, rolled-up paper he'd held behind his back. Lindsay carefully unrolled it. She stared at the large fan shape on the page.





There was her name at the bottom! Lots and lots of other names spread out in neat rows around hers.

“That’s you and Mom,” Lindsay said, pointing to the names closest to hers. “And there’s Grandma and Grandpa!”

“That’s right,” Dad said. “This fan chart shows the names of your ancestors for *nine* generations.”

There were so many names. But some of the spots were empty. Lindsay wondered about the missing names. “It looks like the puzzles I used to do with Grandpa,” she said. Grandpa had died a few years ago, and Lindsay really missed him.

Dad nodded. “It *is* like a puzzle. A very important puzzle. And every family member is like a puzzle piece.”

Lindsay almost laughed when she imagined Grandma shaped like a puzzle piece.

“When we find a person’s name and do their temple work, we link them to the rest of the family—like joining puzzle pieces together. *You’re* helping build this puzzle.”

“Wow.” Lindsay brushed her fingers over the names. She knew

family history was important, but now she was even more excited to help. *All* of her family could be linked together forever!

Lindsay taped her new chart to the ceiling right above her bunk bed. She loved to stare at the chart and study all the names. She imagined everyone holding each other’s hands, linked together like puzzle pieces. She felt happy. This was the biggest puzzle she had ever seen!

One night Lindsay couldn’t sleep. Her bedroom was really dark. The tiny night-light made scary-looking shadows on the walls. She pulled her blanket up over her head and squeezed her eyes shut.

After a little while she peeked out above the blanket and saw the chart. She read her name. Then she read Mom and Dad’s names. When she got to Grandpa’s name, she felt warm and peaceful.

She remembered how Grandpa smiled at her when they did puzzles together. “When I help Dad do family history,” she thought, “I’m linking our family together!” She imagined Grandpa smiling even bigger about that. She didn’t feel scared at all anymore. She smiled and snuggled into her blanket and fell asleep dreaming of people and puzzles and connecting her family together. ■

## LINDSAY’S LIST

Lindsay works on family history in lots of ways!

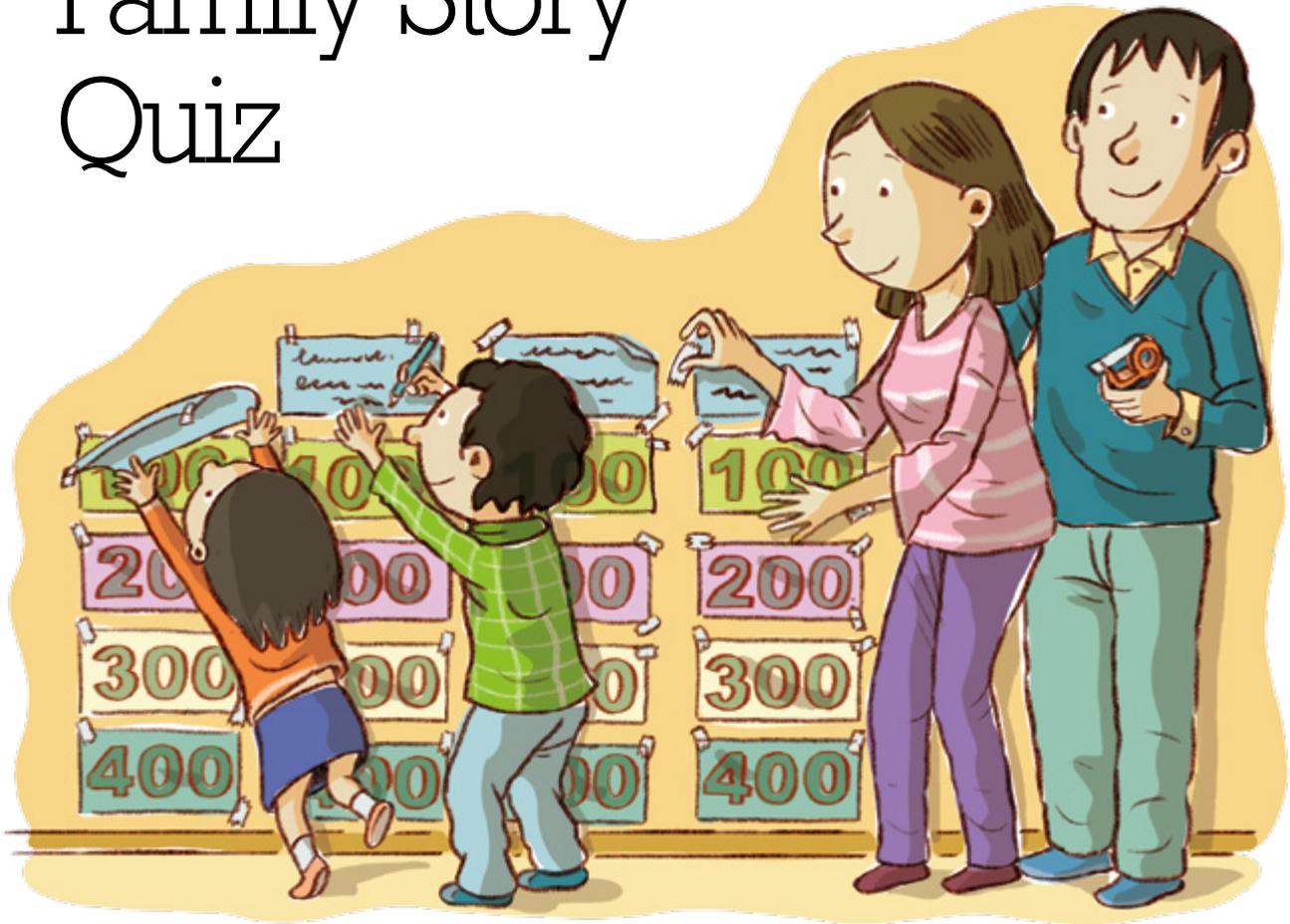
She made her own family tree on FamilySearch.org. She searches for stories and pictures of her family.

She solves family history mysteries! One time a record was missing. She and her dad went to a family history library. They searched in the files and found a copy. They found names of more family members too!

Her favorite part of doing family history is finding names for temple work. She’s excited to go to the temple and do baptisms when she turns 12.



# Family Story Quiz



By Carolyn Colton

Here's a game to help you learn more about your family and their stories!

## PREPARATION

1. Think of four types of stories, like *Funny*, *Childhood*, *Spiritual*, or *Vacations*. Write each category on a piece of paper and tape it on a wall.
2. Find four family stories for each category. Ask your family for help.
3. Think of short clues for each

story and write them on pieces of paper.

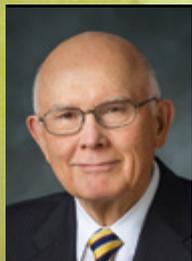
4. Write 100, 200, 300, or 400 points on other side of the paper. Tape the clues under the categories.

## HOW TO PLAY

1. Divide players into two teams. Whoever wrote the clues is the leader.
2. The first team picks a category and number, like "Funny, for 200."

3. The leader takes off the number and reads the clue. If the team can tell the story that matches the clue, they get the points!
4. If they don't know the story, the leader tells the story but leaves out a detail, like where it happened or who it's about. If the team can guess the missing detail, they get half the points.
5. The next team picks a clue and plays. After all the clues are picked, the team with the most points wins!

## SPECIAL WITNESS



By Elder  
Dallin H. Oaks

Of the Quorum of  
the Twelve  
Apostles

*The members of  
the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles are  
special witnesses of  
Jesus Christ.*

# How can I show kindness to others?

We should all follow  
the gospel teachings to  
love our neighbors and  
avoid arguments.

We should love all  
people, be good  
listeners, and show  
respect for what  
others believe.

We should especially  
be kind to our family  
members.

We should avoid bullying,  
insulting, or saying things  
that might hurt others.

ILLUSTRATION BY AMY BATES

*From "Loving Others and Living  
with Differences," Ensign or  
Liahona, Nov. 2014, 25–28.*



# Happy to Help

By Amie Jane Leavitt

Based on a true story

*“When we’re helping, we’re happy” (Children’s Songbook, 198).*

William leaned his rake against the side of the house and plopped down on the grass. Raking the leaves was hard work, but he and his sisters, Chloé and Amelia, were finally done. Way up above the Alps mountains he could see a plane fly by. He wondered where it was going.

William loved his little town near the French-Swiss border. People from all over the world visited here. He thought about the places he wanted to go, the people he could meet, and the adventures he might have someday.

He was startled out of his daydream by whistling and the *crunch, crunch, crunch* of footsteps in the yard next door.

“Pat must be getting ready to rake his leaves,” William thought.

”I’m sure glad we’re done with ours.”

“But if raking leaves was hard for three people, it must be really hard for one!” William thought. Pat’s wife,



Pam, had just had surgery, so Pat would have to rake his leaves by himself.

Mum always said, “When we’re helping, we’re happy!” and William thought that probably meant helping Pat, even though they were already tired from raking their own leaves.

William looked over at Chloé and Amelia, who were building tiny twig houses in the grass. “Should we go help Pat?” he asked. “We can help him finish pretty fast.”

Chloé and Amelia agreed and followed William.

“Want some help?” Amelia asked as they walked around the bushes into Pat’s yard.

“I sure would! But you kids have been raking all afternoon. I bet you’re tired.”

“That’s OK,” William said. “We want to help. After all, when we’re helping, we’re happy!”

As they worked, Pat told the kids fun stories from his life. Pat was from India, but he had lived all over Asia and Africa.

After the leaves were bagged, William looked over and noticed the apples scattered around the two tall apple trees in Pat’s yard. Their work wasn’t quite done yet. William stooped down and started gathering apples. He sorted the rotten ones from the good ones as he went along. Chloé and Amelia ran over to put the apples in piles.

Pat rolled his old green wheelbarrow out from the shed. “Let’s put the rotten ones in here. Then you can take the good ones home with you.”

“That’s OK, Pat. We don’t need to take your apples,” William said.

“I want to give them to you,” Pat said. “After all, when I’m giving, I’m happy!”

That night during dinner, the children told Mum and Dad how much fun they’d had helping Pat and hearing his stories.

Suddenly William had an idea. “I know what we can do with the apples he gave us!” He jumped up and grabbed a copy of the *Liahona* from the bookshelf. “I think Pat and Pam would really like this,” William said, turning to a recipe for apple cake. “And like Pat said today, when we’re giving, we’re happy!”

“Let’s make a cake for our other neighbors too!” Chloé said.

William grinned. He thought about all the people he could meet and the exciting stories he could hear. And all that through just a bit of kindness. And a bit of cake. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

# The Sacrament: A Reminder of Jesus

By Erin Sanderson

On the night before Jesus was crucified, He asked two of His disciples to prepare an evening meal. Then He invited His Apostles to come. At that meal, called the Last Supper, Jesus gave His disciples a special way to always remember Him. We can read about it in the New Testament:

“And [Jesus] took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which

is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

“Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19–20).

When we eat and drink the sacrament, we are doing the same thing the Apostles did at the Last Supper. The bread reminds us of Christ’s body and how He suffered for us physically. The water

reminds us of His blood that was shed for us.

The sacrament prayers also remind us of the promises we make when we are baptized—to always remember Jesus Christ. When you listen to the sacrament prayers, think about what you did that week to remember Jesus. How can you remember Him in the coming week? ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*



## LEARN MORE

At the Last Supper, Jesus taught His Apostles some important things:

- He washed their feet to teach them about loving and serving others.
- He said, “Love one another; as I have loved you” (John 13:34).
- He prayed that they would teach others the gospel.
- He sang a hymn with them.
- He promised that the Holy Ghost could be with them (see John 14:26–27).

## A BOOKMARK REMINDER

Cut out this bookmark and glue it to heavy paper. Keep it in your scriptures so you can look at it during the sacrament. You could use it to mark the sacrament prayers in Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79.

### FAMILY TALK

Look at some of the sacrament hymns in the hymnbook. Talk about the messages in the hymns. How does singing the sacrament hymn prepare us to take the sacrament? As a family, make a goal to think about the messages of the sacrament hymns when you sing them in church.

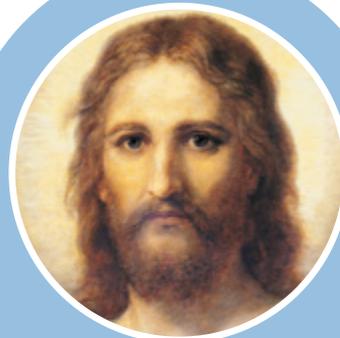
**Song:** "To Think about Jesus" (*Children's Songbook*, 71)

**Scripture:** Luke 22:19

**Video:** Go to [Biblevideos.org](http://Biblevideos.org) to watch "The Last Supper"

### SCRIPTURE TIP

Most of the hymns have scripture references listed at the bottom of the page. Many songs in the *Children's Songbook* have scriptures too. Read the scriptures that go along with the songs to help the words in the songs mean more.



What are some of the miracles that Jesus Christ performed?

How did Jesus treat others?

Is there someone I need to forgive?

Is there something I need to repent of?

What can I do to remember Jesus this week?

How can I follow Him?

# A New Feeling

By Francislaine Urquidi Farfan Vasser

Based on a true story

*“The Spirit whispers this to me  
and tells me it is true”*

(Children’s Songbook, 5).



Gabriel loved learning about Jesus. He loved hearing stories from the scriptures. His family read the scriptures together every night.

One rainy night they

snuggled together in their warm home. Papa said a prayer. Then Mama read stories from the Book of Mormon. Gabriel tried to listen very carefully. Mama read about Jesus

talking to children.

“Mama, the children were with Jesus?” Gabriel asked.

“That’s right,” she said. “And He blessed each of them and prayed for them.”



Gabriel felt a new feeling inside. He did not know what it was. He felt warm even though it was chilly outside. He smiled big.

Gabriel wanted to share this special feeling. "I feel so happy and warm!" he said. He was so happy that he almost felt like crying!

"That special feeling is the Holy Ghost," Papa told him. "He gives you a warm feeling to help you know that the scriptures are true."



Mama smiled and hugged Gabriel. "That feeling tells you that Jesus loves you."

"Jesus blesses me," Gabriel said. "Just like the children in the Book of Mormon! He sent the Holy Ghost to me!"

He couldn't stop smiling. "I know the scriptures are true," he thought. "The Holy Ghost told me!" ■

*The author lives in São Paulo, Brazil.*



**By President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901)**

Fifth President of the Church

## A VISIT FROM THE SAVIOR

*It was right here that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me.*

*Editor’s Note: The following account was shared by LeRoi C. Snow, the son of President Lorenzo Snow. Brother Snow tells how, at age 85, his father was concerned he would be asked to succeed President Wilford Woodruff, who was ailing, as President of the Church. Following President Woodruff’s death on September 2, 1898, President Snow knelt at an altar in the Salt Lake Temple and pleaded with the Lord for guidance.*

After finishing his prayer, [my father] expected a reply, some special manifestation from the Lord. So he waited—and waited—and waited. There was no reply, no voice, no visitation, no manifestation. He left the altar and the room in great disappointment. Passing through the celestial room and out into the large corridor, a glorious manifestation was given President Snow which I relate in the words of his granddaughter, Allie Young Pond. . . .

“One evening while I was visiting Grandpa Snow in his room in the Salt Lake Temple, I remained until the door keepers had gone and the night watchmen had not yet come in, so grandpa said he would take me to the main front entrance and



let me out that way. . . . After we left his room and while we were still in the large corridor leading into the celestial room, I was walking several steps ahead of Grandpa when he stopped me and said: ‘Wait a moment, Allie, I want to tell you something. It was right here that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me at the time of the death of President Woodruff. He instructed me to go right ahead and reorganize the First Presidency of the Church at once and not wait as had been done after the death of the previous presidents, and that I was to succeed President Woodruff.’

“Then Grandpa came a step nearer and held out his left hand and said: ‘He stood right here, about three feet above the floor. It looked as though He stood on a plate of solid gold.’

“Grandpa told what a glorious personage the Savior is and described His hands, feet, countenance, and beautiful white robes, all of which were of such a glory of whiteness and brightness that he could hardly gaze upon Him.

“Then he came another step nearer and put his right hand on my head and said: ‘Now, Granddaughter, I want you to remember that this is the testimony of your grandfather, that he told you with his own lips that he actually saw the Savior, here in the temple, and talked with Him face to face.’”

. . . I related this experience in the Eighteenth Ward sacramental service. After the meeting Elder Arthur Winter told me he also had heard my father tell of the Savior’s appearance to him in the temple instructing him not only to reorganize the First Presidency at once but also to select the same counselors that President Woodruff had, Presidents George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith. ■

*From “An Experience of My Father’s,” Improvement Era, vol. 33, no. 11 (Sept. 1933), 677, 679; punctuation and capitalization modernized.*

# INSIGHTS



## **How do we judge whether worldly philosophies about the family are true?**

“The proclamation on the family has become our benchmark for judging the philosophies of the world, and I testify that the principles set forth within this statement are as true today as they were when they were given to us by a prophet of God nearly 20 years ago.”

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**Bonnie L. Oscarson**, Young Women general president, “Defenders of the Family Proclamation,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 14–15.

# Also in This Issue

## FOR YOUNG ADULTS

### I Felt the **Power of the Atonement** of Jesus Christ When. . . .

These young adults have learned that the Savior's Atonement expands beyond just repentance. Read their experiences in applying the Atonement in their lives.



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## FOR YOUTH



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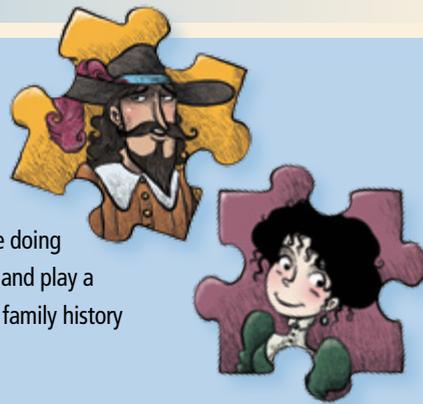
### BLESSED BY **SEMINARY**

Latter-day Saint youth from Belgium to Bolivia all have one thing in common—seminary! Read about youth who agree that seminary is worth the sacrifice (p. 60), and learn about how the new seminary graduation requirements can help strengthen your testimony (p. 62).

## FOR CHILDREN

### Lindsay's Family Puzzle

Have you ever thought that family history is a lot like doing a puzzle? Read about Lindsay's family puzzle (p. 70) and play a fun game with your family to learn more about your family history stories (p. 72)!



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