

# Liahona

Pointing Us All to Jesus Christ



## TO BUILD ZION

An Invitation to Each of Us, 6

## OVERCOMING PREJUDICE

What We Can Do, 38



# Asunción, Paraguay

Asunción is one of the oldest cities in South America. Home to about two million people, it is also the site of a temple. The first convert in Paraguay was baptized in 1948. Today the Church in this country has:



96,114 members



134 congregations



2 missions

## Across the Generations

In the village of Comunidad Tovacón, Walter and Rosario Flores enjoyed visits from their grandchildren. Since this photo was taken, however, Walter has passed away. "We are blessed to know that the gospel provides a way for families to be together for eternity," Rosario says.



PHOTOGRAPH OF STREET IN ASUNCION BY CHRISTIAN MOLINA



*"Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion;  
for all flesh is in mine hands."*

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 101:16



CHILDREN OF LIGHT, BY ANNIE MARIE OBORN

## *Respect for All of God's Children*

President Russell M. Nelson has urged us to “expand our circle of love to embrace the whole human family” (*Teachings of Russell M. Nelson* [2018], 83). With so much diversity among God’s children, how can we create a community where all people live in harmony?

In his article “Bring Forth Zion” (page 6), Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invites us to unify our hearts and minds as we invite all to come unto Christ. “Overcoming Racism and Prejudice: We Can Build Bridges” (page 38) can help us in our effort to become one. Certainly, becoming one starts with making and keeping covenants with our Heavenly Father. Learn more in “Covenants, Ordinances, and Blessings” by Elder Randy D. Funk of the Seventy (page 30).

Not only is creating unity in our diversity a commandment (see John 17:21; Doctrine and Covenants 38:27), but also it’s an opportunity for us to learn from and be blessed by our brothers and sisters of other cultures, ethnicities, and experiences. We hope this month’s issue helps all of us live more united in Christ.

Sincerely,

Elder Walter F. González  
Of the Seventy  
Adviser to the *Liahona*



"The invitation to gather and bless those on both sides of the veil, build Zion, and prepare the world for our Savior's Second Coming includes each of us."

—Elder Gerrit W. Gong, page 8

FEATURE

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COVER



Photographs below Christ statue by Cody Bell and Leslie Nilsson

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**The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:**

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By Bradley R. Wilcox

### Returning Home Early—What I Learned from Zion's Camp

By Rebecca Cowley

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## CONNECT MORE

Find issues of the magazine at [liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org). Use the link on that page to share questions, feedback, and experiences.

Additionally, you can reach us through email at [liahona@ChurchofJesusChrist.org](mailto:liahona@ChurchofJesusChrist.org) or by mail at:  
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**By Elder  
Gerrit W. Gong**  
Of the Quorum  
of the Twelve  
Apostles

# Bring Forth Zion

*As Latter-day Saints blessed with the restored gospel, we are called to strengthen the Church and build Zion.*

Throughout history, the Lord's people have sought to bring forth a gospel society where He can dwell. To become such a community of Saints, we must learn to sanctify and unify our hearts and minds, deal justly without contention and disputation, and dwell in righteousness with no poor among us (see Moses 7:18).

For example, after John and Maria Linford joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Gravely, England, in 1842, John became president of the local branch. Relatives and friends, however, did not share the joy the Linfords found in the Restoration. If they could not persuade John to give up his new religion, then they would “starve him to it” by boycotting his shoemaking business.

In 1856 the Perpetual Emigrating Fund gave John and Maria an opportunity to immigrate to the Salt Lake Valley. They sailed to New York with three of their sons. From there they traveled to Iowa City, Iowa, from which they left in July 1856 with the ill-fated James G. Willie handcart company.

Early on October 21, near the banks of the Sweetwater River in Wyoming, John spoke his last words.

“I am glad we came,” he told Maria when she asked him if he was sorry they had left England. “I shall not live to reach Salt Lake, but you and the boys will, and I do not regret all we have gone through if our boys can grow up and raise their families in Zion.”<sup>1</sup>



## What Is Zion?

Few topics outside the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ have inspired ancient and modern prophets and Saints more than the latter-day gathering of the house of Israel and the building of Zion in preparation for the Savior's Second Coming.<sup>2</sup>

Why is Zion so important to Latter-day Saints—then and now, wherever the Lord's people are found?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles declared, “From the day of Adam to the present moment—whenever the Lord has had a people of his own; whenever there have been those who have hearkened to his voice and kept his commandments; whenever his saints have served him with full purpose of heart—there has been Zion.”<sup>3</sup>

The scriptures describe a Zion society. Enoch, a prophet of great faith during Noah's day, “built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion” (Moses 7:19). The Lord dwelt there with His people, blessing them and their land (see Moses 7:16–18). The Lord said unto Enoch, “Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name” (Moses 7:35).

An aspiration of Zion is to establish a united place of faith founded on the celestial principles of heaven, wherein God's people can walk with Him and God Himself can find abode.

The Book of Mormon testifies that after the resurrected Savior visited the New World, “the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land. . . .

“And they had all things in common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift. . . .

“And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people” (4 Nephi 1:2, 3, 15).

## Armed with Righteousness and Power

Enoch's day was a time of war, bloodshed, fear, darkness, and hate—when “the power of Satan was upon all the face of the earth” (Moses 7:24; see also verses 16, 17, 33). But Enoch was faithful, and the Lord called him to cry repentance.



The Lord told Enoch that similar “great tribulations” (Moses 7:61) will precede His Second Coming. “As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah” (Moses 7:60).

Of our day, President Russell M. Nelson recently observed, “I view the current [COVID-19] pandemic as only one of many ills that plague our world, including hate, civil unrest, racism, violence, dishonesty, and lack of civility.”<sup>4</sup> Yet, we have prophetic assurance. President Nelson has also said:

“We live in the day that ‘our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation.’ [Doctrine and Covenants 121:27.] We have front-row seats to *witness live* what the prophet Nephi saw *only in vision*, that ‘the power of the Lamb of God’ would descend ‘upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.’ [1 Nephi 14:14.]

“*You*, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw.”<sup>5</sup>

The invitation to gather and bless those on both sides of the veil, build Zion, and prepare the world for

our Savior’s Second Coming includes each of us. “Of all the people who have ever lived on planet earth,” said President Nelson, “*we* are the ones who get to participate in this final, great gathering event.”<sup>6</sup>

### How Do We Get There?

As Latter-day Saints blessed with the restored gospel, we are “called to labor in [the Lord’s] vineyard, and to build up [His] church, and to bring forth Zion” (Doctrine and Covenants 39:13). That work requires love, unity, faith, service, sacrifice, and obedience.

“When people love God with all their hearts and righteously strive to become like Him, there is less strife and contention in society. There is more unity,” said Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He added: “*Unity* is . . . a broad, comprehensive term but most certainly exemplifies the first and second great commandments to love God and love our fellowmen. It denotes a Zion people whose hearts and minds are ‘knit together in unity’ [Mosiah 18:21].”<sup>7</sup>

With that love and unity, we exercise faith to draw upon our Savior’s Atonement, which can transform us as we purify our hearts and lives (see Mosiah 3:19; Doctrine and



Covenants 97:21). We gather those willing to come unto the Lord in righteousness. Through sacred ordinances and celestial principles, we invite the power of godliness into our lives (see Doctrine and Covenants 105:5). Consecrated by covenant belonging with God and each other, we build Zion and prepare for the Second Coming.

“Charity is the pure love of Christ,” said President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. “And it is faith in Him and the full effects of His infinite Atonement that will qualify you, and those you love and serve, for the supernal gift to live in that sociality of a long-looked-for and promised Zion.”<sup>8</sup>

### Prepare for the Days to Come

Modern prophets teach that coming unto the Savior is a matter of individual commitment, not physical location.

“In the early days of the Church, conversion often meant emigration as well,” President Nelson has explained. “But now the gathering takes place in each nation. The Lord has decreed the establishment of Zion in each realm where He has given His Saints their birth and nationality.”<sup>9</sup>

As we embrace the challenge and blessing of building Zion in our families, branches, wards, stakes, and

communities, we look with John and Maria Linford toward the day when our children and grandchildren “can grow up and raise their families in Zion” among every nation, kindred, and tongue.

As we seek first the Lord and His righteousness, we pray “that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 65:5). ■

### NOTES

1. See Andrew D. Olsen, *The Price We Paid: The Extraordinary Story of the Willie and Martin Handcart Pioneers* (2006), 45–46, 136–37.
2. See Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org).
3. Bruce R. McConkie, “Come: Let Israel Build Zion,” *Ensign*, May 1977, 116–17.
4. Russell M. Nelson, in Sarah Jane Weaver, “President Nelson Invites Us to Give Thanks,” Nov. 20, 2020, [thechurchnews.com](https://www.thechurchnews.com).
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Hear Him,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 88.
6. Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel.”
7. Quentin L. Cook, “Hearts Knit in Righteousness and Unity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 18, 19.
8. Henry B. Eyring, “Sisters in Zion,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 69.
9. Russell M. Nelson, “The Gathering of Scattered Israel,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 81.

# General Conference: A Worldwide Church Meeting

*We listen to prophets and other Church leaders during general conference. They teach us what God wants us to hear.*



**E**ach April and October, the Church holds a series of meetings called general conference. Leaders teach and testify about Jesus Christ and His gospel. General conference is held in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, and is broadcast throughout the world in over 80 languages. All members and any other interested people are invited to listen to the talks.

## The First Church Conferences

The Church was officially organized during a meeting on April 6, 1830 (see Doctrine and Covenants 20). The first general conference was held on June 9, 1830. Since then, general conferences have been held under the direction of the President of the Church wherever members could gather. In the 1840s, leaders began holding conference twice a year.

## How Conferences Are Organized Today

The First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and other Church leaders speak during general conference. The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square and other Church choirs provide music. Each conference has five sessions: three on Saturday and two on Sunday.



## Teachings of Leaders

In the months before conference, Church leaders pray about what to teach. The Lord inspires them to know what they should say. They teach gospel truths and invite us to keep God's commandments. They also testify of Jesus Christ and encourage us to follow Him.

## Learning from Conference

Before general conference, we can pray to hear what the Lord wants us to learn. As we listen to the talks, the Spirit will teach us what we need to know. After conference, the talks appear on [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org), in the Gospel Library app, and in the *Liahona*. We can prayerfully study the talks to learn more about Jesus Christ and His gospel.

## FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Jesus Christ taught that we should meet together often (see 3 Nephi 18:22). When Church members worship together, the Lord will be with them (see Matthew 18:20).

The Lord commanded Church members to "instruct and edify each other" (Doctrine and Covenants 43:8).

As Church members show faith in Christ, His Spirit will be with them as they meet (see Doctrine and Covenants 44:2).

## Also in This Issue

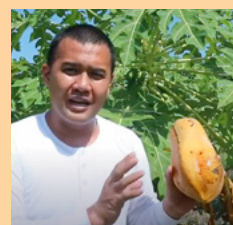
We hope you have enjoyed learning about general conference. Here are some other gospel words from this issue:

### ***Vicarious work:***

Performing an ordinance, such as baptism, in the temple for those who didn't have the chance to receive it when they were alive (see page 14).



***Self-reliant:*** To do your best to provide for your own needs (page 18).



***Parable:*** A story that helps us learn an important lesson (page 27).



## My Client or My Calling?

By Carlos Marx Barbosa Guzmán, Guerrero, Mexico

*As I tried to fulfill my priesthood responsibilities, the Lord showed me that He was aware of my financial situation.*

When I was called as elders quorum president in 2000, only seven elders were attending priesthood meeting. Also, we weren't doing a good job of making our home teaching—now ministering—visits.

I knew we faced a great challenge to inspire the elders to step up. So, for starters, we decided to reorganize assignments and increase supervision.

Because I am a self-employed attorney, I travel a lot. I am very busy, but I wanted to fulfill my priesthood responsibilities.

One day, I had to travel by bus to another city to follow up with a client. Because my finances were tight, I hoped that my client would agree to pay me an advance.

On the way to catch the bus, I decided to go see some quorum members and encourage them to visit their families. Some had forgotten but committed to do so. Others committed to finish their visits that very week.

I was so excited by their commitments that I decided to visit and encourage other quorum members. Before I knew it, it was past

noon. So, instead of leaving town, I decided to go to my office to review the client's case.

To my surprise, when I arrived at my office, my client was standing outside with another person. I explained to my client that I was about to review his case and would have a report for him the next day. He said he had come to introduce me to a new client. After his friend and I had talked, we agreed on a fee for me to help him solve his legal matter. Then, suddenly, my client offered to pay me an advance.

For me, that was a miracle. Heavenly Father knew I was trying to be faithful to Him. He also knew my needs. He has blessed me in many ways over the years, but this time His blessing came financially. He fulfilled His word in the scriptures to those who serve Him: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

And our elders quorum? The Lord blessed us as we moved ahead with a unified spirit. Our home teaching soon rose to 100 percent, and our priesthood attendance increased to 35 faithful elders.

I testify that we can all be instruments in the work of the Lord and find joy and blessings in serving Him by serving others. ■





# Light to Protect Us

By Chelsey Bressler Beesley, Idaho, USA

*The driver never got out of his truck, but I knew that he had come to protect us.*

On a cold winter night in February, my two children and I, along with my mother, Jo Ann, were driving to Idaho. Our eight-hour drive included driving through two mountain passes. During this time of year, the weather can be brutal.

We had just left Baker City, Oregon, when it began to snow. As we drove, the snowflakes grew bigger and bigger. Within minutes, as we drove through a mountain pass, I could not see anything in front of me, so I pulled over. I prayed to Heavenly Father to help me get my family to safety. After I prayed, a semitruck pulled up behind us, stopping within inches of my bumper.

The driver never got out of his truck, and I never saw his face. But I knew at that moment that he had come to protect us. By parking behind us, he used his truck lights

to alert other drivers that we had pulled over. When I finally got the courage to continue driving, we pulled back onto the road behind



another semitruck while the first semitruck stayed behind us. We drove between the two trucks as they guided us out of danger.

As we left the mountain pass, the snow turned to rain. I wanted to thank the driver behind us, but as soon as we were out of the pass,

I couldn't see him. By then, I knew we were going to be OK and would make it home safe and sound, which we did.

I have never been so scared in my life. I am grateful that Heavenly Father sent guardian angels to protect

***"I have never been so scared in my life," says Chelsey, pictured with her mother, Jo Ann Bressler, and her sons, Wyatt and Adam.***

us, ease our worries, and give me the strength and courage I needed to bring my family home.

Ironically, I am the daughter of a truck driver. Heavenly Father answered my prayer by sending us protectors in the form of truck drivers. My testimony grew much that night—not only of prayer but also that He is with us always and forever. ■



# Help from the Other Side of the Veil

By Ailin Chacón Sanchez de Balmaceda, San Juan, Argentina

*As I lay in pain in the hospital, I felt alone until I remembered my beloved ancestors.*

In 2017, I became pregnant with our first child. My husband, Lucas, and I were excited but scared for the arrival of little Juan Lionel.

Late one night at the beginning of February 2018, I began having contractions. I was only eight months along, but it looked like our baby would come earlier than expected. We grabbed a few things and quickly left for the clinic. I didn't feel ready to go into labor, but I prayed, asking God that His will be done despite our fears.

When we arrived at the clinic, my gynecologist was notified but said he would not arrive until later. My husband called and texted messages to our parents and siblings, but none of them were awake. He continued calling and texting throughout the

night, but no one responded. That made me feel very lonely.

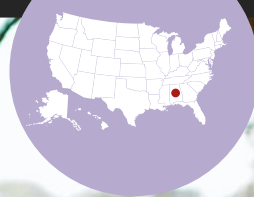
As the pain from my contractions increased, I felt more and more alone. Suddenly, however, something wonderful happened. I began to think of my ancestors—especially my maternal grandmother, Rosa Mercado, and her mother, Javiera Balmaceda.

As I remembered them, I felt in my heart and mind that they were both with me at that moment. I felt their presence in such a strong and sweet way that I cannot fully express in words what I experienced. I did not see them, but I felt them nearby, giving me courage, support, and love as my mothers and as part of my family. I felt that they were angels ministering to me in my time of need.

Years before in the temple, my mother, father, siblings, husband, and I did their vicarious work and the vicarious work of other ancestors. I feel that the courage I received and the feeling I had that my ancestors were near was a gift through the power and authority of God.

Since then, I have felt the spirit of my ancestors on other occasions, helping me and guiding me as a mother and a wife and in other important aspects of my life.

I testify that God will never leave us alone on the path of our lives. If we do His work, we will be given help from the other side of the veil. We will receive love, knowledge, strength, and the peace “which passeth all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). ■



# We're Not Afraid Anymore

By Christie Jamison

*I had what I always thought I wanted in life, but our family was struggling spiritually. Then our son Jesse was diagnosed with leukemia. His illness, however, led to the best thing that ever happened to us. It rekindled my faith in the gospel and helped bring my family into the Church. We would be devastated if Jesse's cancer returned, but now we have an eternal perspective. Now we're sealed as a family. The gospel has changed us forever.*

READ MORE  
of the Jamisons' story  
in the Gospel Library or  
by using the QR code:



# Teaching about Keeping Covenants and Building Zion

## Dear Parents,

In this issue, we hope you enjoy the articles on keeping covenants, building Zion, recognizing Satan's tactics, and more. This page has ideas for using this issue to help you teach these topics to your family.

## GOSPEL DISCUSSIONS

### *Covenants and Blessings*

What are covenants, and what does it mean to make a covenant? In his article on page 30, Elder Randy D. Funk of the Seventy answers these questions. Use this article to help you discuss the following questions with your family: What covenants have you made already, and which are you preparing to make? How can we better keep our covenants? What blessings have you received from making covenants?



### *Building Zion*

Ask your children what they think *Zion* means. Then use Elder Gerrit W. Gong's article "Bring Forth Zion" on page 6 to help them learn more about what Zion means both in the past and today. Consider discussing ways your family can help build Zion within your home and in your community.

### *Defending against Satan*

Identify some key points and quotes from "Knowing the Tactics of Our Enemy" on page 20 and discuss with your family some ways Satan might tempt them. Discuss some ways you can work together to strengthen each other against these temptations.

### *Come, Follow Me Study Helps*

See page 26 for articles on different topics in *Come, Follow Me* to support your study of the Doctrine and Covenants this month.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEXANDRE BORGES

## COME, FOLLOW ME FAMILY FUN

### *Blessings from the Temple*

#### *Doctrine and Covenants 109*

The Kirtland Temple was dedicated on March 27, 1836. Many spiritual experiences were recorded from this event.

1. Read through a few of the accounts from the "Voices of the Restoration" section at the end of the September 27–October 3 lesson in the *Come, Follow Me* manual.
2. Younger children could draw a picture of the Kirtland Temple.
3. Talk about what it would have felt like to participate in the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. What details from the accounts stand out to you?
4. Sing "The Spirit of God" (*Hymns*, no. 2), which was written for this temple dedication.

**Discussion:** Why are temples important to you? Share spiritual experiences you have had because of temples.

*Idea submitted by Mitzi Schoneman*

## IN THIS MONTH'S FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH MAGAZINE

### "Dress Distress"

A young woman talks about choosing to dress modestly while participating in a fashion show. Consider reading this with your children and discussing why we choose to dress modestly.

### "God Will Fight Your Battles—in His Way"

Sometimes it can be hard to understand why the miracles we want don't come. Read this article with your children to help them understand why God doesn't provide everything we

want or think we need. You might ask your children questions like, What miracles did the members of Zion's Camp expect but not receive? What blessings came from this situation?

### "Building the Best You"

Use this article to help children see how they can build happy and joyful lives. You might discuss with them how they are trying to build their future happiness and then read this article. Discuss how they can use the five things mentioned in the article to have a joyful future.



## IN THIS MONTH'S FRIEND MAGAZINE

### "Scripture Time Fun"

Do this activity with your children each week to supplement your family's *Come, Follow Me* study. For young children, look for ideas in the "For Little Ones" section.

### Being a Peacemaker

Read "Saying the Nice Things" to find out how a new home evening tradition helped Jonathan be a peacemaker in his family.

### "Church History Cards"

Did you know that Desideria Yáñez from Mexico was the first person to receive a Book of Mormon in Spanish? Look for this month's Church History Cards to learn more!

### Scripture Story from the Doctrine and Covenants

Read this month's illustrated story to teach your children about the Kirtland Temple.

### "Conference Notebook"

Find activity pages for your children to color while they watch general conference next month.



# Helping Others Prepare for Unexpected Needs

*As ministering brothers and sisters, we can help our brothers and sisters prepare for an uncertain world.*

**P**andemics, natural disasters, economic downturns, political upheaval, and violent conflicts—the world has seen plenty of these in the past year. In addition to these large-scale events, we also face unexpected challenges in our personal lives, such as illness, divorce, loss of income, and so forth.

Our efforts to prepare for the unexpected can provide safety and security for ourselves and others. What can we do as ministering brothers and sisters to help those we love weather the unexpected storms in their lives?

Carlomagno Aguilar from Angeles, Philippines, provides just one example. When he learned that his area would be going into quarantine because of the COVID-19 pandemic, he hurried to buy supplies—although his list was different from those around him. He had a plan to be prepared, buying seeds and fertilizer for his home garden.

To be more self-reliant, Carlomagno has been an urban farmer for years. He also ministers

to his neighbors, both by giving them produce from his garden and by teaching them to grow their own food. He also created an online channel where his tips and tutorials are available to everyone, helping his brothers and sisters become more self-reliant and prepared for the future.

Bishop W. Christopher Waddell, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, taught: “As we embrace spiritual principles and seek inspiration from the Lord, we will be guided to know the Lord’s will for us, individually and as families, and how best to apply the important principles of temporal preparedness. The most important step of all is to begin” (“There Was Bread,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 44–45).

Helping each other be prepared in such an uncertain world is a basic way to show Christlike love. Let’s help each other take that “most important step” to begin.

## Suggestions for Helping Others

As always, ministering begins with prayerful consideration and counseling together. The following suggestions can help you think through how you or those you minister to could begin preparing to meet unexpected challenges.

1. **Think holistically.** We can prepare in a variety of ways for different areas of our lives. It’s important to store and produce food as you are able, prepare financially, develop strong emotional resiliency, and make plans for emergency situations.
2. **Discuss challenges that are most likely to occur where you live and how to address them.** Different areas around the world have unique challenges. If you live somewhere where earthquakes are common, discuss how you can prepare your home to help you stay safe, such as securing heavy furniture to the wall. Or if you live somewhere where typhoons are common, discuss how to respond in that situation, such as keeping a radio on for news or evacuating to high ground.



*Carlomagno Aguilar started an online channel to teach about urban farming.*



3. **Discuss how to create an emergency fund.** Saving money can help you if you lose your job or have additional unexpected expenses. Talk about how to save money, such as by starting small and saving a little each time you are paid until you reach your goal.
4. **Gather supplies for an emergency kit together.** Having an emergency kit can help you be prepared if you need to leave your home for a brief period. Work together to think through and gather needed items. This can be done over a period of time. Consider shelter, light, money, food and water, medical supplies, communication, critical documents, a change of clothing, entertainment and comfort items (games, books, toys for children), and any other needs.

5. **Build a friendship with the person you serve.** It's important to have strong coping skills for managing the emotions that come with difficulty. One of these skills is to have healthy relationships. As you strengthen your friendship with the person, you will be helping them to create a support system.
6. **Talk about food storage.** It can be helpful to have extra food on hand for emergencies. Encourage each other to start by building a short-term supply that you use and replenish in your regular cooking. Then start working on gathering long-term staples. If you don't have much space for food storage or if you're prohibited by law from storing large amounts of food, just store as much as is appropriate for your circumstances. ■

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

You can learn more about these tips and additional ways to help others become more self-reliant by visiting [ChurchofJesusChrist.org/self-reliance](https://ChurchofJesusChrist.org/self-reliance). Click on "Manuals and Videos" to see the different self-reliance courses.

# Knowing the Tactics of Our Enemy

*Being aware of the enemy's tactics can help disciples of Jesus Christ draw upon His power and strength to defeat Satan and his followers in the battles that lie ahead.*



By Joseph G. Richardson

**W**hen I served in the military, one of the first things I learned was the importance of knowing about the enemy in order to effectively fight against them. I spent time studying the tactics and strategies of enemies so that I would be able to develop plans to out-smart and defeat them in case we met in battle.

Because our spiritual enemies, Satan and his followers, are invisible to us, we tend to forget that they are watching us and trying to tempt us. President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901) of the First Presidency cautioned: “I have come to the conclusion that if our eyes were open to see the spirit world around us, . . . we would not be so unguarded and careless and so indifferent whether we had the spirit and power of God with us or not; but we would be continually watchful and prayerful to our Heavenly Father for His Holy Spirit and His holy angels to be around about us to strengthen us to overcome every evil influence.”<sup>1</sup>

Understanding the power and abilities of the devil can help us recognize the potential damage and destruction that he and his followers seek to inflict upon us. We must constantly be aware and prepare our defensive and offensive tactics to avoid falling victim to temptations and enticements.





### The battle began in the premortal life.

When we fought in the War in Heaven, we did not fight with rifles and bombs but with testimony and conviction. President Russell M. Nelson taught: “This war in heaven was not a war of bloodshed. It was a war of conflicting ideas—the beginning of contention.”<sup>2</sup>

The followers of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ came to earth with mortal bodies. Satan and his followers are also on earth but as spirits.<sup>3</sup> The war that began in the premortal existence did not end. Since the time of Adam, Satan and his vast army have continued to battle against those who supported the Father and His plan of salvation. Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stated: “The war of good against evil will continue throughout our lives since the adversary’s purpose is to make all people as miserable as he is. Satan and his angels will try to shroud our thoughts and assert control

by tempting us to sin. If they can, they will corrupt all that is good. Nevertheless, it is essential to understand that they will have power over us only if we allow it.”<sup>4</sup>

The forces of evil are not small in number. With “a third part of the hosts of heaven” (Doctrine and Covenants 29:36) being cast out of heaven along with Satan, numerous spirits are under his command. “We are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls” (Helaman 13:37).

Just as with war on earth, by learning what we can about opposing spiritual forces—their capabilities, strengths and weaknesses, and motivations—we can prepare to effectively fight against them. We can learn a few key tactics Satan uses by studying scriptures and words of modern prophets.

## 1. The enemy places emphasis on attacking the strongest opponents.

President George A. Smith (1817–75) of the First Presidency illustrated this when he told this Chinese fable:

“A man, traveling through the country, came to a large city, very rich and splendid; he looked at it and said to his guide, ‘This must be a very righteous people, for I can only see but one little devil in this great city.’

“The guide replied, ‘You do not understand, sir; this city is so perfectly given up to wickedness . . . that it only requires one devil to keep them all in subjection.’

“Traveling on a little farther he came to a rugged path and saw an old man trying to get up the hill side, surrounded by seven great, big, coarse looking devils.

“‘Why,’ says the traveler, ‘this must be a tremendously wicked old man, only see how many devils there are around him.’

“‘This,’ replied the guide, ‘is the only righteous man in the country and there are seven of the biggest devils trying to turn him out of his path and they all cannot do it.’”<sup>5</sup>

If Satan can lead away a member of the Church, he

gains a greater victory than he does over one who has never made any covenants with God. Elder Larry R. Lawrence, an emeritus member of the Seventy, taught: “The devil targets all men, but especially those who have the most potential for eternal happiness. He is clearly jealous of anyone who is on the pathway to exaltation.”<sup>6</sup>

An even more decisive battle is won by the enemy if a leader of the Church is overcome by the adversary. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) wrote: “Satan wants all men, but especially is he anxious for the leading men who have influence. Perhaps he might try much harder to claim men who are likely to be his greatest opposition, men in high places who could persuade many others not to become servants to Satan.”<sup>7</sup>

Knowing that Satan will put his forces on his strongest opponents can help us prepare to face battles throughout life. We can be motivated to continually put up defenses against our spiritual enemy.

Knowing this can also help us as we share the gospel with our friends and family. Elder Ronald A.

Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve

Apostles said: “We are at war with Satan for the souls of men. The battle lines were drawn

in our pre-earth life. Satan and a third of our Father in Heaven’s children turned away from His promises of exaltation. Since that time, the adversary’s minions have been fighting the faithful who choose the Father’s plan.”<sup>8</sup>



As we share the gospel knowing that everyone will also likely be experiencing their own battles against Satan, we can be better prepared to recognize those battles and to join others in fighting against him regardless of their beliefs.

## 2. Satan and his evil forces will try to stop events of spiritual significance.

Consider these examples from the scriptures:

- Satan exerted great pressure on Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, believing that in doing so, he could destroy the plan of salvation before it could progress any further (see Moses 4:6–12).
- Just after Moses saw God face to face, “Satan cried with a loud voice, and ranted upon the earth, and commanded” Moses to worship him (Moses 1:19).
- After Christ had fasted for 40 days and communed with Heavenly Father, Satan tried to tempt Christ to misuse His power (see Matthew 4:2–11; Luke 4:1–13).
- Joseph Smith was overcome by darkness just before Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him to begin the Restoration of the gospel on the earth (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–17).

Many others throughout the scriptures and throughout time have had compelling evil pressures placed upon them to stop their part in Heavenly Father’s plan.

In our lives, we should be aware that Satan or his followers will place emphasis on gaining control in order to

stop a sacred event or the results of that event. How many of us have fallen to those temptations, experienced personal trials, or come up against a roadblock just before a spiritual event in our lives? Receiving a new calling, preparing to go to the temple, or participating in any other spiritual event rarely goes smoothly.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) once said, “When individuals are blessed with visions, revelations and great manifestations, look out, then the devil is nigh you, and you will be tempted in proportion to the vision, revelation, or manifestation you have received.”<sup>9</sup>

## 3. The devil’s motivation is pride.

In the premortal life, Satan said to Heavenly Father, “I will redeem all mankind . . . ; wherefore given me thine honor” (Moses 4:1). That pride led to his downfall and caused him to be cast out. Isaiah wrote:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . .





“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . .  
 “. . . I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:12–14).

We must be careful of our own pride and avoid allowing Satan to use it to tempt us. For example, Satan could use our pride to tempt us to be so offended by something someone says that we don’t return to church. Or he might use our pride to encourage us to focus more on being right than on listening and loving someone else.

### **Knowing Satan’s strategies can help us defeat him.**

Satan and his followers are trying to defeat us. We are surrounded by these enemies and are susceptible to their efforts every day of our lives. We should not underestimate their power or consider their cause too lightly.

Yet we have been prepared for this very battle since before our birth. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) once had a vision in which he learned that many choice spirits “received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the

Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men” (Doctrine and Covenants 138:56). Every person on this earth chose to follow Heavenly Father’s plan in the premortal life and can do so again.

Our Heavenly Father knew that these last days would be full of danger, corruption, and treachery. To defeat Satan and his experienced, powerful forces in the final conflicts prior to the Savior’s Second Coming, we must strive to be some of God’s strongest and most faithful daughters and sons. ■

*The author lives in Arizona, USA.*

#### **NOTES**

1. George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth*, sel. Jerreld L. Newquist (1987), 64–65.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “The Canker of Contention,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 69.
3. See Gospel Topics, “War in Heaven,” [topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).
4. Ulisses Soares, “Yes, We Can and Will Win!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 75.
5. George A. Smith, “Discourse,” *Deseret News*, Nov. 11, 1857, 287.
6. Larry R. Lawrence, “The War Goes On,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2017, 35; *Liahona*, Apr. 2017, 33.
7. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 175.
8. Ronald A. Rasband, “Build a Fortress of Spirituality and Protection,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 108.
9. Brigham Young, “Discourse,” *Deseret News*, Feb. 27, 1856, 402.

# Caroline Was Willing to Share

By Matthew C. Godfrey

Church History Department

*How much money was Caroline Tippetts willing to donate to help buy land in Zion?*



Caroline Tippetts and her family worked hard, both physically and spiritually. Caroline's brothers worked in sawmills, helping shape the lumber that was abundant in the state of New York, USA, where they lived. Their family had joined the Church in 1832. Now one of her brothers, Alvah, led the branch of Saints in their area.

In 1834, Alvah had told them about a revelation the Lord had given to the Prophet Joseph Smith asking members to donate or loan money to help “establish Zion” (Doctrine and Covenants 101:74). Knowing that the Church needed to buy land where the Saints could gather, Caroline, age 21, agreed to give \$150 in cash and \$107 in property, which

was more than anyone else in the branch was donating.<sup>1</sup>

Caroline, her younger brother, Joseph, and one of their cousins stopped in Kirtland, Ohio, on their way to Missouri. They met with Joseph Smith and the Kirtland high council. A cloud of debt hung over the Church at this time, and the high council asked if Caroline would be willing to loan the Church some of her money. As the meeting notes state, “It was ascertained by the council [that] Sister Caroline Tippetts held \$149.75 of the money. . . . She was accordingly called into the council and expressed a willingness to loan the same.”<sup>2</sup>

Caroline saw the loan agreement signed by Joseph Smith, Oliver

Cowdery, and Frederick Williams. But she probably didn't see Joseph and Oliver kneeling in prayer the next day, giving “thanks for the relief which the Lord had lately sent.”<sup>3</sup> Thanks to Caroline's willingness to share her resources, the Church was able to pay off some debt and continue building the Kirtland Temple. ■

You can read more about Caroline in this issue in the Gospel Library app or at [iahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://iahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

## NOTES

1. Currency converter tools suggest that Caroline's total donation was equivalent to over \$7,000 in today's money.
2. Minute Book 1, Nov. 28, 1834, 78, [josephsmithpapers.org](http://josephsmithpapers.org); spelling and punctuation standardized.
3. Joseph Smith, Journal, 1832–1834, Nov. 29, 1834, 87, [josephsmithpapers.org](http://josephsmithpapers.org).



## Doctrine and Covenants 94–97

In these sections we learn about the Lord's Command to the early Saints to build a temple.



### Scripture Study Activity

These scriptures describe some other blessings that come to the pure in heart:

- Psalm 24:3–5
- Jacob 3:1–2
- Doctrine and Covenants 56:18; 101:17–18; 136:11

### Discussion

What do you most appreciate about being able to attend the temple?

#### NOTE

1. David B. Haight, "Temples and Work Therein," *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 61.

# What Blessings Do the Pure in Heart Receive?

## "The Pure in Heart . . . Shall See God"

In section 97, the Lord promises that if the Saints build a temple and keep it pure, "all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God" (verse 16). After quoting this verse in a general conference talk, Elder David B. Haight (1906–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

"It is true that some have actually seen the Savior, but when one consults the dictionary, he learns that there are many other meanings of the word see, such as coming to know Him, discerning Him, recognizing Him and His work, perceiving His importance, or coming to understand Him.

"Such heavenly enlightenment and blessings are available to each of us."<sup>1</sup>

In what ways have you seen God manifest Himself in the temple?



ILLUSTRATION BY DAN BURR



# The Parable of the Nobleman: A Lesson in Obedience

**D**octrine and Covenants 101:43–62 presents a parable that was given to explain why the Saints had been driven out of Missouri.

## Do I ever question the commandments of God?

Have you, like the servants, ever wondered if a commandment was really necessary? This parable teaches us that the Lord's commandments protect us and help us live happy lives (see also Mosiah 2:41; Doctrine and Covenants 82:8–10).

What can we do if we don't see the need for a commandment?

- Study the topic and pray for the Lord to help us “feel that it is right” (Doctrine and Covenants 9:8).
- Remember times in the past when obedience brought blessings.<sup>1</sup>
- Act in faith, trusting that we will understand “after the trial of [our] faith” (Ether 12:6).

### NOTE

1. See Neil L. Andersen, “Spiritually Defining Memories,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 18–22.

In the parable, the servants start building a tower but then decide that “there is no need” for one (Doctrine and Covenants 101:49). But because they do not build the tower, they have no warning when an enemy breaks in and destroys the vineyard.

**A nobleman  
instructs his servants  
to plant a vineyard  
and build a hedge  
around the trees and  
a tower so that a  
watchman can look  
over the land.**

**Servants  
plant the vine-  
yard and build  
the hedge but  
decide not  
to build the  
tower.**

**An unforeseen  
enemy destroys  
the vineyard.**





# Zion's Camp— Preparing to Serve the Lord

After the group of Church members known as Zion's Camp had marched hundreds of miles to help their fellow Latter-day Saints, the Lord told Joseph Smith to disband the group, even though they thought they hadn't fulfilled their goal. Because of this, some called Zion's Camp a failure, but those who participated testified that their experiences prepared them for future service to the Lord.

During the long march, some of the camp members complained and spoke against the Prophet Joseph, but others were faithful to him and learned patience and obedience.

## DISCUSSION

What do you think it means to redeem Zion? (see Doctrine and Covenants 103:15).

**FEBRUARY 1834:**

Joseph Smith received a revelation to find at least 100 people to march to Missouri and help the Saints regain their land in Jackson County.

They marched between  
**20–40**  
miles (32 to 64 km) a day.

PONTIAC,  
MICHIGAN

KIRTLAND,  
OHIO

**8** of the first 12  
latter-day Apostles  
served in this camp.

About **205** men and  
**25** women and children  
participated.

Most traveled over **900** miles  
(1,450 km) through **4** states.

**13** Saints died from  
an outbreak of  
cholera in the camp.

The **2** groups that  
took different routes  
met up in June.

QUINCY

SALT RIVER  
SETTLEMENT

LIBERTY,  
MISSOURI

**ALL**

of the first latter-day  
Seventies were  
members of the camp.

**JUNE 1834:**

The Prophet Joseph received a revelation accepting the camp members' offering, and they disbanded.



# The Blessings of the Priesthood



## Discussion

When have you  
felt the power of  
the priesthood in  
your life?

"We sometimes overly associate the power of the priesthood with men in the Church. The priesthood is the power and authority of God given for the salvation and blessing of all—men, women, and children.

"A man may open the drapes so the warm sunlight comes into the room, but the man does not own the sun or the light or the warmth it brings. The blessings of the priesthood are infinitely greater than the one who is asked to administer the gift."

—Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Power in the Priesthood," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 92.



By Elder  
Randy D. Funk  
Of the Seventy

# Covenants, Ordinances, and Blessings

During my first semester of law school, my contracts class was taught by a distinguished professor who was very kind and gracious—when he was not in the classroom. In class, he was a master at teaching using the Socratic method—a method of teaching that involves asking probing questions in a way intended to develop critical thinking.

For most class periods we were assigned to read three legal decisions or cases. During class, a student was called upon to summarize the facts of the case and then describe the legal principles of contract law that the cases established. The unfortunate student was then subject to the professor's probing, twisting questions that followed. This was almost always a humbling experience.

The first time I was called upon, the cases dealt with a principle of contract law known as *unilateral acceptance*. As a result, I have never forgotten that principle.

## Offer and Acceptance

Among other things, to form a binding contract under the laws of man, there must be an offer and an acceptance. Generally, a contract is formed when one party makes an offer and the other party accepts the offer.

For some agreements, such as a contract to purchase real estate, the law requires that the offer and the acceptance be in writing. In other situations, the parties need only verbally agree. But for some agreements, the acceptance of an offer is made simply by performance. This is known as unilateral acceptance.

***We choose to accept  
God's offered blessings  
when we exercise our  
moral agency to receive  
ordinances and keep the  
associated covenants.***



For example, I might say to you, “If you bring me a dozen bananas, I will pay you \$100.” To accept my *generous* offer, you don’t need to sign an agreement or even say you will bring me bananas. You simply need to go to the store or marketplace, buy a dozen bananas, and bring them to me. Or, in some parts of the world, you might actually pick the bananas yourself. Either way, if you bring me a dozen bananas, I am contractually obligated to pay you \$100. Why? Because you accepted my offer by your performance.

### We Must Act

Covenants with our Heavenly Father work in much the same way. To receive the *generous* blessings He offers, we must act to accept them. There is not a negotiation followed by a signed acceptance. Instead, by our affirmative expressions and by acting in accordance with His will, including receiving essential ordinances, we show our desire and willingness to make covenants with Him. As we then keep our covenants by what we do, we qualify for the abundant blessings He has promised.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we learn:

“There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

“And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21).

The Savior taught, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

In other words, we accept our Heavenly Father’s offered blessing of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven not simply by what we say but also by what we do. And when we covenant with Him, He has assured us, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye *do* what I say.” He also made clear that if we do not do His will—if we don’t accept His offer—then we have no agreement: “When ye *do not* what I say, ye have no promise” (Doctrine and Covenants 82:10; emphasis added).

### Ordinances of Salvation and Exaltation

We enter into those covenants necessary for salvation and exaltation by receiving sacred ordinances. As stated in the *General Handbook*: “Members make covenants with God as they receive the ordinances of salvation and exaltation. . . . All who endure to the end in keeping their covenants will receive eternal life.”<sup>1</sup>

The ordinances of salvation and exaltation are baptism, confirmation and the gift of the Holy Ghost, Melchizedek Priesthood ordination for men, and the endowment and sealing ordinances of the temple.<sup>2</sup> Each of these five ordinances is performed vicariously in the temple for deceased ancestors because these ordinances are essential for all God’s children.

The record of Alma teaching at the Waters of Mormon illustrates the relationship among covenants, ordinances, and blessings. Notice how God, through His prophet, sets the conditions, describes the promised blessings, and declares how we may receive those blessings.

To those gathered at the Waters of Mormon who expressed a desire to come into the fold of God—*desire* being an important first step (see Alma 32:27)—Alma taught what was



***We accept our  
Heavenly Father’s  
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of eternal life not  
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by what we do.***



expected of them. They had to be “willing to bear one another’s burdens, . . . mourn with those that mourn; . . . comfort those that stand in need of comfort,” and “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places . . . even until death” (Mosiah 18:8, 9).

Alma then described their promised blessings: “Ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life” and that “the Lord . . . may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you” (Mosiah 18:9, 10).

What did the people need to do to accept those remarkable blessings? In Alma’s words: “You . . . [must be] baptized in the name of the Lord, as a *witness* before him that ye have entered into a *covenant* with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments” (Mosiah 18:10; emphasis added). Notice that the ordinance of baptism, a sacred act that most of us clearly remember, serves as a witness or evidence that we have entered into a covenant with God.

The people were so eager to do this that “they clapped their hands for joy, and exclaimed: This is the desire of our hearts” (Mosiah 18:11). They freely desired to enter into a covenant as they entered into the waters of baptism.

***When we partake  
of the sacrament,  
we testify and  
witness anew  
that we will  
always remember  
Jesus Christ and  
that we are will-  
ing to keep His  
commandments.***

Similarly, as we receive each of the other ordinances of salvation and exaltation, we receive additional promises of great blessings. The covenants we make are sacred and binding on us and with God. We choose to accept His offered blessings when we exercise our moral agency to receive ordinances and keep the associated covenants.

### **The Sacrament**

The ordinance of the sacrament invites us to remember the Savior and our covenants. When Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament among the Nephites, He gave priesthood power to His disciples and instructed them to “break bread and bless it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name” (3 Nephi 18:5).

We often think of partaking of the sacrament to renew our baptismal covenants. Though that is correct, notice the language used by the Savior. When He instructed His followers to partake of the bread, He said, “This shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shown unto you. And it



shall be a *testimony* unto the Father that ye do always remember me” (3 Nephi 18:7; emphasis added).

When they drank of the wine, He said, “This is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth *witness* unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you” (3 Nephi 18:10; emphasis added).

In other words, when we partake of the sacrament each week, we *testify* and *witness* anew that we will always remember Jesus Christ and that we are willing to keep His commandments. If we do always remember Him and keep His commandments, His Spirit will be with us (see 3 Nephi 18:7, 11).

### Blessings We Receive

Reflecting on the blessings that come to us as we partake of the sacrament, President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has observed: “Because it is broken and torn, each piece of bread is unique, just as the individuals who partake of it are unique. We all have different sins to repent of. We all have different needs to be strengthened through the Atonement of the

***Central to the great plan of happiness is a Savior, Jesus Christ, who makes up the difference and overcomes the unfairness.***

Lord Jesus Christ, whom we remember in this ordinance.”<sup>3</sup>

I have found it helpful to ponder verses 10, 12, and 14 of 3 Nephi 18. In each of these verses the Savior says to those who partake of the sacrament, “Blessed are ye,” but He does not specify what the blessing will be. Perhaps because each person who participates in this sacred ordinance is as different as the shape of each piece of bread, we each need different blessings. Though our challenges, circumstances, and needs differ, the Savior has promised each of us who keep the sacramental covenant, “Blessed are ye.”

### Love and Mercy

Now I highlight an important distinction between the laws of God and the laws of man: the role of love and mercy in God’s plan of redemption for His children. As noted, in many cases we invite His offered blessings through our actions. As loving parents do, Heavenly Father mercifully

considers the desire of our hearts as well as our works (see Doctrine and Covenants 137:9). He realizes that sometimes the opportunity to act may be limited by circumstances beyond our control. An early death, a serious disability, the simple lack of knowledge or opportunity, or any other unfairness that occurs in a fallen world may seem to block our progress and the receipt of promised blessings we desire.

Thus, central to the great plan of happiness is a Savior, Jesus Christ, who makes up the difference, overcomes the unfairness, and allows all—all who truly desire and do all they can—to ultimately accept and receive the promised blessings of a loving Heavenly Father.

Heavenly Father wants us to return to His presence, but He wants us to return because we desire to do so. As Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “Our Heavenly Father’s goal in parenting is not to have His children *do* what is right; it is to have His children *choose* to do what is right and ultimately become like Him. If He simply wanted us to be obedient, He would use immediate rewards and punishments to influence our behaviors.”<sup>4</sup>

Heavenly Father requires a willing heart as well as effort on our part. Many of the rewards for choosing what is right come in the future, and they are far more than we deserve—which is why some rewards are referred to as a gift (see 1 Nephi 10:17; Doctrine and Covenants 14:7). Like the generous, merciful parent Heavenly Father is, He gives us much—far beyond anything we merit. Thus, exaltation is not earned, but it must be chosen, accepted, and gratefully received.

In all seasons and all circumstances, may each of us act with faith, obedience, diligence, and gratitude to prepare to receive “all that [our] Father hath” (Doctrine and Covenants 84:38; see also Alma 34:32).

### A Righteous, Covenant People

We live in a wonderful time when the blessings of the gospel are readily available to those who accept them. President Russell M. Nelson has taught:

“We have front-row seats to *witness live* what the prophet Nephi saw *only in vision*, that ‘the power of the Lamb of God’ would descend ‘upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory’ [1 Nephi 14:14].

“*You*, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!”<sup>5</sup>

Our Heavenly Father loves us and truly desires to bless us. Through the infinite Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, all can be made whole. As we trust God and act in faith to make and keep sacred covenants with Him, how great will be our joy now and throughout eternity. ■

*From a devotional address, “Covenants—Accepting God’s Offered Blessings,” delivered at Brigham Young University–Idaho on September 22, 2020.*

#### NOTES

1. *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3.5.1, ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. See *General Handbook*, 18.1.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Introductory Message” (address given at the seminar for new mission presidents, June 25, 2017), 2.
4. Dale G. Renlund, “Choose You This Day,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 104.
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Hear Him,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2020, 88.



### A SACRED PROMISE

“In legal language, a covenant generally denotes an agreement between two or more parties. But in a religious context, a covenant is much more significant. It is a sacred promise with God. He fixes the terms. Each person may choose to accept those terms. If one accepts the terms of the covenant and obeys God’s law, he or she receives the blessings associated with the covenant.”

**President Russell M. Nelson, “Covenants,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 86.**

# My Faithful Counselor

By Richard M. Romney

Church Magazines

*When it came to service,  
Larry never saw age as a barrier.*

When my family moved back to the town where I grew up, we found a community in transition. Once known as a place for young families, the neighborhood was now the home of many widows and widowers, parents whose children had grown up and moved away, and a small but growing number of young families who were moving in when homes became available.

Because of the shifting population, ward boundaries were reorganized. Parts of three wards were combined into one ward, and I was called as bishop. I had a few days to think about counselors. The first name came quickly and the Spirit confirmed it. But I wasn't immediately sure who the other counselor should be.

I considered several younger men in the new ward, but I didn't know them well. It seemed to me that we needed them more in the Young Men organization.

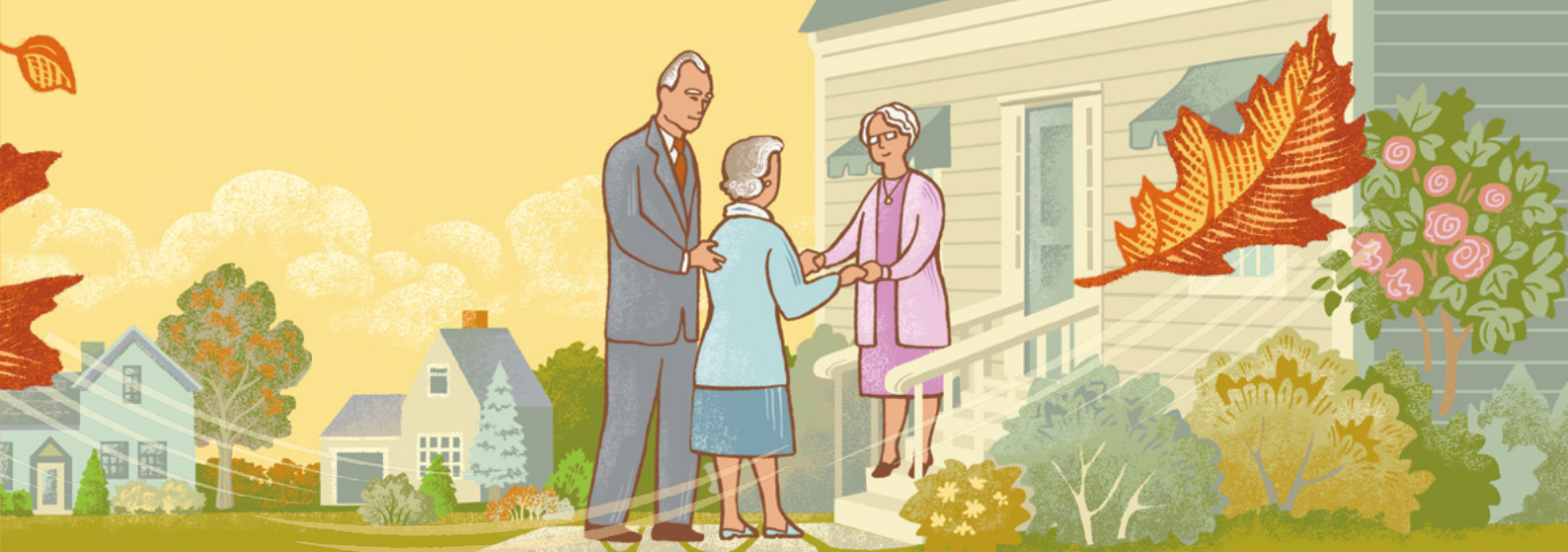
I knew an older man, Larry Morgan, who had lived in the neighborhood for a long time. In fact, he had been a youth leader when I was a teenager. Now he was 76. I felt prompted to talk with him. "Maybe he'll help me become better acquainted with some of the people I don't know," I thought.

He was standing in the driveway when I arrived at his home, and without a word spoken, I knew Larry was to be the other counselor. I visited with him for a few minutes; then I returned home and called the stake president. That Sunday the bishopric was sustained, with Larry as second counselor.

Larry was soft-spoken and deliberate in his manner, but when he spoke, people listened. He also had unwavering faith in the Lord. I soon learned to trust his counsel.



*Larry and Elizabeth Morgan*



## “We’ll Visit Them”

Home teachers (known today as ministering brothers) did a great job visiting the widows and widowers and letting the bishopric know how they were doing. Today, much of the responsibility for their welfare would rest with the elders quorum and the Relief Society. But at the time, I felt a duty to visit them, too. So I made an effort to call on one or two a week. At that rate it would take nearly a year to visit all of them. With a young family that also needed my time, I felt stretched thin.

I talked about this in bishopric meeting, and Larry had an idea.

“Why don’t my wife and I help out?” he said. “We have all day to visit. Rely on the home teachers, but let Elizabeth and me go to see those who need a little extra attention. We’ll let them know you’re thinking of them.”

After that, my faithful counselor and his wife made many visits and cheered up many souls. They lightened my load considerably.

## “How Old Is the Prophet?”

At one time, our ward needed a Gospel Doctrine teacher in Sunday School. As a bishopric we prayed and reviewed several names with the Sunday School president. But we didn’t feel a confirmation about what to do. Once again, Larry had an idea. “What about Ila Gibb?” Ila was in her 70s, but we all felt impressed that she would be a good teacher. The Sunday School president agreed.

Sister Gibb laughed when Larry and I extended the calling. “I’m old,” she said. “Just leave me on the shelf.”

When Larry replied, “Sister Gibb, how old . . .,” I thought he was going to hold himself up as an example. But he didn’t. He said with kindness, “How old is the prophet?” At this time, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) had just become the President of the Church at age 84.

“I see where you’re headed,” Ila replied. “I guess we’re never too old to serve.” And for the next three years, she served as a marvelous Gospel Doctrine teacher.

I’m 69 years old now, and I often think of Larry and the faith he showed to accept the calling to serve as a counselor in the bishopric at age 76. As I think about his service, I am inspired to think that there is still a lot I can do—and that many of us in our 60s, 70s, and 80s can do—to continue building the kingdom of God. ■



# Overcoming Racism and Prejudice: We Can Build Bridges

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*As we help to gather Israel and establish Zion,  
we can promote respect for all of God's children.*

One of the powerful truths of the restored gospel—one that has profound implications—is that “each of us has a divine potential because each is a child of God. Each is equal in His eyes.”<sup>1</sup>

As Church members seek to follow the commission to be one (see Doctrine and Covenants 38:27) and to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion (see Doctrine and Covenants 6:6), President Russell M. Nelson has invited us “to lead out in abandoning attitudes and actions of prejudice” and shared several ways we can “promote respect for all of God’s children.”<sup>2</sup> He has encouraged us, as we build Zion, to also build bridges of friendship, cooperation, and understanding.<sup>3</sup>

“We are all connected, and we have a God-given responsibility to help make life better for those around us,” he said. “We don’t have to be alike or look alike to have love for each other. We don’t even have to agree with each other to love each other. If we have any hope of reclaiming the goodwill and sense of humanity for which we yearn, it must begin with each of us, one person at a time.”<sup>4</sup>

## **There Is Room for Everyone**

President Nelson has urged us to “expand our circle of love to embrace the whole human family.”<sup>5</sup> How can we as Church members help to create a global community of

Saints in which everyone feels welcome and strives to live in peace and harmony with each other regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, age, gender, education, socioeconomic status, ability level, or any other difference?

The answer is, of course, through our Savior Jesus Christ. As President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said, “Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can unite and bring peace to people of all races and nationalities.”<sup>6</sup> Jesus Christ can change our hearts (see Mosiah 5:2). He has “power to heal” (Mark 3:15).

As we come unto Christ ourselves, we gain a deeper understanding of the profound truth President Nelson taught, that the Lord “invites *all* to come unto Him.”<sup>7</sup>

There is room in the Savior’s Church for everyone who is willing to follow Him and “let God prevail” in their lives. God’s favor is not dependent on race, the color of our skin, or other characteristics but on our devotion to Him and our willingness to keep His commandments.<sup>8</sup>

## **We Can Lead Out in Reaching Out**

If we find in ourselves anything that reflects attitudes or behaviors based on prejudice, we need to abandon it in our efforts to become one, because if we are not one, we are not His (see Doctrine and Covenants 35:2; 38:27). “Members of the Church should lead out in promoting respect for all of God’s children. . . . They strive to be

persons of goodwill toward all, rejecting prejudice of any kind.”<sup>9</sup>

As members of “the body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:27), we need each other, “that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it” (1 Corinthians 12:25–26).

Prayer, study, and humble reflection can help us see how we can better love God and all of His children. Establishing goodwill may mean overcoming our own biases, assumptions, or stereotypes as we interact with each other. Making an effort to understand the experiences of those who aren’t like us can open our eyes to different but important perspectives.

President Oaks also said that “suspicion or even hostility give way to friendship or even love when personal contacts produce understanding and mutual respect.”<sup>10</sup>

In the following pages, you will see experiences, reflections, and insights about building bridges as we build Zion. ■

#### NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 94.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” 94.
3. See Tad Walch, “President Nelson’s Yearlong Call for Unity,” *Deseret News*, Oct. 1, 2019, [deseretnews.com](http://deseretnews.com).
4. Russell M. Nelson, in Walch, “President Nelson’s Yearlong Call for Unity.”
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Blessed Are the Peacemakers,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2002, 41; see also *Teachings of Russell M. Nelson* (2018), 83.
6. Dallin H. Oaks, “Racism and Other Challenges” (Brigham Young University devotional, Oct. 27, 2020), 6, [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” 94; see also 2 Nephi 26:33.
8. See Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” 94; see also *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 38.6.14, [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org).
9. *General Handbook*, 38.6.14.
10. Dallin H. Oaks, “Love Your Enemies,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 27.



## Jesus Christ Knows the Pain We Feel from Prejudice

By Sónia N.

*My quest is to see people as the Saviour would see them.*

I have experienced prejudice or discrimination in one form or another for almost 20 years.

After joining the Church in Mozambique, I moved to South Africa. It is a beautiful country, one of the most prosperous in Africa. Its beauty is accentuated by the diversity of its people and a richness in culture.

South Africa is a nation that is still healing from a history clouded by racial segregation. Although apartheid was formally abolished in 1994, the scars of this previous policy of government-implemented racism still remain.

As a Black Mozambican Latter-day Saint woman living in South Africa for the past 18 years, I navigate discrimination and exclusion, often displayed as microaggression. Racism, classism, tribalism, sexism, and xenophobia are a few examples of the ills of segregation that society still faces. There is something within the natural man that seems to want to divide society and make us believe that being different is bad.



*At the Rome Italy Temple open house, members and friends surround the Christus statue, as seen through the visitors' center window.*

The Saviour also faced prejudice because of who He was, what He believed, and where He was from (see John 1:46). Yet He did not respond with violence, anger, bitterness, or hate. He taught against all of these things and acted in love and truth. He taught that power and influence come through persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, and love (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41). He taught that when we are offended, we should go to our brother and talk it over together (see Matthew 18:15). He taught us to pray for those who persecute us (see Matthew 5:38–48). And when He was tried unjustly and hung on a cross to die, He taught us to forgive (see Luke 23:34).

Ultimately, it is His love that will change us and the world (see 2 Nephi 26:24).

## What We Try to Do

Can members of the Church be susceptible to this way of thinking? Absolutely. We must all put off the natural man in our lifelong effort to become saints through the Atonement of Christ (see Mosiah 3:19).

Whenever my children and I feel isolated, overlooked, stereotyped, or viewed as a curiosity, we come home and talk about it. We say, “What has just happened? Let’s unpack this. Let’s talk about why people behave this way.” Talking about it helps to stop our feelings from festering inside of us.

I try to teach my kids that our greatness is determined by how we treat the people who are marginalized or ostracized in society (see Matthew 25:40). That can mean looking for ways to reach out to others so that we aren’t excluding them.

## I’m Trying to Be like Jesus

As painful as some of the experiences are, the lessons we are learning are making my children better people. And me too. Our disappointments have helped us develop compassion and empathy for others.

Experiences with prejudice give me an opportunity to choose. Am I going to be bitter and retaliate, or am I going to give that person not only another chance but a second, a third, and a fourth chance? Am I going to see society as a horrible place, or am I going to be a force for positive change?

## And I’ll Keep Trying

I’m not a perfect person; I don’t always forgive immediately after someone affronts me. It takes time, it takes healing, and it takes the Holy Ghost working with me. Sometimes I choose to be offended, and I don’t immediately embrace His promptings. But if I am open to Him, the Spirit patiently works with me until I’m able to understand what Heavenly Father would have me do with the situation.

My quest is to truly see people as the Saviour would see them. To do that, we must be willing to acknowledge that we don’t have all the answers. When we are willing to say, “I’m not perfect; I have a lot to learn. What can I learn from the perspectives of others?”—*that* is when we are really able to hear. *That* is when we are truly able to see.

As I go through this journey, it helps to remember that I’m here for a purpose, that the trials of life are temporary—a necessary part

of mortality—and that I am not alone. Through it all, I'm trying to be like Jesus! *Trying* is active, and when we fail, we can try again. ■

*The author lives in Gauteng Province, South Africa.*

## MORE STORIES LIKE THIS

We can learn a lot from the experiences of others. Join us in this month's online issue to read the following stories:

- Alissia shares the difficulties of being different from others at church, as well as the strengths our differences can bring. Read "We Are Better Together."
- Gabriel describes the choice he faced when unexpectedly experiencing religious discrimination. Read "Facing Prejudice in the Workplace."
- After facing years of rejection because of her children's disabilities, Miyuki found a place of refuge and personal growth in the Church. Read "Finding Belonging in Christ."



## How Can I Help Overcome Prejudice?

*Here are six ways we can abandon prejudice and promote respect.*

### What Can I Do to Overcome Prejudice?

**1. Look inside first.** We can commit to recognizing within ourselves and abandoning any "attitudes and actions of prejudice."<sup>1</sup>

President Russell M. Nelson said, "Any of us who has prejudice toward another race needs to repent!"<sup>2</sup>

**2. Seek to understand.** Take the time to listen to those who have experienced prejudice. This can include reliable books, movies, and news reports about the topic.<sup>3</sup>

Darius Gray, a prominent African American member and Church leader, observed, "If we endeavored to truly hear from those we consider as 'the other,' and if our honest focus was to let them share of their lives, their histories, their families, their hopes, and their pains, not only would we gain a greater understanding, but this practice would go a long way toward healing the wounds of racism."<sup>4</sup>

**3. Speak up.** If you hear someone share a false or negative idea about race, speak up in a kind but clear way.

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said, "As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we must do better to help root out racism."<sup>5</sup>

Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, "We are invited to change the world for the better, from the inside out, one person, one family, one neighborhood at a time."<sup>6</sup>

### What Can I Do If I Have Experienced Discrimination?

**1. Forgive, and gain a friend.** When we are hurt by the actions of others, we can teach and forgive and seek to build a relationship.

While serving as an Area Seventy, Elder Fred A. "Tony" Parker said: "When I've been a victim of racism, I've found success in meeting it head-on, forgiving the individual and addressing the issue. If someone says something to hurt my feelings, I need to find a way to help him understand why that hurt. It is an opportunity not only to forgive

but to build a relationship so that the person doesn't just look at Tony Parker as an African-American but as a child of God. Jesus taught forgiveness (see Matthew 18:21–35), and He taught us when we have been offended to take it to the individual and work it out (see Matthew 18:15).<sup>7</sup>

**2. Learn helpful lessons from hurtful experiences** (see Doctrine and Covenants 122:7).

The Reverend Amos C. Brown tells a story about Howard Washington Thurman. Howard lived next to a woman who mistreated his family because they were Black—even throwing manure from her chicken coop into the Thurmans' yard.

When the woman fell ill, Howard's mother took her some soup and roses. With gratitude, the woman asked where the flowers had come from. Mrs. Thurman explained, "While you were throwing the chicken manure, God was preparing the soil."

"That's what we've got to do in the midst of evil," Reverend Brown said. "Take the manure but have the faith in God to use it to grow a garden of roses."<sup>8</sup>

**3. Turn to Christ for healing and guidance.** Trusting the Savior with your pain and following Him can bring peace.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that in addition to redeeming us from sin by satisfying the demands that justice has upon us, Jesus Christ "also satisfies the debt justice owes to us by healing and compensating us for any suffering we innocently endure."<sup>9</sup>

The Savior provides the perfect example for us to follow. He taught us what to do when offended (see Matthew 18:15), persecuted (see Matthew 5:38–48), and even unjustly condemned to death (see Luke 23:34). ■



#### NOTES

1. *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 38.6.14, ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. Russell M. Nelson, in "President Nelson Shares Social Post about Racism and Calls for Respect for Human Dignity," Newsroom, June 1, 2020, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
3. See "Seeking Information from Reliable Sources," *General Handbook*, 38.8.45.
4. Darius Gray, "Healing the Wounds of Racism," Apr. 5, 2018, blog.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
5. Dallin H. Oaks, "Love Your Enemies," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 28.
6. Gerrit W. Gong, "All Nations, Kindreds, and Tongues," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 38.
7. Fred A. "Tony" Parker, "The Savior Heals Our Hurts," *Ensign*, June 2018, 44–45.
8. "We Are Family: A Discussion on Overcoming Prejudice with Elder Jack N. Gerard and the Reverend Amos C. Brown," *Liahona*, Sept. 2021, digital version.
9. D. Todd Christofferson, "Redemption," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 110.

#### DISCOVER MORE

Learn more about what the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches about overcoming prejudice:

- Learn what the Lord's prophets are teaching on this topic. Read the Gospel Topics entry "Racial and Cultural Prejudice" at topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
- Learn from Church leaders how we can find unity in diversity. Read "We Can Do Better: Welcoming Others into the Fold," *Liahona*, Sept. 2017, 22–27.
- See excerpts and video from a discussion between Elder Jack N. Gerard of the Seventy and the Reverend Amos C. Brown of the Third Baptist Church of San Francisco. Go to the digital version of the September 2021 *Liahona* at liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org or in the Gospel Library app.

# Discerning the Good in Ourselves

By Emily Abel

For most of my life, I have defined the gift of discernment as being able to recognize right from wrong, truth from error. While that is a critical part of the gift, I recently learned there is more to it.

I found a treasure in the footnotes of a talk given in the April 2020 general conference. A speaker quoted President Stephen L Richards (1879–1959), former First Counselor in the First Presidency, who said, “The highest type of discernment is that which perceives in others and uncovers for them their better natures, the good inherent within them.”<sup>1</sup>

Doesn’t that sound like poetry?

The Holy Ghost can help us uncover the good *inherent* in others. The truth of that statement was so sweet to me that I wanted to learn more. I found that Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also taught that the gift of discernment helps us “find and bring forth the good that may be concealed in *us*.”<sup>2</sup>

Since this discovery, I’ve come to realize how important this part of the gift of discernment is. We need to find the good qualities in ourselves so that we can develop them. As we do, we will feel and act more like the children of God we really are (see Psalm 82:6; Mosiah 5:7; Moroni 7:19).

So how can we start finding the good in ourselves? Here are a few ways to get started.

How would you define the gift of discernment? Until recently, I was totally missing out on one of the essential purposes of this gift.



## Focus on Using Your Strengths to Bless Others

It is a doctrinal truth that everyone has certain gifts from God (see Doctrine and Covenants 46:11)—and it is not vain to think about them. In fact, the Lord has asked us to! The scriptures teach us to seek “earnestly the best gifts, *always remembering for what they are given*” (Doctrine and Covenants 46:8; emphasis added).

As we become more aware of our gifts or talents, we should find ways to use them to serve others.

One way to identify your gifts is by asking someone you trust! Ask them what your strengths are. If you’re like me, you might think that sounds awkward. But remember, this isn’t about vanity; it’s about finding what individual traits or attributes you have to offer your brothers and sisters of the world (see Mosiah 8:18).

For example, a kind neighbor once told me that I have a gift for helping people feel at ease. Rather than brushing the comment off as only polite praise, I started watching for that gift in my life. As I did, I realized that Heavenly Father could help me use my social skills to befriend others and bless more lives than my own.

By recognizing your gifts, you can consciously choose to use them to bless others (see Doctrine and Covenants 82:18).

## Study Your Patriarchal Blessing

Patriarchal blessings are also a good source for seeing our unique, God-given gifts. Elder Larry R. Lawrence, an emeritus member of the Seventy, said: “The Spirit can show us our weaknesses, but He is also able to show us our strengths. . . . When we read our patriarchal blessings, we are reminded that our Heavenly Father knows our divine potential.”<sup>3</sup>

Studying your patriarchal blessing helps you focus on developing the traits that can help you reach your potential.

In my case, I often picture the type of mother I hope to be one day. Without realizing it, I get caught up in thinking that



a good mother is fit, organized, and beautiful—and that her cinnamon rolls are the envy of her ward’s Relief Society. While those things are not bad, studying my patriarchal blessing has shown me that the Lord cares more that I am a kind and charitable mother. For me, those Christlike traits are the ones I should be most anxious to develop.

## Remember and Reflect during the Sacrament

The sacrament is a time to think about the Savior. It’s also a time to reflect on your progress toward becoming like Him. As you work to discover your inherent good traits, looking back each week at your achievements, experiences, and social encounters can help you see certain moments where your gifts were manifested.

President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “As you examine your life during the ordinance of the sacrament, I hope your thoughts center not only on things you have done wrong but also on things you have done right—moments when you have felt that Heavenly Father and the Savior were pleased with you. You may even take a moment during the sacrament to ask God to help you see these things.”<sup>4</sup>

Here are some questions you could ask yourself or God during the sacrament:

- How did I follow Christ's example this week?
- Whom did I serve?
- When did I feel the Spirit this week? Why?
- What is a Christlike trait I'm trying to develop? How am I doing?
- Is there anything in my life I should pray for help with?
- Is there anyone I need to forgive?
- What is one problem, big or small, that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ helped me with this week?

Pondering the goodness of God and evaluating my life during the sacrament rather than focusing only on failures and flaws helps me put my trust in Him.

## Magnify Your Calling

We are given our callings for a reason, even if we do not know the reason at first.

I was once called to the Relief Society presidency of my young single adult ward. I was excited to start. But after a few months, I felt discouraged. I couldn't see any spiritual growth in those I was trying to minister to. My efforts to visit and befriend seemed to fall flat.

One Sunday, I felt like I was missing the spiritual gifts that help someone be good at ministering. My prayer during the sacrament that day was to feel assurance that I was capable of my calling. I felt impressed to ask for a priesthood blessing.

I met with my bishop, and as he laid his hands on my head, one of the first things he said to me was, "Heavenly Father appreciates the kindness you show to others."

The Spirit washed over me, and I felt assured that the Lord was pleased with my efforts. I felt I *did* have a portion of the gifts needed to minister lovingly. I had just been measuring my failures rather than my successes.

Your callings are great opportunities to find and use your spiritual gifts.

## You Can Start Now

We don't need to wait to begin uncovering the good in ourselves.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, then Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said:

"Sometimes we feel discouraged because we are not 'more' of something—more spiritual, respected, intelligent, healthy, rich, friendly, or capable. . . .

"I learned in my life that we don't need to be 'more' of anything to start to become the person God intended us to become."<sup>5</sup>

We can start with a prayer. Tell Heavenly Father how you feel now, and how you want to feel about yourself. Specifically ask for the gift of discernment to help you see your inherent goodness. Some of the sweetest moments of my life have come from saying these prayers. I believe Heavenly Father is eager to help us see all that He sees.

Because of our identity as children of God, we are destined for greatness (see Doctrine and Covenants 78:17). Through the gift of discernment, we *can* come to know that for ourselves. ■

*The author lives in Utah, USA.*

### NOTES

1. Stephen L. Richards, in Douglas D. Holmes, "Deep in Our Heart," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 25–26.
2. David A. Bednar, "Quick to Observe" (Brigham Young University devotional, May 10, 2005), 5, [speeches.byu.edu](https://speeches.byu.edu); emphasis added.
3. Larry R. Lawrence, "What Lack I Yet?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 35.
4. Henry B. Eyring, "Always Remember Him," *Ensign*, Feb. 2018, 5.
5. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "It Works Wonderfully!" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 22–23.



## MORE FOR YOU IN YA WEEKLY!



How can  
you disagree  
**without being  
contentious?**



How can you  
**see the good in  
others,** even when  
you disagree with  
their opinions?



What is the  
**gift of discernment,**  
and why is it  
important to you as a  
young adult?

You can find answers to these questions and others in this month's YA Weekly (located in the Young Adults section under Audiences in the Gospel Library).

Each month in YA Weekly, you can also find new articles and insights about missionary work, help in gaining life skills, devotionals from Church leaders speaking to young adults, and more.

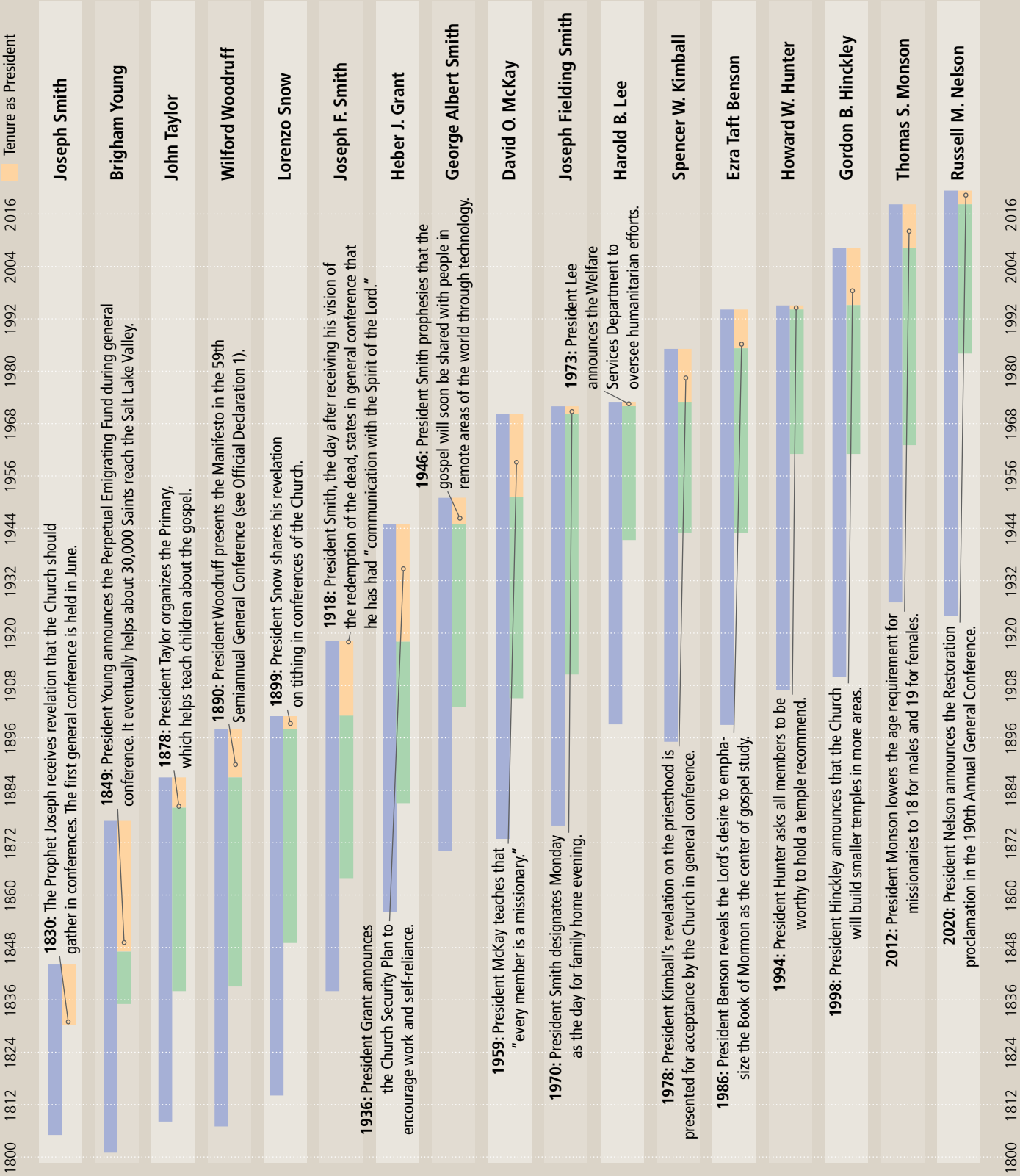


# Living Church, Living Prophets

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a “living church” (Doctrine and Covenants 1:30) guided by a modern prophet. He receives revelation from God to direct the whole Church. Here are some examples of inspired direction given by Presidents of the Church:

## Presidents of the Church

- Lifespan
- Apostleship
- Tenure as President



## YOUNG ADULTS

*How can we recognize the  
good in ourselves?*

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COVENANTS,  
ORDINANCES,  
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### WHAT IS THE CONNECTION?

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COME, FOLLOW ME

### INSIGHTS INTO DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 94–107

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