

► President Russell M. Nelson: *Choosing the Path of Love*

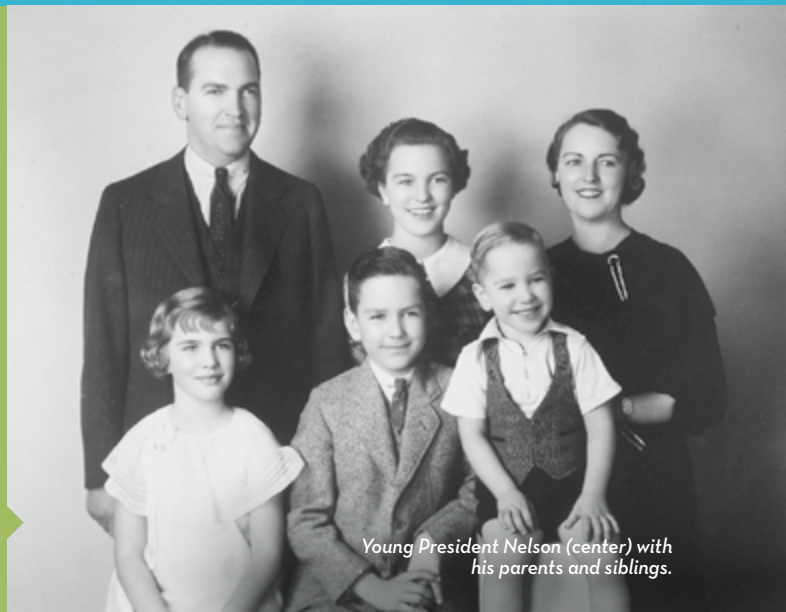


President Nelson as a young boy.

When President Russell M. Nelson was young, he liked to keep busy and be independent. He worked at a few different jobs in those years—for instance, in his father’s advertising business, in the post office, in a bank. But as he got older and thought seriously about what he wanted to do with his life, he knew he had to choose his path.

Eventually he decided to become a doctor. How did he make this decision? He says it was based on two things he realized about himself:

1. “That was where my talents lay. I had a great desire to do research, to go into the unknown.”
2. “I liked people. I wanted to serve them. I reasoned that the finest career that would be available to a human being would be that of mother. Inasmuch as that was out of the question for me, I reasoned that the second occupation would be medicine. There I could help people every day and teach them.”¹



Young President Nelson (center) with his parents and siblings.



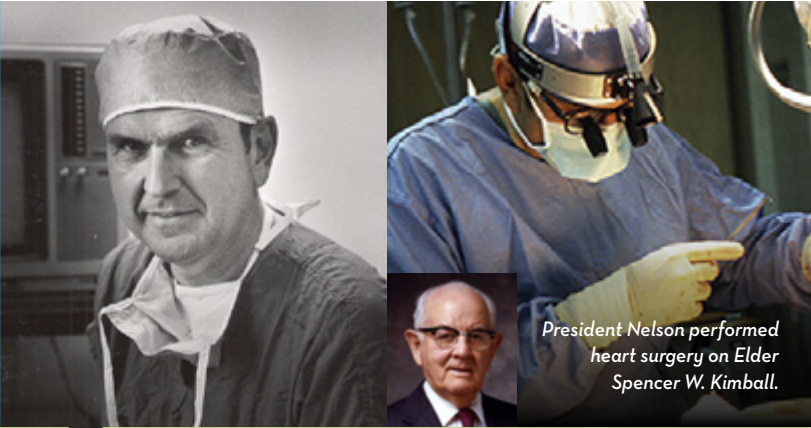
With classmates at medical school.

His chosen career path led him to become a world-renowned heart surgeon and medical researcher. And it all started with his love of others and desire to serve them. In addition, his love of God and desire to serve Him and His children has also led him along his path of Church service, including as an Apostle and now the 17th President of the Church.

Learn More about President Nelson

Learn more about President Nelson on page 49 of this issue, as well as at:

- RussellMNelson.lds.org
- mormonnewsroom.org/leader-biographies/president-russell-m-nelson
- Twitter: [@NelsonRussellM](https://twitter.com/NelsonRussellM)
- Facebook: facebook.com/lds.russell.m.nelson



President Nelson performed heart surgery on Elder Spencer W. Kimball.

Your Path

President Nelson has frequently taught us how we can choose the right path in this life—the path back to Heavenly Father. For instance, he has said: “The greatest compliment that can be earned here in this life is to be known as a covenant keeper. The rewards for a covenant keeper will be realized both here and hereafter.”²

He has also taught that faith in Jesus Christ is essential, particularly as we face difficulties. “Every test, every trial, every challenge and hardship you endure is an opportunity to further develop your faith.”³

When President Nelson was asked to perform heart surgery on Elder Spencer W. Kimball, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, he had to exercise faith. The surgery was very risky; Elder Kimball’s heart was weak, and he was old. But President Nelson placed his trust in God and received a blessing from the First Presidency that promised him “that all would go well, and that [he] need not fear for [his] own inadequacies, for [he] had been raised up by the Lord to perform this operation.” The surgery went flawlessly, and President Nelson received a special witness that the person he had just operated on would become the prophet one day—which, about a year later, he did.⁴

Your Reward

President Nelson has repeatedly reminded us why we follow Jesus Christ, why we keep God’s commandments, why we go to the temple, why we stay on the covenant path: “Men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25), both in the eternities and now, regardless of our challenges. He has taught: “Joy is a gift for the faithful. It is the gift that comes from intentionally trying to live a righteous life, as taught by Jesus Christ.”⁵

When it comes to choosing our path in life, we can learn a great deal from President Nelson. As he said after becoming President of the Church: “I declare my devotion to God our Eternal Father and to His Son, Jesus Christ. I know and love Them and pledge to serve Them—and you—with every remaining breath of my life.”⁶ **NE**



President Nelson and his wife Wendy often travel together to visit members around the world.

NOTES

1. In Spencer J. Condie, *Russell M. Nelson: Father, Surgeon, Apostle* (2003), 39–40.
2. Russell M. Nelson, Oct. 2011 general conference.
3. Russell M. Nelson, Oct. 1990 general conference.
4. Russell M. Nelson, *From Heart to Heart* (1979), 164.
5. Russell M. Nelson, *From Heart to Heart* (1979), 164.
6. “New First Presidency Holds News Conference,” Jan. 16, 2018, mormonnewsroom.org.