

# TESTIMONY SHARING IN WORD AND DEED



**Elder Gary E.  
Stevenson**

Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

*Your testimony is an invitation for others to “come unto Christ.”*

**O**pportunities to bear our testimony come in different times and places. There is great power when a testimony is born properly. At times, we may feel uncertain about what to say and do, or how to say and do it. I would like you to reflect upon your testimony. As you do this, I have three areas I would like to address:

## **1. WHAT IS A TESTIMONY?**

A testimony is a knowledge or spiritual witness of truth given to us by the Holy Ghost. Receipt of this knowledge will change the things we say and the things we do. A testimony is composed of key elements of truth of which the Holy Ghost will bear witness.

“The foundation of a testimony is the knowledge that Heavenly Father lives and loves us; that Jesus Christ lives, that He is the Son of God, and that He carried out the infinite Atonement; that Joseph Smith is the prophet of God who was called to restore the gospel; that we are led by a living prophet today; and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Savior’s true Church on the earth.”<sup>1</sup>





## 2. HOW DO WE PROPERLY BEAR OUR TESTIMONY?

When we share our spiritual knowledge or our spiritual witness to others, we “bear our testimony.” Likewise, when others observe our righteous behavior, actions, or deeds, this also is a way we “bear our testimony.” Bearing our testimony in word or deed is a way of sharing plain and precious truths of the gospel with others. It is an invitation for others to “come unto Christ.”

As members of the Church, we have opportunities to bear our spoken testimonies in formal Church meetings. Many find they do not know exactly how to articulate the stirrings of the Spirit within them when called upon to bear their testimony.

We previously identified key elements of truth fundamental to bearing a testimony.

When put in these terms, a testimony

becomes simpler and more natural. We begin to focus on the truths of which the Holy Ghost will bear witness and less on such things as a recent travelogue.

## 3. WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES TO BEARING OUR TESTIMONY?

The first obstacle may be uncertainty. President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has stated: “We gain or strengthen a testimony by bearing it. Someone even suggested that some testimonies are better gained on the feet bearing them than on the knees praying for them.”<sup>2</sup> The Spirit bears witness to the speaker and listener alike.

Another obstacle is fear and embarrassment. President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) counseled us to “teach

through testimony” as he pointed to the examples of Peter and Paul. “Paul declared to the Romans, ‘I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’ (Romans 1:16). . . . The Apostle Peter urged, ‘Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you’ (1 Peter 3:15).”<sup>3</sup>

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) described valuable counsel he received from his father: “When I left for a mission some sixty-two years ago, my good father handed me a card on which were written five words. They were the words of the Lord to the ruler of the synagogue who had received news of his daughter’s death: ‘Be not afraid,

# WHEN THE MOMENT COMES, BE BOLD AND STAND UP.

only believe' (Mark 5:36).<sup>4</sup> This counsel served as an inspiration throughout his mission.

President Hinckley further counseled: "Yes, this work requires sacrifice, it requires effort, it requires courage to speak out and faith to try. This cause does not need critics; it does not need doubters. It needs men and women of solemn purpose. As Paul wrote to Timothy: 'God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord' (2 Timothy 1:7–8)."<sup>5</sup>

## BE BOLD AND STAND UP

I used to live in Tokyo, Japan, quite near the Tokyo temple. Whenever I got in a taxi cab in Tokyo, rather than giving my home address, I would say, "Latter-day Saint Temple, please." Usually, the first response from the cab driver would be a look of bewilderment. I would then say, "You know, the beautiful building across from the Arisugawa Park, the one with the gold statue of the angel on top?" Once they knew where to go, then came my next question: "You must know who the Latter-day Saints are; you see the missionaries on their bikes with helmets and white shirts all the time, don't you?" Every cab ride led to a discussion about the Church.

Opportunities to bear testimony abound everywhere. Many of your friends know you by your social media profiles. Do your friends know the really important things about you? Do your language and photos represent your testimony? We are encouraged

to show people our goodness. We are honest, kind, motivated, educated, good people. We are Latter-day Saints. Make certain the images and words you use online are a testimony of your goodness and beliefs.

As you more fully understand what a testimony is and as you practice bearing a testimony properly, you will overcome the obstacles of uncertainty and fear and embarrassment.

I would like to ask each of you to try a little harder to find a place to bear your testimony, both in word and in deed. When the moment comes, be bold and stand up. You will feel the warmth of the Comforter inside when you do.

## MY TESTIMONY

I testify that we have a loving Heavenly Father, and we are His children. I have faith in and a testimony of Jesus Christ and of His role as our Savior and Redeemer. I bear witness of the Restoration of the gospel; Joseph Smith is the prophet who stands at the head of this dispensation, and the Book of Mormon is the word of God. I bear testimony that we are the reestablished, original Christian church. I bear testimony that the Church is led by a living prophet, who receives revelation for our day. **NE**  
*From a BYU–Hawaii devotional address given on Sept. 21, 2010.*

### NOTES

1. *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 178.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, Apr. 2008 general conference.
3. Thomas S. Monson, "Preparation Precedes Performance," *Ensign*, Sept. 1993, 71.
4. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Be Not Afraid, Only Believe," *Ensign*, Feb. 1996, 2.
5. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Be Not Afraid, Only Believe," 5.