



APOSTLES SPEAK TO US



THE WITNESS

"In the Church we know who He is: Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the Only Begotten of the Father. He is He who was slain and He who liveth again. He is our Advocate with the Father. ... He is the anchor that holds us and protects

us and our families through the storms of life...

"... With all that I have experienced, there is one great truth that I would share. That is my witness of the Savior Jesus Christ.

"Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon recorded the following after a sacred experience:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"'For we saw him' (D&C 76:22-23).

"Their words are my words.

"I believe and I am sure that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that He lives. He is the Only Begotten of the Father, and 'by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God' (D&C 76:24).

"I bear my witness that the Savior lives. I know the Lord. I am His witness. I know of His great sacrifice and eternal love for all of Heavenly Father's children. I bear my special witness in all humility but with absolute certainty, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



OBEDIENCE THROUGH OUR FAITHFULNESS

"To succeed in life, we must teach our spirit and body to work together in obedience to God's commandments. ...

"Our third article of faith teaches us about the importance of obedience: 'We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.' ...

"Too often we think of obedience as the passive and thoughtless following of the orders or dictates of a higher authority. Actually, at its best, obedience is an emblem of our faith in the wisdom and power of the highest authority, even God. ... When we demonstrate our faithfulness through obedience, God will ultimately rescue us.

"Those who rely solely on themselves and follow only their own desires and self-inclinations are so limited when compared to those who follow God and tap into His insight, power, and gifts. It has been said that someone who is all wrapped up in himself or herself makes a very small package. Strong, proactive obedience is anything but weak or passive. It is the means by which we declare our faith in God and qualify ourselves to receive the powers of heaven. Obedience is a choice. It is a choice between our own limited knowledge and power and God's unlimited wisdom and omnipotence."

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Even as a young woman, I loved the priesthood session the most! It is so important for the young women and men to know and understand the priesthood power and responsibility the Relief Society holds. It is a divine organization. I highly encourage the young women to go back and watch the priesthood session! It enlightened and uplifted me in ways I was not expecting.”

Maggie S., 18, Missouri, USA



LET YOUR FAITH SHOW

“We might each ask ourselves, where is our faith? Is it in a team? Is it in a brand? Is it in a celebrity? Even the best teams can fail. Celebrities can fade. There is only One in whom your faith is always safe, and that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you need to let your faith show!...

“... Living the Lord’s pure religion, which means striving to become a true disciple of Jesus Christ, is a way of life and a daily commitment that will provide divine guidance. As you practice your religion, you are exercising your faith. You are letting your faith show...”

“... Danger lurks when we try to divide ourselves with expressions such as ‘my private life’ or even ‘my best behavior.’ If one tries to segment his or her life into such separate compartments, one will never rise to the full stature of one’s personal integrity—never to become all that his or her true self could be.

“The temptation to be popular may prioritize public opinion above the word of God. ... Even if ‘everyone is doing it,’ wrong is never right. Evil, error, and darkness will never be truth, even if popular...”

“... Immorality is still immorality in the eyes of God, who one day will judge all of our deeds and desires...”

“... Day after day, on your path toward your eternal destiny, increase your faith. Proclaim your faith! Let your faith show!”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THE KEYS AND AUTHORITY OF THE PRIESTHOOD

“Priesthood power blesses all of us. Priesthood keys direct women as well as men, and priesthood ordinances and priesthood authority pertain to women as well as men...”

“Ultimately, all keys of the priesthood are held by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose priesthood it is. He is the one who determines what keys are delegated to mortals and how those keys will be used...”

“We are not accustomed to speaking of women having the authority of the priesthood in their Church callings, but what other authority can it be? When a woman—young or old—is set apart to preach the gospel as a full-time missionary, she is given priesthood authority to perform a priesthood function. The same is true when a woman is set apart to function as an officer or teacher in a Church organization under the direction of one who holds the keys of the priesthood. Whoever functions in an office or calling received from one who holds priesthood keys exercises priesthood authority in performing her or his assigned duties...”

“In the eyes of God, whether in the Church or in the family, women and men are equal, with different responsibilities.

“... Unlike priesthood keys and priesthood ordinations, the blessings of the priesthood are available to women and to men on the same terms. The gift of the Holy Ghost and the blessings of the temple are familiar illustrations of this truth.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



FOLLOWING UP

"I'm a great believer in the principle of follow-up. As it says in the missionary guide *Preach My Gospel*, 'extending an invitation without following up is like beginning a journey without finishing it or buying a ticket to a concert without going into the theater. Without the completed action, the commitment is hollow' [(2004), 200]. . . .

"... There is much more to missionary work for members than simply extending invitations to people to listen to the missionaries. It also includes follow-up with the missionaries in the cultivation of faith, the motivation to repentance, the preparation for making covenants, and enduring to the end....

"... We can all be more consistently involved in missionary work by replacing our fear with real faith, inviting someone at least once a quarter—or four times every year—to be taught by the full-time missionaries....

"... I invite all members ... to obtain a copy of *Preach My Gospel*. ... Read it, study it, and then apply what you learn ... to bring souls to Christ through invitation and follow-up....

"If we follow up, the Lord will not let us down. I have seen the unspeakable joy that accompanies testimony-driven inviting and faithful follow-up ... the world over....

"... As we work together, seeking the one, inviting, and following up with trust and faith, ... hundreds of thousands of God's children will find purpose and peace in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE"

"When you focus your life on the basic principles of the plan of salvation, you will better concentrate on sharing what you know because you understand the eternal importance of the ordinances of the gospel. You will share what you know in a way that encourages your friends to want to be strengthened spiritually. You will help your loved ones want to commit to obey all of His commandments and take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ.

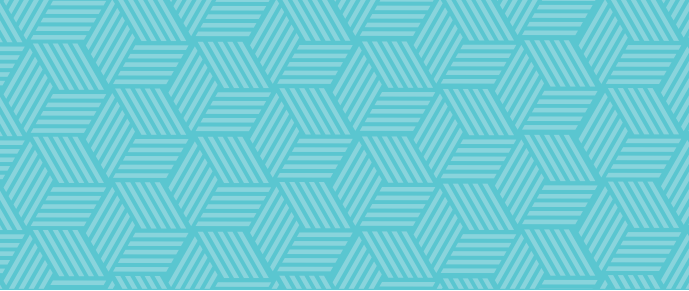
"Remember that the conversion of individuals is only part of the work. Always seek to strengthen families. Teach with a vision of the importance of families being sealed in the temple. ... When you have the vision of the sealing ordinances of the temple, you will help build the kingdom of God on earth....

"Your personal testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is a powerful tool. Accompanying resources are prayer, the Book of Mormon and the other scriptures, and your commitment to priesthood ordinances. All of these will facilitate the direction of the Spirit, which is so crucially important for you to rely upon.

"To be effective ... , concentrate on this basic principle of the gospel: *the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes possible our becoming more like our Father in Heaven so that we can live together eternally in our family units.* ...

"... May we remember to do as He has done by sharing our love, trust, and knowledge of truth with others who have not yet embraced the brilliant light of the gospel."

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



General Conference IS FOR YOU



"I invited a friend to go to conference with me. Now I'm going to practice what I learned: follow up and help my friend to accept the gospel."
Einy Sariah, 18, Bolivia



"IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS"

"At times we may be tempted to practice what I call 'natural man's obedience,' in which we disobediently reject God's law in favor of our wisdom or our desires or even popularity. Because this is widely practiced by so many, this perversion of obedience diminishes God's standards in our culture and in our laws.

"At times members may participate in 'selective obedience,' claiming to love God and honor God while picking and choosing which of His commandments and teachings—and the teachings and counsel of His prophets—they will fully follow...

"As our understanding of obedience deepens, we recognize the essential role of agency...

"Spiritually mature obedience is 'the Savior's obedience.' It is motivated by true love for Heavenly Father and His Son...

"Using our agency to obey means choosing to 'do what is right [and letting] the consequence follow' [*Hymns*, no. 237]. It requires self-mastery and brings confidence, eternal happiness, and a sense of fulfillment...; and it always includes a deep personal commitment to sustain priesthood leaders and follow their teachings and counsel...

"To rationalize disobedience does not change spiritual law or its consequences but leads to confusion, instability, wandering in strange paths, being lost, and grief. As disciples of Christ, we have a sacred obligation to uphold His laws and commandments."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THE COST—AND BLESSINGS—OF DISCIPLESHIP

"I say to all and especially the youth of the Church that if you haven't already, you will one day find yourself called upon to defend your faith or perhaps even endure some personal abuse simply because you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Such moments will require both courage and courtesy on your part....

"And therein lies a message for every young man and young woman in this Church. You may wonder if it is worth it to take a courageous moral stand in high school or to go on a mission only to have your most cherished beliefs reviled or to strive against much in society that sometimes ridicules a life of religious devotion. Yes, it is worth it....

"Sadly enough, my young friends, it is a characteristic of our age that if people want any gods at all, they want them to be gods who do not demand much, comfortable gods, smooth gods who not only don't rock the boat but don't even row it, gods who pat us on the head, make us giggle, then tell us to run along and pick marigolds.

"Talk about man creating God in his own image!...

"...It is obvious that the bumper sticker question 'What would Jesus do?' will not always bring a popular response....

"Be strong. Live the gospel faithfully even if others around you don't live it at all. Defend your beliefs with courtesy and with compassion, but defend them."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"No matter how hard or lonely life may seem and no matter the difficulties, the Savior knows exactly how we feel and how to help us. I have determined to change to rely on Jesus Christ even more. I will need that as I'm serving as a missionary!"

David T., 17, Utah, USA



BEAR UP THEIR BURDENS WITH EASE

"Each of us ... carries a load. Our individual load is comprised of demands and opportunities, obligations and privileges, afflictions and blessings, and options and constraints...."

"Sometimes we mistakenly may believe that happiness is the absence of a load. But bearing a load is a necessary and essential part of the plan of happiness...."

"Consider the Lord's uniquely individual invitation to 'take my yoke upon you' [Matthew 11:29]. Making and keeping sacred covenants yokes us to and with the Lord Jesus Christ. In essence, the Savior is beckoning us to rely upon and pull together with Him...."

"The unique burdens in each of our lives help us to rely upon the merits, mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah (see 2 Nephi 2:8). I testify and promise the Savior will help us to bear up our burdens with ease (see Mosiah 24:15). As we are yoked with Him through sacred covenants and receive the enabling power of His Atonement in our lives, we increasingly will seek to understand and live according to His will. We also will pray for the strength to learn from, change, or accept our circumstances rather than praying relentlessly for God to change our circumstances according to our will. We will become agents who act rather than objects that are acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:14). We will be blessed with spiritual traction."

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



ROOTS AND BRANCHES

"The doctrine of the family in relation to family history and temple work is clear. The Lord in initial revelatory instructions referred to 'baptism for your dead' [D&C 127:5; emphasis added]. Our doctrinal

obligation is to our own ancestors. This is because the celestial organization of heaven is based on families.... We need to be connected to both our roots and branches...."

"Temple and family history work is not just about us. Think of those on the other side of the veil waiting for the saving ordinances that would free them from the bondage of spirit prison...."

"The leadership of the Church has issued a clarion call to the rising generation to lead the way in the use of technology to experience the spirit of Elijah, to search out their ancestors, and to perform temple ordinances for them. Much of the heavy lifting in hastening the work of salvation for both the living and the dead will be done by you young people."

"If the youth in each ward will not only go to the temple and do baptisms for their dead but also work with their families and other ward members to provide the family names for the ordinance work they perform, both they and the Church will be greatly blessed. Don't underestimate the influence of the deceased in assisting your efforts and the joy of ultimately meeting those you serve. The eternally significant blessing of uniting our own families is almost beyond comprehension."

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



"I have many nonmember friends, and it was great for them to see some of the conference pictures and messages I was sharing on social media."

Sarah B., 17, Kentucky, USA



THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

"By His Atonement and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has overcome all aspects of the Fall. . . . We can have ultimate trust and confidence in His power to overcome all else and grant us everlasting life. . . .

"... The Savior makes all things right. No injustice in mortality is permanent, even death, for He restores life again. No injury, disability, betrayal, or abuse goes uncompensated in the end because of His ultimate justice and mercy.

"By the same token, we are all accountable to Him for our lives, our choices, and our actions, even our thoughts. Because He redeemed us from the Fall, our lives are in reality His. . . .

"... Because He was resurrected, Jesus cannot have been only a carpenter, a teacher, a rabbi, or a prophet. Because He was resurrected, Jesus had to have been a God, even the Only Begotten Son of the Father.

"Therefore, what He taught is true; God cannot lie.

"Therefore, He was the Creator of the earth, as He said.

"Therefore, heaven and hell are real, as He taught.

"Therefore, there is a world of spirits, which He visited after His death.

"Therefore, He will come again, as the angels said, and 'reign personally upon the earth' [Articles of Faith 1:10].

"Therefore, there is a resurrection and a final judgment for all."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



SPIRITUAL WHIRLWINDS

"More concerning than the prophesied earthquakes and wars are the spiritual whirlwinds that can uproot you from your spiritual foundations and land your spirit in places you never imagined possible, sometimes with your barely noticing that you have been moved.

"The worst whirlwinds are the temptations of the adversary. Sin has always been part of the world, but it has never been so accessible, insatiable, and acceptable. There is, of course, a powerful force that will subdue the whirlwinds of sin. It is called repentance. . . .

"... Don't let the whirlwinds drag you down. These are your days—to stand strong as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Build more firmly your foundation upon the rock of your Redeemer.

"Treasure more completely His incomparable life and teachings.

"Follow more diligently His example and His commandments.

"Embrace more deeply His love, His mercy and grace, and the powerful gifts of His Atonement.

"As you do, I promise you that you will see the whirlwinds for what they are—tests, temptations, distractions, or challenges to help you grow. And as you live righteously year after year, I assure you that your experiences will confirm to you again and again that Jesus is the Christ. The spiritual rock under your feet will be solid and secure."

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