YOUTH MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS | MAY 2019



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### THE MONTHLY YOUTH MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

May 2019 • Volume 49 • Number 5



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- Neiafu, Tonga
- Tooele Valley, Utah
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PRIL 2019 GENERAL CONFERENCE

# STUDY AND ACT

Many of the talks in this conference inspired us to focus on acting in faith, repenting, and progressing along the covenant path.

In this special issue of the *New Era,* we've included excerpts from talks given by the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and other Church leaders. As you study their words, what are you inspired to do? How are you inspired to change? And what actions will you decide to take?







# PRESIDENT RUSSELL M. NELSON

### GENERAL PRIESTHOOD SESSION WE CAN DO BETTER AND BE BETTER

Recently I have found myself drawn to the Lord's instruction given through the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Say nothing but repentance unto this generation" [Doctrine and Covenants 6:9; 11:9]. This declaration is often repeated throughout scripture. It prompts an obvious question: "Does *everyone* need to repent?" The answer is yes...

Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

. . . Experience the strengthening power of daily repentance of doing and being a little better each day. . . .

... Brethren, prayerfully seek to understand what stands in the way of your repentance. Identify what *stops* you from repenting. And then, change! Repent! All of us can do better and be better than ever before.

There are specific ways in which we can likely improve. One is in the way we treat our bodies. . . .

. . . Because Satan is miserable *without* a body, he wants us to be miserable *because* of ours.

Your body is your personal temple, created to house your eternal spirit. Your care of that temple is important. Now, I ask you, brethren, are you more interested in dressing and grooming your body to appeal to the world than to please God? Your answer to this question sends a direct message to Him about your feelings regarding His transcendent gift to you . . .

Another way we can also do better and be better is how we honor the women in our lives, beginning with our wives and daughters, our mothers and sisters. . . .

If you have a need to repent because of the way you have treated the women closest to you, begin now. . . .

Brethren, we all need to repent. We need to get up off the couch, put down the remote, and wake up from our spiritual slumber. It is time to put on the full armor of God so we can engage in the most important work on earth.... The forces of evil have never raged more forcefully than they do today. As servants of the Lord, we cannot be asleep while this battle rages....

Gratefully, the priesthood we hold is far stronger than are the wiles of the adversary. I plead with you to be the men and young men the Lord needs you to be.







### SUNDAY MORNING SESSION COME, FOLLOW ME

President Russell M. Nelson

In that coming day when you will complete your mortal probation and enter the spirit world, you will be brought face-to-face with that heart-wrenching question: *"Where* is *my* family?"

Jesus Christ teaches the way back to our eternal home. He understands our Heavenly Father's plan of eternal progression better than any of us. After all, He is the keystone of it all. He is our Redeemer, our Healer, and our Savior...

The spirit in each of us naturally yearns for family love to last forever. Love songs perpetuate a false hope that love is all you need if you want to be together forever. And some erroneously believe that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ provides a promise that all people will be with their loved ones after death.

In truth, the Savior Himself has made it abundantly clear that while His Resurrection assures that every person who ever lived will indeed be resurrected and live forever, much more is required if we want to have the high privilege of exaltation. Salvation is an individual matter, but exaltation is a family matter...

So, what is required for a family to be exalted forever? We qualify for *that* privilege by making covenants with God,

# **SALVATION** IS AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER, BUT **EXALTATION**, IS A FAMILY MATTER.

**PRESIDENT RUSSELL M. NELSON** 

keeping those covenants, and receiving essential ordinances

The Savior invites all to follow Him into the waters of baptism and, in time, to make additional covenants with God in the temple and receive and be faithful to those further essential ordinances. All these are required if we want to be exalted with our families and with God forever.

The anguish of my heart is that many people whom I love, whom I admire, and whom I respect decline His invitation. They ignore the pleadings of Jesus Christ when He beckons, "Come, follow me" [Luke 18:22]... Now, as President of His Church, I plead with you who have distanced yourselves from the Church and with you who have not yet really sought to know that the Savior's Church has been restored. Do the spiritual work to find out for your selves, and please do it now. Time is running out.



→ See the full address at conference.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

May 2019



# DALLIN H. OAKS FIRST COUNSELOR IN THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

# GENERAL PRIESTHOOD SESSION WHERE WILL THIS LEAD?

Our present and our future will be happier if we are always conscious of the future. As we make current decisions, we should always be asking, "Where will this lead?"

Some decisions are choices between doing something or doing nothing....

... As we see threats creeping up on persons or things we love, we have the choice of speaking or acting or remaining silent. It is well to ask ourselves, "Where will this lead?" Where the consequences are immediate and serious, we cannot afford to do nothing. We must sound appropriate warnings or support appropriate preventive efforts while there is still time.

... More common are those choices between one action or another. These include choices between good or evil, but more frequently they are choices between two goods. Here too it is desirable to ask where this will lead. We make many choices between two goods, often involving how we will spend our time. There is nothing bad about playing video games or texting or watching TV or talking on a cell phone. But each of these involves what is called "opportunity cost," meaning that if we spend time doing one thing, we lose the opportunity to do another. I am sure you can see that we need to measure thoughtfully what we are losing by the time we spend on one activity, even if it is perfectly good in itself....

"Where will this lead?" is also important in choosing how we label or think of ourselves. Most important, each of us is a child of God with a potential destiny of eternal life. Every other label, even including occupation, race, physical characteristics, or honors, is temporary or trivial in eternal terms. Don't choose to label yourselves or think of yourselves in terms that put a limit on a goal for which you might strive....

... We make countless choices in life, some large and some seemingly small. Looking back, we can see what a great difference some of our choices made in our lives. We make better choices and decisions if we look at the alternatives and ponder where they will lead.... For us, the end is always on the covenant path through the temple to eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God.





### SUNDAY AFTERNOON SESSION CLEANSED BY REPENTANCE

President Dallin H. Oaks

The atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ opens the door for "all men [to] repent and come unto him" (Doctrine and Covenants 18:11)....

Repentance begins with our Savior, and it is a joy, not a burden....

We begin with faith in Jesus Christ, because "it is he that cometh to take away the sins of the world" (Alma 5:48). We must repent because, as Alma taught, "except ye repent ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of heaven" (Alma 5:51). Repentance is an essential part of God's plan. . . .

To be cleansed by repentance, we must forsake our sins and confess them to the Lord and to His mortal judge where required (see Doctrine and Covenants 58:43). Alma taught that we must also "bring forth works of righteousness" (Alma 5:35). All of this is part of the frequent scriptural invitation to come unto Christ.

We need to partake of the sacrament each Sabbath day. In that ordinance we make covenants and receive blessings that help us overcome all acts and desires that block us from the perfection our Savior invites us to achieve...

In the Lord's Church, mortal judgments for members or prospective members are administered by leaders who seek divine direction. It is their responsibility to judge persons who are seeking to come unto Christ to receive the power of His Atonement on the covenant path to eternal life....

... The ultimate accountability, including the final cleansing effect of repentance, is between each of us and God....

The judgment most commonly described in the scriptures is the Final Judgment that follows the Resurrection....

To assure that we will be clean before God, we must repent *before* the Final Judgment.... The Atonement of Jesus Christ gives us the only way to achieve the needed cleansing through repentance, and this mortal life is the time to do it....

Overarching God's plan and all of His commandments is His love for each of us.... Our loving Savior opens His arms to receive all men and women on the loving conditions He has prescribed to enjoy the greatest blessings God has for His children.

Because of God's plan and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I testify with a "perfect brightness of hope" [2 Nephi 31:20] that God loves us and we *can* be cleansed by the process of repentance.



➡ See the full address at conference.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



REPENTANCE BEGINS WITH OUR OUR SAVIOR AND IT IS A JOY, NOT A BURDEN.

FROM GETHSEMANE (JESUS IS MY LIGHT), BY JORGE COCCO

DETAIL

PRESIDENT DALLIN H. OAKS





# PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING SECOND COUNSELOR

IN THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

### SATURDAY MORNING SESSION A HOME WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD DWELLS

On this date in 1830, Joseph Smith organized the Church under the direction of the Lord. It was done in the Whitmer family home near Fayette, New York....

Although I don't know what the Prophet Joseph said or how he looked when he stood before that little group, I know what those people with faith in Jesus Christ felt. They felt the Holy Ghost, and they felt that they were in a holy place. They surely felt that they were united as one....

My purpose today is to teach what I know of how we can qualify for that feeling more often and invite it to last longer in our families. As you know from experience, that is not easy to do. Contention, pride, and sin have to be kept at bay. The pure love of Christ must come into the hearts of those in our family....

. . . Building faith in Jesus Christ is the beginning of reversing spiritual decline. . . .

Your faith in the Savior has grown as you followed President Russell M. Nelson's suggestion to reread the Book of Mormon. You marked passages and words that referred to the Savior. Your faith in Jesus Christ grew. But like a new plant, such faith in Jesus Christ will wither unless you find continued resolve to ponder and pray to increase it....

In addition to your example of growing in faith, your praying as a family can play a crucial part in making home a sacred place. . . .

Because none of us is perfect and feelings are easily hurt, families can become sacred sanctuaries only as we repent early and sincerely....

Our family members will grow in their desire to share the gospel as they feel the joy of forgiveness. That can come even as they renew covenants when they partake of the sacrament. . . .

For both parents and children, the temple is the best opportunity to gain a feeling for and a love of heavenly places....

You will find some of your greatest joys in your efforts to make your home a place of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a place that is permeated with love.



YOU WILL FIND SOME OF YOUR GREATEST JOYS IN YOUR EFFORTS TO MAKE YOUR HOME A PLACE OF FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND A PLACE THAT IS PERMEATED WITH LOVE.

PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING

New Era

# SUSTAIN EACH

### GENERAL PRIESTHOOD SESSION THE POWER OF SUSTAINING FAITH

President Henry B. Eyring

Many times I have heard priesthood leaders give thanks for the sustaining faith of those they serve. From the emotion in their voices, you know their gratitude is deep and real. My purpose today is to convey the Lord's appreciation for your sustaining His servants in His Church. And it is also to encourage you to exercise and grow in that power to sustain others with your faith....

You choose whether to sustain all whom the Lord calls—in whatever the Lord has called them. . . . By raising your hand to sustain, you make a promise. You make a promise with God, whose servants these are, that you will sustain them.



These are imperfect human beings, as are you. Keeping your promises will take unshakable faith that the Lord called them. Keeping those promises will also bring eternal happiness. Not keeping them will bring sorrow to you and to those you love—and even losses beyond your power to imagine....

In addition to improving in sustaining those who serve in the Church, we will learn that there is another setting in which we can increase in such power. There, it can bring even greater blessings to us. It is in the home and family.

I speak to the younger priesthood holder who lives in a home with his father. Let me tell you from my own experience what it means for a father to feel your sustaining faith. He may look confident to you. But he faces more challenges than you know. At times he can't see the way through the problems before him. Your admiration for him will help him some. Your love for him will help even more. But the thing that will help the most is sincere words like these: "Dad, I've prayed for you, and I have felt that the Lord is going to help you. Everything will work out. I know it will."...

In the priesthood quorum and in the family, increased faith to sustain each other is the way we build the Zion the Lord wants us to create. With His help, we can and we will....

As we grow in that pure love of Christ, our hearts soften. That love will humble us and lead us to repent. Our confidence in the Lord and in each other will grow. And then we will move toward becoming one, as the Lord promises we can [see Doctrine and Covenants 35:2].







# ELDER ULISSES SOARES OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

# **HOW CAN I UNDERSTAND?**

As recorded in the book of Acts, Philip the Evangelist taught the gospel to a certain Ethiopian who was a eunuch in charge of all the treasures belonging to the queen of Ethiopia [see Acts 8:27]. While returning from worshipping in Jerusalem, he read the book of Isaiah. Compelled by the Spirit, Philip came closer to him and said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?

"And [the eunuch] said, How can l, except some man should guide me? . . .

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" [Acts 8:30–31, 35].

The question asked by this Ethiopian man is a reminder of the divine mandate we all have to seek to learn and to teach one another the gospel of Jesus Christ....

Our purpose as we seek to learn and to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ must be to increase faith in God and in His divine plan of happiness and in Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice and to achieve lasting conversion....

... Our lives need to be rooted upon the rock of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, which might help us individually and as families to

have our own spiritual impressions engraved in our hearts, helping us to endure in our faith....

The Ethiopian's question, "How can I [understand], except some man should guide me?" also has a special meaning in the context of our individual responsibility to put the principles of the gospel we have learned into practice in our lives. In the Ethiopian's case, for example, . . . he asked to be baptized. He came to know that Jesus Christ was the Son of God [see Acts 8:37–38].

Brothers and sisters, our actions must reflect what we learn and teach. We need to show our beliefs through the way we live....

My dear companions in the gospel, I testify to you that when we earnestly, heartily, firmly, and sincerely seek to learn the gospel of Jesus Christ and teach it to one another with real purpose and under the influence of the Spirit, these teachings may transform hearts and inspire a desire to live according to the truths of God.



# **CAREFUL VERSUS CASUAL**

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we are blessed to know how and where true happiness is found. It is found in carefully living the gospel established by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and in striving to become more like Him...

... We ... are on a track, a covenant path we committed to when we were baptized as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Although we may encounter occasional obstacles along the way, this path will keep us moving towards our prized eternal destination if we stay firmly on it. ...

There is a careful way and a casual way to do everything, including living the gospel. As we consider our commitment to the Savior, are we careful or casual?...

The youth theme for 2019 is taken from John 14:15, where the Lord instructs, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." If we love Him as we claim, can't we show that love by being a little more careful in living His commandments?

Being careful in living the gospel does not necessarily mean being formal or stuffy. What it does mean is being appropriate in our thoughts and behavior as disciples of Jesus Christ...

The *For the Strength of Youth* pamphlet contains standards that, when followed carefully, will bring rich blessings and help us stay on the covenant path....

We do not lower our standards to fit in or make someone else feel comfortable. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, and as such we are about elevating others, lifting them to a higher, holier place where they too can reap greater blessings....

It's impossible to live a perfect life. Only one man was able to live perfectly while dwelling on this telestial planet. That was Jesus Christ. Although we may not be perfect, . . . we can be worthy: worthy to partake of the sacrament, worthy of temple blessings, and worthy to receive personal revelation.

King Benjamin testified of the blessings that come to those who carefully follow the Savior:

"And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness" [Mosiah 2:41].

... Deep and lasting happiness comes by intentionally and carefully living the gospel of Jesus Christ.



See the full address at conference.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



# SISTER BECKY CRAVEN SECOND COUNSELOR

IN THE YOUNG WOMEN GENERAL PRESIDENCY

ALTHOUGH WE MAY NOT

BE PERFECT,...

WE CAN BE WORTHY.

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23

SISTER BECKY CRAVEN

New Era

(**B**)

NIII



# ELDER DIETER F. UCHTDOR

# OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

# MISSIONARY WORK: SHARING WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART

I have often pondered and prayed about the Savior's great commission to His disciples—us, His children—to "go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" [Matthew 28:19].

I wrestled with the question "How can we, as members and disciples of Christ, best fulfill that great commission in our daily lives?" . . .

If . . . you feel that you have been dragging your feet when it comes to sharing the gospel message, may l suggest five guiltfree things anyone can do to participate in the Savior's great commission to help gather Israel?

**First, draw close to God**. The first great commandment is to love God. . . .

. . . Others will notice that there is something unique and special about you. And they will ask about it.

**Second, fill your heart with love for others.** This is the second great commandment. . . .

Strive to emulate the love of Christ and have compassion for others. . . .

Third, strive to walk the path of discipleship. As your love for God and His children deepens, so does your commitment to follow Jesus Christ...

The important thing is that you don't give up; you keep trying to get it right. You will eventually become better, happier, and more authentic. Talking with others about your faith will become normal and natural...

**Fourth, share what is in your heart.** . . . Always look for opportunities to bring up your faith in natural and normal ways with people—both in person as well as online. . . .

**Fifth, trust the Lord to work His miracles**. Understand that it's not your job to convert people. That is the role of the Holy Ghost. Your role is to share what is in your heart and live consistent with your beliefs....

As an Apostle of Jesus Christ, I bless you with the *confidence* to be a living testimonial of gospel values, with the *courage* to always be recognized as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with the *humility* to assist in His work as an expression of your love for Heavenly Father and His children.





# GUILT-FREE WAYS TO GATHER ISRAEL

1. DRAW CLOSE TO GOD.

2. FILL YOUR HEART WITH LOVE FOR OTHERS.

3.STRIVE TO WALK THE PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP.

4. SHARE WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART.

> 5.TRUST THE LORD TO WORK HIS MIRACLES.

### BISHOP BI

# NO ONE AND IT'S TOO LATE OF FOR THE OF SAVIOR'S SAVIOR'S LOVING GONE, THE OF SAVIOR'S LOVING REACH.

**BISHOP W. CHRISTOPHER WADDELL** 

JUST AS HE DID

Just one year ago, a call was extended by President Russell M. Nelson for each of us to care for our brothers and sisters in a "higher, holier way" ["Opening Remarks," Oct. 2018 general conference]. Speaking of the Savior, President Nelson taught that "because it is His Church, we as His servants will minister to the one, just as He did. We will minister in His name, with His power and authority, and with His loving-kindness" ["Ministering with the Power and Authority of God," Apr. 2018 general conference].

In response to the invitation from a prophet of God, remarkable efforts to minister to the one are taking place all over the world, in both coordinated efforts, as members faithfully fulfill their ministering assignments, as well as in what I'll call "impromptu" ministering, as so many demonstrate Christlike love in response to unexpected opportunities....

... Those needs come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and conditions. A single parent; a less-active couple; a struggling teen; an overwhelmed mother; or financial, health, or marriage issues the list is almost endless. However, . . . no one is too far gone, and it's never too late for the Savior's loving reach. . . .

Whether we serve as ministering brothers or sisters, or simply when we are made aware of someone in need, we are encouraged to seek the guidance and direction of the Spirit—and then to act. We may wonder how best to serve, but the Lord knows, and through His Spirit we will be directed in our efforts. Like Nephi, who "was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do" [1 Nephi 4:6], we will also be led by the Spirit as we strive to become instruments in the Lord's hands to bless His children. As we seek the guidance of the Spirit and trust the Lord, we will be placed in situations and circumstances where we can act and bless—in other words, minister.



# WE WILL FIND PEACE, JOY, >>> AND <<< HAPPINESS IN OUR LIFE WHEN -SERVING-HELORD >>> AND OUR <« NEIGHBORS. •1•

PRESIDENT M. RUSSELL BALLARD

New Era

SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION



# PRESIDENT M RUSSELL BALLARD ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE

# THE TRUE, PURE, AND SIMPLE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

In the last 18 months, the Lord has inspired His prophet and the Apostles to implement a number of wonderful adjustments. However, I worry that the spiritual purposes of these adjustments might become lost in the excitement about the changes themselves....

The best ways for us to see the spiritual purposes of the Church are to live the true, pure, and simple teachings of Christ and also to apply the Savior's two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. ... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" [Doctrine and Covenants 59:5-6].

Obedience to those two commandments provides a way to experience more peace and joy. When we love and serve the Lord and love and serve our neighbors, we will naturally feel

Loving God and loving our neighbors is the doctrinal foundation of ministering; home-centered, Church-supported learning; Sabbath day spiritual worship; and the work of salvation on both sides of the veil supported in the Relief Societies and

elders quorums. All of these things are based on the divine commandments to love God and to love our neighbors. Can there be anything more basic, more fundamental, and more

Living the true, pure, and simple gospel plan will allow us more time to visit the widows, widowers, orphans, lonely, sick, and serving the Lord and our neighbors. . . .

... I am a witness that the Lord directs His Church to accomplish His purposes. I have received divine guidance far beyond my capacity. The joy of gospel living for me has been centered on the true, pure, and simple doctrine and gospel of lesus Christ.





# ELDER NEILL. ANDERSEN OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

# THE EYE OF FAITH

With the Restoration of the gospel, God has given us the way to learn and know essential spiritual truths: we learn them through the holy scriptures, through our personal prayers and our own experiences, through the counsel of the living prophets and apostles, and through the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who can help us to "know the truth of all things" [Moroni 10:5]...

Let's look at the proclamation on the family through the eye of faith....

The proclamation begins: "All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny."

These are eternal truths. You and I are not an accident of nature....

We lived before our birth. Our individual identity is stamped in us forever. In ways we don't fully understand, our spiritual growth there in the premortal world influences who we are here. We accepted God's plan. We knew that we would experience difficulties, pain, and sorrow upon the earth. We also knew that the Savior would come and that as we proved ourselves worthy, we would rise in the Resurrection, having "glory added upon [our] heads for ever and ever" [Abraham 3:26]....

If we pick and choose what we accept in the proclamation, we cloud our eternal view, putting too much importance on our experience here and now. By prayerfully pondering the proclamation through the eye of faith, we better understand how the principles are beautifully connected, supporting one another, revealing our Father's plan for His children.

Should we really be surprised when the Lord's prophets declare His will and, for some, questions remain? Of course, some reject the voice of the prophets immediately, but others prayerfully ponder their honest questions—questions that will be settled with patience and an eye of faith... One purpose of prophets is to help us in resolving sincere questions...

There are so many, young and old, who are loyal and true to the gospel of Jesus Christ, even though their own current experience does not fit neatly inside the family proclamation: children whose lives have been shaken by divorce; youth whose friends mock the law of chastity; divorced women and men who have been gravely wounded by the unfaithfulness of a spouse; husbands and wives who are unable to have children; women and men who are married to a spouse who does not share their faith in the restored gospel; single women and men who, for various reasons, have been unable to marry....

I know the Savior lives. I witness that He is the source of all truth that really matters and that He will fulfill all the blessings He has promised to those who keep His commandments.



# HOW TO LEARN AND KNOW SPIRITUAL TRUTHS:





HOLY GHOST



PERSONAL PRAYERS



LIVING PROPHETS





# R. HOLLAND OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

# **BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD**

Looking up from water's edge, past the eager crowds seeking baptism at his hand, John, called the Baptist, saw in the distance his cousin, Jesus of Nazareth, striding resolutely toward him to make a request for that same ordinance. Reverently, but audible enough for those nearby to hear, John uttered the admiration that still moves us two millennia later: "Behold the Lamb of God" [John 1:29].

... John ... used the figure of a sacrificial lamb offered in atonement for the sins and sorrows of a fallen world and all the fallen people in it. . . .

... No wonder the angels of heaven sang for joy when, finally, Jesus was born-the long-promised Messiah Himself. Following His brief mortal ministry, this purest of all Passover sheep prepared His disciples for His death by introducing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper .... There would still be an offering, it would still involve a sacrifice, but it would be with symbolism much deeper, much more introspective and personal than the bloodletting of a firstborn lamb....

My beloved brothers and sisters, with the exciting new emphasis on increased gospel learning in the home, it is crucial for us to remember that we are still commanded to "go to the house

of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day" [Doctrine and Covenants 59:9]. In addition to making time for more home-centered gospel instruction, our modified Sunday service is also to reduce the complexity of the meeting schedule in a way that properly emphasizes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as the sacred, acknowledged focal point of our weekly worship experience. We are to remember in as personal a way as possible that Christ died from a heart broken by shouldering entirely alone the sins and sorrows of the whole human family....

Brothers and sisters, this hour ordained of the Lord is the most sacred hour of our week. By commandment, we gather for the most universally received ordinance in the Church. It is in memory of Him who asked if the cup He was about to drink could pass, only to press on because He knew that for our sake it could not pass.





# ELDER GARY E STEVENSON OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

# YOUR PRIESTHOOD PLAYBOOK

Having enjoyed sports throughout my life, I have always admired those who develop their athletic abilities to the point where they perform at high levels. For someone to be *really* good at anything, it takes, in addition to natural talent, great discipline, sacrifice, and countless hours of training and practice. Such athletes often hear the sometimes-harsh criticisms of coaches and willingly put aside what they want now for something greater in the future....

In team sports, plays are developed for certain game situations and compiled into a playbook. Athletes learn their specific assignment for each play. Successful players study the playbook so thoroughly that when a play is called, they know exactly, almost instinctively, where to go and what to do.

In a similar way, we holders of the priesthood also have a team (a quorum) and a playbook (the holy scriptures and the words of modern prophets).

Do you strengthen your teammates?

How well have you studied your playbook?

Do you fully understand your assignment? .

You know what temptations you are most vulnerable to, and you can predict how the adversary will try to derail and dishearten you. Have you created a personal game plan and playbook so that you will know how to respond when faced with opposition? . . .

With a game plan, a playbook, and a firm commitment to execute your role, you will find that temptation has less control over you. You will already have made the decision of how you will react and what you will do. You won't need to decide every time you are confronted with temptation...

Listen to your trusted coaches, such as your parents, bishop, and Young Men leaders. Learn the playbook. Read the scriptures. Study the words of modern-day prophets. Create your own game plan of how you will prove yourself as a disciple of Christ.

Know in advance the plays you will use to strengthen your spirit and avoid the snares of the adversary. . . .

... Your mission in this life [is] to learn the ways of the Lord, enter the path of discipleship, and strive to live according to God's plan. You can do it. God will uphold and bless you as you turn to Him. You can do this because you are an all-star in His eyes.





# DALE G. RENLUND OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

JSE THE FAITH



# **ABOUND WITH BLESSINGS**

Blessings from heaven are neither earned by frenetically accruing "good deed coupons" nor by helplessly waiting to see if we win the blessing lottery. No, the truth is much more nuanced but more appropriate for the relationship between a loving Heavenly Father and His potential heirs—us. Restored truth reveals that blessings are never earned, but faith-inspired actions on our part, both initial and ongoing, are essential.

As we consider how we receive blessings from God, let us liken heavenly blessings to a massive pile of wood. Imagine at the center a small mound of kindling, topped by a layer of wood chips. Sticks come next, then small logs, and finally huge logs. This woodpile contains an enormous amount of fuel, capable of producing light and heat for days. Envision next to the woodpile a single match, the kind with a phosphorus tip.

For the energy in the woodpile to be released, the match needs to be struck and the kindling lit. The kindling will quickly catch fire and cause the larger pieces of wood to burn. Once this combustion reaction starts, it continues until all the wood is burned or the fire is deprived of oxygen.

Striking the match and lighting the kindling are small actions that enable the potential energy of the wood to be released. Until the match is struck, nothing happens, regardless of the size of the woodpile. If the match is struck but not applied to the kindling, the amount of light and heat released from the match alone is miniscule and the combustion energy in the wood remains unreleased. If oxygen is unavailable at any point, the combustion reaction stops.

In a similar way, most blessings that God desires to give us require action on our part—action based on our faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in the Savior is a principle of action and of power. First we act in faith; then the power comes—according to God's will and timing. The sequence is crucial. The required action, though, is always tiny when compared to the blessings we ultimately receive....

Often, the activation energy needed for blessings requires more than just looking or asking; ongoing, repeated, faith-filled actions are required....

I invite you to faithfully activate heavenly power to receive specific blessings from God. Exercise the faith to strike the match and light the fire. Supply the needed oxygen while you patiently wait on the Lord.

# NO MATTER S HOW HARD IT TRIES, S DARKNESS CANNOT PUT OUT [HIS] LGHT ∽EVER.~

SISTER SHARON EUBANK
## SISTER SISTER SHARDA EUBANK FIRST COUNSELOR IN THE RELIEF SOCIETY GENERAL PRESIDENCY

## **CHRIST: THE LIGHT THAT SHINES IN DARKNESS**

Jesus Christ . . . is the source of our power, the Light and Life of the World. Without a strong connection to Him, we begin to spiritually die. Knowing that, Satan tries to exploit the worldly pressures we all face. He works to dim our light, short-circuit the connection, cut off the power supply, leaving us alone in the dark. . . .

### Some of Us Are Paralyzed with Grief

... When we've taken a beating like the man on the road to Jericho and been left for dead, Jesus comes along and pours oil into our wounds, lifts us tenderly up, takes us to an inn, looks after us... **Christ heals wounds.** 

### Some of Us Are Just So Tired ...

Christ is willing to join with us in the yoke and pull in order to lighten our burdens. **Christ is rest.** 

### Some of Us Feel We Don't Fit the Traditional Mold

For various reasons, we don't feel accepted or acceptable. . . . In almost every [New Testament] story [Jesus] is reaching someone who wasn't traditionally accepted in society.

Luke 19 tells the story of . . . Zacchaeus. He climbed a tree in order to see Jesus walk by. . . . Jesus saw him up in the tree and called to him. . . . And when Jesus saw the goodness of Zacchaeus's heart and the things he did for others, He accepted his offering. . . .

### Some of Us Are Splintering with Questions ...

... This is not the stage in our eternal development where we have all answers. ... Assurance comes in ways that aren't always easy to analyze, but there is light in our darkness. ... **Christ is light to see.** 

## Some of Us Feel We Can Never Be Good Enough

... Satan wields this reasoning like a club: white wool stained scarlet can never go back to being white. But ... the miracle of [Jesus Christ's] grace is that when we repent of our sins, His scarlet blood returns us to purity....

### ... Christ makes wool white...

If you feel that the beacon of your testimony is sputtering and darkness is closing in, take courage. Keep your promises to God. Ask your questions. . . . Turn to Jesus Christ, who loves you still.

Jesus said, "I am the light [that] shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not" [Doctrine and Covenants 6:21]. That means no matter how hard it tries, the darkness cannot put out that light. Ever. You can trust that His light will be there for you.



→ See the full address at conference.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

... Christ sees us in our tree.



## ELDER OUENTINL COOK OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

## **GREAT LOVE FOR OUR FATHER'S CHILDREN**

Charity, which is "the pure love of Christ" [Moroni 7:47], includes God's eternal love for all His children.

My purpose . . . is to emphasize the essential role of that kind of love in missionary work, temple and family history work, and home-centered, Church-supported family religious observance. . . .

### Missionary Effort to Gather Scattered Israel

... The attribute of love [is] essential to missionary work in our day, just as it has always been....

When it comes to gathering Israel, we need to align our hearts with this kind of love and move away from feelings of mere responsibility or guilt to feelings of love and participation in the divine partnership of sharing the Savior's message, ministry, and mission with the world.

As members we can show our love for the Savior and our brothers and sisters throughout the world by making simple invitations. The new Sunday meeting schedule represents an exceptional opportunity for members to successfully and lovingly invite friends and associates to come and see and feel a Church experience....

### Temple and Family History Effort to Gather Israel

Love is also at the center of our temple and family history effort to gather Israel on the other side of the veil.... Our temple and family history effort has been strengthened to a significant degree by the new adjustments in both the Sunday meeting schedule and the youth advancement in classes and quorums. These changes provide for earlier and more powerful attention to learning about our ancestors and gathering Israel on the other side of the veil. Both temple and family history work are greatly enhanced....

... I promise that lovingly performing ordinances for ancestors will strengthen and protect our youth and families in a world that is becoming increasingly evil....

## Prepare Eternal Families and Individuals to Live with God

The new emphasis on home-centered gospel study and living and the resources that are provided by the Church are a great opportunity for lovingly preparing eternal families and individuals to meet and live with God....

I promise that as we focus on our love for the Savior and His Atonement, make Him the centerpiece of our efforts to gather Israel on both sides of the veil, minister to others, and individually prepare to meet God, the influence of the adversary will be diminished and the joy, delight, and peace of the gospel will magnify our homes with Christlike love.



## CHRISTLIKE LOVE IS ESSENTIAL IN:





TEMPLE AND FAMILY HISTORY WORK.



HOME-CENTERED, CHURCH-SUPPORTED FAMILY RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE.

## WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREPARE FOR THE SECOND COMING?



ELDER D. TODD CHRISTOFFERSON



# ELDER D. TODD CHRISTOFFE TWELVE APOSTLES

## **PREPARING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN**

Some time ago in Buenos Aires, Argentina, I participated in a conference with leaders from a wide variety of religious faiths. Their love for their fellowman was unmistakable. They were intent on relieving suffering and helping people rise above oppression and poverty....

... The Holy Spirit affirmed two things to me: First, the work of ministering to temporal needs is vital and must continue. The second was unexpected, yet powerful and clear. It was this: beyond selfless service, it is supremely important to prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ....

So yes, let us do all we can to relieve suffering and sorrow now, and let us devote ourselves more diligently to the preparations needed for the day when pain and evil are ended altogether....

... The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is uniquely empowered and commissioned to accomplish the necessary preparations for the Lord's Second Coming; indeed, it was restored for that purpose....

What can we do to prepare now for that day? . . .

First, and crucial for the Lord's return, is the presence on the earth of a people prepared to receive Him at His coming....

In ancient times, God took the righteous city of Zion to Himself. By contrast, in the last days a new Zion will receive the Lord at His return. Zion is the pure in heart, a people of one heart and one mind, dwelling in righteousness with no poor among them. ... We build up Zion in our homes, wards, branches, and stakes through unity, godliness, and charity....

An underlying effort in building Zion is the gathering of the Lord's long-dispersed covenant people. . . . All who will repent, believe on Christ, and be baptized are His covenant people. . . .

Also vital to the preparation for the Second Coming is the great redemptive effort on behalf of our ancestors. . . .

... Let us truly celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and all that it portends: His return to reign for a thousand years of peace, a righteous judgment and perfect justice for all, the immortality of all who ever lived upon this earth, and the promise of eternal life. Christ's Resurrection is the ultimate assurance that all will be put right. Let us be about building up Zion to hasten that day.



### BROTHER BROTHE

## THE ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

Suppose for a moment a man contemplating an exhilarating free fall makes a rash decision and spontaneously jumps from a small plane...

When we sin, we are like the foolish man who jumped from the plane. No matter what we do on our own, only a crash-landing awaits us. We are subject to the law of justice, which, like the law of gravity, is exacting and unforgiving. We can be saved only because the Savior, through His Atonement, mercifully provides us with a spiritual parachute of sorts. If we have faith in Jesus Christ and repent (meaning we do our part and pull the rip cord), then the protective powers of the Savior are unleashed on our behalf and we can land spiritually unharmed.

This is possible, however, only because the Savior overcame the four obstacles that can prevent our spiritual progress.



**1. Death.** He overcame death through His glorious Resurrection. . . .

**2. Sin.** The Savior overcame sin and guilt for all those who repent. . . .

... It is an infinite Atonement because it encompasses and circumscribes every sin and weakness, as well as every abuse or pain caused by others....

**3. Afflictions and Infirmities.** Alma prophesied that Christ "shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind." Why? "That his bowels may be filled with mercy, . . . that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities" [Alma 7:11–12].

How does He accomplish this? Sometimes He removes the affliction, sometimes He strengthens us to endure, and sometimes He gives us an eternal perspective to better understand their temporary nature. . . . ... Because of the Savior's Atonement, we can have an eternal perspective that gives meaning to our trials and hope for our relief.

**4. Weaknesses and Imperfections.** Because of His Atonement, the Savior has enabling powers, sometimes referred to as grace, that can help us overcome our weaknesses and imperfections and thus assist us in our pursuit to become more like Him...

... Because the Savior performed His Atonement, there is no external force or event or person—no sin or death or divorce that can prevent us from achieving exaltation, provided we keep God's commandments. With that knowledge, we can press forward with good cheer and absolute assurance that God is with us in this heavenly quest.





# GERRIA GONG OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

## GOOD SHEPHERD, LAMB OF GOD

At this Easter season, we celebrate the Good Shepherd, who is also the Lamb of God. Of all His divine titles, no others are more tender or telling. We learn much from our Savior's references to Himself as the Good Shepherd and from prophetic testimonies of Him as the Lamb of God. These roles and symbols are powerfully complementary—who better to succor each precious lamb than the Good Shepherd, and who better to be our Good Shepherd than the Lamb of God? . . .

As our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ calls His sheep in His voice and name. He seeks and gathers us. He teaches how to minister in love. Let us consider these three themes, beginning with Him calling us in His voice and His name. First, our Good Shepherd "calleth his own sheep by name.... They know his voice" [John 10:3–4]. And "in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ" [Alma 5:38]. As we seek with real intent to follow Jesus Christ, inspiration comes to do good, to love God, and to serve Him....

Second, our Good Shepherd seeks and gathers us into His one fold....

Our Savior reaches out to the one and to the ninety-and-nine, often at the same time. As we minister, we acknowledge the ninety-and-nine who are steadfast and immovable, even while we yearn after the one who has strayed....

Third, as the "Shepherd of Israel" [Psalm 80:1], Jesus Christ exemplifies how shepherds in Israel minister in love....

... God's shepherds are to strengthen, heal, bind up that which is broken, bring again that which was driven away, seek that which was lost....

Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is our perfect Good Shepherd. Because He has laid down His life for us and is now gloriously resurrected, Jesus Christ is also the perfect Lamb of God.

The sacrificial Lamb of God was foreshadowed from the beginning. . . .

As Lamb of God, our Savior knows when we feel alone, diminished, uncertain, or afraid....

... Our Savior assures us, whatever our circumstances, whoever we are: "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" [Isaiah 40:11]....

As Lamb of God, Jesus's divine mission was foreordained and rejoiced in by apostles and prophets. His Atonement, infinite and eternal, is central to the plan of happiness and the purpose of creation. He assures us that He carries us next to His heart.



## **JESUS CHRIST IS OUR**

## PERFECT GOOD SHEPHERD.

BECAUSE HE HAS LAID DOWN

**HIS LIFE FOR US AND IS** 

NOW GLORIOUSLY RESURRECTED,

**JESUS CHRIST IS ALSO THE** 

PERFECT LAMB OF GOD.

ELDER GERRIT W. GONG



## ELDER DAVID A BEDNAR OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

## PREPARED TO OBTAIN EVERY NEEDFUL THING

Each member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has an individual responsibility to learn and live the Lord's teachings and to receive by proper authority the ordinances of salvation and exaltation. We should not expect the Church as an organization to teach or tell us everything we need to know and do to become devoted disciples and endure valiantly to the end [see Doctrine and Covenants 121:29]. Rather, our personal responsibility is to learn what we should learn, to live as we know we should live, and to become who the Master would have us become. And our homes are the ultimate setting for learning, living, and becoming....

The overarching purpose of Heavenly Father's plan is for His children to become more like Him. Accordingly, He provides us with essential opportunities to grow and progress. . . . We cannot expect simply to attend Church meetings and participate in programs and thereby receive all of the spiritual edification and protection that will enable us "to withstand in the evil day" [Ephesians 6:13].

... And though we all need help pressing forward on the covenant path, the ultimate responsibility for developing spiritual strength and stamina rests upon each one of us.

If all you or I know about Jesus Christ and His restored gospel is what other people teach or tell us, then the foundation of our testimony of Him and His glorious Latter-day work is built upon sand [see 3 Nephi 14:24–27; 18:13; Matthew 7:24–27]. We cannot rely exclusively upon or borrow gospel light and knowledge from other people—even those whom we love and trust....

The ultimate missionary training center is in our homes.... Our most instructive Sunday School classes should be our individual and family study in our places of residence....

Family history centers now are in our homes....

Vital temple preparation classes occur in our homes....

... But many Church members are unsure about what appropriately can and cannot be said regarding the temple experience outside of the temple....

[The Church has prepared] a rich reservoir of resources . . . in print, audio, video, and other formats to help us learn about [temple] ordinances. [I invite you to study] the excellent materials available at temples.ChurchofJesusChrist.org. . . .

I joyfully witness that compensating blessings will come as we strive to fulfill our individual responsibility to learn and love the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. We truly can "be prepared to obtain every needful thing" [Doctrine and Covenants 109:15].





**CENTERS** 



WHERE VITAL TEMPLE PREPARATION CLASSES OCCUR

New Era



## RONALDA RASBAND OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES



## **BUILD A FORTRESS OF SPIRITUALITY AND PROTECTION**

Christ-centered homes are fortresses for the kingdom of God on earth in a day when, as prophesied, the devil "rage[s] in the hearts of the children of men, and stir[s] them up to anger against that which is good" [2 Nephi 28:20].

People have built fortresses throughout history to keep the enemy outside. Often those fortresses included a guard tower where watchmen—like prophets—warned of menacing forces and coming attacks....

So it is with us. Our homes are fortresses against the evils of the world. In our homes we come unto Christ by learning to follow His commandments, by studying the scriptures and praying together, and by helping one another stay on the covenant path...

Brothers and sisters, 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 chose the Father's plan...

For our safety, we must build a fortress of spirituality and protection for our very souls, a fortress that will not be penetrated by the evil one.... When we build a fortress of spiritual strength, we can shun the advances of the adversary, turn our backs on him, and feel the peace of the Spirit...

What are some ways we can fortify ourselves in troubled times? . . .

We are obedient....

We trust the Lord....

We stand for the truth....

We make and renew our covenants by partaking of the sacrament and by worshipping in the temple....

We should have integrity in all that we do. . . .

As we diligently strengthen our fortifications, we become like Jesus Christ, as His true disciples, with our very souls in His protection...

Our testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ, our homes, our families, and our membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be our personal fortresses of protection surrounding us and shielding us from the power of the evil one.



# **BE INSPIRED**

Conference messages can inspire and teach you as you go back and study all of them. Here are a few samples of inspiring messages that weren't included in the previous pages.

Go to **conference.ChurchofJesusChrist.org**, the **Gospel Library**, or this month's *Ensign* magazine to find your inspiration.

## THE MORE DILIGENTLY WE SEEK HIS VOICE, THE EASIER IT BECOMES TO HEAR.



Elder Brook P. Hales of the Seventy



## NO ONE CAN BE LEFT BEHIND! THE LORD LOVES EACH YOUNG MAN AND EACH YOUNG WOMAN.

Elder Carl B. Cook of the Presidency of the Seventy

NO MATTER WHAT, NO MATTER WHERE, IN CHRIST AND THROUGH CHRIST THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE SMILING BRIGHTLY BEFORE US. IMMEDIATELY BEFORE US.

Elder Kyle S. McKay of the Seventy





WE CAN FULLY TRUST IN A LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER, WHO IS CONSTANTLY TRYING TO HELP US BECOME THE PERSON HE KNOWS WE CAN BECOME. JUST AS READING AND LEARNING ABOUT MUSCLES IS NOT ENOUGH TO BUILD MUSCLE, READING AND LEARNING ABOUT FAITH WITHOUT ADDING ACTION IS INSUFFICIENT TO BUILD FAITH.

Elder Juan Pablo Villar of the Seventy

CONFERENCE.CHURCHOFJESUSCHRIST.ORG

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# RENOVAT RENOVAT FAITH CORPORED IN DESUS CHRIST.

President Russell M. Nelson, vpr. 2019 general conference. Vew Era

## WHAT YOUTH FELT AT CONFERENCE



"THIS GENERAL CONFERENCE RENEWED MY DESIRE TO SEEK OUT ETERNAL TRUTHS. I WAS INSPIRED TO RE-EXAMINE MY ROLE AS A PRIESTHOOD HOLDER AND HOW I AFFECT THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE." Jackson G., 17, Nevada, USA

"AS CONFERENCE ENDED, I FELT AN URGENCY TO SEEK NEW SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES AND DRAW CLOSER TO GOD EACH DAY."



Tania C., 18, Buenos Aires, Argentina



"CONFERENCE HELPED ME TO FEEL INFORMED, LIKE I KNOW WHAT'S EXPECTED OF ME. IT HELPED ME UNDERSTAND THE CHANGES THAT ARE HAPPENING AND HOW THEY WILL MAKE THE CHURCH BETTER." Kyrie G., 13, Utah, USA

"I WAS INSPIRED TO HAVE FAITH AND TO ACT UPON IT. AND IT ALSO HELPED ME TO UNDERSTAND WE NEED TO REPENT AND KEEP COVENANTS."

Liah Annette K., 12, Ghana



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS