

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood during the golden hour of sunset. The houses are densely packed, with various roof colors and some swimming pools visible. The sky is a warm, hazy orange. Overlaid on the center of the image is a quote in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The quote is framed by decorative horizontal lines with small circles in the center. The quote reads: "WE WILL FIND PEACE, JOY, >>> AND <<< HAPPINESS IN OUR LIFE WHEN SERVING THE LORD >>> AND OUR <<< NEIGHBORS." The text is arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, following the contours of the quote.

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PRESIDENT M. RUSSELL BALLARD

New Era



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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 more happiness that comes to us in no better way.

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 simple than that?

Living the true, pure, and simple gospel plan will allow us more time to visit the widows, widowers, orphans, lonely, sick, and poor. We will find peace, joy, and happiness in our life when 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 Jesus Christ.



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