



APOSTLES SPEAK to Us



A PLEA TO MY SISTERS

“It would be impossible to measure the influence that . . . women have, not only on families but also on the Lord’s Church, as wives, mothers, and grandmothers; as sisters and aunts; as teachers and leaders; and especially as exemplars and devout defenders of the faith. . . .

“Sisters, do you realize the breadth and scope of your influence when you speak those things that come to your heart and mind as directed by the Spirit? . . .

“My dear sisters, whatever your calling, whatever your circumstances, we need your impressions, your insights, and your inspiration. . . .

“... We need women who have a bedrock understanding of the doctrine of Christ and who will use that understanding to teach and help raise a sin-resistant generation. We need women who can detect deception in all of its forms. We need women who know how to access the power that God makes available to covenant keepers and who express their beliefs with confidence and charity.

“... Today I plead with my sisters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to step forward! Take your rightful and needful place in your home, in your community, and in the kingdom of God—more than you ever have before. . . . I promise you in the name of Jesus Christ that as you do so, the Holy Ghost will magnify your influence in an unprecedented way!”

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



STRENGTHENED BY THE ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

“Our Savior . . . knows our struggles, our heartaches, our temptations, and our suffering, for He willingly experienced them all as an essential part of His Atonement. And because of this, His Atonement empowers Him to succor us—to give us the strength to bear it all. . . .

“... Sometimes His power heals an infirmity, but the scriptures and our experiences teach that sometimes He succors or helps by giving us the strength or patience to endure our infirmities. . . .

“... Our Savior’s Atonement does more than assure us of immortality by a universal resurrection and give us the opportunity to be cleansed from sin by repentance and baptism. His Atonement also provides the opportunity to call upon Him who has experienced all of our mortal infirmities to give us the strength to bear the burdens of mortality. He knows of our anguish, and He is there for us. Like the good Samaritan, when He finds us wounded at the wayside, He will bind up our wounds and care for us (see Luke 10:34). The healing and strengthening power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement is for all of us who will ask. I testify of that as I also testify of our Savior, who makes it all possible.”

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



"I loved when Elder Robert D. Hales said, 'If you want more than you now have, reach up, not across!' We were encouraged to continually head toward Christ."

Mary A., from Facebook



GOD IS AT THE HELM

"Clearly, our Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ have outfitted the Old Ship Zion with clear and simple eternal truths that will help us stay the course through the troubled waters of mortal life. Here are just a few..."

"... Make no mistake about it: the Lord directs His Church through living prophets and apostles. This is the way He has always done His work..."

"A second truth is the doctrine of the plan of salvation. ... [It] is a map of where we came from, our purpose here on earth, and where we are going when we die..."

"Another key truth in the Church is that Heavenly Father created Adam and Eve for a lofty purpose. It was their charge—and, subsequently, the charge of their posterity—to create mortal bodies for God's spirit children so they could experience mortality. By this process, Heavenly Father sends His spirit children to earth to learn and grow through the experiences of earth life..."

"Another important doctrine that we should cling to is to observe the Sabbath day..."

"God's plan is in place. He is at the helm, and His great and powerful ship flows toward salvation and exaltation. Remember that we cannot get there by jumping out of the boat and trying to swim there by ourselves."

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



MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY'S WORLD

"I would like to speak specifically to the youth—the noble youth—and noble young adults..."

"I testify that if you are there for the Lord, He will be there for you. If you love Him and keep His commandments, you will have His Spirit to be with you and guide you..."

"... Pay your tithing and then save! When you earn more, save more. Don't compete with others to have expensive toys. Don't buy what you can't afford..."

"Education prepares you for better employment opportunities. It puts you in a better position to serve and to bless those around you. It will set you on a path of lifelong learning..."

"... None of us marry *perfection*; we marry *potential*. The right marriage is not only about what I want; it's also about what she—who's going to be my companion—wants and needs me to be..."

"... Begin exercising your faith in every area of your life..."

"... Prayerfully select mentors who have your spiritual well-being at heart. Be careful about taking advice from your peers. If you want more than you now have, reach *up*, not across!"

"Remember, no one can reach upward on your behalf. Only *your* faith and prayers will cause you to lift yourself and have the mighty change of heart. Only *your* resolve to be obedient can change your life."

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



“As Elder Bednar paid tribute to the six men who had passed during his time in the Quorum of the Twelve, I remembered the last time I heard them speak. This inspired me to become more like the dedicated servants of the Lord by starting from the ground up. From this, I have decided to dust off my scriptures and read them every day.”

Logan F., 14, Texas, USA



BEHOLD THY MOTHER

“No love in mortality comes closer to approximating the pure love of Jesus Christ than the selfless love a devoted mother has for her child. . . .

“You see, it is not only that they bear us, but they continue bearing *with us*. It is not only the prenatal carrying but the lifelong carrying that makes mothering such a staggering feat. Of course, there are heartbreaking exceptions, but most mothers know intuitively, instinctively that this is a sacred trust of the highest order. The weight of that realization, especially on young maternal shoulders, can be very daunting. . . .

“To all of our mothers everywhere, past, present, or future, I say, ‘Thank you. Thank you for giving birth, for shaping souls, for forming character, and for demonstrating the pure love of Christ.’ To Mother Eve, to Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, to Mary of Nazareth, and to a Mother in Heaven, I say, ‘Thank you for your crucial role in fulfilling the purposes of eternity.’ To all mothers in every circumstance, including those who struggle—and all will—I say, ‘Be peaceful. Believe in God and yourself. You are doing better than you think you are. In fact, you are saviors on Mount Zion, and like the Master you follow, your love “never faileth” [Moroni 7:46; see also 1 Corinthians 13:8]. I can pay no higher tribute to anyone.”

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



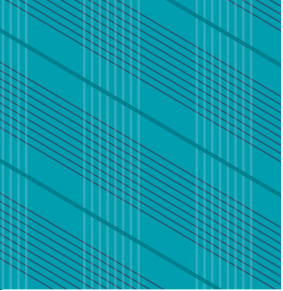
“CHOSEN TO BEAR TESTIMONY OF MY NAME”

“My purpose is to explain why indeed it is wonderful to have older men of great spiritual maturity and judgment serving in the senior leadership positions of the restored Church of Jesus Christ—and why we should ‘hear’ and ‘hearken’ (Mosiah 2:9) to the teachings of these men whom the Lord has ‘chosen to bear testimony of [His] name . . . among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people’ (D&C 112:1). . . .

“... These men have had a sustained season of tutoring by the Lord, whom they represent, serve, and love. They have learned to understand the divine language of the Holy Spirit and the Lord’s patterns for receiving revelation. These ordinary men have undergone a most extraordinary developmental process that has sharpened their vision, informed their insight, engendered love for people from all nations and circumstances, and affirmed the reality of the Restoration. . . .

“The Savior declared, ‘Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same’ (D&C 1:38). May we hear and heed the eternal truths taught by the Lord’s authorized representatives. As we do so, I promise our faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will be fortified, and we will receive spiritual guidance and protection for our specific circumstances and needs.”

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



“When Elder Christofferson said, ‘In the Church, we are all on the same journey,’ I had a tender moment with the Holy Ghost. It was the first time I’d ever thought of people at church in that way.”
Breanna D., 17, Idaho, USA



SHIPSHAPE AND BRISTOL FASHION

“In order to overcome the challenges and temptations that each of us inevitably faces, it will require righteous preparation and the use of divinely provided protections. We must determine to be temple worthy regardless of what befalls us. If we are prepared, we shall not fear. . . .

“How, then, do we prepare in such a difficult time? In addition to being temple worthy, there are many principles that contribute to righteousness. I will emphasize three.

“First: Righteous Self-Control and Conduct . . .

“A principle of eternal progression is that exercising self-control and living righteously strengthen our ability to resist temptation. . . .

“Second: Honoring the Sabbath Will Increase Righteousness and Be a Protection for the Family . . .

“ . . . Honoring the Sabbath is a form of righteousness that will bless and strengthen families, connect us with our Creator, and increase happiness. . . .

“Third: Divine Protections Are Provided When We Are Righteous

“As part of God’s divine plan, we are blessed with the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . The Spirit will help us avoid temptations and dangers, and comfort and lead us through challenges.”

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



WHY THE CHURCH

“There are those who consider themselves religious or spiritual and yet reject participation in a church or even the need for such an institution. Religious practice is for them purely personal. Yet the Church is the creation of Him in whom our spirituality is centered—Jesus Christ. It is worth pausing to consider why He chooses to use a church, His Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to carry out His and His Father’s work. . . .

“ . . . A major reason the Lord has a church is to create a community of Saints that will sustain one another. . . .

“ . . . As the body of Christ, the members of the Church minister to one another in the reality of day-to-day life. . . .

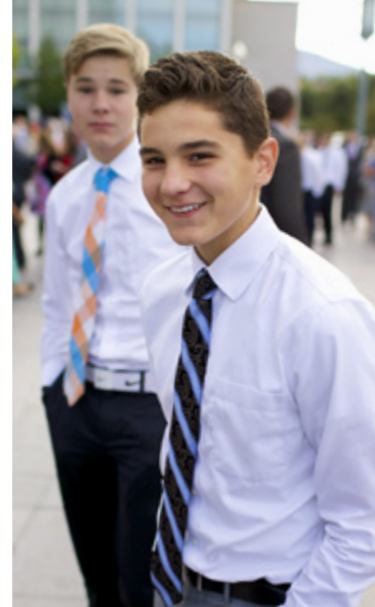
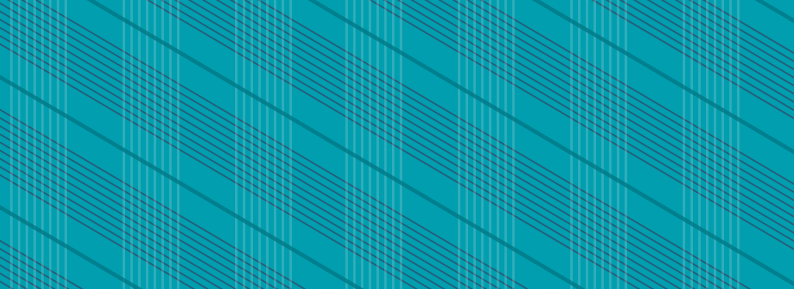
“There is a second major reason the Savior works through a church, His Church, and that is to achieve needful things that cannot be accomplished by individuals or smaller groups. . . .

“ . . . We speak not just of immortality but also of eternal life, and for that the gospel path and gospel covenants are essential. And the Savior needs a church to make them available. . . .

“The final reason I will mention for the Lord to have established His Church is the most unique—the Church is, after all, the kingdom of God on the earth. . . .

“Its destiny is to establish Zion in preparation for the return and millennial rule of Jesus Christ.”

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



“What meant the most to me was simply that we have Apostles on this earth right now who are called of God. It is such a comfort and blessing to me to have the knowledge that God still speaks to us today through living prophets.”

Elise F., from Facebook

3 NEW APOSTLES CALLED



FAITH IS NOT BY CHANCE, BUT BY CHOICE

“Faith does not fall upon us by chance or stay with us by birthright. . . . The future of your faith is not by chance, but by choice. . . .

“How we live our lives increases or diminishes our faith. . . . There is an adversary who delights in destroying our faith! Be relentless in protecting your faith.

“Addressing honest questions is an important part of building faith, and we use both our intellect and our feelings. . . . Not all answers will come immediately, but most questions can be resolved through sincere study and seeking answers from God. Using our mind without our heart will not bring spiritual answers. . . .

“Faith never demands an answer to every question but seeks the assurance and courage to move forward, sometimes acknowledging, ‘I don’t know everything, but I do know enough to continue on the path of discipleship.’

“Immersing oneself in persistent doubt, fueled by answers from the faithless and the unfaithful, weakens one’s faith in Jesus Christ and the Restoration. . . .

“The guidance of the First Presidency and the Twelve help protect our faith. . . .

“... I promise you that your faith, through the grace of Jesus Christ, will one day allow you to stand with those you love, clean and pure in the presence of God.”

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



I STAND ALL AMAZED

“If I could leave one small message with you today, it would be this: the Lord has said, ‘Love one another; as I have loved you’ [John 13:34]. I’m confident that there is no choice, sin, or mistake that you or anyone else can make that

will change His love for you or for them. That does not mean He excuses or condones sinful conduct—I’m sure He does not—but it does mean we are to reach out to our fellowman in love to invite, persuade, serve, and rescue. Jesus Christ looked past people’s ethnicity, rank, and circumstances in order to teach them this profound truth.

“I have been asked many times when I received my testimony.

“I can’t remember not believing in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I have loved Them since I learned of Them at the knees of my angel mother, reading scripture and gospel stories. That early belief has now grown into a knowledge and a witness of a loving Heavenly Father, who hears and answers our prayers. My testimony of Jesus Christ has been built from many special experiences in which I have come to know His great love for each one of us.

“I’m grateful for our Savior’s Atonement and wish like Alma to shout it with the trump of God [see Alma 29:1]. I know that Joseph Smith is God’s prophet of the Restoration and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. And I know that President Thomas S. Monson is God’s true servant and prophet.”

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



“Elder Dale G. Renlund taught that we need to see through the Lord’s eyes. I’m nearing my mission, and it helped me to open my eyes.”

Ean P., 17, Washington, USA



San Pedro, Belize

Read more about them on the back cover.



PLAIN AND PRECIOUS TRUTHS

“Our loving Heavenly Father and His Son, Jehovah, with a knowledge of the end from the beginning, opened the heavens and a new dispensation to offset the calamities that They knew would come. The Apostle Paul described the forthcoming calamities as ‘perilous times’ [2 Timothy 3:1]. For me, this suggests that Heavenly Father’s generous compensation for living in perilous times is that we also live in the fulness of times.

“As I agonized over my inadequacies this week, I received a distinct impression which both chastened and comforted me: to focus not on what I can’t do but rather on what I can do. I can testify of the plain and precious truths of the gospel.

“These are the words which I have shared hundreds of times with both those who belong to the Church and many who are not members: ‘God is our [loving] Heavenly Father. We are His children. . . . He weeps with us when we suffer and rejoices when we do what is right. He wants to communicate with us, and we can communicate with Him through sincere prayer. . . . Heavenly Father has provided us, His children, with a way to return to live in His presence. . . . Central to our [Heavenly] Father’s plan is Jesus Christ’s Atonement’ (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 31–32).

“Heavenly Father sent His Son to the earth to atone for the sins of all mankind.”

Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



THROUGH GOD’S EYES

“To effectively serve others we must see them through a parent’s eyes, through Heavenly Father’s eyes. Only then can we begin to comprehend the true worth of a soul. Only then can we sense the love that Heavenly Father has for all of His children. Only then can we sense the Savior’s caring concern for them. We cannot completely fulfill our covenant obligation to mourn with those who mourn and comfort those who stand in need of comfort unless we see them through God’s eyes. This expanded perspective will open our hearts to the disappointments, fears, and heartaches of others. But Heavenly Father will aid and comfort us. . . . We need to have eyes that see, ears that hear, and hearts that know and feel if we are to accomplish the rescue so frequently encouraged by President Thomas S. Monson.

“Only when we see through Heavenly Father’s eyes can we be filled with ‘the pure love of Christ’ [Moroni 7:47]. Every day we should plead with God for this love. Mormon admonished, ‘Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ’ [Moroni 7:48].

“With all my heart I want to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. I love Him. I adore Him. I witness of His living reality. I witness that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah. I am a witness of His incomparable mercy, compassion, and love.”

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles