



Messages FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY



President
Thomas S. Monson

PRINCIPLES AND PROMISES

“Those who are obedient to the Lord’s commandments and who faithfully observe the Word of Wisdom are promised particular blessings, among which are good health and added physical stamina [see D&C 89:18–21].

“Recently I read the true account of a dramatic manifestation concerning these promises. A faithful member of the Church, John A. Larsen, served during World War II in the United States Coast Guard on the ship *USS Cambria*. During a battle in the Philippines, word came of an approaching squadron of bombers and kamikaze fighter planes. . . . John and three companions gathered their gear and hurried to the beach, hoping for a lift out to one of the departing ships. Fortunately, a landing craft picked them up

and sped toward the last ship leaving the bay. The men on that departing ship . . . had time only to throw ropes to the four men, that they might hopefully be able to climb to the deck.

“John, with a heavy radio strapped to his back, found himself dangling at the end of a 40-foot (12 m) rope, at the side of a ship headed out to the open sea. He began pulling himself up, hand over hand, knowing that if he lost his grip, he would almost certainly perish. After climbing only a third of the way, he felt his arms burning with pain. He had become so weak that he felt he could no longer hold on.

“With his strength depleted, as he grimly contemplated his fate, John silently cried unto God, telling Him that he had always kept the Word of Wisdom and had lived a clean life—and he now desperately needed the promised blessings.

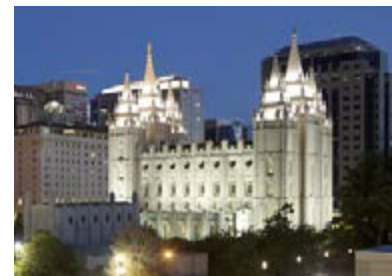
“John later said that as he finished his prayer, he felt a great surge of strength. He began climbing once again and fairly flew up the rope. When he reached the deck, his breathing was normal and not the least bit labored. The blessings of added health and stamina promised in the Word of Wisdom had been his. He gave thanks to his Heavenly Father then, and throughout the remainder of his life, for the answer to his desperate prayer for help.

“... May we care for our bodies and our minds by observing the principles set forth in the Word of Wisdom, a divinely provided plan. With all my heart and soul, I testify of the glorious blessings which await us as we do.”

THE PERFECT PATH TO HAPPINESS

“Our Father’s plan for our happiness and our salvation is shared by our missionaries throughout the world. Not all who hear this divine message accept and embrace it. However, men and women everywhere, . . . recognize its truths, and they plant their feet on the path that will lead them safely home. Their lives are forever changed.

“Essential to the plan is our Savior, Jesus



Christ. Without His atoning sacrifice, all would be lost. It is not enough, however, merely to believe in Him and His mission. We need to work and learn, search and pray, repent and improve. We need to know God’s laws and live them. We need to receive His saving ordinances. Only by so doing will we obtain true, eternal happiness.

“We are blessed to *have* the truth. We have a mandate to *share* the truth. Let us *live* the truth, that we might merit all that the Father has for us. He does nothing save it be for our benefit. He has told us, ‘This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ [Moses 1:39].

“From the depths of my soul, and in all humility, I testify of the great gift which is our Father’s plan for us. It is the one perfect path to peace and happiness both here and in the world to come.”

“As I listened to the words of the Lord’s inspired leaders, something I felt I should change was to trust in Heavenly Father and in His laws, His corrections, and His way of guiding us through life because He knows us, He knows what we need, and He wants the best for us.”

Augusto M., 17, Federal District, Brazil

