

## SNIPPETS FROM THIS ISSUE

Forty years after my dad served his mission, I was able to tell him the rest of the story. —page 7 • It felt good to do the right thing without being instructed by our parents. —page 16 • Despite what nagging whispers of doubt or failure might reach our ears, we can always choose to look ahead and stop beating ourselves up over the past. —page 19 • High school is tough, but be the shining light across the room. —page 21 • I felt the atmosphere around me change, and school felt lighter and better. —page 23 • I feel like I could go on a mission and know what I'm talking about. —page 27 • Before my mission, I was a tall, skinny kid... who played baseball, and that's who I thought I was. I realize now that baseball is just something I did. —page 37



Cover: Celebrating the Family Proclamation, pp. 2–6  
Cover photograph: Cody Bell

### To submit manuscripts or art:

Online: Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click "Submit Your Work."

Email: [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)

Mail: New Era Editorial, 50 E. North Temple St.,  
Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

For return, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

### The First Presidency:

Thomas S. Monson, Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

### The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, Neil L. Andersen

Editor: Joseph W. Sitati

Advisers: Randall K. Bennett, Craig A. Cardon, Christoffel Golden, Larry R. Lawrence, James B. Martino

Managing Director: David T. Warner

Director of Operations: Vincent A. Vaughn

Director of Church Magazines: Allan R. Loyborg

Business Manager: Garff Cannon

Managing Editor: Brittany Beattie

Assistant Managing Editor: Joshua J. Perkey

Publications Assistant: Sally Johnson Odekirk

Writing and Editing: Ryan Carr, David Dickson, David A. Edwards, Matthew D. Flitton, Lori Fuller, Garrett H. Garff, Jill Christine Hacking, Charlotte Larcabal, Michael R. Morris, Richard M. Romney, Paul VanDenBerghe

Editorial Intern: Karee Brown

Managing Art Director: J. Scott Knudsen

Art Director: K. Nicole Walkenhorst

Design: Jeanette Andrews, Fay P. Andrus, Mandie M. Bentley, Nate Gines

Intellectual Property Coordinator:

Collette Nebeker Aune

Production Manager: Jane Ann Peters

Prepress: Joshua Dennis

Printing Director: Craig K. Sedgwick

Distribution Director: Stephen R. Christiansen

© 2015 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah.

### To subscribe:

By phone: Call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express.

Online: Go to [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org).

By mail: Send \$8 U.S. check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

### To change address:

Send old and new address information to:

Distribution Services

P.O. Box 26368

Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

Visit the *New Era* online at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).

Copyright information: Text and visual material in the *New Era* may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; email [cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org](mailto:cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org).

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 707.4.12.5). NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: Send address corrections to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431.

# WHAT'S INSIDE

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

September 2015 • Volume 45 • Number 9

## FEATURES

**2** The Teachings of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World"  
*The family unit is fundamental not only to society and to the Church but also to our hope for eternal life.*

President Henry B. Eyring

**12** Losing My New Friends  
*Having new friends was nice, but then came a tough choice.*

**18** You Can Change  
*No matter what the present is like, you decide your future.*

**20** Be a Shining Light  
*A young man's example was all this young woman needed.*



20

**22** Seminary Is Worth It!  
*Why take seminary? There are plenty of great reasons.*

**24** Old Testament Geography  
*Can you find these places from the Old Testament?*



24

**26** I Have Learned for Myself  
*Elevate your gospel learning in seminary.*

**28** 75 Truths from the Old Testament and Pearl of Great Price  
*See just the beginning of what you'll learn in seminary.*

**30** To Stay or Obey?\*

*Experience a young man's mission dilemma.*

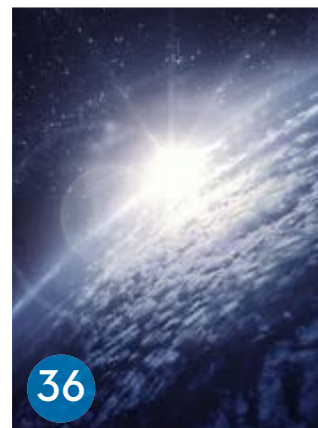


2

**36** What You Knew in Premortal Life  
*You might think you don't have a testimony, but in fact, you always have.*

Elder Kevin W. Pearson

**40** 2015 Mutual Theme:  
How's the Sailing So Far?  
*Youth share how they've embarked.*



36



8



14

## PLUS...

- 7 FROM THE MISSION FIELD
- 8 OBJECTS FROM THE SCRIPTURES
- 10 FHE OBJECT LESSON
- 14 SUNDAY LESSON HELP\*
- 17 MORMONAD
- 32 FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH
- 39 LINE UPON LINE
- 41 TO THE POINT
- 42 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
- 44 COME, FOLLOW ME CARDS\*
- 45 THE EXTRA SMILE
- 46 INSTANT MESSAGES
- 48 FROM CHURCH LEADERS
- 49 POSTER

\* Check out this article for support for this month's Sunday lesson theme.





By President  
Henry B. Eyring  
First Counselor in  
the First Presidency

## THE TEACHINGS OF “THE FAMILY: A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD”

*The family unit is fundamental not only to society and to the Church but to our hope for eternal life.*

Since the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph Smith, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has issued a proclamation only four times.<sup>1</sup> It had been more than 15 years since the previous one, which described the progress the Church had made in 150 years of its history. Thus, we can understand the importance our Heavenly Father places upon the family, the subject of the fifth and most recent proclamation, given on September 23, 1995.<sup>2</sup>

The title of the proclamation on the family reads: “The Family: A Proclamation to the World—The First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”

Three things about the title are worth our careful reflection. First, the subject: the family. Second, the audience, which is the whole world. And third, those proclaiming it are those we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators. All this means that the family must be of tremendous importance to us, that whatever the proclamation says could help anyone in the world, and that the proclamation fits the Lord’s promise when He said, “Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

The title tells us something about how to prepare for the words that follow. We can expect that God won’t just tell us a few interesting things about the family; He will tell us what a family ought to be and why. Further, we know that our Heavenly

Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, want us to become like Them so that we can dwell with Them forever in families. We know that from this simple statement of Their intent: “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

## Marriage Is Central to God’s Plan

The proclamation begins this way:

“We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”

Let us try to imagine ourselves as little children hearing those words for the first time and believing they are true. A little child would feel safe hearing the words “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.” The child would know that the longing to have the love of both a father and a mother, distinct but somehow perfectly complementary, exists because such longing is part of the eternal pattern, the pattern of happiness. The child would also feel safer knowing that God will help the mother and father resolve differences and love each other, if only they would ask for His help and try. Prayers of children across the earth would go up to God, pleading for His help for parents and for families.

Now read in that same way, as if we were little children, the next words of the proclamation:

“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. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

“In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.”

Understanding these truths ought to make it easier for us to feel like a little child, not just as we read the proclamation but throughout our lives, because we are children—but in what a family and of what parents! We can picture ourselves as we were, for longer than we can imagine, sons and daughters associating in our heavenly home with parents who knew and loved us. Also, we know that in the premortal world we were men or women with unique gifts because of our gender and that the opportunity to be married and to become one was necessary for us to have eternal happiness.

“Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”





But now that we are here we can picture ourselves home again with our heavenly parents in that wonderful place, not only as sons and daughters but as husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, grandsons and granddaughters, bound together forever in loving families.

There is only one place in heaven where there will be families—the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. That is where we will want to be.

“Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

---

### Human Life Is Sacred

Some other words in the proclamation will have special meaning for us, knowing what we know about eternal life. They are in the next two paragraphs:

“The first commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God’s commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

“We declare the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God’s eternal plan.”

We can understand why our Heavenly Father commands us to reverence life and to cherish the powers that produce it as sacred. If we do not have those reverential feelings in this life, how could our Father give them to us in the eternities? Family life here is the schoolroom in which we prepare for family life there.

---

### Living the Teachings of Jesus Christ

The proclamation describes our schooling here for family life:

“The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by

a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”

We cannot control what others choose to do, and so we cannot force our children to heaven, but we can determine what *we* will do. And we can decide that we will do all we can to bring down the powers of heaven into that family we want so much to have forever.

A key for us is in the proclamation: “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

What could make it more likely that people in a family would love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God, and obey the law? It is not simply teaching them the gospel. It is in their hearing the word of God and then trying it in faith. If they do, their natures will be changed in a way that produces the happiness they seek.

### A Warning about Not Heeding This Counsel

The proclamation warns that for those who fail to respond to its truths the result will be more disastrous than simply lack of peace in this life or absence of happiness. Here is the prophetic warning and the call to action, with which the proclamation ends:

“We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will

bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

“We call upon responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.”

The family unit is fundamental not only to society and to the Church but also to our hope for eternal life. We begin to practice in the family, the smaller unit, what will spread to the Church and to the society in which we live in this world, which will then be what we practice in families bound together forever by covenants and by faithfulness. We can start now to “promote those

measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family.” I pray that we will. I pray that you will ask, “Father, how can I prepare?” Tell Him how much you want what He desires to give you. You will receive impressions, and if you act on them, I promise you the help of the powers of heaven.

I testify that our Heavenly Father lives, that we lived with Him as spirits, and that we would be lonely living anywhere but with Him in the world to come. **NE**  
From “The Family,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, 10–18.

#### NOTES

1. These proclamations are printed in full in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. (1992), 3:1151–57.
2. See *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.

“The family unit is fundamental not only to society and to the Church but also to our hope for eternal life.”

