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The Divine Plan of **BECOMING MORE**

I HAVE BEEN BLESSED to be with my wife at the birth of each of our children and to be present also at the death of each of my parents. I was surprised to feel what I felt at the moment of birth and at the moment of death. I felt that something sacred was occurring. Our time on earth is an eternally significant part of our existence. Heaven marks the beginning and the end of each mortal life.

What we need to do while we are here on earth can be understood only through knowing what happened before birth and what will happen after death. If our life on earth were all there is, we might all “eat, drink, and be merry” (2 Nephi 28:7) without much concern for others. But when we see mortal life in context, we see that it is not a question of “to be or not to be?” but rather “to become more or not to become more?”¹

Understanding the plan of salvation—our life before birth, the purpose of our life on earth, our life after death—and the key role that our Savior, Jesus Christ, plays in that plan shows us that He will help us through this life. As we make covenants with Him, we put ourselves on the covenant path—and we become more like Him and our Heavenly Father, step by step.

Our Life Before Earth

Revelation teaches that we are the spirit children of God and that we lived with Him for a long time before we came to earth. Our Heavenly Father





Elder Christofferson with his wife and children.



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



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prepared a way for us to become like Him. Those who chose our Father’s plan of salvation or plan of happiness in the premortal life—which is all of us—chose to “become more.”

Our Time on Earth

We came to an earth created by God and His Son, Jesus Christ. We received a physical body. Having a body is essential to receiving the glory that God enjoys. If we demonstrate that we will keep God’s commandments, we will “have glory added upon [our] heads for ever and ever” (Abraham 3:26). This means we will become like our heavenly parents and live with them forever. We shouted for joy at these glorious possibilities.

You and I waited a long time, but now we are here on earth. We look forward to the time when we are resurrected with a perfect, immortal body and enter the celestial kingdom to enjoy eternal life—something so wonderful that we cannot even imagine it. In the meantime, we are learning and striving to “do all things whatsoever the Lord [our] God shall command [us]” (Abraham 3:25). Because we know God’s plan, we know that these commandments are not given to restrict our freedom or happiness—just the opposite. The commandments are our guide to ultimate freedom and joy.

He Provided a Savior

Still, life is hard. We all stumble as we learn to live by faith. But God promised us before the earth’s creation that He

would provide a Savior to rescue us from sin and death. By His own suffering and death—His Atonement—Jesus Christ paid for our sins and offers us the gift of repentance. So, when we repent, He forgives our sins and cleanses us from their effects. And by His Resurrection, the Savior gives us the gift of our own resurrection and immortality.

Walking the Covenant Path

Just as we are born physically into this mortal world, we must be born again spiritually into the kingdom of heaven. We do this by exercising faith in Christ, repenting, being baptized, and receiving the Holy Ghost. This is the beginning of a spiritual transformation that lasts throughout our lifetime on earth. We sometimes call it “enduring to the end,” which means that we strive to keep our baptismal covenant of obedience our whole lives, repenting as needed and moving forward again. “Yea, and as often as my people repent,” Jesus says, “will I forgive them their trespasses against me” (Mosiah 26:30).

You Can Count on God’s Help

In your life before birth, you chose God, you chose Christ, you chose to “become more” with Their help. And you can count on Their help. The members of the Godhead are not disinterested observers in our lives. They love us infinitely and use their powers to help us, as much as we will permit. They always respect our agency, but They are eager to bless us.

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Jesus assures us, “I will not forget thee, O house of Israel. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands” (1 Nephi 21:15–16).

Becoming Better Step by Step

Some feel that the celestial kingdom is a realistic hope for others but somehow not for them. The truth is, no one qualifies without the grace of Jesus Christ. Thankfully, you can access His grace. Jesus told us that He has overcome the world. With your baptism and other covenants, you bind yourself to Him so that with Him, you also overcome the world.

You don’t have to achieve perfection here on earth. The Prophet Joseph Smith compared it to climbing a ladder: you start at the bottom and climb step by step in learning and living gospel principles. And that learning, he taught, continues beyond this life—“It is not all to be comprehended in this world.”²

Whatever weaknesses, hardships, or suffering we face on earth, God promises His faithful children that no blessing will be withheld if we stay on the covenant path (or quickly get back to it). Then it all works out. That is the divine plan of becoming more! 🙏

NOTES

1. Truman G. Madsen, *Eternal Man* (1966), 31–32.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 268.

