

Ward

warrior, he “did not delight in bloodshed” (Alma 48:11). He was “firm in the faith of Christ,” and his only reason for fighting was to “defend his people, his rights, and his country, and his religion” (Alma 48:13). If Latter-day Saints must go to war, they should go in a spirit of truth and righteousness, with a desire to do good. They should go with love in their hearts for all God’s children, including those on the opposing side. Then, if they are required to shed another’s blood, their action will not be counted as a sin.

See also Civil Government and Law; Peace

Ward (*See* Church Administration)

Welfare

Each member of the Church has two basic welfare responsibilities: to become self-reliant and to care for the poor and the needy.

Parents have a sacred responsibility to look after the physical and spiritual welfare of their children. As children grow older, they become more responsible for their own welfare. Parents should teach them basic principles of welfare, helping them prepare to be self-reliant and provide for their own families in the future. Parents can also give children opportunities to help care for the poor and the needy.

If you are an adult member of the Church, all of the following counsel applies directly to you. If you are a young man or woman, much of this counsel applies to you as well, even if you still depend largely on your parents.

Becoming Self-Reliant

The responsibility for your social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and economic well-being rests first on yourself, second on your family, and third on the Church. Under the inspiration of the Lord and through your own labors, you

should supply yourself and your family with the spiritual and temporal necessities of life.

You are better able to take care of yourself and your family when you are self-reliant. You are prepared to endure times of adversity without becoming dependent on others.

You can become self-reliant by (1) taking advantage of educational opportunities; (2) practicing sound principles of nutrition and hygiene; (3) preparing for and obtaining suitable employment; (4) storing a supply of food and clothing to the extent the law allows; (5) managing your resources wisely, including paying tithes and offerings and avoiding debt; and (6) developing spiritual, emotional, and social strength.

In order to become self-reliant, you must be willing to work. The Lord has commanded us to work (see Genesis 3:19; D&C 42:42). Honorable work is a basic source of happiness, self-worth, and prosperity.

If you are ever temporarily unable to meet your basic needs through your own efforts or the support of family members, the Church may be able to help you. In these situations, the Church often provides life-sustaining resources to help you and your family become self-reliant again.

Caring for the Poor and the Needy

The Lord has always commanded His people to care for the poor and the needy. He said, "Ye must visit the poor and the needy and administer to their relief" (D&C 44:6). He also commanded, "Remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple" (D&C 52:40).

You can care for the poor and the needy in many ways. One important way is through fasting and contributing fast offerings, which the bishop or branch president uses to assist ward or branch members who suffer from poverty, illness, or other hardships. You can also give of your time and share your talents. You can serve the homeless, the disabled, widows, and others in your neighborhood and community.

In addition to giving local and individual care for those in need, the Church reaches out worldwide to people, no matter their faith, who suffer the effects of natural disasters, poverty, disease, and other crises. The Church provides life-sustaining resources to help families and individuals recover and work toward self-reliance. Donations to the Church's Perpetual Education Fund provide the means for disadvantaged Latter-day Saints to further their education. Church-service missionaries volunteer their time and resources to improve literacy, promote health, and provide training.

Additional references: James 1:27; Jacob 2:17–19; D&C 42:31; 104:15–18

See also Fasting and Fast Offerings; Service

Word of Wisdom

The Word of Wisdom is a law of health revealed by the Lord for our physical and spiritual benefit. In this revelation, which is recorded in section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord tells us which foods are good for us to eat and which substances are not good for our bodies. He promises spiritual and physical blessings for obeying the Word of Wisdom.

In the Word of Wisdom, the Lord commands us not to take the following substances into our bodies:

- Alcoholic drinks (see D&C 89:5–7).
- Tobacco (see D&C 89:8).
- Tea and coffee (see D&C 89:9; latter-day prophets have taught that the term “hot drinks” refers to tea and coffee).

Anything harmful that people purposefully take into their bodies is not in harmony with the Word of Wisdom. This is especially true of illegal drugs, which can destroy those who become addicted to them. Stay entirely away from them. Do not experiment with them. The abuse of prescription drugs also leads to destructive addiction.