

SEPTEMBER 2024

Liahona

Pointing Us All to Jesus Christ



**JESUS CHRIST: THE
SOURCE OF HEALING
AND RELIEF, 44**

**THE GARMENT OF
THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD**

A Symbol and a Reminder, 4

**A PROPHET
TO GUIDE US**

Why He Knows the Way to Jesus Christ, 12, 20



◀ *“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

“When [Jesus] had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

“And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. . . . He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

JOHN 9:5–7

Finding Relief in Jesus Christ

This month in our *Come, Follow Me* study, we read about a special and unique experience: the resurrected Christ visiting the Americas and inviting the Nephites to “come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world” (3 Nephi 11:14).

As He did with the Nephites, Jesus Christ invites each of us to come and have a personal experience with Him and develop a covenant relationship with Him. How grateful I am that He loves us in this way and desires to be with us. Because of Him, we are never alone. In my article, I share that “we were meant to partner with the Lord in a powerful way through our covenants” (page 44). As we come unto Him through our daily choices to keep sacred covenants, we build a relationship with Jesus Christ that will bring His love and relief to our lives and the lives of our families.

We are reminded of Jesus Christ by wearing the temple garment after we are endowed, explains President Jeffrey R. Holland in his article “The Garment of the Holy Priesthood” (page 4). He shares the First Presidency’s promise that keeping our covenants and wearing the garment will give us greater access to the Savior’s protection and power.

I testify that our Heavenly Father and Savior love you and that Jesus Christ came for this very purpose: to bring us the relief that we seek. Jesus Christ is relief.

Sincerely,



Kristin M. Yee

Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency



“How comforting it must have been for Adam and Eve to remember one thing: that promises had been made—something sacred and eternal called covenants.”
—President Jeffrey R. Holland, page 4

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COVER



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MORE NEW LIAHONA ARTICLES

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YA WEEKLY

Find more articles for young adults in *YA Weekly*, located in the Gospel Library under Magazines or Adults > Young Adults.



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THE GARMENT *OF THE* HOLY PRIESTHOOD

As part of the temple endowment, we have been given a sacred physical reminder of our covenants—a symbol of the Savior Himself.



By President Jeffrey R. Holland

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Regardless of the preparation they were undoubtedly given and the reassurances they tried to remember, it must have been a stunning shock to Adam and Eve to leave their paradisiacal Garden of Eden and step into a fallen world.

With solemn awareness, they realized what it meant to trade their tranquil, carefree life for a world of opposition and sweat, thorns and sorrow—followed eventually by something called death. They could not have known at the beginning what all of this meant, but they soon learned that each day could bring new pain. Indeed, the most painful of all was the realization that they would face all this separated from their Father in Heaven—“shut out from his presence,” Moses would later record.¹

Given this separation and loneliness in a cold, dreary world, how comforting it must have been for Adam and Eve to remember one thing: that promises had been made—something sacred and eternal called covenants. They had promised they would obey Father all the days of their life, and He had promised to provide a Savior, who would relieve their pain and sorrow, atone for their mistakes, and bring them safely back into His presence.

But how would these mortals remember what they had promised? How would they remain aware of their perilous situation—aware all the time, day and night?!

A Reminder of Their Covenants

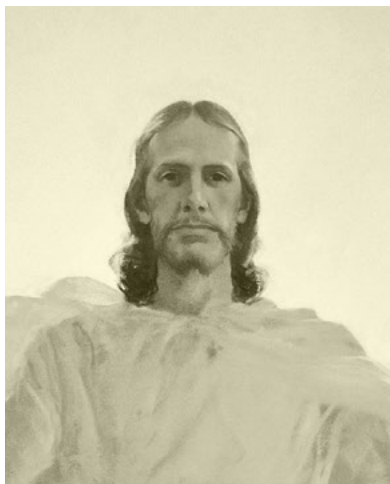
For such a reminder He gave them “coats of skins.”² What a gift this was and how timely. After partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve were almost instantly aware that they were naked. First, they tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves. Then, fearing that to be inadequate, they tried to hide from the Lord.³ (Such a foolish endeavor was evidence mortality was settling in!) From that moment to the present, a loving Father has invited His children to come, out of hiding, unto Him. And as with the coats of skins then and various items of clothing since, He in His mercy has not left us naked but has clothed the obedient in a “robe of righteousness,” a reminder of our promises and covenants. These “garments of salvation” symbolize the greatest gift of all, the Atonement of Jesus Christ.⁴



FIRST PRESIDENCY STATEMENT ON THE GARMENT

The garment of the holy priesthood reminds us of the veil in the temple, and that veil is symbolic of Jesus Christ. When you put on your garment, you put on a sacred symbol of Jesus Christ.

Wearing it is an outward expression of your inner commitment to follow Him. The garment is also a reminder of your temple covenants. You should wear the garment day and night throughout your life. When it must be removed for activities that cannot reasonably be done while wearing the garment, seek to restore it as soon as possible. As you keep your covenants, including the sacred privilege to wear the garment as instructed in the initiatory ordinances, you will have greater access to the Savior's mercy, protection, strength, and power.



The Garment Is a Symbol of the Savior

Well, all this thinking about Adam and Eve and covenants and clothing is, of course, more than just a mental exercise. It's not hard to imagine how Adam and Eve felt, because we too face troubles in this fallen world. We too have been separated from the presence of God, and we further distance ourselves every time we transgress. Like Adam and Eve, we have been given that same Savior, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Alpha and Omega, the Son of the living God. Like Adam and Eve, we have made covenants with God. And, as part of the temple endowment, we have been given a sacred physical reminder of those covenants⁵—a symbol of the Savior Himself. In our dispensation it is called the garment of the holy priesthood.⁶

We wear this garment beneath our outer clothing. Whatever responsibilities I have, whatever roles I play in life, whatever the duties of daily living require, beneath it all are my covenants—always and forever. Beneath it all are those sacred promises to which I desperately cling. The garment isn't flaunted or shown off before the world, and neither are my covenants. But I do keep both close to me—as close as I possibly can. They are intensely personal and supremely sacred.

In remembering those covenants, those two-way promises, we wear the garment throughout our lives. This practice reflects our desire for the Savior to be a constant influence in our lives. Other beloved symbols are periodic. We are baptized once in our lives. We partake of the sacrament once a week. We attend the temple as circumstances permit. But the garment of the holy priesthood is different: this symbol we honor every day and night.

And that's the way covenants are—not set aside out of convenience or carelessness and not modified to fit the styles and fashions of society. In the life of a disciple of

Jesus Christ, the ways of the world must be modified to align with our covenants, not the other way around.

When we put on the garment, we are, as the First Presidency has taught, putting on a sacred symbol of Jesus Christ. That being the case, why would we ever look for an excuse to take that symbol off? Why would we deprive ourselves of the promise of power, protection, and mercy the garment represents? On the contrary, whenever we do have to temporarily remove the garment, we should be eager to put it back on, as soon as possible, because we remember both the promises and the perils that give meaning to our covenants. Above all, we remember the cross and empty tomb of Christ.

Some might say, "I have other ways to remember Jesus." And I would respond, that's wonderful. The more the better. Let's all think of as many ways as we can to keep our commitment to "always remember him."⁷ But in so doing, it would be disingenuous to intentionally neglect the reminder the Lord Himself gave to the endowed, the garment of the holy priesthood.

Jesus Christ and His gospel mean everything to me. All my eternal hopes and aspirations, everything I hold dear, hang on Him. He is "the rock of my salvation,"⁸ my way of access to my Heavenly Father, my only way back to what I once had and now want to have again, along with so very much more. His gift to us is the most generous I have ever received, the most generous ever given—purchased as it was with infinite suffering, extended to an infinite number, bestowed with infinite love. The thorns and thistles, the pain and anguish, the sorrow and sin of this fallen world are all "swallowed up in Christ."⁹

So I have worn the garment of the holy priesthood—every day and night as appropriate since I was endowed 64 years ago, at age 19—because I love Him and because I need the promises it represents.



Questions about Wearing the Garment?

Some of you may be reading this article hoping I will answer a particular question about the garment. You might hope for a “Thus saith the Lord”—or even a “Thus saith His servants”—on a matter close to your heart. Your question might stem from a personal circumstance related to employment, exercise, hygiene, climate, modesty, sanitary facilities, or even a medical condition.

Some answers to these kinds of questions can be found at temples.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and in section 38.5 of the *General Handbook*. Trusted family members and leaders might be consulted about a personal matter. There is, however, very clear direction given in the initiatory ordinances, and there is forever and ever your Father in Heaven, who knows you and loves you and understands everything about your circumstances. He would be thrilled to have you ask Him these questions personally.

Please don't misunderstand. As you reach out for divine guidance, the Spirit will *not* inspire you to do less than follow the instruction received in the temple and the prophetic counsel shared by the First Presidency in their recent statement. A loving Father will *not* help you rationalize doing less than you can to align with His standards of devotion and modesty that will bless you now and forever. But does He understand your questions, and will He help you receive the blessings of respecting the garment and keeping your covenants? Yes! Should you also consult with competent medical and health professionals when needed? Of course! Should you disregard common sense or look beyond the mark? I pray that you won't.

I can't answer every question you have. I can't even answer every question I have. But I can, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, promise you the help of a loving God, who seeks your every success and blessing, in ways you can't now fathom or foresee, as you keep the covenants you have made with Him. ■

NOTES

1. Moses 5:4.
2. Moses 4:27.
3. See Moses 4:13–14.
4. See Isaiah 61:10; 2 Nephi 9:14; see also Revelation 19:8; 2 Nephi 4:33; Mormon 9:5; Doctrine and Covenants 109:76.
5. Obviously, the garment we wear today is not identical to the coats of skins given to Adam and Eve. The garment has changed in various ways over the years, including in material and design. But the things that truly matter—the garment's sacred nature, the covenants it represents—do not change.
6. This full name of the garment, like the full name of the Church, is instructive. The priesthood is the power of God, and wearing the garment is a reminder of godly power available to us when we make and keep covenants with God.
7. Moroni 4:3; 5:2.
8. 2 Nephi 4:30.
9. Mosiah 16:8; see also Alma 31:38.





THE CHURCH IS HERE

Reykjavík, Iceland

The first missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints arrived in Iceland in 1851. In the 20th century, many members emigrated to other countries. Today, however, Church members in Iceland have come from various countries, and many native Icelanders returned to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and help recent converts lead the Church. Though few in number, they are a tight-knit community. The Church in Iceland has:



380 members
(approximately)



4 branches
(including one in Spanish)



1 FamilySearch center

A Community of Saints

The members in Iceland rely on each other. When Bettina Gudnason's husband passed away, she found comfort in the family of Saints around her: "Members of the Church were always around me and with me. I know in my heart that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know everything that is happening around us. They know us by name."





President Russell M. Nelson greets people after a devotional in Singapore on November 20, 2019.

RUSSELL M.

A PROPHET FOR OUR DAY



With a prophet to guide us in these latter days, we truly are a blessed people.

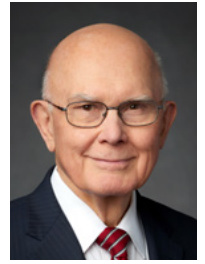
When an interviewer criticized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as “a church run by old men,” President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) responded, “Isn’t it wonderful to have a man of maturity at the head, a man of judgment who isn’t blown about by every wind of doctrine?”¹

President Russell M. Nelson, the oldest living prophet to serve in this dispensation, is such a man. He completes his 100th year on September 9, 2024. He is a leader of extraordinary compassion and congeniality, vision and vitality, warmth and wisdom.

I love President Nelson. We have been friends for 60 years and fellow Apostles for 40 years. Since January 2018, I have been blessed to serve under his direction in the First Presidency of the Church.

Called to lead the restored Church of Jesus Christ and be its preeminent teacher, President Nelson knows the Savior, whose prophet he is. Through a century of living and learning, he has excelled in prominent professional and military service. With his large family, he has been a loving and effective family leader. Through Church callings, including the past six years as the Lord’s prophet, he has been an exemplary leader in the Lord’s restored Church.

Through a century of living, President Nelson has learned and practiced the keys to happiness in this life and in the life to come—what he has called life’s “most crucial lessons.”²



**By President
Dallin H. Oaks**

First Counselor in
the First Presidency

NELSON:



He has taught us that we should “begin with the end in mind.”³

He loves the house of the Lord. During his years as President of the Church, he has announced 168 new temples—about half of the Church’s 350 total temples that have been built, are under construction, or have been announced in this dispensation.

He has taught us that all our temple building is bringing the temple, and the blessings of temple covenants, closer to more of God’s children.⁴ That is God’s plan.

President Nelson has taught, “I have learned that Heavenly Father’s plan for us is *fabulous*, that what we do in this life really matters, and that the Savior’s Atonement is what makes our Father’s plan possible.” Understanding that plan, he said, “takes the mystery out of life and the uncertainty out of our future. It allows each of *us* to choose *how* we will live here on earth and *where* we will live forever.”⁵

As Latter-day Saints, we are truly a blessed people to be led by the Lord’s humble servant, President Nelson, who is dedicated to preparing the world for the Second Coming of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. May we all continue to pray for, testify of, sustain, and thank God for our prophet—President Russell Marion Nelson. ■

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, in David A. Bednar, “Chosen to Bear Testimony of My Name,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 128.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2023, 117.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2018, 7.
4. See Russell M. Nelson, “Focus on the Temple,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 121.
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!,” 117.
6. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Correct Name of the Church,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 87–90.
7. See Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 92–95.
8. Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!,” *Liahona*, 117–20.
9. See Russell M. Nelson, “Sisters’ Participation in the Gathering of Israel,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 68–70; see also Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), Gospel Library.
10. See Russell M. Nelson, “Come, Follow Me,” *Liahona*, May 2019, 91; see also Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” 7.
11. See Russell M. Nelson, “Opening Remarks,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 6–8.

AMONG PRESIDENT NELSON’S
MOST IMPORTANT TEACHINGS ARE
THE FOLLOWING:

HE HAS ADMONISHED

US TO USE THE CORRECT NAME
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.⁶

HE HAS COUNSELED

US IN HOW TO LET GOD PREVAIL
IN OUR LIVES.⁷

HE HAS ENCOURAGED

US TO “THINK CELESTIAL.”⁸

HE HAS TAUGHT

US AN ENLARGED VISION OF
GATHERING ISRAEL ON BOTH
SIDES OF THE VEIL.⁹

HE HAS INSPIRED

US TO PROGRESS ON THE COV-
ENANT PATH, AND HE HAS LOV-
INGLY INVITED US TO RETURN TO
THAT PATH IF WE HAVE STRAYED.¹⁰

HE HAS EXHORTED

CHURCH MEMBERS EVERYWHERE
TO FOLLOW A HOME-CENTERED,
CHURCH-SUPPORTED PATTERN OF
GOSPEL LEARNING.¹¹

DECADES

OF DEDICATED SERVICE: SELECTED TEACHINGS FROM PRESIDENT RUSSELL M. NELSON

Now 100 years old, President Nelson has served 40 years as an Apostle. The following are some of his teachings from his time as President of the Church.

BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND

“The end for which each of us strives is to be endowed with power in a house of the Lord, sealed as families, faithful to covenants made in a temple that qualify us for the greatest gift of God—that of eternal life. The ordinances of the temple and the covenants you make there are key to strengthening your life, your marriage and family, and your ability to resist the attacks of the adversary. Your worship in the temple and your service there for your ancestors will bless you with increased personal revelation and peace and will fortify your commitment to stay on the covenant path.”

*“As We Go Forward Together,” **Liahona**, Apr. 2018, 7.*

REPENT DAILY

“Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

*“We Can Do Better and Be Better,” **Liahona**, May 2019, 67.*



MAKE AND KEEP COVENANTS

“Every woman and every man who makes covenants with God and keeps those covenants, and who participates worthily in priesthood ordinances, has direct access to the power of God. Those who are endowed in the house of the Lord receive a gift of God’s priesthood power by virtue of their covenant, along with a gift of knowledge to know how to draw upon that power.”

“Spiritual Treasures,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 77.

HEAR THE LORD

“Our Father knows that when we are surrounded by uncertainty and fear, what will help us the very most is to hear His Son.

“Because when we seek to hear—truly hear—His Son, we will be guided to know what to do in any circumstance.”

“Hear Him,” *Liahona*, May 2020, 89.

CHOOSE TO LET GOD PREVAIL

“With the Hebraic definition of *Israel* in mind, we find that the gathering of Israel takes on added meaning. The Lord is gathering those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives. The Lord is gathering those who will choose to let God be the most important influence in their lives.”

“Let God Prevail,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 92.

OVERCOME THE WORLD

“Overcoming the world is not an event that happens in a day or two. It happens over a lifetime as we repeatedly embrace the doctrine of Christ. We

cultivate faith in Jesus Christ by repenting daily and keeping covenants that endow us with power. We stay on the covenant path and are blessed with spiritual strength, personal revelation, increasing faith, and the ministering of angels. Living the doctrine of Christ can produce the most powerful virtuous cycle, creating spiritual momentum in our lives.”

“Overcome the World and Find Rest,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 97.

CHOOSE TO BE A PEACEMAKER

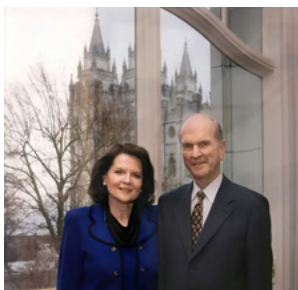
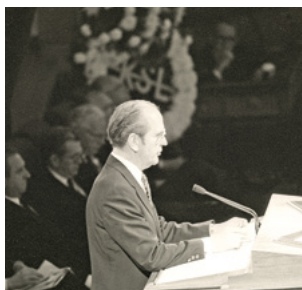
“Contention drives away the Spirit—every time. Contention reinforces the false notion that confrontation is the way to resolve differences; but it never is. Contention is a choice. Peacemaking is a choice. You have your agency to choose contention or reconciliation. I urge you to *choose* to be a peacemaker, now and always.”

“Peacemakers Needed,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 100.

THINK CELESTIAL

“When you make choices, I invite you to take the long view—an eternal view. Put Jesus Christ first because your eternal life is dependent upon your faith in Him and in His Atonement. It is also dependent upon your obedience to His laws. Obedience paves the way for a joyful life for you today and a grand, eternal reward tomorrow.”

“Think Celestial!,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2023, 118.



We thank Thee, O God, for the prophet.

WE TESTIFY OF OUR LIVING PROPHET

I know that President Russell M. Nelson is a prophet of God, and I am grateful that God speaks to him. President Nelson's love for us is one manifestation of God's love. I love President Nelson. The promises he pronounces are of God.

Justine Hinautan, Philippines



Thank you, President Nelson, for your inspiring and uplifting teachings. We love you.

Thaong Putheary, Cambodia



President Nelson teaches me that the most important thing today is to choose Christ by cherishing and honoring covenants.

Ryan Hulme, New Zealand

I am so grateful for the prophet, Russell M. Nelson. I bear my testimony that he is a man called by God to guide and strengthen us in the last days. If we follow his counsel, all will be well.

Nelson Almeida, Cabo Verde

I am so grateful for the love and insights President Nelson offers as a prophet. His talk on the temple ushered me towards getting my endowment, his devotional to the young adults has reminded me to recognize my chief identity as a child of God, and his push for gathering scattered Israel has been a constant topic amongst my family and ward community. Most importantly, he has helped me draw closer to my Savior.

Grace Burt, United States



Thank you, President Nelson, from the bottom of our hearts for giving us words of wisdom from our Heavenly Father. God bless you, our dear prophet!

Brenda Boyle, Scotland



I have deeply pondered the teachings of our beloved prophet, Russell M. Nelson. His teachings have inspired my life. His prophetic words have motivated me to keep going forward and to live the gospel more fully in this chaotic and conflicted world. I feel so safe to know that we have a prophet in our day who exhorts us to have a spirit of peace, to avoid contention with our peers. I value his great teachings.

Ana Montoya, Honduras



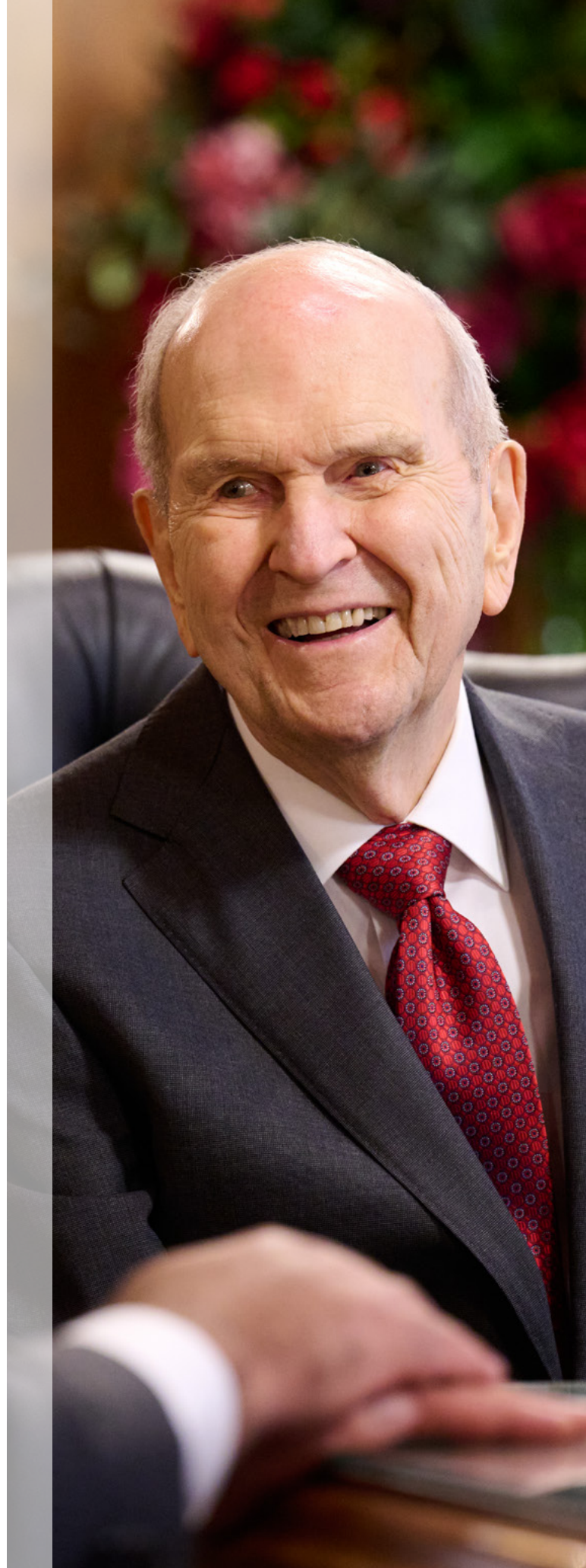
I have a firm testimony that President Russell M. Nelson is God's prophet for the latter days. I've had the privilege of witnessing up close his humility, his simplicity, and the love he feels for people. Indeed, he is the chosen man to lead God's kingdom on earth in this unique time. I've listened to and followed his counsel, which has guided me to live a righteous life and face the challenges of mortality. I feel immense love for President Nelson, and I'm aware of his extraordinary contribution to the advancement of God's kingdom and the gathering of Israel through his inspirations and announcements for temple construction worldwide.

David G. Fernandes, Brazil



On August 24, 2019, the prophet spoke in Spanish and instructed us on keeping the commandments of the Lord. I felt very strongly the love of Jesus Christ for the effort of the prophet in learning our language. I know that through the living prophet, God encourages, instructs, protects, guides, and blesses us.

Saúl Alfredo Rojas de León, Guatemala







By Elder Isaac K. Morrison
Of the Seventy

THE Prophet

LEADS US TO

Jesus Christ

*The prophet
knows the way
because he
knows Jesus
Christ, who
is “the way,
the truth,
and the life”
(John 14:6).*

One day I was having lunch in the Church Administration Building cafeteria with three of my colleagues in the Seventy. While we were eating, President Russell M. Nelson came to our table with his bowl of soup and said, “May I join you?” “Of course, President!” we all said. Who wouldn’t want to have lunch with the prophet?

While we ate, President Nelson shared a few experiences he has had in the many countries he has visited and talked about people who have inspired him. He was so kind, wise, and generous.

As we finished lunch, I turned to President Nelson and said, “President, I don’t know if I will sit at the same table with you any-time soon. But this evening, I am going to see my wife and children and tell them that I ate lunch with the prophet. I know they will ask me, ‘What did he tell you to tell us?’ President, what would you want me to tell my wife and children?”

President Nelson looked at me for a moment. I was so eager to hear what he had to say! “I have only three words for you,” he said. “Tell your family that I said, ‘*Keep the commandments.*’”

We have all heard this counsel from President Nelson before, but in that moment, I felt a personal, strong witness that President Nelson is truly the prophet. I thanked him, and later that day I told my family what had happened. Our children later made “Keep the Commandments” stickers and placed them on our refrigerator and mirrors to remind us of what President Nelson said.

Samuel the Lamanite showed his complete commitment to Jesus Christ when he stood upon a wall and declared to the Nephites the things the Lord had put into his heart.



Since then, I have pondered President Nelson’s counsel. When we keep the commandments, we show our love for Heavenly Father and the Savior. We draw closer to Them and abide in Their love. (See John 14:21; 15:10.)

This experience with the prophet has confirmed to me a profound and spiritually significant truth. In Primary we sing, “Follow the prophet; he knows the way.”¹ He *does* know the way! The prophet knows the way because he knows the Savior, who *is* “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). When we follow the prophet, we are being led to Jesus Christ.

The Sacred Role of Prophets

The Lord has given a significant and sacred role to prophets both anciently and in our day. We read in the scriptures that “surely the Lord God will do nothing, *until* he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Joseph Smith Translation, Amos 3:7 [in Amos 3:7, footnote a]).

In the book of Ezekiel, we learn more about what is required of prophets. The Lord said to the prophet Ezekiel, “I have set thee [as] a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me” (Ezekiel 33:7).

Prophets, like watchmen on a tower, have the special mandate to be the Lord’s mouthpiece and declare what He has revealed to them. The Lord requires His prophets to be men of faith, men of integrity, and men who are fearless.

Samuel the Lamanite, for example, showed his complete commitment to Jesus Christ when he stood upon a wall and declared to the Nephites the things the

Lord had put into his heart (see Helaman 13:4).

“And behold, an angel of the Lord hath declared it unto me,” Samuel said, “and he did bring glad tidings to my soul. And behold, I was sent unto you to declare it unto you also, that ye might have glad tidings; but behold ye would not receive me” (Helaman 13:7).

It is remarkable to me that Samuel boldly testified of truth—even when the Nephites “cast stones at him . . . and . . . shot arrows at him as he stood upon the wall” (Helaman 16:2). We see this boldness in prophets, seers, and revelators today.

Making the World a Better Place

Not long ago, I met a couple during a stake conference in Nashville, Tennessee, USA. The wife had been a member of the Church all her life. The husband was not a member.

They came up to me, and the husband said, “I am ready to be baptized.”

I was happy to hear that! I asked him, “What has changed?”

He told me, “When I heard President Nelson’s message in general conference,² it touched me so much. I knew then that he was a prophet. I gained a testimony, and now I’m ready to be baptized.”

I also know a woman in Cape Coast, Ghana, who somehow tuned into general conference. She had never heard of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but she became glued to what she saw and heard from prophets, seers, and revelators. Afterward, she looked for the Church. She found a chapel and met the missionaries. Eventually she was baptized. Recently, she sent me pictures of herself at the temple to receive her endowment.

These two instances show how powerful the prophet’s message is to the world! If all would heed his message, the world would be so peaceful. We would all focus on what matters most, including developing a relationship with Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and building strong, eternal families. We would also be our best selves because we would keep the two great commandments: loving God and loving our neighbor (see Matthew 22:37–39). We would bring forth Zion, a society where love, righteousness, and harmony prevail, reflecting the spirit of discipleship (see Doctrine and Covenants 82:14).

When we follow the prophet, we can be confident that we are doing what God would have us do because the prophet follows—

By heeding the prophet's counsel, we can find peace, joy, and direction in our lives as we strive to become more like Jesus Christ.

and helps us follow—Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus Christ, everything in life becomes meaningful. “We can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives.”³ By following the prophet, we can truly make the world a better place.

Find Promised Blessings

When the Saints were driven from Kirtland, Ohio, the First Presidency entrusted Oliver Granger to sell the Saints' properties and settle the debts of the Church. Oliver, an ordinary man mostly blind due to exposure to the cold, accepted this challenging task because the Prophet Joseph Smith and other leaders had asked him. Oliver persevered through many difficulties, and the Lord valued his sacrifice and efforts.

“I remember my servant Oliver Granger,” the Lord stated. “Behold, verily I say unto him that his name shall be had in sacred remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever. . . .

“ . . . And when he falls he shall rise again, for his sacrifice shall be more sacred unto me than his increase” (Doctrine and Covenants 117:12–13).

Oliver and his wife, Lydia, sustained the prophet, and the Lord recognized that Oliver had done his best even if he was not always successful. The Lord highlighted the value of his efforts over his achievements.⁴

As a missionary and even now, I do not recall hearing much about

Oliver Granger, but his name is mentioned in scripture because he obeyed the prophet's direction and received promised blessings—his name *is* had in sacred remembrance. We learn from Oliver Granger that even though direction comes from a divine source (through prophets), it does not guarantee a smooth path devoid of challenges, but the promises are sure (see Alma 37:17).

What would our lives be like without prophets? The living prophet and President of the Church represents a direct line of communication from God to His people and is the only person on earth who receives revelation to guide the entire Church. He also provides ongoing revelation from God to help us navigate the challenges of our time. By heeding the prophet's counsel, we can find peace, joy, and direction in our lives as we strive to become more like Jesus Christ. (See Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6.)

Let us embrace the teachings and example of modern-day prophets, knowing that they are instruments in God's hands and lead us toward eternal blessings. I love them and pray for them. I am grateful to know that they are inspired and help lead us and our families to our Savior, Jesus Christ. ■

NOTE

1. “Follow the Prophet,” *Children's Songbook*, 111.
2. See Russell M. Nelson, “Peacemakers Needed,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 98–101.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.
4. See Boyd K. Packer, “The Least of These,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 86.



A Spiritual Impression of Creation

By Stephan Seable, Oregon, USA

The Atonement of Jesus Christ took on a deeper meaning for me as I sculpted the story of Abraham and Isaac.

Scan the code
to read more



The Good the Gospel Brought Me

By Tom Yellowman, New Mexico, USA

Because of the people at church, I felt the Holy Ghost.

While I was growing up, my hero was my maternal grandfather, my *acheii*. He was strong in his faith. I went to a lot of different churches with him, but religion wasn't for me.

When I met Gina, who became my wife, she was a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She wanted me to learn about the Church so we could marry in the temple. But I didn't want that. I was not religious.

Eventually we got married civilly. After we had a child, I still wasn't interested in the Church, but Gina kept attending.

Finally, I decided I would prove that her church was wrong by going to other churches. This went on for several years, but no matter where I went, I wasn't comfortable.

Then, one Sunday as Gina was getting our daughter ready to go to church, I started getting dressed for church too. She looked at me and asked, "What are you doing?" I responded, "I'm



going to go to church with you." She looked at our daughter and said, "Get ready quick! We don't want him to change his mind!"

So, off we went. Because I felt the Holy Ghost through the people at church, they were essential to my conversion. After that, the missionaries came to our home. They were awesome, the teachings they shared were beautiful to me, and the Spirit filled my heart (see Moroni 10:4-5).

When I visited my grandfather to tell him what I had found, he was not happy. But I knew I had to follow my heart.

I joined the Church, and soon Gina and I were sealed in the temple. Our daughter was sealed to us, and we now have three more children who were born in the covenant.

It took 10 years for my *acheii* to finally respect what we believe in the Church. At my son's high school graduation, he told everybody in Navajo, "I enjoy this family. I support what they believe. Their children really know how to pray."

I am the only member of the Church in my extended family, but I know they accept that my conversion was genuine, and they see the good the gospel has brought to my wife, our children, and me. ■

The Book of Mormon Brought Me Peace

By Américo Chantre Fernandes, Cape Verde

I came to understand that the Book of Mormon was desirable to change my life and bring me closer to Jesus Christ.

At the end of 2013, two young men wearing white shirts and ties began to visit my sister twice a week. I knew right away they were from a church. For me, being part of a church wasn't in my plans, so I decided not to talk to them.

With each of their visits, I made sure not to be home when they arrived. Something in particular, however, caught my attention. They always carried a blue book. I had never seen it before, and it seemed strange to me.

One day in the living room, my sister began telling me about the book. Suddenly, the two young men arrived. Unfortunately, I couldn't hide from them. They saw us with the blue book—the Book of Mormon—and started asking what I knew about Jesus Christ.

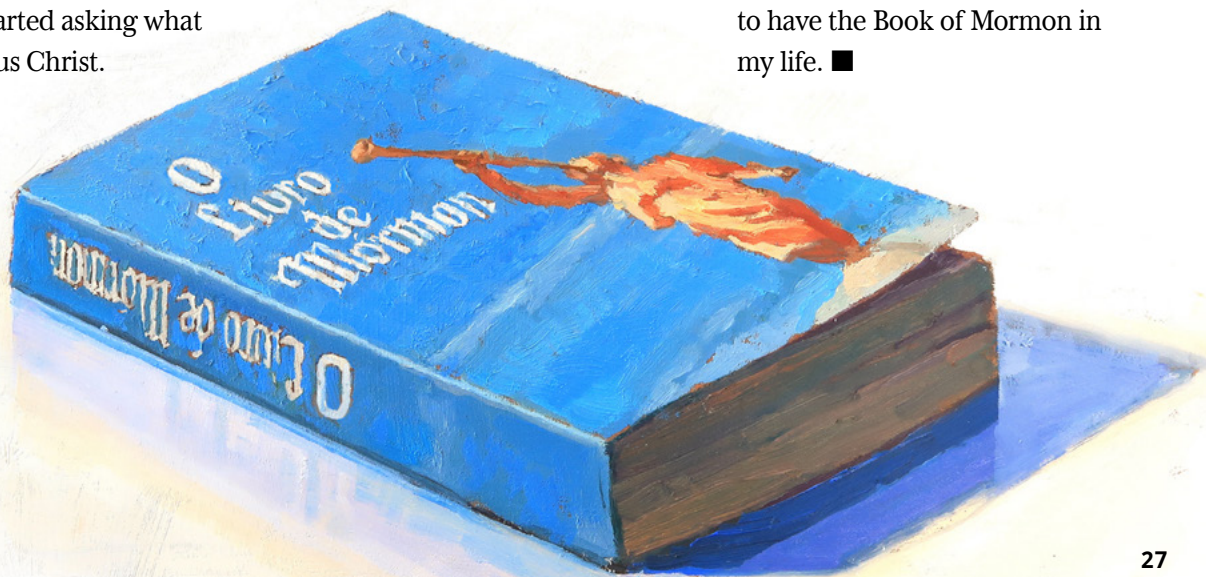
As I listened to the missionaries from that day on, I was impressed by how they connected their teachings to the Book of Mormon. As a result, the blue book became less strange to me.

I still had serious doubts about it, but I started reading it. I came to understand that the Book of Mormon was not a substitute for the Bible but was desirable to change my life and bring me closer to Jesus Christ. I learned that the Book of Mormon is centered on the Savior. Its teachings helped me know who He is and who Heavenly Father is.

The Book of Mormon soon helped me become a better person,

a true disciple of Jesus Christ. It also helped me improve my attitude as I faced daily challenges. From my experience studying it, I know it helps people come unto Christ and live the gospel (see Moroni 10:32). It encourages us to follow Christ's teachings and apply them in our daily life. It gives us the knowledge that we are sons and daughters of God. It brings peace.

After several weeks of meeting with the missionaries and reading the Book of Mormon, I was baptized. I bear my testimony with all my heart that the Book of Mormon is true and that reading it brings hope and light in the darkest moments, helping us feel the Lord's love and protection. I am grateful to have the Book of Mormon in my life. ■



God Had Something Better for Us

By Ronald Baa, Northern Mindanao, Philippines



When the missionaries taught me that I was a child of God, I knew He had more blessings in store for my family and me.

I grew up in a small, rural village in the Philippines. My family was poor. In the Philippines, if you don't have money, you can't go to school. Despite that obstacle, I was an ambitious young man.

I told my parents I wanted to become a doctor or a teacher or some kind of a professional, but they always told me to stop dreaming. We didn't have money for me to go to a university. My parents wanted me to be content and not disappointed with my life.

"Being a professional is not for us," they said. They didn't believe that anything better was in store for our family than what we already had.

But that was before we joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We lived far away from any cities, but the missionaries found us and kept coming back. They made many sacrifices to teach my

family, but they changed our lives forever.

When we joined the Church, I learned I was a child of God with potential to grow and learn and become (see Moses 1:39; "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," Gospel Library). With gospel knowledge, I knew it was time to elevate my family's station. We were no longer just poor people from a small village—we were worthy sons and daughters of God deserving of blessings He has promised to His faithful followers.

The missionaries brought the gospel into my life, the gospel brought music into my life, and music got me a scholarship to attend the university. I earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education and then a degree in music, majoring in choral conducting. Now I teach music at Liceo de Cagayan University and conduct the Liceo U High School Glee Club. I also lead a choir of members of the Church. Our mission is to share God's truth through music.

Graduating from the university gave me a new life. I don't know where I would be today without the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Everyone deserves the chance to learn, as I did, that they have a Heavenly Father and that He has blessed them with potential to grow and learn and become. ■

The Spirit Made Up the Difference

By Lisa Nielsen Young, South Carolina, USA

I could feel the love of ward members as they sang without my accompaniment.

We were living in a small town in Georgia, USA, when my father died at just 55 years old. Most of our family lived in another state. Never had the 2,000 miles (3,200 km) between us felt greater than at that time.

My husband was the bishop and I the organist of our small ward. With all the emotions and stress of helping with funeral plans, I was feeling especially weary that Sunday when it came time for our sacrament meeting closing hymn: “God Be with You Till We Meet Again” (*Hymns*, no. 152).

Halfway through the second verse, my grief overcame me. Somehow I played through the end of that verse, but my hands were shaking and my eyes so full of tears that I had to stop with an entire verse left. I couldn’t stop crying.

A brief pause followed as the congregation realized the organ had stopped. But then ward members started singing a cappella. The singing wasn’t perfect. We were few, after all. But the Spirit made up the difference. Through my tears and embarrassment, I could feel the love of many as they sang.

*God be with you till we meet again;
Keep love’s banner floating o’er you;
Smite death’s threat’ning wave before you.
God be with you till we meet again.*

When the hymn ended, the music leader held me as I sobbed through the closing prayer. Several people then came up to the organ with tears in their eyes to say how sorry they were about my father.

Later, I told the music leader I would be playing the piano at the funeral. It probably seemed like a bad idea after what had just happened, but my dad so enjoyed hearing me play the piano. I wanted to play for him. I realized then how close he had felt during the closing hymn.

I am so thankful for the hymns. I testify that music can teach and comfort us in ways that words often cannot. As the First Presidency wrote in the preface to the hymnbook, “Hymns . . . comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end.” I am also thankful for the love of a good ward when I was so far away from my own family. I know that my father and I will indeed meet again. ■



HOW BEING BROKEN DOWN HELPED ME REBUILD MY FOUNDATION OF FAITH

After some serious mental, physical, and spiritual challenges, I discovered what it means to find healing through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

By Maren Kennedy





was serving as a missionary in France when the world collapsed and COVID-19 hurled the whole country into a strict lockdown. I have struggled with depression throughout my life, so I worried that the confining circumstances would cause me to slip into a depressive episode. But the first week of quarantine—the week leading up to the historical April 2020 general conference—was one of the most spiritual weeks of my life.

Looking back, the experiences I had that week felt like the Lord was fortifying me for a storm.

Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave a talk that conference about the repairs that would be made to the Salt Lake Temple's foundations. He likened the remodeling to our own lives and asked us to consider this question:

“What are the foundational elements of my spiritual and emotional character that will allow me and my family to remain steadfast and immovable, even to withstand the earthshaking and tumultuous seismic events that will surely take place in our lives?”¹

As I listened to his talk, the Spirit impressed on me that, like the temple, I was going to be broken down in certain ways during the next period of my life. But I also felt that if I turned to the Lord during these challenges, He would help me strengthen my foundation of faith.

"HEALING . . . IS OFTEN A LIFELONG PROCESS OF RECOVERY AND GROWTH IN SPITE OF, MAYBE BECAUSE OF, ENDURING PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, OR SPIRITUAL ASSAULT. IT REQUIRES TIME."

FEELING BROKEN DOWN

As expected, I soon grew depressed, and it wasn't long before I felt trapped in an endless cycle of suicidal ideation. I felt torn down mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

After two months of quarantine, things got a little better. Thanks to changes in my circumstances, like antidepressant medication and the end of lockdown, I started to feel better mentally. But soon after, I started feeling sick and noticed three large lumps at the base of my throat.

At first I ignored the bumps, but when my symptoms worsened, it became clear that I could no longer stay in the mission field. I returned home, where I was promptly diagnosed with blood cancer—Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Because my antidepressants had a bit of an emotional numbing effect, I felt pretty apathetic as I started six months of chemotherapy.

But even so, I began to break down physically.

REBUILDING MY SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

A year after my chemotherapy treatment ended, I was starting to feel better physically. I was back at college and making plans. But the searing spiritual pain and numbness I had felt on my mission and during chemotherapy had now turned into a general feeling of indifference about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

I was struggling with my feelings about what I had gone through and felt as if They had abandoned me when I was at my lowest.

But Heavenly Father knew what paths I needed to take so I could heal.

I felt like I was grappling with the rubble and remains of my once-strong faith and my once-vibrant personality. I felt

so disconnected from myself. My heart was softening toward the Lord's attempts to reach out to me, but spiritually I felt guilty, anxious, and unworthy because of my indifference toward the gospel.

After pondering my spiritual health for a few months, I was prompted to make small spiritual changes in my life. I had ignored the pain for a while, but I wanted to address the hurt I felt in my soul because of the challenges I had experienced.

Soon I could see Heavenly Father's hand in my life. Without knowing how spiritually numb I was feeling, friends and loved ones brought up the topic of healing. One of them even shared a devotional address by Elaine S. Marshall.

Reluctantly, I read it.

As a nurse, Elaine drew parallels between physical healing and spiritual healing, saying: "Healing is not cure. Cure is clean, quick, and done—often under anesthesia. . . . Healing . . . is often a lifelong process of recovery and growth in spite of, maybe because of, enduring physical, emotional, or spiritual assault. It requires time."²

I don't think it was a coincidence that the treatment for my cancer required six months of chemotherapy. The effects of chemo are drastic, dramatic, and demanding. Interestingly, learning to let my body heal physically taught me a key principle of spiritual healing—how to draw upon Jesus Christ's grace and allow myself time and space to heal my relationship with Him and Heavenly Father.

RECEIVING THE SAVIOR'S GRACE

Grace is divine help, enabling and strengthening power, and spiritual healing. It is a gift from our Heavenly Father, "extended to us through the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ."³

My favorite example of someone accessing the healing power of Jesus Christ through His Atonement is Alma the Younger. As



he lay in a coma state for three days, racked with “the pains of a damned soul,” he remembered his father’s teachings of Jesus Christ (see Alma 36:16–17). He first desired help and then turned to Christ, which changed his trajectory and allowed him to be healed spiritually (see Alma 36:18–22).

The first step I took toward spiritual healing was finding a desire to connect with God. Alma taught me how to start when he said, “Exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words” (Alma 32:27).

I testify from personal experience that this teaching is true.

We can develop a desire, plant a seed (the word of God), and nourish that seed until it becomes something real and concrete. Eventually, the fruits of our faith in Jesus Christ are produced when we see changes in our actions, our opinions, our beliefs, our hearts, our minds, and then our souls. Our foundation becomes built on Him (see Helaman 5:12).

Similar to Alma’s experience, my desire to feel the Spirit and the joy of the gospel again set off a whole trajectory shift that took me through the process of healing. Since then, the Savior has helped me to reconcile my past feelings as I’ve learned to let go of my resentments toward God, Him, and my own weaknesses.

Because of Him, parts of myself that I thought I had lost in the mists of my trials—like my personality, my desires, and my love for the gospel—have been returned to me and have made me feel whole, renewed, and restored.

A STRONGER FOUNDATION

Pain and challenges changed me, but as I found healing through Jesus Christ, I truly rebuilt my foundation of faith on Him. As time passes and I heal, I see that because of Jesus Christ, I can learn to have joy despite my struggles. I now understand that the most important part of going through a trial isn’t what breaks us down or the pain we feel—it’s what follows as we experience healing and reconstruction through the Savior’s grace.

Elder Patrick Kearon of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “Dear friends who have . . . borne the injustices of life—you can have a new beginning and a fresh start. In Gethsemane and on Calvary, Jesus ‘took upon Himself . . . *all* of the anguish and suffering *ever* experienced by you and me’ [Russell M. Nelson, “The Correct Name of the Church,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 88], and He has overcome it all!”⁴

So, to those who feel broken, I plead with you to be brave, to hold on, and to trust in the Lord and His healing power. With time, patience, and even the slightest desire, His grace can transform you, rebuild your foundation, and help you feel whole again.

That’s the gift He offers every one of us. ■

The author is from North Carolina, USA.

NOTES

1. Gary E. Stevenson, “A Good Foundation against the Time to Come,” *Liahona*, May 2020, 50.
2. Elaine S. Marshall, “Learning the Healer’s Art” (Brigham Young University devotional, Oct. 8, 2002), 4, speeches.byu.edu.
3. Topics and Questions, “Grace,” Gospel Library.
4. Patrick Kearon, “He Is Risen with Healing in His Wings: We Can Be More Than Conquerors,” *Liahona*, May 2022, 39.



GUIDO FROM GERMANY



RASOANANDRIANA FROM MADAGASCAR



ARACELI FROM PARAGUAY

YOUNG ADULTS

3 WAYS TO ENDURE LIFE AND ENJOY IT

By Emma Hebertson
Church Magazines

Heavenly Father wants us to find joy in the life we've been given.

When was the last time you were truly happy? Was that question hard to answer? During challenging times, we might get so entrenched in our trials that we can't really recall what joy feels like. As Sister Reyna I. Aburto, former Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, described it: "Black clouds may . . . form in our lives, which can blind us to God's light and even cause us to question if that light exists for us anymore."¹

For many of us young adults, life can sometimes feel like something to just endure—something to struggle through until we finally receive those blessings we’re promised.

What we sometimes forget is that it’s also something to *enjoy*. The blessing of eternal happiness can start *now*.

Here are a few ways we can reignite light and joy in our lives.

REMEMBER THE SIMPLE TRUTHS

Instead of training our eyes to see in the darkness, we can search for the rays of light that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings to our life.

President Russell M. Nelson has reminded us that “joy comes from and because of [Jesus Christ]. He is the source of all joy.”² When you are struggling to find light in your life, turning to Jesus Christ should always be the first step.

You can also ask Heavenly Father to help you remember the significance of your divine identity.

Elder Gary B. Sabin of the Seventy taught, “It is crucial to our happiness that we remember that we are sons and daughters of a loving Heavenly Father.”³ *Truly* knowing that God is aware of you and wants the best for you can light up your life.

Despite the challenges you face, remembering these basic principles of the gospel can help you invite the Savior’s light into your life.

FIND WHAT BRINGS YOU HAPPINESS

Sometimes it can be hard to remember that our happiness doesn’t always look the same as everyone else’s. In fact, as young adults, it’s hard not to compare our lives to those around us. But remember that you have control over your *own* happiness.

Ask yourself: what makes *you* happy?

What makes you smile?

As then-President Dieter F. Uchtdorf suggested when he was Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Reduce the rush and take a little extra time to get to know yourself better.”⁴ Look for the beauty in the little things: Take a walk. Visit the temple. Sign up for a service project. Find a new hobby or pick up where you left off on an old one.

Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once spoke of how creativity can illuminate our lives: “Select something like music, dance, sculpture, or poetry. Being creative will help you enjoy life. It engenders a spirit of gratitude. It develops latent talent, sharpens your capacity to reason, to act, and to find purpose in life. It dispels loneliness and heartache. It gives a renewal, a spark of enthusiasm, and zest for life.”⁵

Finding what fills your heart with happiness can help reignite the light in your life when you’re in a rut.

FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS MOST

If life gets too overwhelming and you feel like it’s taking all your energy to just get through each day, take a moment of stillness to focus on what matters *most*.

To do so, President Uchtdorf suggested that we “simplify our lives a little.”⁶ Refocus your life on Heavenly Father’s love and the beautiful gift of Christ’s Atonement. Prioritize your relationships with your family, friends, and yourself.

Fight the negative with positive, the darkness with the light of Jesus Christ and His gospel.

As President Nelson encouraged us: “Let us not just *endure* this current season. Let us *embrace the future with faith!*”⁷ While enduring the hardships of life, learn to enjoy the beauty of it as well. The eternal happiness that the gospel promises does not start sometime in the future—it starts now. ■

NOTES

1. Reyna I. Aburto, “Thru Cloud and Sunshine, Lord, Abide with Me!” *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 57.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.
3. Gary B. Sabin, “Hallmarks of Happiness,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2023, 57.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Of Things That Matter Most,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 22.
5. Richard G. Scott, “Finding Joy in Life,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 26.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Of Things That Matter Most,” 22.
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Embrace the Future with Faith,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 76.



President Russell M. Nelson greets Latter-day Saints in Kona, Hawaii, on May 16, 2019, during his Pacific ministry tour.

Dear Parents,

This month President Russell M. Nelson celebrates his 100th birthday. Articles in this issue emphasize how he and other prophets point us to Jesus Christ.

One way youth can follow the prophet is by responding to his invitation to attend seminary regularly and read the scriptures daily. He has promised wonderful blessings to those who do, including learning to receive personal revelation, finding answers to life's difficult questions, and coming to know the Savior. Have your teenage children heard this prophetic invitation? Visit seminary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org to find out more information.

GOSPEL DISCUSSIONS

Remember Your Covenants

In President Jeffrey R. Holland's article on page 4, we learn how keeping our covenants and wearing the garment of the holy priesthood after we are endowed will provide "greater access to the Savior's mercy, protection, strength, and power." You could talk with your family about how wearing the garment "is an outward expression of your inner commitment to follow [Jesus Christ]." What are other outward expressions we do to show our commitment to be disciples of Christ?

Keep the Commandments

Elder Isaac K. Morrison asked President Nelson for a personal message for his wife and children. The prophet's response was "Keep the commandments." (See page 20.) You might ask your children: How might your choices be different if the prophet sat at a table with you and asked you to keep the commandments?

Follow the Prophet

President Nelson turns 100 this month! President Dallin H. Oaks shares some of the lessons he has learned from the prophet (see page 12). What have your children learned from the prophet? Has there been a specific talk or devotional that has stood out to them? Share your thoughts. You could watch a video message from him.

COME, FOLLOW ME FAMILY FUN

Hearing God's Voice

3 Nephi 11:5

In 3 Nephi 11, we read how the Nephites could not hear the voice of God until they turned their eyes toward the voice and opened their ears.

1. Stand across from someone. Turn around so you're not looking at each other.
2. One person is the speaker, and the other is the listener. Have the listener cover his or her ears.
3. Have the speaker say a phrase in a quiet voice, like "I'm trying to be like Jesus."
4. See if the listener can tell what the speaker is saying.
5. Now have the listener uncover his or her ears and turn toward the person speaking.
6. The speaker repeats the same phrase.

Discussion: Was it easier to hear the voice when the listener faced the speaker? Read 3 Nephi 11:5. How can you turn your eyes and open your ears to God's voice today?

FROM FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH MAGAZINE

Walk in the Savior's Light

Learn from Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf how the Savior's healing and strengthening power can lead you out of darkness as you repent.

Better Mental Health

Sister Tamara W. Runia shares some ideas for improving and maintaining good mental health and staying close to the Spirit.

Not Always Popular but Always Prophetic

As Samuel the Lamanite taught, prophets are not always popular, but they teach us what we need to hear.



FROM THE FRIEND MAGAZINE

Learning to Repent

Read a message from President Dallin H. Oaks to help your children learn about repentance.

Hello from Zimbabwe!

Meet our friend Sariah from Zimbabwe and learn how she follows Jesus Christ.

Help with Come, Follow Me

Find fun weekly activities to help your family learn from the Book of Mormon.

Healthy Minds and Hearts

In the Older Kids' Section, find kid-friendly stories and resources about mental health.



NO LONGER LONELY: 7 WAYS TO CONNECT

Loneliness is a challenge that can be conquered with some effort, emotional energy, and help from the Savior.

By Julianne Holt-Lunstad

Professor of Psychology, Brigham Young University

We will all likely experience loneliness sometimes. Occasional feelings of loneliness can actually be healthy and productive, a biological signal that we need to build stronger relationships. But ongoing loneliness is often a major obstacle to happiness.

Heavenly Father's plan of happiness includes gathering us in families and in congregations. This helps us not only in our eternal progression but also in our human need to be among others, to feel like we belong, to give and receive emotional support. Science is beginning to recognize social connection as a biological need linked to our health and survival.¹

It's also a spiritual need. We need each other for our spiritual well-being and growth. And a heaven filled with eternal relationships is a particularly joyful thought (see Doctrine and Covenants 130:2).

Consider the following ideas to combat loneliness in your life:

1. **Rely on the Savior.** Your Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know of your loneliness and want to help. Knowing that the Savior is acquainted with the pain of loneliness can help you to know that He understands what you feel. Drawing closer to Heavenly Father and the Savior through prayer, studying the scriptures, and worship on the Sabbath and in the temple will help you know you are never alone. As President Russell M. Nelson has taught, "When the focus of our lives is on . . . Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives."²
2. **Be friendly.** Loneliness can sometimes cause us to doubt that making an effort will help lessen our pain. Do a self-examination to see if you are being pessimistic. While looking for friendships, remember that being friendly is often required.

Simply saying hello to a neighbor can make a difference. And seeking opportunities to bless the lives of others who are also struggling with loneliness may be the most powerful interventions of all.

3. **Build on common interests.** Seek out people and groups whose interests, perspectives, and standards are similar to yours. You could look for (or even consider starting!) a book club, service club, hiking club, singing group, home evening group, or empty-nesters group.
4. **Strengthen existing relationships.** Most people already have relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and ward members. Nurturing these existing relationships is a great place to start when combating loneliness. Friendships take time to build naturally, so be patient as you nurture relationships. Remember that the quality of your relationships is more important than the number of relationships you have.
5. **Seek opportunities to serve and share your talents and spiritual gifts.** There are nearly unlimited

opportunities to minister and serve in the Church, our families, and the community. When we feel our efforts are having a positive effect on others, it can bring a sense of meaning and purpose to our lives. Feeling that our lives have meaning to others is a strong deterrent to loneliness.

6. **Plan for challenging times.** Holidays and significant dates, such as the anniversary of a loved one's death, can be difficult. Try to plan activities with friends or family on such days to keep from dwelling on the connections you wish you had.
7. **Participate in temple and family history work.** This is a powerful way to feel comfort and belonging. Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles promised numerous blessings we can receive, including "increased love and appreciation for ancestors and living relatives, so we no longer feel alone."³

For most people, loneliness is a challenge that can be conquered with some effort, emotional energy, and help from the Savior. ■



NOTES

1. See Julianne Holt-Lunstad, "Social Connection as a Public Health Issue: The Evidence and a Systemic Framework for Prioritizing the 'Social' in Social Determinants of Health," *Annual Review of Public Health*, vol. 43 (2022), 193–213.
2. Russell M. Nelson, "Joy and Spiritual Survival," *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.
3. Dale G. Renlund, "Family History and Temple Work: Sealing and Healing," *Liahona*, May 2018, 47.

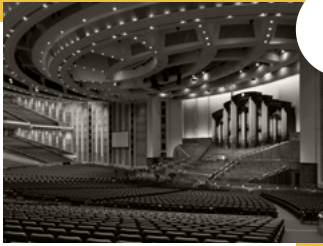


How Can I Strengthen My Testimony of the Prophet?

General conference can help us strengthen our testimonies of living prophets.

In the book of Helaman, the prophet Samuel the Lamanite testifies of Jesus Christ and gives warnings and invitations to the Nephites (see Helaman 13–14). In our day we also have the opportunity to listen to timely warnings from our prophet and other Church leaders. Heeding their invitations helps us follow the covenant path.

General conference is a perfect chance to hear the latest words from our inspired leaders and draw closer to Jesus Christ. Here are some ways you might consider using general conference to enhance your testimony of living prophets:



1

Before general conference, prayerfully ponder why having a prophet is important to you. Consider praying to receive confirmation from the Spirit that the current President of the Church is God’s prophet, seer, and revelator on the earth today. “Knowing by revelation that there is a living prophet on the earth changes everything.”¹



2

Research what it means to support and sustain the prophet and General Authorities. As their names are presented in general conference for a sustaining vote, you can participate in sustaining them.



3

“By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). As you listen to the messages from Church leaders, pay attention to the Spirit testifying that their words are true.

4



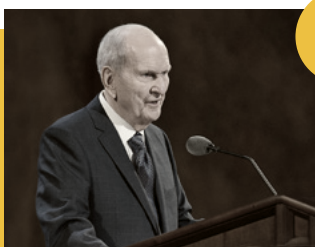
One of the prophet’s main roles is to testify of Jesus Christ and teach us to “look upon the Son of God with faith” (see Helaman 8:13–16). You might want to note what the prophet and the other speakers teach about the Savior.

5



“Through [President Russell M. Nelson], we have received countless invitations and have been promised glorious blessings if we will center our lives on our Savior.”² Consider making a list of the invitations extended by the prophet and other speakers during conference. Refer back to that list to help you strive to become more like Christ.

6



Remember President Nelson’s invitation: “I exhort you to study the messages of this conference frequently—even repeatedly—during the next six months.”³ As you listen to or read the messages again, mark things that stand out to you.

7



President Nelson invites us to “seek and expect miracles.”⁴ As you obey the prophet’s counsel and make changes in your life, pay attention to the blessings you receive and the miracles you see (see Helaman 16:4–5).

As you follow these steps to develop your testimony of a prophet, seer, and revelator, draw on your faith in Jesus Christ and a loving Heavenly Father. God has lovingly given us prophets to guide us back to Him—prophets who act as His mouthpiece to reveal His will to the world. (See Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; 21:5–6.) If we choose to follow His servants’ counsel, we choose to follow Him. ■

NOTES

1. Allen D. Haynie, “A Living Prophet for the Latter Days,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 25.
2. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Never Give Up an Opportunity to Testify of Christ,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 10.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Let Us All Press On,” *Liahona*, May 2018, 118.
4. Russell M. Nelson, “The Power of Spiritual Momentum,” *Liahona*, May 2022, 99.



Helaman 10;
3 Nephi

How Can I Prepare to Receive the Savior?

Here are four ways you can receive the Savior into your life.

The Nephites needed to prepare themselves to receive the Savior physically into their presence. What can we learn from their example to help us receive the Savior spiritually into our lives?

Ponder the Things of God

Then: When the prophet Nephi was feeling “cast down,” he pondered “upon the things which the Lord had shown unto him” (Helaman 10:2–3).

Now: Remembering what God has done for us, in both good times and bad, will give us strength and courage to stay close to Him and face the future with faith.

President Henry B. Eyring, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, suggested we reflect daily and record our impressions. He said: “You might pray and ponder, asking the questions: Did God send a message that was just for me? Did I see His hand in my life or the lives of my children?”¹

How have you seen God’s love, inspiration, or blessings in your life today?



Take upon You the Name of Christ

Then: Mormon was bold in declaring that he was “a disciple of Jesus Christ” (3 Nephi 5:13).

Now: Elder Jonathan S. Schmitt of the Seventy has suggested that we can focus on Jesus Christ by taking upon us different titles of His. For example, Jesus is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (1 Nephi 10:18). Elder Schmitt suggests that we can take upon us this title by being consistent in living the gospel.²

What other names or titles of Jesus Christ can you think of and apply to yourself?

Allow the Savior to Gather You to Him

Then: In 3 Nephi 10:4–6, Jesus Christ likens Himself to a hen gathering her chicks. This is beautiful imagery because He is always beckoning us to come to Him so He can protect and nourish us. But we must choose to come unto Him. He said, “How oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not” (verse 5).

Now: Jesus continues to gather us today, but we have to let ourselves be gathered to Him. Are you allowing yourself to be gathered to the Savior and find protection with Him, or are you refusing and staying exposed to danger?

What invitation is the Savior extending to you, and what do you need to do to accept it?



Look toward Heaven

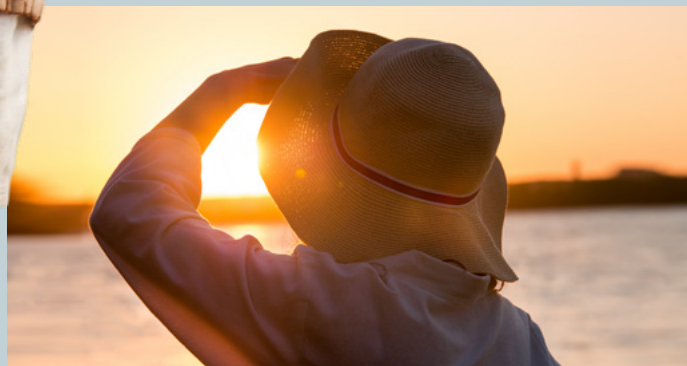
Then: It took the Nephites three tries to hear the voice of God. “The third time they did hear the voice, and did open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven” (3 Nephi 11:5).

Now: One way we can “look steadfastly towards heaven” is by, in President Russell M. Nelson’s phrase, “thinking celestial.” He explains that one aspect of thinking celestial is “being spiritually minded.”³

What can you do to be more spiritually minded and “look steadfastly towards heaven”? ■

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, “O Remember, Remember,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 69.
2. See Jonathan S. Schmitt, “That They Might Know Thee,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 105.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2023, 117.





**By Sister
Kristin M. Yee**

Second
Counselor
in the Relief
Society General
Presidency

DETAIL FROM HE COMES AGAIN TO RULE AND REIGN, BY MARY R. SAUER



FINDING RELIEF

IN OUR COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Jesus Christ is the source of pure love, healing, happiness, and relief.



Finding relief through our covenant relationship with God has been on my mind and heart for some time. As the prophet of the Lord has taught and exhorted us to learn about covenants, temples, and priesthood power, I've found myself searching, loving, and feasting upon the rejuvenating truths encapsulated in covenants.

We were meant to partner with the Lord in a powerful way through our covenants. He desires to be with us in our concerns and our decisions. We need not navigate the challenges, sorrows, insecurities, and heartaches of life alone. He will be beside us. He has said:

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18).

President Russell M. Nelson described the character of God and His great love for us when he taught that “the covenant path is all about our relationship with God.”¹ He said: “Once you and I have made a covenant with God, our relationship with Him becomes much closer than before our covenant. Now we are bound together. Because of our covenant with God, He will never tire in His efforts to help us, and we will never exhaust His merciful patience with us. Each of us has a special place in God’s heart. He has high hopes for us.”²

Through Jesus Christ, from navigating the

My Greatest Source of Peace

As a sister who has not yet married, this loving and merciful covenant relationship with my Father in Heaven and Savior has a powerful place in my life and has been and *is* my greatest source of relief and peace. No matter our marital status or background, the Lord desires us to partner with Him in a powerful way—to be “one” (3 Nephi 19:23) with Him in “all [our] doings” (Alma 37:37). As we cry unto the Lord for our support, and “*let the affections of [our] heart[s] be placed upon [Him] forever*” (Alma 37:36; emphasis added), our lives can be filled by this beautiful covenant bond.

Through our Savior, Jesus Christ, we can receive relief from navigating the challenges of life alone.

We all have concerns and needs that we can feel alone in. He cares about our concerns no matter how great or small. I have felt the need for His help when worrying about seemingly small things like the ever-present friend I call “house repairs.” Without a spouse to consult with, I can worry alone about the right contractor, fair costs, taking time away from work to be home, and being a good steward over my finances and home. It was a

triumph the other day to get my garage door fixed! The Lord heard my concern. And though small in the grand scheme of things, He answered my prayer. How? Through a kind neighbor, the help of the Spirit, and a video on YouTube, I was blessed to know what to do to fix the door.

If the Lord is attentive to the small needs, imagine His desire to bless and sustain us in the weightier matters of the heart and soul, which are not few in number: abuse, addiction, difficult family relationships, loss and disappointment, ongoing mental and physical health challenges, financial distress, constant concern as a parent, constant concern in caring for a parent, struggles with personal faith, a child or spouse who chooses not to participate in the gospel.

During the intensities and infirmities of life, I’ve leaned heavily upon and held closely to my covenant relationship with God. As I’ve trusted in His loving care and tried my best to consecrate my life to Him, He has provided relief through His priesthood power and has been my Provider in my spiritual and temporal needs. He has provided relief from fear, relief from insecurities,

we can receive relief challenges of life alone.

relief from pride, relief from sin, relief from loneliness, relief from sorrow.

President Nelson taught with clarity and assurance that “the reward for keeping covenants with God is heavenly power—power that strengthens us to withstand our trials, temptations, and heartaches better.”³

Through Jesus Christ, we *can* receive relief from navigating the challenges of life alone.

Sisters “upon the Isles of the Sea”

As I’ve been reflecting on the blessings of the covenant bond we have with God, I thought about my assignment to visit the Asia North Area.

I had the privilege of traveling to the small islands of Chuuk in Micronesia, about 1,500 miles (2,400 km) southeast of Japan. Two of the sisters on Weno, Chuuk, have given their lives to raise children who have been abandoned by their parents. These two sisters felt it was important to raise these children in the gospel. One of these sisters is single and working full-time as a school counselor.

I shared with them President Nelson’s message to the sisters of the Church, which is that you sisters are loved, necessary, and precious.⁴

The beautiful single sister who is raising her nieces and nephews broke down in tears and said she had not felt precious lately; she had felt forgotten. But she testified she felt of God’s love and awareness for her in the prophet’s words that she was indeed “precious,” and she knew it was true. She felt God’s healing love; she felt relief.



Sister Yee with two sisters in Micronesia who are raising children abandoned by parents.

The Lord has said, “Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea?” (2 Nephi 29:7).

These sisters are known to their Heavenly Father and Savior. They are not alone. And neither are you and I in our trials and challenges. The Lord sent me roughly 8,500 miles (13,700 km) by plane, train, car, and boat to bring God’s love and relief to “the one” on the isles of the sea. And so He will find you and me on our personal islands where we might feel alone in the concerns and the burdens we carry in our hearts. He is present and prepared to bless, guide, and comfort us.

“I Can Come to You”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) once described the experience of a young divorced “mother of seven children then ranging in ages from 7 to 16. She said that one evening she went across the street to deliver something to a neighbor.” These are her words as he recalled them:

“As I turned around to walk back home, I could see my house lighted up. I could hear echoes of my children as I had walked out of the door a few minutes earlier. They were saying: ‘Mom, what are we going to have for dinner?’ ‘Can you take me to the library?’ ‘I have to get some poster paper tonight.’ Tired and weary, I looked at that house and saw the light on in each of the rooms. I thought of all of those children who were home waiting for me to come and meet their needs. My burdens felt heavier than I could bear.

“I remember looking through tears toward the sky, and I said, ‘Dear Father, I just can’t do it tonight. I’m too tired. I can’t face it. I can’t go home and take care of all those children alone. Could I just come to You and stay with You for just one night? . . .’

“I didn’t really hear the words of reply, but I heard them in my mind. The answer was: ‘No, little one, you can’t come to me now. . . . But I can come to you.’”⁵

“I can come to you.” He came to her, and He will come to you and me, just as the Savior came to the woman at the well where she labored and toiled through her days (see John 4:3–42). He encouraged her, taught her,

declared His messiahship to her, and loved her when perhaps she didn’t love herself. To the woman at the well, to the young mother of seven, to you and me, Jesus Christ stands ready to provide relief. I testify that we can receive relief through our covenant bond with a loving God.

Perhaps like me, you have pleaded for help to not be left alone during some of the most emotionally, physically, and spiritually demanding seasons of your life. These intense seasons of growth have left what I call “spiritual stretch marks” on the soul. But I bear witness that He has carried me, and He will carry you. He has graven you upon the palms of His hands (see Isaiah 49:16; 1 Nephi 21:16). He has been there as you’ve sought “to be righteous in the dark.”⁶ He has not forsaken me, nor will He forsake you.⁷ And I will love Him forever for it.

Dear sisters and brothers, the source of pure love, healing, happiness, and relief *has been found* in Jesus Christ. I testify that Jesus Christ is relief.⁸

He desires to care for you, to bless and forgive you. He came for this very purpose, to provide you with the much-needed relief that you seek. He is the Redeemer of the world, and I testify that He lives and that He loves you. ■

From a Brigham Young University Women’s Conference address delivered on May 3, 2023.

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “The Everlasting Covenant,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2022, 11.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “The Everlasting Covenant,” 6.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Overcome the World and Find Rest,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 96.
4. See Russell M. Nelson, “Sisters’ Participation in the Gathering of Israel,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 68–70.
5. Gordon B. Hinckley, “In the Arms of His Love,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 117.
6. Brigham Young, in James E. Faust, “The Light in Their Eyes,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 22.
7. See Study Helps, Index to the Triple Combination, “Forsake, Forsaken,” Gospel Library.
8. See Camille N. Johnson, “Jesus Christ Is Relief,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 81–84.

Christ Blesses the Nephites

“Have ye any that are sick among you? . . . Bring them hither and I will heal them. . . .

“And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude . . . did go forth with their sick and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all them that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them.”

3 Nephi 17:7, 9



CHRIST BLESSES THE NEPHITES AT THE BOUNTIFUL TEMPLE, BY MINERVA TEICHERT

YOUNG ADULTS

After months of mental, physical, and spiritual challenges, I discovered what it means to find healing through Jesus Christ.

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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



ENGLISH