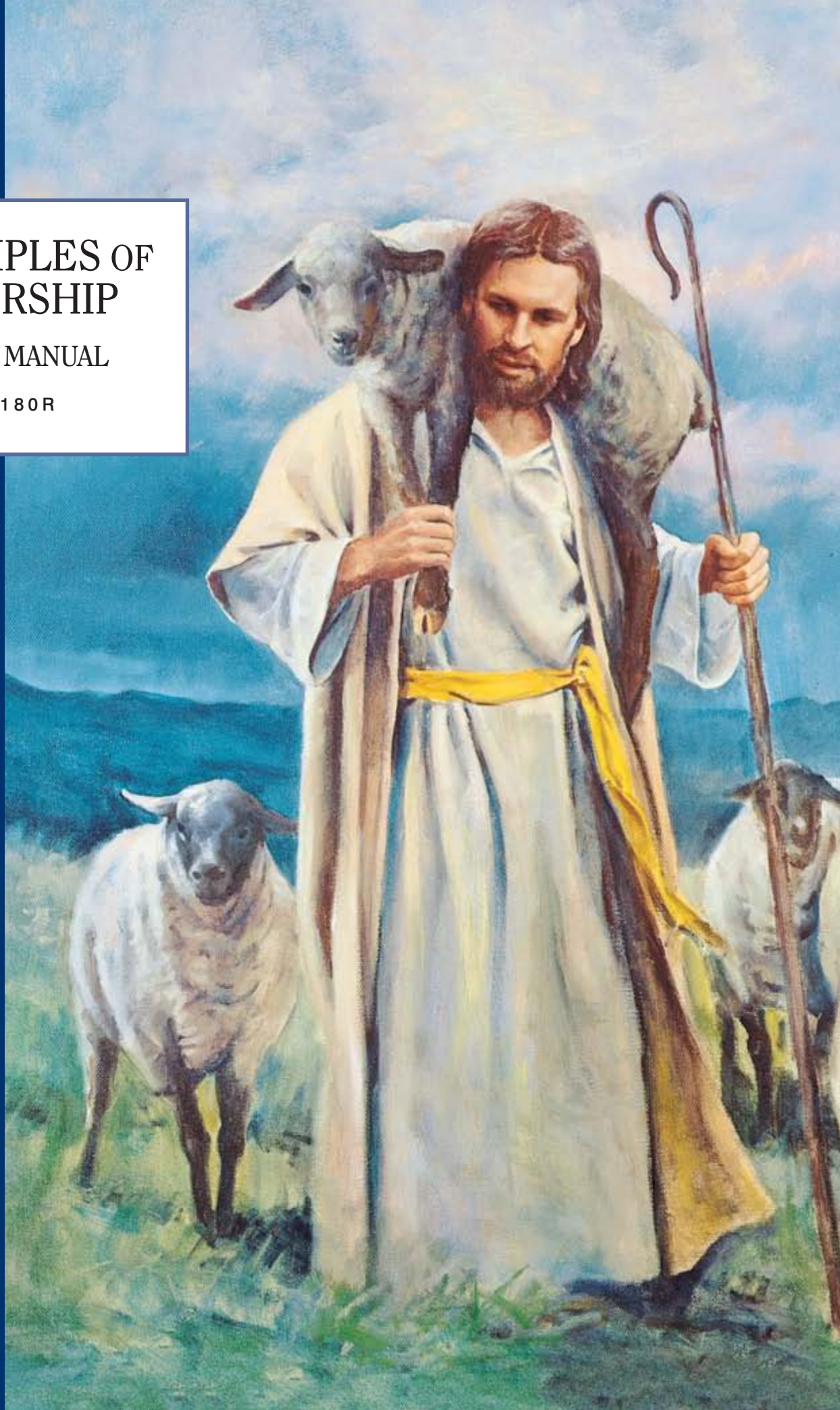


PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

TEACHER MANUAL

RELIGION 180R



PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP TEACHER MANUAL

Religion 180R

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF RELIGION 180R

Religion 180R, *Principles of Leadership*, introduces students to leadership principles and methods that will help them lead in a way that is pleasing to Jesus Christ, the perfect leader. As President Spencer W. Kimball explained, “We will find it very difficult to be significant leaders unless we recognize the reality of the perfect leader, Jesus Christ, and let him be the light by which we see the way!” (“Jesus: The Perfect Leader,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, 7).

As the Church grows, the need to prepare leaders increases. Members of the Church can learn to be leaders. President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted the following statement by United States Army General Mark W. Clark: “Contrary to the old saying that leaders are born not made, the art of leading can be taught and it can be mastered” (in *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 306).

Principles of Leadership is a one-credit course meeting one class period per week. It may be offered to all students or adapted for specific groups, such as institute of religion student council leaders. If the course is being offered to a specific group, be sure to include a notice following the course listing in the class schedule (for example, “For student council leaders”). Although *Principles of Leadership* is designed as a one-semester or two-term course, you could supplement the lessons with additional materials to meet local needs in order to provide a year of lesson materials for an institute student council.

The *Principles of Leadership Teacher Manual* includes more lessons than can be taught in a 15-week semester system. The extra lessons allow teachers some flexibility in deciding what topics to present in class. In a 9-week term setting, the lessons could be arranged in two groups of nine for presentation in two terms. The first term course, Religion 180R, and the second term course, Religion 181R, could both be called *Principles of Leadership*.

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP TEACHER MANUAL

The *Principles of Leadership Teacher Manual* includes a lesson on each of eighteen principles of

leadership drawn from the scriptures. The order in which you present the lessons may be adjusted according to your circumstances. It may take more than one class period to adequately discuss some of the principles. Organize the lessons so that you can discuss the principles you feel are most important to your students as they prepare for leadership roles in the Church, school, community, and home.

Each lesson begins with a scripture from which a general principle of leadership is extracted. In addition, each lesson includes:

- *Lesson concepts*—Specific principles to help students apply the general leadership principle.
- *Commentary*—Explanations of the lesson concepts, including additional scriptures and statements by General Authorities.
- *Teaching ideas*—Suggested methods for teaching the concepts.
- *Teacher resources*—Speeches or writings by General Authorities relating to principles of leadership. These are followed by study questions.

The speeches in the teacher resources section and accompanying questions are intended for you, the teacher, as you prepare your lessons. You may also choose to use the speeches and questions in class or give them to students as handouts. Note that some of the speeches relate directly to the lessons they follow, while others are about leadership in general.

May this teacher manual help you prepare tomorrow’s leaders and fulfill President Ezra Taft Benson’s hope: “Beloved youth, you will have your trials and temptations through which you must pass, but there are great moments of eternity which lie ahead. You have our love and our confidence. We pray that you will be prepared for the reins of leadership. We say to you, ‘Arise and shine forth’ (D&C 115:5) and be a light unto the world, a standard to others” (“To ‘the Rising Generation,’” *New Era*, June 1986, 8).

LEADERS AND OUR DIVINE POTENTIAL

“Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God” (D&C 18:10).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

An understanding of our divine potential helps leaders guide others to Jesus Christ.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. We have divine potential because we are children of Heavenly Father.
2. Jesus Christ is our Savior.
3. Leaders should follow the Golden Rule.

CONCEPT 1. WE HAVE DIVINE POTENTIAL BECAUSE WE ARE CHILDREN OF HEAVENLY FATHER.

COMMENTARY

The Psalmist asked, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:4). Some people believe that man is simply a rational animal motivated by subconscious drives, socioeconomic forces, or innate aggression. Some people believe that man’s behavior is controlled by promised rewards or threatened punishments. Some people hold that our existence is meaningless.

By contrast, Latter-day Saints understand that all people are children of Heavenly Father and have the potential to become like Him (see Acts 17:29; Ephesians 4:6; Hebrews 12:9). The Savior’s admonition to become perfect as He is perfect is an evidence of our divine potential.

We believe that all people have great worth (see D&C 18:10, 15), that they are able to discern right from wrong (see 2 Nephi 2:5), that because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement they are free to choose between good and evil (see vv. 26–27), and that they are therefore accountable for their choices (see v. 10). We hold that God’s purpose in establishing the plan of salvation is that we might have joy (see v. 25).

TEACHING IDEA

Draw a vertical line down the middle of the board. On the left side write the heading *Some Secular Views of Human Nature*. On the right side write the heading *Latter-day Saint Beliefs*

about Human Nature. Discuss the commentary above, and write summaries of secular views and revealed insights regarding our nature and potential under the appropriate headings. Call students’ attention to our understanding as Latter-day Saints that we are children of Heavenly Father with the potential to become like Him.

Discuss how our knowledge of who we are and what we may become helps us be better leaders. Encourage students to cultivate a deeper understanding of human nature and the plan of salvation. Tell students that doing so will increase their desire and ability to bring people to Jesus Christ.

Discuss how our understanding of our divine nature can influence the planning of Church and family programs.

Have students read Moses 1:27–39. Discuss questions such as:

- What do these verses tell us about who we are?
- What do these verses tell us about our potential?
- Do you think Moses was better able to lead his people after the vision described in these verses? Why?
- What truths do you see in these verses that can help you be a better leader?

Divide the class into small groups. Tell each group to imagine that they have been called to plan a stake youth conference. Have them outline the conference and plan activities that will help the

youth know that they are children of Heavenly Father and have divine potential. Invite the groups to consider how the conference plans might differ if they were made by a secular institution for a similar group of young people. Give them time to finish, and then have them report their findings to the class.

CONCEPT 2. JESUS CHRIST IS OUR SAVIOR.

COMMENTARY

Our view of human nature is affected by our understanding of the nature and mission of Jesus Christ. The gospel teaches that Jesus is the Messiah, our Savior, and the Divine Son of God the Father.

Nephi was told by the angel: “These last records [the Book of Mormon] . . . shall establish the truth of the first [the Bible] . . . and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved” (1 Nephi 13:40).

The Savior knew from childhood that His mission was part of His Heavenly Father’s plan. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve explained, “He knew so much, so young” (*Men and Women of Christ* [1991], 115). The Apostle John recorded that Jesus “received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness” (see D&C 93:13). As Christ’s ministry unfolded, He spoke to others of His identity and mission. “I and my Father are one,” He told His disciples (John 10:30). To the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well He revealed that He was the long-awaited Messiah (see John 4:19–26, 42). Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, summarized the Lord’s testimony of Himself at the pool of Bethesda: “He worked by the power of the Father; he would bring to pass the resurrection; he was to be honored along with the Father; he would judge all men; he would preach to the spirits in prison and open the graves of earth’s departed ones; he had life in himself, even as did the Father—all this and much, much more [see John 5]” (*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 154).

Amulek explained to the Zoramites: “For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there

must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish. . . .

“For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice. . . .

“And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal” (Alma 34:9–10, 14).

TEACHING IDEA

Have students find scriptural passages that describe aspects of Jesus Christ’s divine personality or purpose. Invite some to read to the class a passage they found. Discuss what the scriptures and modern prophets teach about who Jesus Christ is and what He did for each of us through His atoning sacrifice.

Explain that the Atonement is the center of the plan of salvation. It makes possible our resurrection and return to our heavenly home. Discuss why it is important for family and Church leaders to understand Jesus Christ’s role in the plan.

CONCEPT 3. LEADERS SHOULD FOLLOW THE GOLDEN RULE.

COMMENTARY

Leaders should treat people with kindness and respect. Each person is a child of Heavenly Father with divine potential for whom the Savior suffered and died. People are more likely to respond positively to leaders who show love and respect for them.

The Savior taught, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12). This teaching has come to be known as the Golden Rule.

Alma taught, “The Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have” (Alma 29:8). It should not surprise us when peoples to whom the gospel has not been revealed understand many gospel truths.

Many religions have precepts similar to this teaching of the Savior. The accompanying table lists several.

Judaism	“What is hateful to you, do not to your fellowmen. That is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary” (<i>Talmud</i> , Shabbat, 31a).
Buddhism	“Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful” (<i>Udana-Varga</i> , 5, 18).
Confucianism	“Surely it is the maxim of loving-kindness: Do not unto others that you would not have them do unto you” (<i>Analects</i> , 15, 23).
Islam	“No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself” (<i>Sunnah</i>).

Adapted from David Wallechinsky and Irving Wallace, *The People’s Almanac* (1975), 1314–15.

TEACHING IDEA

Ask if someone in class can recite the Golden Rule. If no one responds, have students read Matthew 7:12, and explain that this teaching of the Savior is often called the Golden Rule. Remind students that the Lord inspires righteous teachers in every nation (see Alma 29:8), and explain that a version of this rule exists in many religions. President Ezra Taft Benson taught that the Golden Rule is “the formula for successful relationships with others” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 447).

Discuss with the class characteristics of leaders who live the Golden Rule, and list their findings on the board. The following examples might be helpful:

Leaders who live the Golden Rule:

- See people and tasks in a larger context.
- Are optimistic about the people they serve and the tasks they undertake.
- Develop a greater ability and desire to serve others.

(See also the lists by Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone in the Teacher Resources section below.)

Read Luke 10:25–37 and discuss what this parable teaches about the Golden Rule. Consider questions such as:

- What might it cost a person to be a “good Samaritan”? Is the cost ever too high for leaders to pay? Explain.
- Should leaders live the Golden Rule even if they don’t expect others to treat them similarly? Why?
- How do you think our country would change if leaders and citizens lived the Golden Rule?

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone
Of the Seventy

Excerpts from The Incomparable Christ: Our Master and Model (1995), 106–8, 110–11, 113–16, 119–20, 123–25, 128–32

[Captain Moroni ended his letter to Ammoron], “Now I close my epistle. I am Moroni; *I am a leader*” [Alma 54:14; italics added].

In my copy of the Book of Mormon I have written in the margin, “Never have truer words been spoken than when Moroni declared, ‘I am a leader.’” What a leader!

Many years later, Moroni was described in these words: “If all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men.” (Alma 48:17.)

When Moroni was chief commander over the Nephite armies:

“He rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole.

“And he fastened on his headplate, and his breastplate, and his shields, and girded on his armor about his loins; and he took the pole, which had on the end thereof his rent coat, (and he called it the title of liberty) and he bowed himself to the earth, and he prayed mightily unto his God for the blessings of liberty to rest upon his brethren, so long as there should a band of Christians remain to possess the land.” (Alma 46:12–13.)

There was no question in Moroni's mind that he was a leader. He knew his role, and he intended to fulfill it. He lined up in the right direction with his whole soul. He put his faith to work by action and by kneeling in prayer, and he wasn't ashamed to do either publicly.

Moroni was an undaunted leader with an unconquerable spirit. His heart and soul were in a cause greater than himself; he felt not one particle of fear. Whenever I read about Captain Moroni, a fire burns in the very marrow of my bones. What would you give to fight side by side with a man such as this?

Men, women, and youth will always rally to a cause when they have a leader; however, it is difficult for God or any organization to use a reluctant leader. . . .

I am certain that Moroni did not really know how great he was. I doubt that he ever studied a leadership principle from a popular book or costly seminar. There simply came a great need, and Moroni, in his purity and confidence, stepped forward and allowed the Lord to use him.

In the Church, we are all leaders and followers. The Church is so organized that even the least among us leads during his or her life. This leadership might take the form of a few families to home teach, or it might be a stake, region, or even an area calling; it may be a class of Young Women, or it may be all the young women in the Church. . . .

President Harold B. Lee suggested that only as we make ourselves totally available can we become worthy disciples of Christ. Interestingly, lack of self-confidence or feelings of unworthiness do not conflict with this thought. Moses and Enoch both were "slow of speech" and wondered at the call. We may feel inadequate, but when there is a job to do, someone needs to step forward and do it.

The fourth section of the Doctrine and Covenants states, "If ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work." (Verse 3.) . . .

All who make themselves available and have willing hearts will be called to lead. It is part of the gospel plan. . . .

A leader must be able to have a vision of the work. . . .

"Where there is no vision, the people perish," but they also do not perform. (Proverbs 29:18.) They have no heart for the work and will inevitably impair rather than assist. Similarly, a leader with no vision will dramatically limit his effectiveness. . . .

If vision is so important, how do we gain it? Those who have vision have many things in common:

- They see the total work before them.
- They visualize what must happen in order to get the results they desire.
- They consider all of their resources, potentials, and capabilities collectively.
- They see in their mind what marvelous and magnificent things could happen when the total work force is mobilized unitedly.
- They then go to work to accomplish their goal.
- They have the ability to communicate their vision to those around them in a convincing way so that others are enlisted also.
- They see what they are doing as a cause, not a project.
- Religious leaders feel a "holy hand" assisting in the work. . . .

Imagine with me the magnitude of the cause in which we are engaged. We have been given the keys, the priesthood, and the program for the greatest cause in eternity. We alone of all God's children have the keys of knowledge of salvation and exaltation. . . .

The cause is greater than men or prophets. It is the cause of the Savior. It is the cause of God the Eternal Father. By enlisting in His cause and faithfully enduring, we will be the recipients of all we are teaching and sharing. A verse we quote so often, sometimes without much thought, is "This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) Imagine a cause with eternal implications and consequences, a cause so great that all eternity hangs in the balance as we accept or reject it. We do not fully comprehend what a magnificent privilege it is to be fully enlisted. . . .

A quorum or class can have a cause—missionary work, welfare activities, activation of

all quorum members, temple preparation, the bonds of brotherhood or sisterhood (unity), and dozens more. When we are involved in a united way, we achieve results we hardly dare dream.

The things we love most have the ability to become truly great causes. Families, religion, country, rights, freedoms, liberty, agency, and work—most of us prize these things dearly. . . .

The cause to which we throw ourselves must be real and of great worth; it cannot be fabricated. The Lord offers us many individual causes, such as baptism into the only true Church, temple sealings, eternal family relationships, missionary work, care of the needy, and our own sense of destiny, with the potential of exaltation. . . .

. . . The leader must be exemplary. . . .

Example is in all we do. In this the leader is constant. He cannot be one level of character on the battlefield and another level when he is alone. . . .

This is the Lord's work. It must move forward. The Lord endows men and women with talents, and those talents and leadership abilities ought to be put to use where they can bring about the greatest results. . . .

Always the leaders will get the job done. They lift all around them. . . .

We ought to pray for spiritual leaders who will lift and motivate people, who will increase activity levels and performances. . . .

We will find that those who have the most profound impact on our lives are those who use their leadership roles to serve. Those who are selfish, arrogant, or prideful are loathe to serve but quick to seize power. They love control, domination, and obedience by compulsion. . . .

Servant leadership is based on a profound respect for the children of men. It requires leadership traits that do not demean, debase, or otherwise cause those we lead to feel inferior. Servant leadership lifts, blesses, and changes lives in a positive way. . . .

Servant-leaders exercise the following traits and practices in their roles. They:

- Understand the value of every human soul.
- Have an inborn or developed sense of caring for others.
- Are quick to volunteer to take pressure off someone else.
- Rush to the aid of someone who is going through an embarrassing or humiliating experience.
- Treat all people on a basis of equality.
- Do not feel that tasks they expect others to do are too demeaning for themselves.
- Are not offended by disruptions of people who are themselves going through emotional traumas or stress.
- Expect more from themselves than they do from anyone else.
- Are quick to compliment, give credit, and build up those who perform a given task.
- Judge people by their potential, not necessarily by one single negative experience.
- Do not take credit for someone else's achievements and love to share credit for any of their own accomplishments.
- Get the facts before finding fault or criticizing another person.
- Help all people feel they had a real part in the success of a project.
- Detest practical jokes or statements that focus humiliation or attention on one soul.
- Always constructively criticize in private and compliment in public.
- Are absolutely honest in their work.
- Are equally fair with all under their direction.
- Are always willing to listen to both sides of a quarrel, discussion, or issue. They know it is a pretty thin pancake that has only one side. . . .
- Make themselves accessible to all, not just those with position or power.

True servant-leaders do not need a checklist of these character traits, for they live them daily. . . .

Servant-leaders also understand the uniqueness and individualism of each person. Years ago I remember hearing the Greek legend of Procrustes. The legend referred to a “Bed of Procrustes.” It was six feet long. Those who were not six feet tall were stretched to fit the bed. Those who were over six feet had the excess inches lopped off. Everyone was expected to fit the Procrustean Bed. That is fortunately not the way of the Lord or His kingdom. He has always called uncommon men and women with great integrity, ambition, discipline, and faith in Christ. Not all will fit in the same size bed, nor will all fit into the same callings.

Everyone will not—and should not—be the pinnacle leader at the ward, stake, or general Church level, but everyone can make his or her maximum contributions as a servant-leader in a particular calling and circumstance. And that is all the Savior expects of us—our very best, wherever we are.

STUDY HELPS

- Who is Elder Featherstone’s example of an ideal leader? What qualities made him such a leader?
- In addition to willing hearts, what else must we have to become good leaders?
- What can we do to develop the characteristics that visionary leaders have in common?
- What causes can we be engaged in as we lead and serve in our families? our ward and stake organizations?
- Why is it important for a leader to be a good example?
- What characteristic of servant leaders do you feel is most important for you to develop next? How could you begin developing this characteristic? (*Note:* If you use this question in the classroom, have students consider their responses silently.)
- What does the “Procrustean bed” have to do with leadership?

HONORING THE AGENCY OF THOSE WE LEAD

“Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life” (2 Nephi 10:23).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders should serve in ways that allow others to exercise their agency.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Church and family leaders should honor the agency of those they lead.
2. As appropriate, leaders should both give direction and allow others to share in decisions.

CONCEPT 1. CHURCH AND FAMILY LEADERS SHOULD HONOR THE AGENCY OF THOSE THEY LEAD.

COMMENTARY

Elder Boyd K. Packer, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said, “The only agency spoken of [in the scriptures] is *moral agency*” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 92; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 67; see D&C 101:78). This agency is the ability to choose between good and evil. Lehi explained that we “are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil” (2 Nephi 2:27). Jesus Christ always respected the agency of those He taught during His mortal ministry. He never compelled them to obey Him. (See Matthew 22:15–22; Luke 18:18–30; John 6:28–71.)

Heavenly Father’s eternal plan allows us to have agency. Agency is important to our becoming like Him. This is why Lucifer attempted to destroy our agency and God “caused that he should be cast down;

“And he became Satan, yea, even the devil” (Moses 4:3–4).

Lehi taught that for us to exercise our agency, there must be “opposition in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11). Adam and Eve used their agency in the

Garden of Eden to precipitate the Fall. When we exercise our agency to choose right, we become more righteous, and when we use it to choose wrong, we become more wicked. We are accountable for our choices to the extent that we make them freely. Without agency there could be no righteousness or wickedness.

Leaders should lead in righteousness and encourage others to use their agency in the cause of righteousness.

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss the meaning of the word *agency* as used in a gospel setting. Help students understand why it is important for leaders to understand this principle.

Discuss with students Doctrine and Covenants 121:41 and help them understand the terms *persuasion*, *long-suffering*, *gentleness*, *meekness*, and *love unfeigned*. Invite students to find and share scriptural examples of people who demonstrated these qualities in their leadership.

Ask how leaders might be tempted not to respect the agency of others. You could use questions like the following:

- If a leader uses guilt to motivate a person to do something, is the leader honoring that person’s agency? Explain your answer.

- How does using competition to motivate people relate to respecting agency? For example, do you think it would be a good idea to have the elders and the high priests see who can get the highest percentage of home teaching? Why or why not?
- How does offering rewards for doing good relate to respecting a person's agency? (An example would be a parent offering a child money to get good grades.)

CONCEPT 2. AS APPROPRIATE, LEADERS SHOULD BOTH GIVE DIRECTION AND ALLOW OTHERS TO SHARE IN DECISIONS.

COMMENTARY

The scriptures teach us how to behave without infringing on others' agency. The Prophet Joseph Smith, while imprisoned in Liberty Jail, was inspired to write these words: "When we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. . . .

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned" (D&C 121:37, 41).

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone, a member of the Seventy, said of these verses of scripture: "When we analyze the principles in this wondrous counsel, we see that it is in great contrast to the world's commonly held view of leadership. To lead people by persuasion is a holy order of God. Persuasion suggests a regeneration, a change of heart, conviction, or renewal. Persuasion brings those we are leading to the same level of understanding that we have. It does not force people against their will but helps willing disciples to change; thus, the will of the persuader and the will of the persuaded become one.

"Long-suffering suggests that God wants us to realize that His way in leadership is not a quick fix. We teach, train, and retrain, and then we patiently wait for the results we desired. Long-suffering is

deeper than just being patient. It requires empathetic feelings and the realization that each person is different. Some may not mentally grasp a concept or principle; others may not agree and so need persuasion; still others may lack motivation. The long-suffering leader is more interested in developing and training souls than in getting the job done quicker or in some other way, or by someone else.

"President Harold B. Lee often focused our attention on one word in the Lord's admonition to 'let every man learn his duty.' (D&C 107:99.) The word was *let*. The Christ-like life requires constant seeking and growth" (*The Incomparable Christ: Our Master and Model* [1995], 125–26).

Neal A. Maxwell, who was later called to the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote that leaders basically follow one of three styles of leadership: *manipulative*, *directive*, and *participative*. In manipulative leadership, the leader manipulates people and circumstances to achieve group goals. In directive leadership, the leader makes decisions, with or without input from the group. In participative leadership, the group shares responsibility for making decisions. Read Brother Maxwell's discussion of these principles in the teacher resources section below. Note that Brother Maxwell recommended a mix of directive and participative leadership styles.

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss the three leadership styles identified by Neal A. Maxwell (manipulative, directive, and participative) and write them on the board. Under each style, list its strengths and weaknesses. Read the following excerpt from Brother Maxwell's statement:

"Both experience and the scriptures suggest the need for a blend of leadership styles—*directive* and *participative*, in which these styles are used in those circumstances most appropriate for them. We have a unique blend in the Church of directive leadership and participative leadership in which everyone grows and everyone moves forward in terms of eternal goals" (" . . . A More Excellent Way: *Essays on Leadership for Latter-day Saints*" [1967], 26).

Invite students to think of successful Church or family leaders, and ask what makes them successful. Discuss how these leaders blend the leadership styles defined by Brother Maxwell.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Brother Neal A. Maxwell

Later of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

*"Looking at Leadership," in
". . . A More Excellent Way":
Essays on Leadership for
Latter-day Saints (1967), 15–29*

. . . Leadership [involves cooperation]. It also involves risk. The mystery of leadership is contained in the complexity of one human personality multiplied by the complexities of all the involved counterparts. Trying to describe leadership is like having several viewers trying to compare what they see in a kaleidoscope when the mere act of passing the kaleidoscope shakes up its design.

In seeking to describe the mystery of leadership numerous attempts have been made by scholars and researchers to identify certain key traits which, if possessed by the leaders, presumably would make them effective because of these superior endowments.

While most of us can recognize good leadership when we experience or observe it, it is hard for us to isolate controlling traits in a clear-cut way. . . .

Perhaps it is best to step back from the trees in order to see the forest. A trait is a "tree" which clearly has individual significance, but all the trees form a forest or pattern in the personality of the leader even though we cannot clearly distinguish between all the trees or see the significance of their interrelationships.

The style of leadership one adopts (though not necessarily consciously) grows out of his ideas and feelings about the nature of man. Thomas Jefferson said to a correspondent, "We both consider the people as our children and love them with paternal affection, but you love them as infants whom you are afraid to trust without nurses and I as adults whom I freely leave to self government." For some, Jefferson's views are excessively optimistic. The Prophet Joseph Smith, speaking of the governing

of the members of the Church, said, "I teach them correct principles and they govern themselves." Yet the spirit is needed to aid us in self-governance.

The ultimate models for us are, of course, God the Father and Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith advises us in his *Lectures on Faith* that God has perfected each of the attributes that make him God. That is, he is perfect in knowledge, power or faith, justice, judgment, mercy, truth, and love. As the prophet describes his perfection in each of these attributes, we can readily see that if he were not perfect in each of them he could not be God. Perfect knowledge without perfect love would be a dangerous condition. To be absolute in power without perfect mercy would be insufferable, and to be perfect in love without being perfect in truth could give us unchecked sentimentality. Any leader on the proximate, mortal scale who does not seek to work on these same attributes, cannot be fully effective or fully safe in terms of the power he possesses to influence and to direct the lives of others. . . .

. . . It is difficult for groups and organizations to rise above the level of their leadership, and while our ultimate leadership is divine, our proximate leadership is made up of imperfect humans whose own weaknesses have an inevitable impact upon the family, group, and church and the individuals within these settings.

There appear to be three basic leadership styles, each with its own limitations, advantages, variations, and spin-offs. There is, first of all, *manipulative leadership*, ranging in its more sinister form from the Machiavellian kind on through to the kind of modest manipulation each of us at times may consciously or unconsciously practice on those around us.

Manipulative leadership has certain advantages: it can at times give short-term results, solve a problem, or pass a crisis by manipulating people, feelings, and causes. It can at times give the followers a sense of action and accomplishment, yet does not require the leader to take into account the feelings and ideas of the members of his group since he is free to manipulate them, to bypass them, or to use their naiveté.

The disadvantages of this form of leadership are: it can be, and usually is, crushingly condescending; it seeks to carry out the wishes of the leader and

to meet his needs, not necessarily the needs of the group. It can miscarry badly with an evil leader or end in chaos with a leader who is not sophisticated in his manipulation, and therefore, who is more apt to be exposed early. It uses or ignores people and their feelings without aiming at their growth.

A second basic pattern of leadership is *directive leadership*, in which the leader seeks to maintain his greater “psychological size” in relation to the members of the group. He is the dominant figure and though he may be very sincere and dedicated, he clearly calls the shots and makes the most crucial decisions.

This kind of leadership has these kind of advantages: it often can get results with considerable speed. It gives followers a sense of action and accomplishment. It gives them a certain sense of security, especially with a leader who is a rallying point around which they can flock. It avoids some limitations of group inadequacies, since the leader can call on group members for help where it is appropriate but need not be bound by sharing all decision-making with them.

We have all seen examples of this kind of leadership in a crisis. It is not a popular form of leadership in some quarters today, but we must be reminded that it has real advantages. [Former United States President] Herbert Hoover observed that while the American people like the “common man,” when they are in a crisis, such as war, they want the “uncommon general.” . . .

But there are disadvantages to directive leadership: it can create very dependent followers who rely too much of the time for too many things in too many circumstances on the leader. No doubt Brigham Young spoke from this kind of concern when he lamented:

“I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders that they will not inquire for themselves of God whether they are led by him. I am fearful they will settle down in a state of blind self-security, trusting their destiny in the hands of their leaders with a reckless confidence that in itself would thwart the purposes of God in their salvation, and weaken that influence they could give to their leaders did they know for themselves, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led in the right way.” [*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1941), 135.] . . .

President Young was striking at an essential principle of followership and leadership in this particular instance. It is not only important for the growth of the members involved to exercise their own claims on God for assurance about the direction of the kingdom, but it is also important for followers to prepare themselves to follow in such a way that their influence could be much more helpful to the leaders in reaching shared goals. Not only do followers who proceed, as Brigham Young said, “with a reckless confidence” fail to develop themselves in their own power and resources, but also they deprive the leaders of the kind of support they deserve and need at times from followers who are themselves developing the skills required. The 58th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants indicates that the Lord expects members of the Church to accomplish much on their own without incessant institutional insistence or prodding. It is neither realistic nor wise to expect leaders to provide all of the answers all of the time, to provide solutions to all of the problems that will arise. This would require leaders to be omniscient; further, it would require of them the kind of sustained energy and time which is simply not humanly possible to give over protracted periods of time.

The counsel by Brigham Young is just as appropriate for today as it was when he gave it. It is particularly needed in a Church that is growing in its size, scope, and strategic situation in the world today.

There is another subtle principle at issue here. It is linked with the counsel Jethro gave to Moses when the former suggested ways in which Moses might lead his people more effectively. Jethro urged Moses to delegate, not only for the sake of the people, but also for his own sake, because, as Jethro observed: “Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee, thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.” (Exodus 19:18.)

Even with his superior, divine skills, there were times when Jesus needed to take himself out of the pressing context in which he was situated to confer directly with his Father in heaven. He needed to be able to receive, especially since he was giving all the time. There is a genuine people-fatigue which can overtake leaders in situations; it

is in these circumstances that they desperately need to have effective followers, not followers who are dependent upon them for advice at every turn of the road.

Over-dependency can thwart the purposes of God, who desires our individual growth and development, *and* followers who can be much more effective and supportive of leaders by sharing the commitment of the leader.

Directive leadership also has the potential disadvantage that the leader is often not aware of all the facts and feelings present among the followers. The talents of the followers and members of the group cannot be as fully developed unless they share more extensively in decision-making and implementation. This kind of leadership can miscarry even with a sincere, dedicated directive leader because he does not strive to mobilize the full resources of his group, nor is he himself always sufficiently omniscient to avoid error.

Directive leadership with all the advantages it possesses can encourage an attitude in some leaders toward followers when they are trying feverishly to impart instructions and information to them. It is almost as if these leaders in these situations wanted to dispense quickly whatever it was they had to say—instructional or informational—and be done with it! There are situations in which we can honestly shift spiritual responsibility by merely telling others, but this should not become a total leadership style. Rather than displaying the kind of love which is a “completely patient science,” some of us are willing to sacrifice for mankind, as Dostoevsky wrote, if “the ordeal does not last long but is soon over, with all looking on and applauding.”

Very often the talented directive person becomes very impatient with clumsiness and mediocrity in other people. The talented person may also bridle under the supervision of someone whom he believes to be inferior to himself. Abraham Maslow has observed: “When the pigeon bosses the eagle, the eagle is miserable.” But in a Church of eagles and pigeons, people need to learn to follow as well as how to lead, and there are times when pigeons temporarily lead eagles, and the eagle has a responsibility to learn from this experience as does the pigeon. But the talented also have other burdens as Maslow has observed too. They can

become so anxious over their superiority that they hold back the full impact of their talents for fear they will be seen by others as being too dominant and too adequate. What often arises in these situations is a kind of false display of humility. If, however, the “pigeons and the eagles” have a commitment to each other and each other’s well-being, there is a way they can draw on each other for appropriate skills, talents, and help—but this requires a system of openness and trust. . . .

A third kind of leadership is *participative leadership* in which members of the group share widely in decision making, in which the group is democratically run, in which procedures are adopted and traditions built to insure that this will be the case. This kind of leadership has these advantages: it often uses the talents, feelings, and facts of group members very effectively. It gives group members a chance to invest in goals and in problem solving so that there is greater group compliance and team work in obtaining these objectives. It often creates excellent conditions for individual growth.

Participative leadership seeks to call upon the maximum resources of the group members. When it succeeds, this kind of leadership results in a higher achievement than the individual alone could produce. Participative leadership assumes that everyone has something to give, which is not inconsistent with the teaching that “For all have not every gift given unto them; there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.” (D&C 46:11.)

Leadership rests to a significant degree on the kind of decision-making that makes effective use of feedback (communication to another person or group which gives that person information about how he has affected others and how he stands in relation to his goals and intentions). Participative leadership frees those concerned to provide helpful feedback, whereas directive leadership often suffers from the fact that as the leader acquires more prestige and power, his followers may be less and less likely to level with him even though he wishes this were not so.

The disadvantages of participative leadership are that, at times, groups focus too much on feelings and become too immobilized to take needed action. A group may listen and hear only

the signal of “an uncertain trumpet.” Group problem solving can, when it miscarries, result in the stifling of individual creativity and can result in a great deal of mediocrity.

Recalling his work on the theory of relativity, Albert Einstein noted “a feeling of direction, of going straight toward something concrete.” This kind of creative insight—“going straight toward something concrete”—could, under some conditions, be stifled by participative leadership. Although discussions with his colleagues might have been helpful to Einstein, creative insights are often obtained in solitude.

A critic of participative leadership has asked “Could the Mona Lisa have been painted by a committee?” This same critic of the group process says that it often leads to the “cancellation of each other’s inner certitudes.” Participative leadership also has the disadvantage, at times, of ending up with unconscious and unintended manipulation of group members by a dominant figure while everyone blithely assumes that they share in decision making, which is not the case.

Each of these leadership styles crashes against the central and recurring problems of leadership such as balancing the need to get the job done and the need to be concerned with the feelings of one’s colleagues and followers. We have all been members of groups where the leader was so task-oriented, so anxious to get the job done, that when it was finally done, at great emotional expense, it did not stay done, because the failure of the group to comply finally cancelled out what appeared to be a successful effort. We have seen, too, how members of the group can become offended or withdraw because leaders were too task-oriented.

We have also seen leaders who become immobilized because of their concern with the feelings of members of the group. The group can genuinely suffer from such a vacuum of leadership. There are certain circumstances in which action must be taken. . . .

A reading of verses in The Book of Mormon which describe real free agency as acting for one’s self instead of being “acted upon,” (2 Nephi 2:26) shows that the latter is equated with misery. . . .

Both experience and the scriptures suggest the need for a blend of leadership styles—*directive*

and *participative*, in which these styles are used in those circumstances most appropriate for them. We have an unique blend in the Church of directive leadership and participative leadership in which everyone grows and everyone moves forward in terms of eternal goals.

An elders quorum president who is building quorum support for a welfare project and who is not certain as to whether the group should plant corn or peas would be well advised, especially if he is not an agricultural expert, to listen to the members of the quorum who might advise him which of the two crops the soil is best suited to produce. He would also be well advised to involve the group members in the decision-making, since they must hoe the corn or weed the peas—unless the president wishes to do it all alone! Participative leadership does help us get at the facts and the feelings, which are another form of fact, with which we must be deeply concerned.

There are times, however, when directive leadership is clearly the appropriate kind of leadership. Brigham Young probably could have spent years working with some lukewarm members of the Church after the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith, encouraging them to join him and go west. But the saints finally had to cross the Mississippi River; they had to leave Nauvoo. The time for action had come. Under some conditions, leaders must “cross the river.”

A leader is best apt to be able to blend directive and participative leadership if he is personally and seriously engaged in the divinely intended process of improving his attributes of knowledge, faith, justice, judgment, mercy, truth, and love. He will then be more effective and is more to be trusted with power and influence. If he loves more perfectly, he will have greater sensitivity to the feelings of group members and know when it is appropriate to emphasize participative leadership. If he is constantly increasing in his storehouse of knowledge and truth, he will have better insights upon which he can draw when he must act in a directive way. Group members are much more apt to have confidence in a leader when they see him actively struggling to develop these kinds of attributes. A leader who is careless about power, insensitive to feelings of members of the group, or who is too sure of his own views without

adequate knowledge or information cannot inspire followers for long. A leader who uses status and authority to cover his sins, to gratify his pride or ambition, or to exercise control or dominion will fail organizationally as well as spiritually.

The Church doctrine we have is divine. We have all the advantages of being a part of a structured kingdom in which Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the law giver with a living prophet as his earthly spokesman. This gives us the advantage of over-arching divine purpose, insight, and instruction, and the advantages of authority which can produce action in circumstances which require speed and response. But the Church is also participative in that God's work is truly our own. There is ample opportunity—far more than we use—for us to become involved as leaders and followers in activities which will build the kingdom and also assist us to grow. We have more opportunities than we ever recognize to use our talents and to get our feelings and facts into the process of Church decision-making in those situations in which participative leadership is appropriate. . . .

If we would honor God in the particular style of leadership each of us assumes, we would honor him best by emulating him in developing those attributes which insure wise, effective, and safe leadership. . . .

STUDY HELPS

- According to Brother Maxwell, in what sense is leadership at least partially a mystery?
- What three basic styles of leadership does Brother Maxwell identify? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?
- What style does Brother Maxwell recommend for Church leaders?
- Do you think leaders could improve their leadership more by working on organizational skills or by working on understanding and applying basic principles of leadership? Explain.

BECOMING A GOOD SHEPHERD

“I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

*“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep”
(John 10:14–15).*

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders should demonstrate love and concern for those they lead.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd.
2. Family and Church leaders should strive to follow the pattern of leadership set by the Lord.

CONCEPT 1. JESUS CHRIST IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

COMMENTARY

In the Bible, shepherds are used to represent leaders of God’s people (see Isaiah 63:11; Jeremiah 23:2). Shepherds watch for enemies who might attack the sheep, and they defend them when necessary. They tend to sick or wounded sheep and search for and rescue lost or trapped ones. In Christ’s teachings, shepherds love their sheep and try to earn their trust. The sheep know, love, and trust the shepherd above all others. A good shepherd will even die for his sheep. Christ contrasts the shepherd with the hireling, who deserts the sheep in times of danger because he does not love them (see John 10:11–13; *The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles* [Religion 211 and 212 student manual, 1979], pp. 108–9).

Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd. In John 10:14–15, Jesus explains that He and His sheep know each other, just as He and His Father know each other. This kind of relationship develops over time and requires personal experience. (For other references to Christ as a shepherd, see Genesis 49:24; Psalm 23; 80:1; John 10:1–30; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4; Alma 5:37–38, 58–60; Helaman 7:18; 15:13; Mormon 5:17; D&C 50:44.)

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve commented: “A shepherd watches over

sheep. In the scriptural stories the sheep are in danger; they need protection and nourishment. The Savior warns us that we must watch the sheep as He does. He gave His life for them. They are His. We cannot approach His standard if, like a hired servant, we watch only when it is convenient and only for a reward. . . .

“The members of the Church are the sheep. They are His, and we are called by Him to watch over them. We are to do more than warn them against danger. We are to feed them” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 49; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 38).

TEACHING IDEA

Have several students read to the class the scriptures cited in the second paragraph of the commentary, paying attention to the titles of Jesus Christ in these passages.

Ask questions like the following. Use information in the commentary to help your discussion.

- Why are shepherds so important?
- What do shepherds do?
- How are hirelings different from shepherds?
- How might sheep react differently under the care of a shepherd than under a hireling?
- What did Jesus do during His mortal ministry that teaches us what it means to be a shepherd?

CONCEPT 2. FAMILY AND CHURCH LEADERS SHOULD STRIVE TO FOLLOW THE PATTERN OF LEADERSHIP SET BY THE LORD.

COMMENTARY

The Lord tells Church and family leaders to be shepherds. President James E. Faust taught: “Tonight I would like to speak to the priesthood of God in their capacity as the Lord’s shepherds. Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated: ‘Anyone serving in any capacity in the Church in which he is responsible for the spiritual or temporal well-being of any of the Lord’s children is a shepherd to those sheep. The Lord holds his shepherds accountable for the safety [meaning the salvation] of his sheep’ [Mormon Doctrine, 2nd ed. (1966), 710]. The bearers of the priesthood have this great responsibility, whether it is father, grandfather, home teacher, elders quorum president, bishop, stake president, or other Church calling” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 62; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 45–46).

We can only become good shepherds as we grow close to the Lord. Elder Henry B. Eyring explained: “He who sees all things, whose love is endless, and who never sleeps—He watches with us. He knows what the sheep need at every moment. By the power of the Holy Ghost, He can tell us and send us to them. . . .

“It is love that must motivate the shepherds of Israel. That may seem difficult at the start, because we may not even know the Lord well. But if we begin with even a little grain of faith in Him, our service to the sheep will increase our love for Him and for them. It comes from simple things that every shepherd must do. We pray for the sheep, every one for whom we are responsible. When we ask, ‘Please tell me who needs me,’ answers will come. A face or a name will come into our minds. Or we may have a chance meeting that we feel isn’t chance. In those moments we will feel the love of the Savior for them and for us. As you watch over His sheep, your love for Him will grow. And that will increase your confidence and your courage” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 51; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 39–40).

TEACHING IDEA

Display the pictures at the end of this lesson. Which one did the Savior exemplify? Why?

Read Moroni 7:47 as a class. Discuss charity, and point out that, since charity is the pure love of Christ, when we have charity for others, we love them as He loves us. Discuss why this attitude is important to family and Church leaders.

Discuss why family and Church leaders should be shepherds to those they lead (see the commentary).

Read the statement by Elder Eyring from the commentary. Discuss questions such as:

- According to Elder Eyring, what can increase our confidence and courage as leaders?
- How does service relate to love?
- What conditions in the world call for our leaders to be good shepherds?
- How can we determine what expressions of love and concern are appropriate in our role as leaders?

Have students read Alma 56:3–11, 17, 43–49, 55–56, and discuss these verses as a class. Ask questions such as:

- Do you think Helaman was a good shepherd? Why?
- How did the two thousand young men led by Helaman respond to his leadership?
- Do you think these two thousand young men would have been less successful under a different style of leadership? Why?

Encourage students to develop Christlike love for everyone so that they will be prepared to be good shepherds when the opportunity comes.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder James E. Faust

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“These I Will Make My Leaders,” in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, 50–54; or Ensign, Nov. 1980, 34–37

I am humbled by the opportunity to address the priesthood this evening. I should like to direct my remarks to the leaders of the Church, and especially to the future leaders, the young men of the Aaronic Priesthood. Many of you young men will

have leadership responsibilities sooner than you realize. It does not seem long since I was a deacons quorum president. As far as the worldwide, fast-growing Church is concerned, leadership is one of our greatest challenges.

Leaders receive and give assignments

A year or so ago I sat in an elders quorum meeting. The members of the presidency were fine, capable young men; but when they got around to sharing the quorum responsibilities and getting the work done, they limited it to those who were present and who would volunteer. Not one assignment was given.

One of the first principles we must keep in mind is that the work of the Lord goes forward through assignments. Leaders receive and give assignments. This is an important part of the necessary principle of delegating. No one appreciates a willing volunteer more than I, but the total work cannot be done as the Lord wants it done merely by those doing the work who may be present at meetings. I have often wondered what the earth would look like if the Lord in the Creation had left the work to be done only by volunteers.

If we look upon fulfilling of assignments as building the kingdom of God and as being an opportunity as well as a privilege and an honor, then assignments and challenges should certainly be given to every member of the quorum. Such involvement should include, with appropriate wisdom and discretion, those who perhaps need them the most—the inactive and the partially active brethren. Assignments always should be given with the greatest love, consideration, and kindness. Those asked to respond should be treated with respect and appreciation.

General Authorities regularly receive assignments from the First Presidency and the President of the Council of the Twelve. Whether such assignments come in writing, as most do, or are personally given, they are always couched with “if you please” or “if it is convenient” or “Would you kindly attend to this or to that.” Never are these assignments framed in terms of a command or a demand.

Follow Savior’s example

Ever since I was first in Egypt in World War II, I have been interested in ancient ruins. There is a fascination in observing why some columns still stand and others have toppled over. Very frequently those still standing do so because they bear a weight on top. There is, I believe, a parallel principle in leadership. Those who stand faithful to their priesthood are often those who bear some weight of responsibility. Those involved are those most likely to be committed. So a successful quorum leader will want all of those in his quorum to have an opportunity to serve with some kind of calling appropriate to the circumstances.

The most encompassing short course on leadership was given by the Savior himself: “And he saith unto them, Follow me” (Matt. 4:19). A leader cannot ask of others what he is not willing to do himself. Our safest course is to follow the example of the Savior, and our security is to listen to and follow the direction of his prophet, the President of the Church.

Good leader “expects much, inspires greatly”

Some years ago I was traveling in the Rosario Argentina Mission up in the northern part of Argentina. As we were traveling along the road, we passed a large herd of cattle being moved. The herd was moving peaceably and without difficulty. The herd was quiet. There were no dogs. Out in front leading the herd were three gauchos on horseback, each about fifteen or twenty yards apart. These three horsemen were slumped forward in their saddles, completely relaxed, confident that the herd would follow them. At the rear of the herd was a single rider bringing up the rear. He, too, was slumped forward in his saddle as if he were sleeping. The whole herd moved peacefully, quietly, and was subdued. From that experience it seemed obvious to me that leadership is about three-fourths show-the-way and about one-fourth follow-up.

The leader himself, when directing, does not have to be bombastic and loud. Those who are called to lead in the ministry of the Master are not called to be chiefs or dictators. They are called to be good shepherds. They are to be constantly training others to take their place and become greater leaders than their teachers. A good leader

expects much, inspires greatly, and sets on fire those he is called to lead.

Now, a leader must cause things to happen and lives to be affected. Something should move and change. He must see that those under him do not fail. But it should be done in the Lord's way. He should be the instrument in the hands of the Almighty for changing lives. He needs to know where he is now, where he is going, and how he is going to get there.

Listening

A leader must be a good listener. He must be willing to take counsel. He must show a genuine concern and love for those under his stewardship. No priesthood leader can ever be effective unless he has firmly in mind the transcending keys of leadership found in section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

"Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproofed, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy" (D&C 121:41–43).

In my experience, the Holy Ghost moves to reprove with sharpness only very rarely. Any reproofing should be done gently in an effort to convince the one being reproofed that it is done in his own interest. . . .

Divine assistance

With faith in the Lord and humility, a priesthood leader may confidently expect divine assistance in his problems. It may require struggling and pondering, but the reward is sure. The answer may come as it did to Enos: "The voice of the Lord came into my mind," said he (Enos 1:10). Or, it may be the feeling in the bosom in accordance with section 9 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

After receiving such divine assurance by and through the power of the Holy Ghost, the humble leader can then pursue an unswerving course with the absolute conviction in mind and heart that that which is being done is on the right course and is what the Lord himself would do in the matter. . . .

Most of us who are called to leadership in the Church feel that we are inadequate because of inexperience, lack of ability, or meager learning and education. Of the many descriptions of Moses is the following: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).

Years ago I recall President John Kelly, who was then presiding over the Fort Worth Texas Stake, called Brother Felix Velasquez to be the president of the Spanish branch. This good man worked, as I recall, as a car inspector on the railroad. When President Kelly called him to this service, he responded, "President, I cannot be the president of the Spanish branch. I cannot read." President Kelly then promised him that if he would accept the calling and labor diligently to magnify it, he would be sustained and blessed. With the help of the Lord, this humble man, through his diligent efforts, became able to read. He served well as branch president and for many years subsequent and now is serving in the high council of that stake. The Lord blesses his servants in many ways. . . .

Counseling; "genius of leadership"

I come now to the genius of leadership, through the priesthood, in the government of the Church. I wish to quote President Stephen L Richards, who said:

"As I conceive it, the genius of our Church government is government through *councils*. . . . Hardly a day passes but that I see the wisdom, God's wisdom, in creating councils: to govern his Kingdom. In the spirit under which we labor, men can get together with seemingly divergent views and far different backgrounds, and under the operation of that spirit, by counseling together, they can arrive at an accord." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1953, p. 86; italics added.)

Counseling together as leaders is the key to the successful functioning of a presidency or a

bishopric. But what if unity in decision making is difficult or is absent? President Joseph F. Smith gave us this advice:

“When bishops and their counselors do not see eye to eye, or when presidents and their counselors have any difference whatever in their sentiments or in their policy, it is their duty to get together, to go before the Lord together and humble themselves before him until they get revelation from the Lord and see the truth alike, that they may go before their people unitedly” (*Gospel Doctrine*, [5th ed. (1939)], p. 156).

Be example of personal righteousness

Those who would lead in this Church must set the example of personal righteousness. They should seek for the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. They should have their lives and homes in order. They should be honest and prompt in the paying of their bills. They must be exemplary in all their conduct. They should be men of honor and integrity. As we seek for the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Lord will answer.

While I was serving as Area Supervisor in South America, a most unforgettable experience happened in Montevideo, Uruguay. I wanted to change some money because I was living in Brazil at the time, so Brother Carlos Pratt took me to a money exchange house in downtown Montevideo. He introduced me to one of the officials, and the official said they would change \$1,000. I did not have \$1,000 in cash and had only a check drawn on a bank in Salt Lake City. The exchange house had never done business with me before. In fact, they had never seen me before and could not expect to ever see me again. They had no way to verify if I had \$1,000 on deposit in the bank upon which I had drawn the check. But they accepted my check without hesitation—based solely on the fact that I was a Mormon and that they had previously done business with other Mormons. Frankly, I was both grateful and pleased because of their confidence. . . .

“Strengthen thy brethren”

When the Savior was giving Peter some leadership training he said, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32).

It is interesting that he used the word *strengthen*. It is very difficult to *strengthen*

without being a good communicator. Often problems develop, not because the plan is faulty, but because the communication is inadequate. . . .

Priesthood leaders have the rare opportunity to conduct priesthood interviews. Specifically, through personal contacts and interviews the leader can accomplish the following:

1. Inspire and motivate.
2. Delegate and trust.
3. Hold accountable and follow up.
4. Teach by example and principle.
5. Be generous with appreciation.

Sometimes leaders hold the reins too tightly, often limiting the natural talents and gifts of those who are called to labor at their sides.

Leadership does not always produce a harmonious symphony of faith, skills, and talents of the group, producing maximum effectiveness and power. It is sometimes a loud solo. President Lee taught a fuller meaning of the scripture, “Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence” (D&C 107:99). In addition to having all of us learn our duties, leaders should let, or permit, their associates to be fully effective within their own office and callings, and helpers should be fully clothed with appropriate authority. . . .

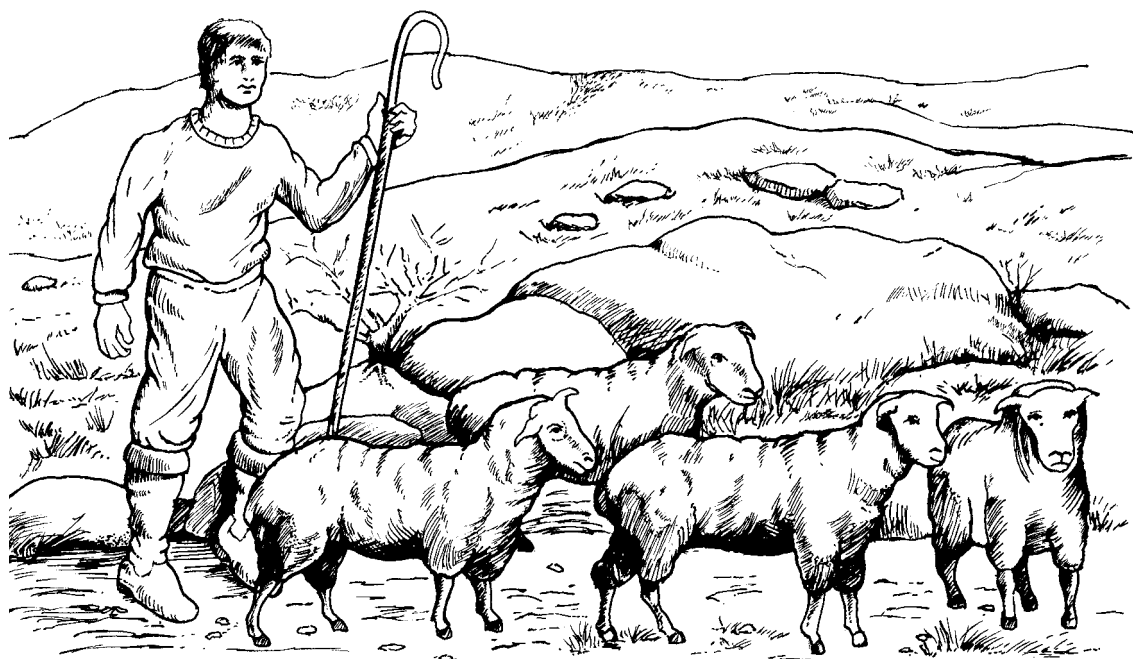
I pray that, by laboring diligently under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, those who have and will be called to leadership will see our duty clearer and have farther vision to set goals and chart a more righteous course.

My testimony is that this Church grows and succeeds because we are under the guiding influence of the holy priesthood of God. I believe that our leaders can generate the great spiritual power needed to guide the work of God through personal revelation, to which in righteousness they are entitled. The counsel of the Lord to Joshua is priceless: “Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” (Josh. 1:9.)

That it may be so I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- Why is it important for leaders to give assignments to those they preside over?
- What principles govern giving assignments?
- What principle of leadership is behind the Savior's admonition to "Follow me"?
- How can leaders know if they are leading in the way the Lord wants?
- In addition to becoming worthy to have the Spirit, what can leaders do to meet their responsibilities to those they lead?
- What is the "genius of leadership"?
- What might happen if leaders try to "hold the reins too tightly"?



SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14–16).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders should set an example of discipleship for the people they serve.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. When leaders work to develop attributes of Jesus Christ, they set an example for those they serve.

CONCEPT 1. WHEN LEADERS WORK TO DEVELOP ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS CHRIST, THEY SET AN EXAMPLE FOR THOSE THEY SERVE.

COMMENTARY

When the resurrected Lord visited the Americas, He explained to His disciples that letting their light shine meant emulating Him (see 3 Nephi 18:24).

Speaking of leadership in the Church, Elder James E. Faust, when he was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, remarked: “Those who would lead in this Church must set the example of personal righteousness. They should seek for the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit. They should have their lives and homes in order. They should be honest and prompt in the paying of their bills. They must be exemplary in all their conduct” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, 53; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 36).

Elder Dean L. Larsen, who was then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, explained: “Those who receive the gospel are expected to manifest its fruits in their lives, not only for their own benefit and blessing, but for the purpose of drawing others to the truth. . . .

“ . . . In significant ways their lives will manifest the fruits of the gospel and set them apart as a beacon to all who are seeking for light and truth”

(in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 85; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 68).

President Gordon B. Hinckley wrote: “By its very nature, true leadership carries with it the burden of being an example. . . . If values aren’t established and adhered to at the top, behavior down the ranks is seriously jeopardized and undermined. Indeed, in any organization where such is the case—be it a family, a corporation, a society, or a nation—the values being neglected will in time disappear” (*Standing for Something: Ten Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes* [2000], 170).

Leaders are more able to help people when they try to exemplify the Savior’s life and teachings. The Lord “continued from grace to grace” until He became perfect (D&C 93:13). His attributes include knowledge, power, justice, judgment, kindness, mercy, patience, truth, humility, meekness, submissiveness, graciousness, gentleness, wisdom, self-denial, obedience, commitment to honoring our agency, compassion, fearlessness, integrity, and cheerfulness. (*Note:* Any of these attributes might become the topic of a lesson.)

Leaders who develop these attributes will know how to communicate clearly with those they lead, love them without trying to control them, rejoice in their goodness and achievements, and resist

Satan's temptations. When we do not follow Jesus Christ's example, we run the risk of discouraging people from coming to Christ. As Alma explained to his wayward son, "Behold, O my son, how great iniquity ye brought upon the Zoramites; for when they saw your conduct they would not believe in my words" (Alma 39:11).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask students to analyze the meaning of the Savior's statement, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), and discuss it as a class (see also John 9:5; 3 Nephi 9:18; 11:11; Ether 4:12; D&C 11:28; 12:9; 45:7; 88:5–13).

Why should Church and family leaders live gospel principles themselves, and not just encourage others to do so?

Discuss as a class character traits the Savior displayed, and list them on the board. Ask how developing these traits in our lives will help us be better leaders. Discuss what Matthew 16:24 (including the JST addition in footnote 24*d*) and Alma 39:11 teach about the importance of example.

Testify to students that as they follow the Savior's example, they reflect His light for others to follow. Remind students that like Him we must grow "from grace to grace" (see D&C 93:13; see also 2 Nephi 28:30).

TEACHER RESOURCES



President Gordon B. Hinckley

President of the Church

"A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," Ensign, Jan. 2001, 2–11; or New Era, Jan. 2001, 4–15

I think there never before was a meeting anything like this in this Church. There are so many of you here tonight. How good you look.

Some of you have come with doubts. Some have come with high expectations. I want you to know that I have been on my knees asking the Lord to bless me with the power and the capacity and the language to reach into your hearts.

Beyond this hall are hundreds of thousands of others who are participating with us. To each of you I say welcome. I am glad for this tremendous opportunity to speak to you, and I recognize how important it is.

I am now old in years—90 plus. I have lived a long time, and I have lived with great love for the young men and young women of this Church. What a truly wonderful group you are. You speak various languages. You are all part of a great family. But you are also individuals, each with his or her problems, each wishing for answers to the things that perplex you and worry you. How we love you and pray constantly for the genius to help you. Your lives are filled with difficult decisions and with dreams and hopes and longings to find that which will bring you peace and happiness.

Once upon a time, a very long time ago, I was your age. I didn't worry about drugs or pornography because they were not available then. I worried about school and where it would lead. It was the season of the terrible economic depression. I worried about how to earn a living. I served a mission after I finished the university. I went to England. We traveled by train to Chicago, made a bus transfer across that city, and went on to New York, where we caught a steamship for the British Isles. While riding the transfer bus in Chicago, a woman said to the driver, "What is that building ahead?" He said, "Ma'am, that is the Chicago Board of Trade Building. Every week some man who has lost his fortune jumps out of one of those windows. He has nothing else to live for."

Such were the times. They were mean and ugly. No one who did not live through that period will ever understand it fully. I hope with all my heart we never have anything like it again.

Now, here you are on the threshold of your mature lives. You too worry about school. You worry about marriage. You worry about many things. I make you a promise that God will not forsake you if you will walk in His paths with the guidance of His commandments.

This is the age of great opportunity. You are so fortunate to be alive. Never in the history of mankind has life been filled with so many opportunities and challenges. When I was born,

the average life expectancy of a man or woman in the United States and other Western countries was 50 years. Now it is more than 75 years. Can you imagine that? On average you may expect to live at least 25 years longer than someone who lived in 1910.

This is the season of an explosion of knowledge. For instance, when I was your age there were no antibiotics. All of these wonderful medicines have been discovered and refined in more recent times. Some of the great scourges of the earth are gone. Smallpox once took whole populations. That is gone entirely. It is a miracle. Polio was once the dreaded fear of every mother. I remember going to visit a man with polio in the county hospital. He was in a great iron lung that moved his own lungs as it pumped up and down. There was no hope for him; he couldn't breathe on his own. He died, leaving his wife and children. This terrible disease is now gone. That too is a miracle. And so it is with other matters.

Of course you face challenges. Every generation that has ever walked the earth has faced challenges. We could spend the entire evening talking about them. But of all the challenges that have been faced in the past, the ones we have today, I believe, are most easily handled. I say that because they are manageable. They largely involve individual behavioral decisions, but those decisions can be made and followed. And when that happens, the challenge is behind us.

I suppose that most of you are in school. I am pleased that you have that opportunity and that desire. I hope that you are studying diligently and that your great ambition is to get A grades in your various courses. I hope your teachers will be generous toward you and that your studies will yield top grades and an excellent education. I could wish nothing better for you in your schoolwork.

Tonight I am going to let your teachers give you the A's that I hope you earn. I want to talk about some B's. You get the A's; I will give you the B's.

1. *Be grateful.*
2. *Be smart.*
3. *Be clean.*
4. *Be true.*

5. *Be humble.*

6. *Be prayerful. . . .*

Be grateful. There are two little words in the English language that perhaps mean more than all others. They are "thank you." Comparable words are found in every other language, such as *gracias, merci, danke, obrigado, domo.*

The habit of saying thank you is the mark of an educated man or woman. With whom is the Lord displeased? He names "those who confess not his hand in all things" (D&C 59:21). That is, those who walk without grateful expression. Walk with gratitude in your hearts, my dear friends. Be thankful for the wonderful blessings which are yours. Be grateful for the tremendous opportunities that you have. Be thankful to your parents, who care so very much about you and who have worked so very hard to provide for you. Let them know that you are grateful. Say thank you to your mother and your father. Say thank you to your friends. Say thank you to your teachers. Express appreciation to everyone who does you a favor or assists you in any way.

Thank the Lord for His goodness to you. Thank the Almighty for His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who has done for you what none other in all this world could do. Thank Him for His great example, for His tremendous teachings, for His outreaching hand to lift and help. Think about the meaning of His Atonement. Read about Him and read His words in the New Testament and in 3 Nephi in the Book of Mormon. Read them quietly to yourself and then ponder them. Pour out your heart to your Father in Heaven in gratitude for the gift of His Beloved Son.

Thank the Lord for His marvelous Church restored in this great season of history. Thank Him for all that it offers you. Thank Him for friends and loved ones, for parents and brothers and sisters, for family. Let a spirit of thanksgiving guide and bless your days and nights. Work at it. You will find it will yield wonderful results.

B number two—*be smart.*

You are moving into the most competitive age the world has ever known. All around you is competition. You need all the education you can get. Sacrifice a car; sacrifice anything that is needed

to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world. That world will in large measure pay you what it thinks you are worth, and your worth will increase as you gain education and proficiency in your chosen field.

You belong to a church that teaches the importance of education. You have a mandate from the Lord to educate your minds and your hearts and your hands. The Lord has said, “Teach ye diligently . . . of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—that ye may be prepared in all things” (D&C 88:78–80).

Mind you, these are not my words. These are the words of the Lord who loves you. He wants you to train your minds and hands to become an influence for good as you go forward with your lives. And as you do so and as you perform honorably and with excellence, you will bring honor to the Church, for you will be regarded as a man or woman of integrity and ability and conscientious workmanship. Be smart. Don’t be foolish. You cannot bluff or cheat others without bluffing or cheating yourselves.

Many years ago I worked for a railroad in the central offices in Denver. I was in charge of what is called head-end traffic. That was in the days when nearly everyone rode passenger trains. One morning I received a call from my counterpart in Newark, New Jersey. He said, “Train number such-and-such has arrived, but it has no baggage car. Somewhere, 300 passengers have lost their baggage, and they are mad.”

I went immediately to work to find out where it may have gone. I found it had been properly loaded and properly trained in Oakland, California. It had been moved to our railroad in Salt Lake City, been carried to Denver, down to Pueblo, put on another line, and moved to St. Louis. There it was to be handled by another railroad which would take it to Newark, New Jersey. But some thoughtless switchman in the St. Louis yards moved a small piece of steel just three inches, a switch point, then pulled the lever to uncouple the car. We discovered that a baggage car that belonged in

Newark, New Jersey, was in fact in New Orleans, Louisiana—1,500 miles from its destination. Just the three-inch movement of the switch in the St. Louis yard by a careless employee had started it on the wrong track, and the distance from its true destination increased dramatically. That is the way it is with our lives. Instead of following a steady course, we are pulled by some mistaken idea in another direction. The movement away from our original destination may be ever so small, but, if continued, that very small movement becomes a great gap and we find ourselves far from where we intended to go.

Have you ever looked at one of those 16-foot farm gates? When it is opened, it swings very wide. The end at the hinges moves ever so slightly, while out at the perimeter the movement is great. It is the little things upon which life turns that make the big difference in our lives, my dear young friends.

Be smart. The Lord wants you to educate your minds and hands, whatever your chosen field. Whether it be repairing refrigerators, or the work of a skilled surgeon, you must train yourselves. Seek for the best schooling available. Become a workman of integrity in the world that lies ahead of you. I repeat, you will bring honor to the Church and you will be generously blessed because of that training.

There can be no doubt, none whatever, that education pays. Do not short-circuit your lives. If you do so, you will pay for it over and over and over again.

The third B—*be clean*. We live in a world that is filled with filth and sleaze, a world that reeks of evil. It is all around us. It is on the television screen. It is at the movies. It is in the popular literature. It is on the Internet. You can’t afford to watch it, my dear friends. You cannot afford to let that filthy poison touch you. Stay away from it. Avoid it. You can’t rent videos and watch them as they portray degrading things. You young men who hold the priesthood of God cannot mix this filth with the holy priesthood.

Avoid evil talk. Do not take the name of the Lord in vain. From the thunders of Sinai the finger of the Lord wrote on tablets of stone, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” (Ex. 20:7).

It is not a mark of manhood to carelessly use the name of the Almighty or His Beloved Son in a vain and flippant way, as many are prone to do.

Choose your friends carefully. It is they who will lead you in one direction or the other. Everybody wants friends. Everybody needs friends. No one wishes to be without them. But never lose sight of the fact that it is your friends who will lead you along the paths that you will follow.

While you should be friendly with all people, select with great care those whom you wish to have close to you. They will be your safeguards in situations where you may vacillate between choices, and you in turn may save them.

Be clean. Don't waste your time in destructive entertainment. There was recently held in the Salt Lake Valley a show put on by a traveling band. I am told that it was filthy, that it was lascivious, that it was evil in every respect. The young people of this community had paid \$25 to \$35 to get in. What did they get for their money? Only a seductive voice urging them to move in the direction of the slimy things of life. I plead with you, my friends, to stay away from such. It will not help you. It can only injure you.

I recently spoke to your mothers and your fathers. Among other things, I talked with them about tattoos.

What creation is more magnificent than the human body? What a wondrous thing it is as the crowning work of the Almighty.

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, said: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16–17).

Did you ever think that your body is holy? You are a child of God. Your body is His creation. Would you disfigure that creation with portrayals of people, animals, and words painted into your skin?

I promise you that the time will come, if you have tattoos, that you will regret your actions. They cannot be washed off. They are permanent. Only by an expensive and painful process can they be removed. If you are tattooed, then probably for

the remainder of your life you will carry it with you. I believe the time will come when it will be an embarrassment to you. Avoid it. We, as your Brethren who love you, plead with you not to become so disrespectful of the body which the Lord has given you.

May I mention earrings and rings placed in other parts of the body. These are not manly. They are not attractive. You young men look better without them, and I believe you will feel better without them. As for the young women, you do not need to drape rings up and down your ears. One modest pair of earrings is sufficient.

I mention these things because again they concern your bodies.

How truly beautiful is a well-groomed young woman who is clean in body and mind. She is a daughter of God in whom her Eternal Father can take pride. How handsome is a young man who is well groomed. He is a son of God, deemed worthy of holding the holy priesthood of God. He does not need tattoos or earrings on or in his body. The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve are all united in counseling against these things.

And while I speak of such matters I want to give emphasis again to the matter of pornography. It has become a \$10 billion industry in the United States, where a few men grow rich at the expense of thousands upon thousands who are their victims. Stay away from it. It is exciting, but it will destroy you. It will warp your senses. It will build within you an appetite that you will do anything to appease. And don't try to create associations through the Internet and chat rooms. They can lead you down into the very abyss of sorrow and bitterness.

I must also say a word concerning illicit drugs. You know how I feel about them. I don't care what the variety may be. They will destroy you if pursued. You will become their slave. Once in their power, you will do anything to get money to buy more.

I was amazed while watching a television program to learn that parents introduced drugs to their children in 20 percent of the cases. I cannot understand what I regard as the stupidity of these parents. What future other than slavery for their children could they see in them? Illegal drugs will utterly destroy those who become addicted to them.

My advice, my pleading to you wonderful young men and women, is to stay entirely away from them. You don't need to experiment with them. Look about you and see the effects they have had on others. There is no need for any Latter-day Saint boy or girl, young man or young woman, to even try them. Stay clean from these mind-altering and habit-forming addictions.

And now just a word on the most common and most difficult of all problems for you young men and young women to handle. It is the relationship that you have one with another. You are dealing with the most powerful of human instincts. Only the will to live possibly exceeds it.

The Lord has made us attractive one to another for a great purpose. But this very attraction becomes as a powder keg unless it is kept under control. It is beautiful when handled in the right way. It is deadly if it gets out of hand.

It is for this reason that the Church counsels against early dating. This rule is not designed to hurt you in any way. It is designed to help you, and it will do so if you will observe it.

Steady dating at an early age leads so often to tragedy. Studies have shown that the longer a boy and girl date one another, the more likely they are to get into trouble.

It is better, my friends, to date a variety of companions until you are ready to marry. Have a wonderful time, but stay away from familiarity. Keep your hands to yourself. It may not be easy, but it is possible.

You young men who plan to go on missions must recognize that sexual sin may keep you from that opportunity. You may think that you can hide it. Long experience has shown that you cannot. To serve an effective mission you must have the Spirit of the Lord, and truth withheld does not mix with that Spirit. Sooner or later you will feel compelled to confess your earlier transgressions. Well did Sir Galahad say, "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure" (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Sir Galahad* [1842], st. 1).

My dear young friends, in matters of sex you know what is right. You know when you are walking on dangerous ground, when it is so easy to stumble and slide into the pit of transgression.

I plead with you to be careful, to stand safely back from the cliff of sin over which it is so easy to fall. Keep yourselves clean from the dark and disappointing evil of sexual transgression. Walk in the sunlight of that peace which comes from obedience to the commandments of the Lord.

Now, if there be any who have stepped over the line, who may already have transgressed, is there any hope for you? Of course there is. Where there is true repentance, there will be forgiveness. That process begins with prayer. The Lord has said, "He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" (D&C 58:42). Share your burden with your parents if you can. And by all means, confess to your bishop, who stands ready to help you.

My next B—*be true*.

Said Shakespeare, "To thine own self be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man" (*Hamlet*, I, iii, 78–81). You have a tremendous inheritance. You have a great background of noble ancestry. Many of you are descendants of the pioneers, who died by the hundreds and thousands in testimony of the truth of this work. If they were to look down upon you, they would plead with you: "Be true. Be loyal. Be 'true to the faith that our parents have cherished, true to the truth for which martyrs have perished.'" They would say, "Faith of our fathers, holy faith, we will be true to thee till death" (*Hymns*, nos. 254 and 84).

And those of you who may not be descended from pioneer ancestry, you belong to a church which has been made strong by the loyalty and unwavering affection of its members through the generations. What a marvelous thing it is to belong to a society whose purposes are noble, whose accomplishments are tremendous, whose work is uplifting, even heroic. Be loyal to the Church under all circumstances. I make you a promise that the authorities of this Church will never lead you astray. They will lead you in paths of happiness.

You who are members of this Church must have a loyalty to it. This is your church. You have as great a responsibility in your sphere of action as I have in my sphere of action. It belongs to you just as it belongs to me. You have embraced its gospel. You have taken upon yourselves a covenant in the

waters of baptism. This you have renewed each time you have partaken of the sacrament. These covenants will be added to when you are married in the temple. You cannot hold them lightly. They are too great a thing. This is the very work of God designed to bring about the immortality and eternal life of His sons and daughters.

Walk in faith before Him with your heads high, proud of your membership in this great cause and kingdom which He has restored to the earth in this, the last dispensation of the fulness of times. Why? To bring you happiness.

Be true to your own convictions. You know what is right, and you know what is wrong. You know when you are doing the proper thing. You know when you are giving strength to the right cause. Be loyal. Be faithful. Be true, my beloved associates in this great kingdom.

The fifth B—*be humble*.

There is no place for arrogance in our lives. There is no place for conceit. There is no place for egotism. We have a great work to do. We have things to accomplish. We need direction in the pursuit of our education. We need help in choosing an eternal companion.

The Lord has said, “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (D&C 112:10).

What a tremendous promise is given in this statement. If we are without conceit and pride and arrogance, if we are humble and obedient, then the Lord will lead us by the hand and answer our prayers. What greater thing could we ask for? There is nothing to compare with this.

The Savior, in the great Sermon on the Mount, declared, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

I believe the meek and the humble are those who are teachable. They are willing to learn. They are willing to listen to the whisperings of the still, small voice for guidance in their lives. They place the wisdom of the Lord above their own wisdom.

And this leads to my final B—*be prayerful*.

You cannot do it alone. I look at this vast congregation, and I know that you are young

people who pray, who get on your knees and speak with the Lord. You know that He is the source of all wisdom.

You need His help, and you know that you need His help. You cannot do it alone. You will come to realize that and recognize that more and more as the years pass. So live that in good conscience you can speak with the Lord. Get on your knees and thank Him for His goodness to you and express to Him the righteous desires of your hearts. The miracle of it all is that He hears. He responds. He answers—not always as we might wish He would answer, but there is no question in my mind that He answers.

You have such a tremendous responsibility, you young men and young women. You are the products of all of the generations that have gone before you. All that you have of body and mind has been passed to you through your parents. Someday you will become parents and pass on to succeeding generations the qualities of body and mind which you have received from the past. Do not break the chain of the generations of your family. Keep it bright and strong. So very much depends on you. You are so very precious. You mean so much to this Church. It could not be the same without you. Stand tall, proud of your inheritance as sons and daughters of God. Look to Him for understanding and guidance. Walk according to His precepts and commandments.

You can have a good time. Of course you can! We want you to have fun. We want you to enjoy life. We do not want you to be prudes. We want you to be robust and cheerful, to sing and dance, to laugh and be happy.

But in so doing, be humble and be prayerful, and the smiles of heaven will fall upon you.

I could wish for you nothing better than that your lives be fruitful, that your service be dedicated and freely given, that you contribute to the knowledge and the well-being of the world in which you live, and that you do it humbly and faithfully before your God. He loves you. We love you. We want you to be happy and successful, to make significant contributions to the world in which you will live and to the on-rolling of this great and majestic work of the Lord.

Well, my brothers and sisters, those are my B's—be grateful, be smart, be clean, be true, be humble, be prayerful.

Now, in conclusion, I offer a word of prayer concerning you.

O God, our Eternal Father, as Thy servant I bow before Thee in prayer in behalf of these young people scattered over the earth who are gathered tonight in assemblies everywhere. Please smile with favor upon them. Please listen to them as they lift their voices in prayer unto Thee. Please lead them gently by the hand in the direction they should follow.

Please help them to walk in paths of truth and righteousness and keep them from the evils of the world. Bless them that they shall be happy at times and serious at times, that they may enjoy life and drink of its fulness. Bless them that they may walk acceptably before Thee as Thy cherished sons and daughters. Each is Thy child with capacity to do great and noble things. Keep them on the high road that leads to achievement. Save them from the mistakes that could destroy them. If they have erred, forgive their trespasses and lead them back to ways of peace and progress. For these blessings I humbly pray with gratitude for them and invoke Thy blessings upon them with love and affection, in the name of Him who carries the burdens of our sins, even the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- What are President Hinckley's "six B's" and why are they significant?
- What principles of leadership can we learn from President Hinckley's address? (see especially his prayer for youth). Why are these principles important?
- Why is gratitude important for servants of the Lord? What can a leader do to inspire gratitude to the Lord?
- President Hinckley referred to a gate and hinge. What could the hinge represent in leadership? What could the gate represent? How can this illustration help us as leaders?
- How can we keep focused on educating our minds and improving our abilities?
- What counsel does President Hinckley give about friends? Why is this counsel important?
- What are some *do's* and *don'ts* from the "Be clean" section of President Hinckley's talk?
- Why is humility important to leadership in the kingdom?
- What role should prayer play in leadership? Why?

LEARNING OUR DUTIES AS LEADERS

“Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence” (D&C 107:99).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders in the Church and family must understand their duties in order to help those they serve receive the blessings of the gospel.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Leaders are more effective when they learn the duties that go with their position.

CONCEPT 1. LEADERS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY LEARN THE DUTIES THAT GO WITH THEIR POSITION.

COMMENTARY

In Doctrine and Covenants 107:99–100, the Lord counsels all to learn their duty. These verses are directed to those serving in priesthood offices, but the spirit of this counsel applies to all leaders. Elder Richard L. Evans, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “Our families, the Church, the community, the nation, the kingdom of God are better served by the best-prepared people. Preparation and knowledge, *with* faithfulness, are infinitely better than just faithfulness alone. And those who drop out for trivial reasons, those who cease to learn, those who don’t continue to try to increase their competence are, I believe, failing to do their full duty” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1966, 55).

Each leadership role has unique duties. We can learn these duties from handbooks, our leaders, others who have served in the office, training meetings, personal observation, seeking the Spirit, studying the scriptures, and praying.

Calls to leadership positions give people the opportunity to learn and practice a variety of abilities, such as “evaluating alternatives, scheduling, delegating, and motivating others. However, all Church leaders are encouraged to focus principally on people, to feed the sheep in the Lord’s flock, to know and love the members, to listen, love, and help with personal needs.

[President David O. McKay said,] ‘It is the leader’s duty . . . to teach the member to love—not the leader or teacher, but the truth of the gospel’ [in Conference Report, Oct. 1968, 143–44]. To do this, leaders are frequently counseled to seek the spiritual gifts of discernment and wisdom (cf. Luke 12:12; D&C 84:85)” (in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. [1992], 2:818).

Leaders must learn their duties and what others expect of them. For example, a class president may be responsible for welcoming students to class, meeting with the teacher and other class officers to plan activities, training other class officers, celebrating class members’ birthdays, reaching out to class members who have challenges or are not attending, and so on.

As family leaders, parents are responsible for the welfare of themselves and their children. Their duties include the guidelines listed in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Auxiliary and priesthood leaders are responsible for helping those they serve receive the blessings of the gospel. Their duties may include conducting meetings, supervising home or visiting teaching, reporting to other leaders, counseling, interviewing, preparing budgets, calling people to serve, directing service projects, and in general helping their organizations function well. The primary responsibility of priesthood and auxiliary leaders is to support and encourage parents in their duty to teach the gospel in the home.

Church and family leaders usually need to develop abilities such as:

- Evaluating alternatives
- Making decisions
- Scheduling activities
- Budgeting time
- Delegating responsibility
- Motivating
- Focusing on people rather than tasks
- Communicating with those they serve and with other leaders
- Edifying
- Listening empathetically
- Knowing and loving people
- Helping people with their personal needs
- Teaching them to love gospel truths
- Using spiritual gifts such as discernment and wisdom
- Working within doctrinal and policy constraints

TEACHING IDEA

Ask two or three students what type of work their parents do to support their families. Or if your students are the heads of families, you could ask what type of work they do. Discuss what skills, knowledge, or attitudes these jobs require.

Point out that every member should prepare to become a leader in the Church or in the family. Each leadership role has its unique duties.

Ask why it is important for leaders to learn their duties. Isn't it enough for leaders just to be good people and to try to help others?

Name with students some of the duties of various Church and family leadership positions. Discuss how we learn these duties. Encourage students to strive to learn all their duties whenever they are placed in a leadership position.

Make a list of a Relief Society president's duties. Make another list of an elders quorum president's duties. Point out that we could make similar lists for every leadership position in the Church and family. Emphasize how important it is for leaders to learn their duties so they can be profitable servants.

Review some of the ways we learn our duties as leaders.

Ask what might keep us from learning our duties as leaders, and discuss how we might overcome these obstacles.

Remind students of the great blessings that come to those who help others come to Jesus Christ (see D&C 18:15–16).

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Dallin H. Oaks

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*"Parental Leadership
in the Family," Ensign,
June 1985, 7–11*

I appreciate this opportunity to speak to the parents of the Church about parental leadership in the family. I address my remarks to every parent, young and old. I speak to those who must exercise their parental roles alone, and I speak to those who are equally yoked together in a happy marriage.

We cannot overstate the importance of parenthood and the family. The basis of the government of God is the eternal family. Our theology begins with heavenly parents and our highest aspiration is to attain that status ourselves. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the plan of our Heavenly Father, for the benefit of his spirit children. The gospel plan is made possible by the sacrifice of our Elder Brother. As earthly parents we participate in the gospel plan by providing earthly bodies for the spirit children of heavenly parents. We solemnly affirm that the fulness of eternal salvation is a family affair. We may truly say that the gospel plan originated in the council of an eternal family, it is implemented through our earthly families, and has its destiny in our eternal families. Small wonder The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is known as a family-centered church.

As parents in Zion we are responsible to teach our posterity the gospel of Jesus Christ, including the necessity of keeping the commandments of God and obtaining the saving ordinances of the gospel.

We all desire to improve our performance as parents. No task is more common, yet none is more important. President Joseph F. Smith gave us this counsel:

“We should never be discouraged in those daily tasks which God has ordained to the common lot of man. Each day’s labor should be undertaken in a joyous spirit and with the thought and conviction that our happiness and eternal welfare depend upon doing well that which we ought to do, that which God has made it our duty to do.”

President Smith applied that principle to parenting as follows:

“After all, to do well those things which God ordained to be the common lot of all man-kind, is the truest greatness. To be a successful father or a successful mother is greater than to be a successful general or a successful statesman.”

Success in an occupation—even a lofty one—is only temporary, President Smith concluded, whereas success as a parent is “universal and eternal greatness.” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939, p. 285.)

Despite the importance of our task, these are difficult times for parents. The stresses and problems of modern living pose great problems for parents. These are suggested by the bittersweet definition of a family as “a group of people who have keys to the same house.”

The popular terms “women’s liberation” and “men’s liberation” suggest other problems. This kind of “liberation” often purports to free men and women from family responsibilities. Men or women who desert or neglect their families may be liberated from responsibilities but they are imprisoned by sin. Whatever may happen in the short run, no one can ever achieve true liberation or freedom by fleeing eternal responsibilities. Eternal freedom requires the conscientious fulfillment of family responsibilities.

As we study the sermons given by our leaders in the first century of the restored Church, we are struck with how seldom they spoke about family responsibilities. In contrast, this is a frequent subject of instruction in recent times. Why is this so?

In my boyhood on a farm, every evening was a family home evening, and there was no television

to distract us from family activities. Aside from brief hours at school, whatever happened during the day happened under the direction of the family. Ordinarily we left the farm only twice a week—on Saturday for shopping and on Sunday for church. That was the pattern of living for most members during the first century of the restored Church. In that circumstance there was little need for a regularly scheduled family home evening. And there was little need to stress the preeminence of the family or the importance of family responsibilities.

Today very few of our youth experience the consistent family-centered activities of earlier times. Urban living and modern transportation have made it easy for our youth to use their homes as boarding houses where they sleep and take an occasional meal but where there is little direction of their activities. Organized recreational activities and high-speed transportation draw young people away from parental supervision.

The way in which most members of the Church earn a living also complicates their parental roles. In times past, the family was a unit of economic *production*, organized and disciplined. All four of my grandparents worked the soil, directing the efforts of their children on family farms or ranches. The whole family worked together in producing their food, maintaining their homes, and generating cash income for what had to be purchased.

Today, relatively few families work together in the production of income. In these times, most families are units of economic *consumption*, which does not require a high degree of organization and cooperation. In these circumstances, it requires a special effort for parents to work with their children in common endeavors, but it is important to do so.

One of the great influences that unified families in prior times was the experience of struggling together in pursuit of a common goal—such as taming the wilderness or establishing a business. This principle is so important that one commentator suggested, “If the family lacks a common crisis, hire a wolf to howl at the door.” (*Time*, Dec. 15, 1967, p. 31.) Most parents have enough crises without hiring any more. But they may need to identify them and organize their families in unified efforts to resolve them.

Families unite when they do meaningful things together. Children should work together under the leadership of parents. Common employment, even on a part-time basis, is valuable. So is a family garden. Common projects to help others are also desirable. Families may establish a perpetual missionary fund. They can research and write family histories and share them with others. They can organize family reunions. They can educate family members in the basic skills of living, including managing finances, maintaining property, and broadening their general education. The learning of languages is a useful preparation for missionary service and modern life. The teachers of these subjects can be parents or grandparents or other members of the extended family.

Some may say, “But we have no time for that.” As for time to do what is truly worthwhile, I suggest that many parents will find that they can turn their family on if they will turn their television off. The TV set is on for an average of seven hours per day in homes in the United States. (*USA Today*, May 17, 1984.) More to the point, a 1984 study of television viewing in a predominantly *LDS area* showed that 70 percent of those surveyed—mostly adults—watched television three hours or more per day. Almost half of that group watched TV for five hours or more.

President David O. McKay taught:

“The home is the first and most effective place for children to learn the lessons of life: truth, honor, virtue, self-control; the value of education, honest work, and the purpose and privilege of life. Nothing can take the place of home in rearing and teaching children, and no other success can compensate for failure in the home.” (*Family Home Evening Manual 1968–69*, p. iii.)

Parents are the master teachers. They do their most effective teaching by example. The family circle is the ideal place to demonstrate and learn kindness, forgiveness, faith in God, and every other practicing virtue of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The father presides and has the ultimate responsibility in the government of the home, but parenting is obviously a shared responsibility. Both parents occupy a leading role in teaching their children, and both must counsel together and support one another. In this effort parents should remember President Kimball’s marvelous

image of the candle and mirror: “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or to be the mirror that reflects it. We parents can be both.” (In Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, p. 49.) In the sacred task of teaching the children of God, parents should unite and combine their efforts to dispel the powers of darkness from the lives of their children.

The family circle is also the best organization to counteract selfishness and self-indulgence, those obsessive themes that seem to be the siren songs of modern life. In contrast to the selfish individualism that surrounds us, we should seek to model our family life after the self-sacrifice of our Savior. He taught us to give ourselves in service to one another. In his great closing sermon, King Benjamin told his people to teach their children “to walk in the ways of truth and soberness . . . [and] to love one another, and to serve one another.” (Mosiah 4:15.)

There is no human relationship more suited to such teachings than a family where parents truly love and give their lives in service to their children. Parents should teach the principles of the restored gospel, including particularly the atoning sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Parents should also teach the smaller-scale sacrifices they are making for their own families. If done in the right spirit—by example as well as by precept—this teaching should help children be more loving and honoring of their parents. It should also help prepare children to be parents themselves.

Parents teach and families learn by doing things together.

Families should pray together, kneeling night and morning to offer thanks for blessings and prayers for common concerns.

Families should worship together, participating in church services and family devotionals.

Families should study and learn together. This should include group reading and discussion of the scriptures, and group consideration of other valuable subjects, such as the practical knowledge necessary to function in a modern world.

Families should work together, as suggested earlier. Families should also play together, so that happy recreational experiences are associated with the activities of the family.

Families should counsel together, treating all matters of concern to the family and its members.

Families should eat together. Mealtime is a natural time for the family to assemble and communicate. It is a shame for such an opportunity to be lost in family bickering or to be fragmented by family members seizing food and scattering to the four corners as if the family kitchen were a fast food outlet.

Families should join in recording family traditions and sacred experiences. They should also come together to share such records to strengthen the family and its individual members. As President Kimball reminded us, “Stories of inspiration from our own lives and those of our forebears . . . are powerful teaching tools,” a source of inspiration for us and our posterity. (*Ensign*, Jan. 1982, p. 4.)

It is a striking fact that the family home evening is the ideal time to accomplish almost every type of family togetherness. It is the ideal place for the family to pray together, learn together, counsel together, play together, and even work together. Most of us recognize this, but I wonder how many of us are really using the family home evening to its full potential. . . .

The magnitude of our responsibilities as parents is revealed in this prophetic statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“The time will come when only those who believe deeply and actively in the family will be able to preserve their families in the midst of the gathering evil around us.” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1980, p. 4.)

In the supremely important task of preserving our families we need all the help we can get. In that effort we are entitled to and will receive the blessings of heaven. We are the servants of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and it is his commission we follow as we seek to carry out our sacred responsibilities as parents in Zion. May we be diligent and blessed in that endeavor.

STUDY HELPS

- What are some of the principal responsibilities of parents as family leaders?
- What reasons does Elder Oaks provide for his observation that early Church leaders spoke less often than current ones about family responsibilities?
- What does Elder Oaks say families can do to be united?
- According to Elder Oaks, what is the most effective way for parents to teach?
- What are some things that families could do together?
- What can leaders do to strengthen parents and the home as a place for gospel instruction and as a laboratory for living the Savior’s teachings?

SERVING THOSE WE LEAD

“And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

“But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

“For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:25–27).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Family and Church leaders serve the Lord by serving those they lead.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. The Savior was the perfect leader and the perfect servant.
2. We should learn to be servant leaders.
3. We can be better servant leaders when we understand the needs of the people we serve.

CONCEPT 1. THE SAVIOR WAS THE PERFECT LEADER AND THE PERFECT SERVANT.

COMMENTARY

During the mortal ministry of Jesus Christ, the mother of James and John once asked that her sons receive special favor. Jesus explained: “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

“But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

“And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25–28).

Following His final Passover feast, Jesus washed the feet of His Apostles and then asked them: “Know ye what I have done to you?

“Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.

“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him” (John 13:12–16).

As Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, observed, “The leader-servant is perfectly epitomized by Jesus” (*Even As I Am* [1982], 62). Jesus spent His mortal ministry healing, blessing, teaching, and serving all, without regard to position. He ministered to (served) people in terms of their deepest needs. The Savior, in His discourse on the bread of life, noted that many people followed Him because of the miracles He performed. Others followed because He gave them bread and fish. The Savior knew that they needed more than miracles and bread to nurture their spirits. He invited them to “eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood,” promising them that “he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” (John 6:53, 58). Peter, speaking for the Twelve, testified that Jesus truly spoke “the words of eternal life” (v. 68).

President James E. Faust, a Counselor in the First Presidency, taught: “The basic needs of mankind . . . —self-esteem, peace of mind, and personal contentment—can be fully satisfied by faithful obedience to the commandments of God. This is true of any person in any country or culture” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 81; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 62).

TEACHING IDEA

Read with your class Matthew 20:25–28; John 13:12–16 and ask: How is leadership in the kingdom of God different from leadership in the world? Discuss their answers (see the commentary).

Have students search the scriptures for examples of service given by Jesus or one of His followers. Have them also look for scriptures that explain the importance of service. Invite them to share the scriptures they find.

Explain that Jesus “perfectly epitomized” the idea of servant leadership. Discuss how the Lord’s Atonement is the greatest act of service ever performed.

CONCEPT 2. WE SHOULD LEARN TO BE SERVANT LEADERS.

COMMENTARY

After Jesus Christ, some of the best examples of servant leaders are ancient and modern prophets and missionaries. King Benjamin taught his people the importance of service: “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). Ammon was able to teach King Lamoni and his people because he first became his servant (see Alma 17–19). Elder Neal A. Maxwell said of the Prophet Joseph Smith: “Was Joseph a leader-servant? Demonstrably! A girl and her brother were struggling in the deep mud on their way to school. The Prophet Joseph ‘stooped down and cleaned the mud from our little heavy-laden shoes, took his handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped our tear-stained faces. He spoke kind and cheering words to us, and sent us on our way to school rejoicing’ (*Juvenile Instructor*, 15 Jan. 1892, p. 67).

“In fleeing with Joseph from a mob, a young man reported, ‘sickness and fright had robbed me

of my strength. Joseph had to decide whether to leave me to be captured by the mob, or endanger himself by rendering aid. Choosing the latter course, he lifted me upon his broad shoulders and bore me with occasional rest through the swamp and darkness. Several hours later we emerged upon the only road and soon reached safety. Joseph’s herculean strength permitted him to [save] my life’ (*New Era*, Dec. 1973, p. 19)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1983, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 56).

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve said of President Howard W. Hunter: “His life’s story is filled with accounts of determination, accomplishment, faith, and true Christian love. He is an inspiration to all of us. He is our prophet. We sit at his feet ready to feast on the wisdom of this true and faithful servant-leader” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 23; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 19).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote: “The leader-servant is perfectly epitomized by Jesus, and if we are to become like Him, so it must be with us.

“Indeed, the very usefulness of our lives depends upon our willingness to serve others” (*Even As I Am*, 62).

Conversely, as Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Twelve observed, “striving to become a master rather than a servant . . . can destroy the spirit of the worker and the work” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 19; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 15). President Gordon B. Hinckley wrote, “Some of our finest work comes through service to others” (*Standing for Something: Ten Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes* [2000], 161).

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone listed helpful traits and practices of servant leaders. Refer to his list in the teacher resource section for lesson 1 (p. 5).

TEACHING IDEA

Give each student a copy of Elder Featherstone’s list of traits of servant leaders (p. 5). Discuss with students individual traits and how developing them can help us become better family and Church leaders.

Divide students into small groups. Have each group read Mosiah 2. Explain that this chapter contains the beginning of King Benjamin’s final sermon to his people. Tell students to notice the

ways King Benjamin exemplified servant leadership and what he taught the people about serving each other. When they finish, discuss what they learned about servant leadership from King Benjamin's life and teaching.

**CONCEPT 3. WE CAN BE BETTER
SERVANT LEADERS WHEN WE UNDERSTAND
THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WE SERVE.**

COMMENTARY

Leaders are more effective when they understand the needs of those they serve. Some needs are common to all. If hunger gnaws at the stomach, the mind tends to focus on the need for food. Likewise, if individuals are ill or lack clothing, shelter, or income, they may find it difficult to concentrate on other concerns.

In addition to physical needs, people have mental, emotional, and spiritual needs. Individuals generally do better if they have good friends, family support, recognition, a sense of belonging to a worthwhile group or cause, and a feeling of worth.

Some needs vary across age. For example, the young generally feel peer pressure and the need for social acceptance more acutely than the old. Other needs affect all, regardless of age or circumstance. For example, we all need to know that God cares what happens in our lives.

There are many ways to increase our understanding of the needs of those we serve. For example, as we read scriptural accounts of Jesus and His leaders serving people, we can ask such questions as How did this leader discover the needs of people? How did the people communicate their needs to the leader? What did the leader know about them that helped him discover their needs? What physical needs did leaders sometimes have to address before they could help people meet their spiritual needs?

We can educate ourselves about the needs of people in general by reading, observing, attending leadership classes, and praying. We can also reflect on our own needs and how we meet them.

President Gordon B. Hinckley explained: "As we look with love and gratitude to God, and as we serve others with no apparent recompense for

ourselves, there will come a greater sense of service toward our fellow human beings, less thinking of self and more reaching out to others. This principle of love is the basic essence of goodness" (*Standing for Something*, 9).

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss the material in the commentary. You could ask questions like:

- What needs should we consider as we work to become better servant leaders?
- What unique needs do young people have that should be considered by their leaders?
- What books have you found helpful in understanding the needs of others?

Discuss experiences that have helped you become more aware of individuals' needs. Have a class discussion on Ammon's missionary activities (see Alma 17–19). Have students look for what Ammon did to understand and meet the needs of King Lamoni.

You could close by sharing President Hinckley's statement from the commentary.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone

Of the Seventy

*Excerpts from More Purity
Give Me [1991], 11–14*

The principle of servant leadership emanates from the very fountainhead of all truth, God the Eternal Father, and it comes to us through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son. Both have been the pinnacle exemplars for us of leadership through service. . . .

Doesn't the Master's entreaty ring true of servant leadership? He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28–30.)

In Mark we read that the disciples had disputed among themselves as to who should be the greatest: “And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.” (Mark 9:35.) . . .

Servant leaders minister to people, all of whom are individuals created in the image of God our Almighty Father. Self-centered administrators, managers, and leaders are mostly interested in rules, regulations, policies, and programs. To such people, men and women are important only as long as they are “useful” in achieving goals.

How many managers, administrators, and leaders would have noticed supposedly unimportant people doing wonderful things. “Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.” (Mark 12:41.) Jesus was aware of their giving. It was a worthy act, and much good would be done. He did not depreciate what any had given. Many leaders today would calculate only that amount of money that could be used to generate further gain in substantial amounts. Little notice would be given to the widow, undoubtedly embarrassed, of little consequence, ill dressed, probably trembling and humble, who approached the treasury. She cast in two mites, two of the smallest Hebrew coins. Two mites weren’t even enough to buy a loaf of bread. She probably dared not so much as lift up her eyes for fear that someone had seen her meager gift and might mock her. I can imagine she hastened away to avoid shame or embarrassment.

Jesus called his disciples and said unto them: “Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” (Mark 12:44.)

I wonder if, somehow, he who is Master of heaven and earth was able to convey to the heart of the widow his sweet, heartfelt gratitude for her gift.



Elder M. Russell Ballard

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*Excerpts from “The Greater
Priesthood: Giving a Lifetime
of Service in the Kingdom,”
Ensign, Sept. 1992, 71, 73*

All who hold the priesthood of God are joined together in a common bond of service. The resurrected John the Baptist expressed this concept on that sacred occasion when he restored the Aaronic Priesthood to men on earth. This angelic messenger from God, the same who had been privileged to baptize the Savior, addressed the Prophet Joseph Smith and his associate in the work, Oliver Cowdery, as “my fellow servants.” (D&C 13:1.) What a marvelous model for humble service in the kingdom of God!

Each man or boy who holds the priesthood, regardless of his priesthood or his ordained office, is a *fellow servant* in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although I hold the ordained office of Apostle in the Melchizedek Priesthood, my associates in that office and I are fellow servants in the work of the Lord with the most recently ordained deacon or elder in the Church.

While the Apostle Paul stated the truth that “God hath set . . . first apostles [in the Church]” (1 Cor. 12:28), he also stated the truth that each member of the body is necessary. No one in any priesthood office can say of those in other offices, “I have no need of thee,” because we all are fellow servants in the service of the Lord. (See vs. 14–28.) Our common and most important objective is to do *His* work. Each priesthood bearer, acting within the duties of his calling, is needed to accomplish the work of the Lord.

I repeat, a priesthood office is bestowed not for status but for service. You and I are *fellow servants* in the Church of Jesus Christ. . . .

President David O. McKay declared:

“Priesthood means service. This is true even in its divine source, as we may infer from the sublime declaration: ‘This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.’ Emanating from Deity is the service that leads to the redemption of God’s children.” (*Pathways to Happiness*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1957, p. 231.) . . .

. . . I invite you to ponder the following words of President Marion G. Romney:

“Service is not something we endure on this earth so we can earn the right to live in the celestial kingdom. Service is the very fiber of which an exalted life in the celestial kingdom is made.

“Knowing that service is what gives our Father in Heaven fulfillment, and knowing that we want to be where He is and as He is, why must we be commanded to serve one another? . . . Service is what Godhood is all about.” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1982, p. 93.)

Brethren, it is a cherished blessing to bear the priesthood of God and to have the opportunity of unlimited service to our fellowmen. I know that the Lord Jesus Christ lives, and I pray that God may bless you, young and old, with a deep appreciation for the priesthood you bear and with an increased desire to serve your fellowmen and your Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- As we serve others, how can we identify and express gratitude for what they do well? (see Elder Featherstone’s discussion of the widow’s mite).
- What positive effects can a sincere compliment have on another person?
- How have you felt when your worthwhile efforts went unnoticed? What would you have liked to happen?
- What do you think is a proper balance between people and programs?
- Select and discuss several statements from Elder Ballard’s comments that are significant to you.

LEARNING TO LEAD WITH CHARITY

“But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ” (Moroni 7:47–48).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Christ-like leadership is motivated by charity.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Charity is the highest motive for service as a leader.
2. We can grow in our capacity to lead with charity.

CONCEPT 1. CHARITY IS THE HIGHEST MOTIVE FOR SERVICE AS A LEADER.

COMMENTARY

Charity is “the highest, noblest, strongest kind of love, not merely affection; the pure love of Christ. It is never used [in the scriptures] to denote alms or deeds or benevolence” (Bible Dictionary, “charity,” 632).

The Apostle Paul taught that charity is greater than any overt act of service or any other spiritual gift: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. . . .

“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . .

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” 1 Corinthians 13:1–3, 8–10, 13).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “We must not only *do* what is right. We must act for the right reasons. The modern term is *good motive*. The scriptures often signify this appropriate mental attitude with the words *full purpose of heart* or *real intent*. . . .

“ . . . If we do not act for the right reasons, our acts will not be counted for righteousness. . . .

“There are no blessings in supposedly good acts that are performed for the wrong reasons” (*Pure in Heart* [1988], 15, 33; see also Moroni 7:6–11).

On another occasion, Elder Oaks suggested six reasons people have for serving:

1. “For the sake of riches or honor.”
2. “To obtain good companionship.”
3. “Out of fear of punishment.”
4. “Out of a sense of duty or out of loyalty.”
5. “The hope of an eternal reward.”
6. “For the love of God and the love of fellowmen.”

This last reason, charity, Elder Oaks calls “the highest reason of all. . . . It is what the scriptures call ‘a more excellent way’ (1 Corinthians 12:31)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1984, 14–16; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 13–14).

Leaders in the Church and family need the guidance, vision, and strength that only the Spirit of the Lord can impart, and this Spirit is hampered when our motives for serving are not pure. Leaders should serve out of charity rather than less worthy motives.

TEACHING IDEA

Ask students whether motives, acts, or results are more important, and discuss their responses. Explain that people tend to evaluate the goodness of their actions in terms of the result (for example: How much money did you make? How many people did you baptize?). But the Lord looks upon the heart, or the motive for our actions (see D&C 137:9). Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve explained: “Everything depends—initially and finally—on our desires. These shape our thought patterns. Our desires thus precede our deeds and lie at the very cores of our souls” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1995, 28; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 23).

Define *charity* and explain that it is the highest motive for service as a leader (see the commentary). Discuss questions like the following as a class or in small groups:

- What are some of the reasons we might serve as Church or family leaders? Are all of them equally valid?
- What should I do if my motives for serving as a leader are less than charitable?
- How can I learn to love the people I serve?

CONCEPT 2. WE CAN GROW IN OUR CAPACITY TO LEAD WITH CHARITY.

COMMENTARY

Elder Dallin H. Oaks wrote: “The requirement that our good acts must be accompanied by good motives is subtle and difficult in practice. . . .

“To become pure in heart—to achieve exaltation—we must alter our attitudes and priorities to a condition of spirituality, we must

control our thoughts, we must reform our motives, and we must perfect our desires. How can this be done?

“The first step in the alteration of our attitudes and our priorities is to face up to our own imperfections and the need to change. . . .

“We begin by questioning ourselves. Stripping away our pretenses and our false fronts, probing honestly and deeply within our inner selves, we should seek to identify our true attitudes and priorities. . . .

“We seek spirituality through faith, repentance, and baptism; through forgiveness of one another; through fasting and prayer; through righteous desires and pure thoughts and actions. We seek spirituality through service to our fellowmen; through worship; through feasting on the word of God, in the scriptures and in the teachings of the living prophets. We attain spirituality through making and keeping covenants with the Lord, through conscientiously trying to keep all the commandments of God. Spirituality is not acquired suddenly. It is the consequence of a succession of right choices. It is the harvest of a righteous life. . . .

“To achieve spirituality and to reform our motives and perfect our desires we must learn to control our thoughts. The prophet Alma taught his faithful son Helaman: ‘Let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever’ (Alma 37:36). . . .

“The ultimate good motive for any act is charity—the pure love of Christ. We acquire that motive in two ways: (1) by praying for love, and (2) by practicing service.

“We can affect our motives by prayer. . . .

“In order to learn to serve for the pure love of Christ, we must practice serving God and our fellowmen” (*Pure in Heart*, 18, 140–41, 144–45, 148).

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss with students how we can develop purity of heart and charity in order to be better leaders. List your conclusions on the board. (These might include changing our attitudes,

controlling our thoughts, and admitting our imperfections. See the commentary.)

Consider inviting students to organize a service project for someone at school or in the neighborhood, keeping in mind the importance of charity in such an endeavor.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Brother Stephen D. Nadauld

Formerly of the Second Quorum of the Seventy

Excerpts from Principles of Priesthood Leadership (1999), 102–6, 109–19

The Church is growing rapidly in a very complex environment and must have effective priesthood leadership. Leadership is different than management. The biggest challenge for today's priesthood leaders is to do a few right things. I believe there are three *right* things that, if done prayerfully and diligently, will make priesthood leaders powerful and effective in moving forward the Lord's work. They are:

I. Teach the Plan of Redemption

This is number one for three reasons. First, from a spiritual perspective, we learn from Alma 13 that it is the ordained responsibility of every Melchizedek Priesthood holder to be a teacher of the plan of redemption. Second, we know secularly that leaders are those who epitomize the values of the group. Third, as a practical matter, talking about doctrine and principles does more to change behavior than does talking about behavior [see Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17].

II. Minister

Ministering, serving, and blessing lives is an essential aspect of the gospel and of priesthood leadership. Because charity is the essence of Christian behavior, its understanding and guileless practice must be present in those who lead. When members realize that the leader genuinely loves and cares about them they are more willing to be led.

III. Have Vision and Focus

Only by developing, articulating, and sharing a clear, achievable picture of the future can the priesthood leader begin to effectively move the work forward. That view of what can be achieved by the quorum, ward, or stake must be consistent with the mission of the Church and with direction from the presiding authority. . . .

These are the three essential activities that define leadership, separate leaders from managers, and make it possible to be effective. . . . The three Roman numeral ideas and questions leaders should ask themselves are reproduced as Figure 15. . . .

Figure 15

EFFECTIVE PRIESTHOOD LEADERS

I. Teach the Plan of Redemption

- Do I take time to study and understand the principles of the plan of redemption so I can teach them clearly?
- Do I teach the plan to my family members, to my quorum, ward, or stake members, and to my friends and neighbors?
- Do I teach the plan in sacrament meeting, leadership meetings, ward and stake conferences, in interviews and counseling opportunities?

II. Minister

- Is my ministering personal in nature or only a response to institutional assignments?
- If I find it hard to genuinely care about others, what could I do to change?
- Am I trying to follow the example of the Savior?

III. Have Vision and Focus

- Do I understand the mission of the Church?
- What group could help me catch a workable vision of what could be done?
- What two or three things could be focused on?
- How could progress in the focused outcomes be measured?

. . . Leadership in any endeavor, including the priesthood, is more effective if attention is paid to something I will label as “process.” Consideration must be given for how things are done and how interactions take place between the priesthood leader and members of the stake, ward, or quorum.

As an example, consider the recently widowed woman who approached the bishop and expressed her sadness at never again being able to pray in

sacrament meeting. When asked by the bishop why she would think she would never again be asked to pray in sacrament meeting, she explained, “Bishop, I’ve observed that you always have a husband and wife offer the sacrament meeting prayers, and since my husband is now dead, it seems to me I won’t ever have that opportunity again.”

After a few moments of thought, the bishop realized that the problem stemmed from a misguided process—when the sacrament meeting program was being organized by a member of the bishopric the practice was to make a telephone call to a member family and request two prayers! One telephone call for two prayers was efficient, but in this case not effective for blessing the lives of ward members.

The process was exclusive not inclusive. It was efficient but not effective. I believe effective leaders learn to manage the processes or the ways an organization goes about doing things. In tending to process, an effective leader addresses the needs that individuals exhibit when they are part of an organization. Have you ever asked yourself the following questions? Why do I want to be involved in a particular organization; why give time and effort to this organization instead of a variety of others? What are the commitment, passion, excitement or enthusiasm factors that make me want to associate and give my best effort? Consider, among others, these six needs or factors.

- To be involved in something with purpose
- To know leaders and others care
- To share in progress and success
- To be part of a team
- To know what’s going on
- To have fun

Of course, I believe that people join the Church because it is true. But are they committed, enthusiastic, excited, and retained? . . .

. . . Leadership in today’s complex environment and organizations is often better accomplished by team leaders than by brilliant individualists. There are too many variables, too many inputs, too many possibilities, and too many rapid changes for any one individual acting alone to process and manage. . . .

. . . This principle is true in almost all of our endeavors, and it is true in the Church. Effective Church leadership requires a team approach and attention to group processes. . . .

[A] challenge . . . for priesthood leaders in the Church today is to recognize the difference between efficiency and effectiveness. It is certainly more efficient for a bishopric or stake presidency to consider an issue and make a decision without seeking input or doing much analysis. There is a class of decisions where confidentiality or other such concerns dictate that decisions be made by the priesthood leader acting alone or at most in counsel with his two counselors. In such cases both efficiency and effectiveness are usually best served by individual as opposed to group action. Even in these situations, wise leaders have learned that gathering all possible information, giving careful thought to alternatives, and performing substantial analysis are prerequisites to receiving inspiration from the Lord.

There are, however, many situations where a priesthood leader can be most effective when he conceives of himself as a team leader. . . .

. . . Organization members need to be involved in discussion, analysis, and solution alternatives in order for anything to change. If the priesthood leader wants to see something happen, he has to think of himself as the leader of a team. The appropriate leadership team in the ward is the ward council. In the stake it is the stake council. . . .

. . . The effective priesthood leader is a team leader. Everyone on the team is a member of the Church and cares about its success. Each should be given equal opportunity for input as well as some opportunity to shoulder responsibility for outcomes. Please note! Team leadership is *not* decision-making by vote or group confusion with no one in charge.

Final decisions must be made by ordained, set-apart priesthood leaders. But the best decisions will be made by those leaders who have allowed the process to provide input and stimulate inspiration.

Inclusive communication

It’s natural for someone in an organization to want to know what’s going on. Those feelings can be ignored by leaders or they can be used to

strengthen commitment and enthusiasm. The trouble is that communication with group members takes time and effort. To a busy leader it may not seem to be an efficient use of resources. And there is always a legitimate question about what can and should be communicated and what is best handled in a more confidential manner. Every organization struggles with these issues, and the Church is no exception.

Priesthood leaders at all levels are counseled extensively and appropriately about the importance of maintaining confidentiality when dealing with sensitive information concerning members' lives and conduct. This confidentiality is essential to the repentance process and must exist for leaders to maintain the confidence of Church members. This principle cannot be overstated. Having said that, I also believe there are opportunities for legitimate inclusive communication that will be appropriate, welcome, and will strengthen the leadership process. The challenge for priesthood leaders is to identify those issues which need to be communicated openly and then go to the effort to provide that communication. . . .

. . . The effort put forth to establish inclusive processes will be returned manyfold in increased commitment and enthusiasm and will provide the leader with leverage to accomplish the mission of the Church.

Esprit de corps

Esprit de corps is defined in the *American Heritage Dictionary* as a spirit of devotion and enthusiasm among members of a group for one another, their group, and its purposes. A group that has the spirit accomplishes its purposes, has strong ties with its members, and is fun to be a part of. Wise leaders can promote these feelings in appropriate ways and observe marked improvement in group performance. Most athletic teams exhibit *esprit de corps*. It exists in many successful business, military, and patriotic organizations and is generally recognized as a major factor in their success. But is this principle appropriate for use in the Church? For example, do we as Church leaders want to promote a gung ho, rah, rah attitude about our Church activity and expect a dedication that excludes any other activity or association? Is it appropriate in the Church to think in terms of

having fun? (I know a Church leader who says if you're not having fun you're not doing it right. I believe he makes an important point.) . . .

The answer is not the same for every group and every leader. Some leaders use personality and their natural interest to promote closeness, enthusiasm, and spirit. Others feel awkward and uneasy in such attempts. While *esprit de corps* may be an important element in a leader's success, it is not necessary that the leader be personally responsible for initiating and promoting it. Others can bring that element to the group. A wise leader will encourage spirit and elan to come from a young, enthusiastic counselor, the chairman of the Activities Committee, or the Young Women presidency. Of course *esprit de corps* and a sense of fun can be abused. . . . But warmth, humor, and fun, when controlled and appropriately inserted into the context of reverence for the Savior and His work, can be extremely effective in the process of leadership. . . .

. . . If a priesthood leader continually asks himself questions such as: Do my stake, ward, or quorum members feel part of what's going on? Are they "on the team"? Do they feel knowledgeable and included? Are they enjoying themselves, their service, and their experience in the Church?—if he asks himself such questions, he is generally aware of process. . . .

In conclusion, I'm convinced that a priesthood leader can be effective by doing a *few* right things. A fundamental irreducible foundation must be personal righteousness and the willingness to seek the Spirit and be taught by it. With that foundation in place, the right things are 1) teach the plan of redemption, 2) minister as the Savior would, 3) have vision, and focus that vision on a small number of objectives. If in addition the leader pays attention to the processes necessary to involve members and gain their commitment, he will be a wonderfully effective leader. The leader will be happy and successful, members' lives will be blessed, and the Lord's work will move forward with direction and power. . . .

I believe that in the process God will bless us with wisdom, experience, spiritual growth, and success in our callings. That certainly is my hope and prayer for every priesthood leader.

STUDY HELPS

- According to Brother Nadauld, what three activities separate leaders from managers?
- What does Brother Nadauld mean by “process”?
- What are advantages of including those we lead in the decision-making process?
- When might it be better for a leader to act alone?
- What are some characteristics of a group that has *esprit de corps*?
- What considerations are important for leaders as they contemplate *esprit de corps* in their groups?
- What foundation does Brother Nadauld recommend for becoming a good leader?

LEADERSHIP

OFTEN REQUIRES SACRIFICE

“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

*“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it”
(Matthew 10:38–39).*

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Church and family leaders must be willing to make sacrifices to help those they serve.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Jesus Christ exemplified sacrifice in His service to others.
2. Leaders must be willing to make sacrifices for those they serve.

CONCEPT 1. JESUS CHRIST EXEMPLIFIED SACRIFICE IN HIS SERVICE TO OTHERS.

COMMENTARY

Jesus Christ set the perfect example of sacrifice for others. No gift was greater than the gift of His Atonement. President Spencer W. Kimball said of the Savior: “He was always the giver, seldom the recipient. Never did he give shoes, hose, or a vehicle; never did he give perfume, a shirt, or a fur wrap. His gifts were of such a nature that the recipient could hardly exchange or return the value. His gifts were rare ones: eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and legs to the lame; cleanliness to the unclean, wholeness to the infirm, and breath to the lifeless. His gifts were opportunity to the downtrodden, freedom to the oppressed, light in the darkness, forgiveness to the repentant, hope to the despairing. His friends gave him shelter, food, and love. He gave them of himself, his love, his service, his life. The wise men brought him gold and frankincense. He gave them and all their fellow mortals resurrection, salvation, and eternal life. . . . To give of oneself is a holy gift” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 246–47).

TEACHING IDEA

Have a student read aloud Matthew 10:37–39, and discuss the idea that being a disciple of Christ requires sacrifice. Explain that Jesus Christ set the example as He sacrificed for us. Invite students to name some of the sacrifices He made.

CONCEPT 2. LEADERS MUST BE WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES FOR THOSE THEY SERVE.

COMMENTARY

The Lord invited early Church leaders to lose themselves in His service. Near the beginning of His mortal ministry, “as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

“And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him” (Mark 1:16–18).

Levi (Matthew) also left his livelihood to follow the Master (see Luke 5:27–28). Peter and the other Apostles also left all (see Luke 18:28). Both Peter and Paul expressed a willingness to lose their lives for His sake (see John 13:37; Acts 21:13). The Savior expected all of His disciples to develop unselfishness towards others (see Luke 3:11; 9:23).

The Lord asks all of His Saints to give up worldliness and seek to become more holy. Alma told the people of Zarahemla: “And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things” (Alma 5:57; see 2 Corinthians 6:17). The Lord asks each of us to present to Him a broken heart and a contrite spirit (see for example 3 Nephi 9:20).

Church and family leaders must be willing to sacrifice to help those they serve. At various times they may be called on to give their time, talents, and means to bless the lives of others. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve explained, “Sacrifice is a demonstration of pure love. The degree of our love for the Lord, for the gospel, and for our fellowmen can be measured by what we are willing to sacrifice for them” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 108; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 76).

As leaders sacrifice for those they serve, they should keep in mind King Benjamin’s counsel: “For it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order” (Mosiah 4:27; see also D&C 10:4). Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, observed: “When we run faster than we are able, we get both inefficient and tired” (*Deposition of a Disciple* [1976], 58).

TEACHING IDEA

Invite students to share instances in which people (such as parents and bishops) have sacrificed to help them or someone else. Ask what sacrifices missionaries typically make to help people accept the gospel.

List on the board things family and Church leaders might be called on to sacrifice to help those they serve. Include assets leaders must be willing to share, such as time and talents. Include also weaknesses they must be willing to forgo, such as worldliness (see the commentary).

Discuss ways the sacrifices of leaders benefit those they serve. Discuss how the Lord blesses the leaders who make these sacrifices.

Have students read Mosiah 4:27 and explain how this verse applies to Church and family leaders. Share insights from the commentary, and explain that leaders must “pace themselves” in their service.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

The Loneliness of Leadership,
*Brigham Young University
Speeches of the Year*
(4 Nov. 1969), 3–6

... There is a loneliness in all aspects of leadership. ...

It was ever thus. The price of leadership is loneliness. The price of adherence to conscience is loneliness. The price of adherence to principle is loneliness. I think it is inescapable. The Savior of the world was a man who walked in loneliness. I do not know of any statement more underlined with the pathos of loneliness than his statement:

... *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* (Matthew 8:20.)

There is no lonelier picture in history than of the Savior upon the cross, alone, the Redeemer of mankind, the Savior of the world, bringing to pass the atonement, the Son of God suffering for the sins of mankind. As I think of that I reflect on a statement made by Channing Pollock.

Judas with his thirty pieces of silver was a failure. Christ on the cross was the greatest figure of time and eternity.

Joseph Smith

Joseph Smith likewise was a figure of loneliness. I have a great love for the boy who came out of the woods, who after that experience could never be the same again, who was berated and persecuted and looked down upon. Can you sense the pathos in these words of the boy Prophet?

... *For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation.* [JS—H 1:25.]

There are few more sorrowful pictures, not in our history anyway, than of the Prophet being rowed across the Mississippi River by Stephen Markham, knowing that his enemies were after his life, and then there came some of his own who accused him of running away. Hear his response:

If my life is of no value to my friends, it is of none to myself. ([History of the Church,] 6:549, June 1844.)

The history of the Church

This has been the history of this Church, my young friends, and I hope we will never forget it. It came as a result of the position of leadership which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the declaration was made concerning the only true and living Church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness, the loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away and which we must face up to with boldness and courage and ability. Our history is one of being driven, of being winnowed and peeled, or being persecuted and hounded. . . .

I go back to these words of Paul:

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; (2 Corinthians 4:8–9.)

A missionary's loneliness

I talked last night with the father of a missionary. He said, "I've just been talking with my son in another land. He is beaten; he is destroyed. He is lonely; he is afraid. What can I do to help him?"

I said, "How long has he been there?"

He said, "Three months."

I said, "I guess that's the experience of almost every missionary who has been there three months. There is scarcely a young man or woman who is called to go into the world in a position of great responsibility to represent The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who does not feel much of the time, I am sure, in the early months of his or her mission, the terrible loneliness of that responsibility. But he also comes to know, as he works in the service of the Lord, the sweet and

marvelous companionship of the Holy Spirit which softens and takes from him that feeling of loneliness."

The lonely convert

It is likewise with the convert. I have been thinking this morning of a friend of mine whom I knew when I was on a mission in London thirty-six years ago. I remember his coming to our apartment through the rain of the night. He knocked at the door and I invited him in.

He said, "I've got to talk with someone. I'm all alone. I'm undone."

And I said, "What's your problem?"

He said, "When I joined the Church a little less than a year ago, my father told me to get out of his home and never come back, and I've never been back."

He continued, "A few months later the cricket club of which I was a member read me off its list, barred me from membership, the boys with whom I had grown up and with whom I had been so close and friendly."

Then he said, "Last month my boss fired me because I was a member of this Church and I have been unable to get another job and I have had to go on the dole."

"And last night the girl with whom I have gone for a year and a half said she would never marry me because I'm a Mormon."

I said, "If this has cost you so much, why don't you leave the Church and go back to your father's home, and to your cricket club, and to the job that meant so much to you, and to the girl you think you love?"

He said nothing for what seemed to be a long time. Then, putting his head down in his hands, he sobbed and sobbed. Finally he looked up through his tears and said, "I couldn't do that. I know this is true, and if it were to cost me my life I could never give it up." He picked up his wet cap and walked to the door and out into the rain, alone and trembling and fearful, but resolute. As I watched him, I thought of the loneliness of conscience, the loneliness of testimony, the loneliness of faith, and the strength and comfort of the Spirit of God.

The loneliness of testimony

I would like to conclude by saying to you here today, you young men and women who are in this great congregation, this is your lot. Oh, you are all together here now. You are all of one kind, you are all of one mind. But you are training to go out into the world where you are *not* going to have about you ten thousand, twenty thousand, twenty-five thousand others like you. You will feel the loneliness of your faith.

It is not easy, for instance, to be virtuous when all about you there are those who scoff at virtue.

It is not easy to be honest when all about you there are those who are interested only in making “a fast buck.”

It is not always easy to be temperate when all about you there are those who scoff at sobriety.

It is not easy to be industrious when all about you there are those who do not believe in the value of work.

It is not easy to be a man of integrity when all about you there are those who will forsake principle for expediency.

The peace of the Spirit

I would like to say to you here today, my brethren and sisters, there is loneliness—but a man of your kind has to live with his conscience. A man has to live with his principles. A man has to live with his convictions. A man has to live with his testimony. Unless he does so, he is miserable—dreadfully miserable. And while there may be thorns, while there may be disappointment, while there may be trouble and travail, heartache and heartbreak, and desperate loneliness, there will be peace and comfort and strength.

A promise and a blessing

I like these great words of the Lord given to those who would go out and teach this gospel.

I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up. (D&C 84:88.)

I think that is a promise to each of us. I believe it; I know it. I bear testimony of its truth to you this day.

God bless you, my dear young friends, you of the noble birthright, you of the covenant, you who are the greatest hope of this generation— young men and women of ability and conscience, of leadership and tremendous potential.

God bless you to walk fearlessly even though you walk in loneliness, and to know in your hearts that peace which comes of squaring one's life with principle, that “peace which passeth all understanding,” I humbly pray, as I leave with you my witness and my testimony of the divinity of this holy work. And as a servant of the Lord, I invoke upon you every joy as you go forward in your lives to rich and marvelously fruitful experience, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

STUDY HELPS

- What do you think is meant by the phrase “There is a great loneliness in leadership”?
- How can we cope with the loneliness of leadership?
- What can compensate for the loneliness of leadership?
- What can we learn from the Savior about the loneliness of leadership?
- President Spencer W. Kimball, commenting on Matthew 10:39, noted that “by losing ourselves, we find ourselves,” and added: “Indeed, it is easier to ‘find’ ourselves because there is so much more of us to find!” (“Small Acts of Service” *Ensign*, Dec. 1974, 2). How does this principle apply to giving Christlike leadership?

APPROACHING LEADERSHIP CHEERFULLY

“Therefore, dearly beloved . . . , let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power” (D&C 123:17).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

We should approach leadership cheerfully.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Church and family leaders should lead with “good cheer, optimism, and courage.”

CONCEPT 1. CHURCH AND FAMILY LEADERS SHOULD LEAD WITH “GOOD CHEER, OPTIMISM, AND COURAGE.”

COMMENTARY

Be of good cheer means “have a happy or brave disposition or attitude.” This phrase appears several times in the scriptures. For example, on the eve of His birth, the Lord said to the distraught Nephi: “Lift up your head and *be of good cheer*; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets” (3 Nephi 1:13; italics added).

Jesus used the words *be of good cheer* to encourage a man sick with palsy, and then added, “thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matthew 9:2). Later the Lord spoke these words to calm His disciples who became afraid after seeing Jesus walk on water, and added, “It is I; be not afraid” (Matthew 14:27).

Elder Harold B. Lee, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: “The Master closed his last recorded sermon prior to his crucifixion with the words: ‘These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ (John 16:33.)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1966, 68).

In 1831 the Lord reassured the Saints, “Be of good cheer, little children; for I am in your midst, and I have not forsaken you;

“And inasmuch as you have humbled yourselves before me, the blessings of the kingdom are yours” (D&C 61:36–37; see D&C 68:6; 78:18; 112:4).

Elder Marvin J. Ashton, who was a member of the Twelve, said: “We need to lead with good cheer, optimism, and courage if we are to move onward and upward” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1974, 56; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 41). President Gordon B. Hinckley wrote: “I am suggesting that as we go through life, we ‘accentuate the positive.’ I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good, that we still our voices of insult and sarcasm, that we more generously compliment and endorse virtue and effort” (*Standing for Something: Ten Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes* [2000], 101).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask several students to describe the disposition of a Church or family leader who has affected their life for good. Point out that effective leaders are almost always positive or cheerful when they are with other people. Ask students how the leaders who influenced them demonstrated their positive or cheerful approach.

Read Doctrine and Covenants 61:36 and help students understand that the Lord wants all of us to “be of good cheer.”

Have students read 2 Nephi 4:17–35. Discuss questions such as:

- What reasons did Nephi have for not being cheerful?
- What reasons did he have for being cheerful?
- Which set of reasons do you find more compelling? Why?
- How do you think Nephi's attitude as expressed in these verses affected his leadership?
- How can we follow Nephi's example in our own leadership?

Write the words *Cheerful* and *Fearful* on the board. Discuss reasons leaders today might have for not being cheerful (such as fear, stress, health problems, failures, wars, natural disasters, problems at school or work, inactivity of loved ones or friends). Discuss reasons leaders today might have for being cheerful (such as the kindness of others, beauty, the “good news” of Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice, the achievements of others, our potential as children of Heavenly Father). Point to the words on the board and state, “You can choose what kind of leader you want to be.”

Divide your class into small groups. Ask each group to identify two or three things leaders might do to be more cheerful in their leadership. Have each group share its suggestions with the class. These might include:

- “Cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated” (D&C 88:124).
- Exercise appropriately and eat a balanced diet.
- Enjoy uplifting music.
- Study the scriptures and other good books.
- Learn to forgive people who offend you, and forget the offense.
- Practice the Golden Rule.
- Be more grateful. Count your blessings and thank Heavenly Father for them.
- Treat people with kindness and courtesy.
- Be active in your ward.
- Develop a healthy and appropriate sense of humor.

Encourage students to have “good cheer” as they lead.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*“Lessons Learned in the
Journey of Life,” Ensign,
Dec. 2000, 6–13*

It is not hard for me to remember when I was in college. I loved many things about college life: I loved learning. I loved the comradery. And I loved football.

I had always dreamed of playing football at the university level, and during my freshman, sophomore, and junior years, I wore a crimson uniform and played running back.

At that time, the world tottered on the brink of chaos. Opposing political forces roiled and ground against each other. Tension mushroomed. Nations chafed against each other. It was as though the entire world groaned in a burgeoning rumble, a volcano that had to erupt, that ultimately would erupt. Before it was over, every nation, every people felt the effects of those dark days.

I remember the day my father came to me. It was just after the 1936 football season had ended.

“Joseph,” he said, “do you want to go on a mission?”

I told him I did.

“Then you must go now,” he said. “If you wait any longer, you’ll never go.”

I didn’t want to believe him. I wanted to pursue my dream of continuing to play football and to graduate from the university. If I were to accept a mission call, I would have to give up everything. In those days a mission call was 30 months long, and I knew if I accepted, there was a good chance I would never play football again—perhaps I would not even be able to graduate.

But I also knew what my father had said was true. My bishop was Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), who later became a member of the First Presidency of the Church. He had spoken

with me before about serving a mission, and I went to tell him that now was the time.

A few months later I stepped aboard the SS *Manhattan* and began a long voyage that would take me into the heart of the world crisis. My mission call was to the German-Austrian Mission.

My first field of labor was in Salzburg, Austria. The mission was shorthanded, and not long after I arrived, my companion was transferred to another district in the mission. Soon I found myself alone in Salzburg, a young missionary in a strange, new country.

One other thing was happening that I haven't mentioned: a large army of Hitler's Third Reich was gathering just over the border, not 20 miles from Salzburg. Everywhere you went you could sense a mounting tension in the air. No one knew if tomorrow would be the day the panzer tanks would flood across the border.

I remember those days well. I don't suppose there has been a time in my life when I felt more discouraged, more lost. The mission was a difficult one; no one seemed to have time for me or the message I brought. I wondered if there would ever be enough members in that city to make a ward.

Six weeks I was alone. Six weeks I waited for a companion. Six weeks I wondered about what I might be doing had I stayed in Salt Lake City and continued my studies.

Even though the days and nights seemed at the time to be never ending, they eventually passed. A senior companion arrived, and we did the best we could under the circumstances to serve the Lord.

That year as Christmas Day approached, my companion and I decided we would walk to Oberndorf, a little village nestled in the beautiful Bavarian Alps. You may know that the beauty and majesty of this little village is what inspired Joseph Mohr in 1818 to write the wonderful hymn "Silent Night" (*Hymns*, no. 204).

On Christmas Eve we walked to the village and sat quietly for a while in a small, humble church, listening to the beautiful organ music. A crisp, clear winter night enveloped us as we began our return trip. We walked under a canopy of stars and across the smooth stillness of new-fallen snow.

Perhaps it was a night not unlike the one that inspired an assistant priest to write the lyrics to one of the most beloved hymns in all of Christendom more than a hundred years earlier.

As we walked, my companion and I talked of our hopes and dreams. We talked of our goals and what we wanted to have happen in our lives. The more we talked, the more serious we became about achieving the things we talked about. As we walked under the light of a full moon, we both made serious resolutions.

I committed that night that I would not waste my time. I would renew my efforts to serve the Lord. I made up my mind that I would magnify any callings I received in the Lord's kingdom.

That was also the evening I made up my mind about whom I would marry. I didn't know her name, but I had in my mind the type of person she would be—one who lived the gospel and who was strong spiritually. I even described her to my companion—that she would be five foot five, that she would have blue eyes, and that she would have blonde hair. Sister Wirthlin fits all of the description that I made of her at that time without knowing her. And so that night was important to me.

Two and one-half years passed, and before I knew it, I was home again. I remember hearing someone mention a name: Elisa Rogers, a young woman who was in charge of a university dance at the Hotel Utah. There was something special about that name. I decided I ought to meet her.

I remember the first time I saw her. As a favor for a friend of mine, I had gone to her home to pick up her sister. Elisa opened the door, and I stared. There she was, beautiful, five foot five, blue eyes, blonde hair.

She must have had a feeling also, because she said to me, "I know who you was."

She quickly realized she had made a grammatical error. To fully appreciate that, you have to remember that she was an English major.

Even after all of these years, she has remembered the embarrassment of that moment. Of course, my retelling this story doesn't make matters better, but I trust she will forgive me.

Six decades have intervened since that Christmas Eve in Oberndorf when I made those resolutions. Much has happened in the intervening years. My premonitions about playing football were right; I never played again. But I did graduate from the university. Even so, I've never regretted serving a mission and committing myself to serving the Lord. By doing so, my life has been filled with adventure, spiritual experiences, and joy that surpasses understanding.

Many of you may be at a time in your lives when perhaps you are feeling a little discouraged or alone. Perhaps you feel a little lost, maybe even a little afraid. Everyone has felt this way at one time or another. Everyone has wondered if his or her life will ultimately be a happy one.

More than two millennia ago, Aristotle suggested that everyone who lives has the same basic objective: to be happy (see *Nicomachean Ethics*, bk. 1, chaps. 4, 7). After 80 years of living, I've begun to pick up a few ideas about what it is that makes people happy and successful. I'd like to tell you five things that, if you will take them seriously and apply them to your own life, will bring you happiness, success, fulfillment, and the obtaining of an inheritance in the celestial kingdom.

Have faith in Heavenly Father

First, have faith in your Heavenly Father. He knows who you are. He listens to you when you pray. He loves you. He is mindful of you. He wants the best for you.

After serving for a time in Salzburg, I was transferred to Zürich, Switzerland. While I was there, Brother Julius Billeter, a member of the Church, approached me. He was a professional genealogist, and he told me he had seen quite a few Wirthlin names in his work. He offered to research my family lines. I wrote home, and my father thought it was a wonderful opportunity, so we hired him to begin.

A year later he handed me a book. It was 14 inches long, 18 inches wide, and weighed 13½ pounds. It was filled with nearly 6,000 names of my ancestors. It was a priceless volume that I treasured. Just before my missionary release, I packed the precious book in a steamer trunk along with some of my other possessions and shipped it

home. I prayed that it would arrive safely and that the precious family history would not be lost.

I arrived home before the trunk. Weeks passed. Still no trunk. I began to worry that the irreplaceable book had been lost. Six months after I had arrived in Salt Lake City, I received a call from the Union Pacific depot. A trunk had arrived for me. I rushed down to retrieve it, but when I saw it, my heart sank. The lock on the trunk had been broken.

I pried up the lid, and when I looked inside, my heart fell further. Everything had been soaked with seawater. What is more, I could tell someone had rifled through my belongings. Some things were missing.

I gingerly removed the layers of clothing, searching for my precious book. When I reached it, my heart overflowed with joy. Not only was it there, but the papers were completely dry! I know the book was preserved through divine intervention.

The Savior asked, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

"Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:29–31).

By the same token, if saving a book from seawater can be worthy of heavenly attention, how much more will your Heavenly Father be aware of your life and your needs?

On one occasion President Thomas S. Monson made this statement to me: "There is a guiding hand above all things. Often when things happen, it's not by accident. One day, when we look back at the seeming coincidences of our lives, we will realize that perhaps they weren't so coincidental after all."

The Lord knows your trials. He knows your victories. And if you will "trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding [but] in all thy ways acknowledge him, . . . he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5–6).

Set righteous goals

Second, set righteous goals. Many things will compete for your attention as you pursue your course through life. There will be endless

distractions. People and things will call to you, singing the siren songs of wealth, pleasure, and power.

Success is a seductive word. Thousands of books have been written on the subject. They promise money, freedom, leisure, and luxury. Thousands of people have provided as many surefire formulas for building wealth. For example, a three-step process for getting rich is attributed to J. Paul Getty: “Get up early. Work hard. Strike oil.”

Other perhaps more utilitarian formulas advocate variations on a singular theme: You must focus all your thoughts, feelings, and actions on your goals. You must want your goal with all the passion of your heart. You must focus every thought on your goal. You must concentrate all your energy into achieving your goal.

Of course, when applied to righteous ends, these methods may be of great worth. The problem is that in most cases the search for wealth, pleasure, and power leads to a place that may seem at first glance to be desirable, but the closer you get, the more you see it for what it is. The price for worldly success too often comes at the price of your birthright. Those who make that bargain will one day feel as Esau, who, after realizing what he had lost, “cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry” (Gen. 27:34).

Another trap we often fall into when we become obsessed with success is that we credit the strength of our arm and power of our thought and forget the Lord, who has blessed and prospered us.

Moses told the children of Israel that one day, “when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, . . .

“And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; . . .

“And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. . . .

“And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish” (Deut. 8:12, 13, 17, 19).

Do you think you can use the money you have earned in this life as currency in the next? Put your Heavenly Father first in your life. Commit to follow

Him and obey His commandments and strive every day to become more Christlike. Focus your efforts on obtaining heavenly riches. To do otherwise will ultimately end in disappointment and sorrow.

I am reminded of the Savior’s parable of the man who worked hard to build wealth. He had so many goods that he did not have a place big enough to hold them. So he built great barns where he could store them. His idea was that as soon as he had a safe place for all his resources, he could then retire and lead a life of leisure—eating, drinking, and being merry.

But just as he finished his buildings, “God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (Luke 12:20).

A sobering question the Savior asked those of His day echoes through the centuries to ours: “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Matt. 16:26).

Is money necessarily evil? The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob answered this question. He taught his people to “think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you.

“But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

“And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted” (Jacob 2:17–19).

Moses told people of his day, “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land . . . , thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother” (Deut. 15:7).

Work to accomplish your goals

Third, once you have established righteous goals, work with all your might to accomplish them. In the words of Elder David O. McKay (1873–1970), when he was in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Let us . . . realize that the *privilege to work* is a gift, that *power to work* is a blessing, that *love to work* is success” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1909, 94; emphasis in original).

Work is therapy for the soul. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of work. I believe that much idleness we experience comes from misunderstanding the Atonement of the Lord. We cannot simply sit around and do nothing and expect to be successful in spiritual or temporal things. We need to do all that is in our power to accomplish our goals, and the Lord will make up the difference.

Remember the words of President Gordon B. Hinckley: “The major work of the world is not done by geniuses. It is done by ordinary people, with balance in their lives, who have learned to work in an extraordinary manner” (“Our Fading Civility,” BYU commencement address, 25 Apr. 1996, 15).

Let me tell you about a remarkable individual who took responsibility for his life and made something of himself, despite humble beginnings. His name is Dr. Ben Carson. Dr. Carson was born and raised in the poor slums of Detroit. He grew up in a home that had no father. His mother took the responsibility on her shoulders of raising a family, and she passed this sense of responsibility on to her son.

Dr. Carson said his mother would often say to her children, “Do you have a brain?” If they answered yes, she would follow up with, “Then you could have thought your way out of that situation. It doesn’t matter what Johnny or Mary or anybody else did. You have a brain, so think your way out of problems.”

Dr. Carson related:

“I began to understand that I was in control, that I could go anywhere I wanted to go, and that I could do anything I wanted to do. The only person who really determined or limited my success was me. Once I understood that, the whole victim mentality went right out the window. I realized I didn’t have to sit around and wait for anybody to do anything for me” (“Seeing the Big Picture: An Interview with Ben Carson, M.D.,” *Saturday Evening Post*, July/Aug. 1999, 50–51).

Dr. Carson didn’t sit around and wait for somebody else to do something for him. He took control of his life. He studied hard in school and did well—well enough to go on and become a doctor. He eventually rose to become the director

of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Children’s Center in Baltimore, a world-famous hospital. In 1987 Dr. Carson performed the first successful operation to separate Siamese twins who were attached at the back of the head.

Socrates said, “The gods sell us all good things at the price of our labor” (Xenophon, *Recollections of Socrates*, bk. 2, chap. 1, sec. 20).

President Gordon B. Hinckley echoed that sentiment: “There is no substitute under the heavens for productive labor. It is the process by which dreams become realities. It is the process by which idle visions become dynamic achievements.

“It is work that spells the difference in life. It is stretching our minds and utilizing the skills of our hands that lift us from mediocrity” (in “Pres. Hinckley Shares 10 Beliefs with Chamber,” *Church News*, 31 Jan. 1998, 3).

Magnify your callings

Fourth, magnify your callings and be faithful members of the Church. When we go to church, we surround ourselves with others who share our commitment to obey the commandments and follow the Savior.

Some mistake the Church for a place where perfect people gather to say perfect things, think perfect thoughts, and feel perfect feelings. May I quickly dispel such a thought? The Church is a place where imperfect people gather to help and strengthen each other as we strive to return to our Heavenly Father. Every one of us will travel a different road in mortality. We will each progress at different rates. Temptations that afflict your brother may not trouble you at all.

Never look down on those who are less perfect than you. Never be upset because someone can’t speak as well as you, can’t lead as well as you, can’t serve as well as you, can’t sew or hoe or glow as well as you.

The Church is a mutual improvement society with the goal to help every son and daughter of God to return to His presence. One way you can measure your value in the kingdom of God is to ask yourself, “How well am I doing in helping others reach their potential? Do I support others in the Church, or do I tear them down?” If you’re tearing others down, you are tearing down the

kingdom of God. If you are building others, you are building the kingdom.

Another test of your worth in the kingdom is to ask yourself if you are actively engaged in magnifying your calling in the Church. When you magnify your calling, you don't merely go through the motions; you challenge yourself to serve in the place you are called with all your heart, might, mind, and strength.

If you do not have a calling in the Church, will you go to your bishop and tell him you are anxious to serve, willing to put your shoulder to the wheel?

As you faithfully serve, the Lord will be with you, and you will feel His Spirit and sense His guiding hand.

A number of years ago in general conference, President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles told the story of Joseph Millett, a little-known member of the Church.

He lived in the early days of the Church and came across the plains with other faithful members to tame a desert and to find a new home. In those first years, food was often scarce. Winters were particularly difficult, and often the days stretched further than the food that was stored.

Joseph Millett wrote in his journal: "One of my children came in and said that Brother Newton Hall's folks was out of bread, had none that day.

"I divided our flour in a sack to send up to Brother Hall. Just then Brother Hall came.

"Says I, 'Brother Hall, are you out of flour?'

"'Brother Millett, we have none.'

"'Well, Brother Hall, there is some in that sack. I have divided and was going to send it to you. Your children told mine that you was out.'

"Brother Hall began to cry. He said he had tried others, but could not get any. He went to the cedars and prayed to the Lord, and the Lord told him to go to Joseph Millett.

"'Well Brother Hall, you needn't bring this back. If the Lord sent you for it you don't owe me for it.' . . .

"You can't tell how good it made me feel to know that the Lord knew there was such a person as Joseph Millett" (Diary of Joseph Millett,

holograph, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; cited in Boyd K. Packer, "A Tribute to the Rank and File of the Church," *Ensign*, May 1980, 63).

This is a wonderful feeling—to know that the Lord trusts and loves you enough to want to use you in blessing the lives of others. Brothers and sisters, your Heavenly Father wants to use you for the same purpose. As you magnify your callings and go about doing good, I promise you the Lord will shower upon your heads blessings of satisfaction and joy so great that you will not have room enough to receive them.

Enjoy the journey

Fifth, enjoy the journey. The people of God are a joyful people. We understand there are times for sobriety, reverence, and devotion; we also understand that we possess the joyful principles of eternal life.

We have so much to smile about, be happy about, yes, even to laugh about.

So many of us are always waiting to be happy. "If only I could graduate, if only I could afford a car, if only I could get married. . . ." For too many, happiness is just over the horizon, never reachable. Every time we climb one hill, happiness beckons just beyond the next.

It is a terrible thing always to be waiting for tomorrow, always depending on tomorrow, always excusing our todays because we are sure that only in the future will we possess the things that will fulfill us.

Don't wait for tomorrow. Don't wait for the right job, the right house, the right salary, the right dress size. Be happy today. Be happy now.

Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as they make their minds up to be" (in John Cook, comp., *The Book of Positive Quotations* [1997], 7).

Make up your mind to be happy—even when you don't have money, even when you don't have a clear complexion, even when you don't have the Nobel Prize. Some of the happiest people I know have none of these things the world insists are necessary for satisfaction and joy. Why are they happy? I suppose it is because they don't listen

very well. Or they listen too well—to the things their hearts tell them. They glory in the beauty of the earth. They glory in the rivers and the canyons and the call of the meadowlark. They glory in the love of their families, the stumbling steps of a toddler, the wise and tender smile of the elderly.

They glory in honest labor. They glory in the scriptures. They glory in the presence of the Holy Ghost.

One thing I know for certain: the time we have here goes by far too quickly. Don't waste any more time sitting on the bench watching life pass you by.

Can I give you one other piece of advice? Be willing to laugh at yourself. When Elder Matthew Cowley (1897–1953) was first called into the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, President J. Reuben Clark (1871–1961) invited him into his office and counseled with him about his new assignment. President Clark was one of the great leaders and thinkers of the Church. He left a post as the United States ambassador to Mexico to accept a position in the First Presidency of the Church. He was a man long accustomed to bearing the weight of heavy responsibility.

As the meeting between Elder Cowley and President Clark drew to a close, President Clark said, "Now, my boy, kid [President Clark called all the members of the Quorum of the Twelve 'kid']—Now, kid, don't forget rule six." Elder Cowley asked, "What's rule six?" President Clark said, "Don't take yourself too darn seriously." Elder Cowley asked, "What are the other five?" President Clark said, "There aren't any" (*Matthew Cowley Speaks* [1954], 132–33).

Some people take themselves so seriously that they think they cannot feel complete until they find themselves. Some abandon family, occupation, and education in this quest to discover who they are.

George Bernard Shaw said, "Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself." Don't worry about searching for who you are; focus your energies on creating the kind of person you want to be! You will discover that as you pursue that journey you will not only find yourself, but chances are you will be pleasantly surprised and proud of the person you find along the way.

Do not procrastinate a minute longer. Every moment is precious. Determine now that you will make of your lives something remarkable!

Not long ago I had the opportunity to return with Sister Wirthlin to the place where I began my mission. My assignment was to organize the Salzburg Austria Stake. In a way it was a coming home for me. I remembered the days that I walked those cobblestone streets and wondered if there ever would be enough members to form a small ward. And here I was, years later, organizing a stake. My heart filled to overflowing as I looked over that congregation of faithful members and as I remembered the time I spent there.

As I look back on it now, I wonder if those times of trial and loneliness weren't instrumental in strengthening my character and heightening my desire to succeed. Those times of seeming failure may have been some of the most instrumental of my life, because they prepared me for greater things to come.

While there, I traveled with my wife to Oberndorf. We walked the same road my companion and I had walked so many years before. And there, before the majestic mountains and pristine beauty of that small Bavarian village, I related to her once again of the silent night when I described to my companion the woman I would marry.

The resolutions I made on that holy night in Oberndorf, Austria, have been a guiding force throughout my life. Although I still have much to learn and to accomplish, I've done my best to have faith in God; I've done my best to focus on the things that are important in life; I've done my best to work hard at righteous tasks; I've done my best to magnify the callings I've received in the Church; and I've done my best to enjoy the journey.

May you do the same as you create of your lives something worthy of your divine heritage.

I testify that the purpose of my mission in far-off Europe is the same now as it was then: to testify that we have a loving Heavenly Father and also His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, who gave us the great Atonement. I testify that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God who received the fulness of the everlasting gospel and who established the Lord's

Church on the earth in these latter days. I bear witness that Gordon B. Hinckley is our prophet, seer, and revelator today.

As you pursue righteous desires, the Lord will be with you and will direct your paths. He wants you to be happy and successful. He wants you to come unto Him. May you find peace and joy in your journey throughout life.

STUDY HELPS

- Do you agree with Aristotle's view that the object of life is to be happy? Explain your answer.
- According to Elder Wirthlin, what are "five things that, if you will take them seriously and apply them to your own life, will bring you happiness, success, fulfillment, and . . . an inheritance in the celestial kingdom"?
- Make a personal list of things that bring you joy and happiness. Explain how these things might help you maintain a positive or cheerful attitude as a leader.
- Find a scripture that brings you cheer.

PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. . . .

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:19–21, 33).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders should plan their time with eternity in mind.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Leaders should place a higher priority on eternal life than on the things of this world.
2. Balance is an important attribute of Church and family leaders.
3. Leaders must learn to budget their time.

CONCEPT 1. LEADERS SHOULD PLACE A HIGHER PRIORITY ON ETERNAL LIFE THAN ON THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD.

COMMENTARY

During His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: . . .

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19, 21).

Elder Delbert L. Stapley, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, explained: “The renewal and sanctification of our bodies by the power of the Holy Ghost is obtained by living the gospel. Our treasures of good works that precede us are building our eternal mansions. To project one’s thinking into the eternities under the influence of the spirit will stretch one’s mind and give clear vision of God’s plan, which will help chart a true course back to his presence. Keep eternity always before you here in mortality and base your acts and judgments and decisions upon God’s eternal laws. We should educate ourselves not only for

time but also for eternity” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1967, 75).

Elder M. Russell Ballard, who was then a member of the Seventy, counseled: “Remember, eternity is now, not a vague, distant future. We prepare each day, right now, for eternal life. If we are not preparing for eternal life, we are preparing for something else, perhaps something far less” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1978, 100; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 66).

President Harold B. Lee, who was then a Counselor in the First Presidency, advised: “Most men do not set priorities to guide them in allocating their time, and most men forget that the first priority should be to maintain their own spiritual and physical strength. Then comes their family, then the Church, and then their professions—and all need time” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams [1996], 615).

Elder Ballard, after he became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, added this counsel: “First, think about your life and set your priorities. Find some quiet time regularly to think deeply about where you are going and what you will need to do

to get there. Jesus, our exemplar, often ‘withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed’ (Luke 5:16). We need to do the same thing occasionally to rejuvenate ourselves spiritually as the Savior did. Write down the tasks you would like to accomplish each day. Keep foremost in mind the sacred covenants you have made with the Lord as you write down your daily schedules” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 15; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 14).

TEACHING IDEA

Read with students Matthew 6:19–21; Luke 12:13–21. Discuss what these scriptures teach us about the relative importance of temporal and eternal things (see also the commentary).

Have students list activities and concerns that compete for their time. Their list might include studying the scriptures, giving service, working, doing things with friends, spending time with family, exercising, doing school work, and recreating. Have students rank each activity on the list from most to least important, and discuss their criteria for ranking.

Be sure students understand that at times we may need to set aside even high priorities to meet an emergency, accomplish a worthwhile task, or serve others. Similarly, priorities that may seem less important from an eternal perspective, such as schoolwork, may be very important in preparing us for future service in the kingdom. Through all our priorities we should keep our lives centered in Jesus Christ and the gospel.

CONCEPT 2. BALANCE IS AN IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTE OF CHURCH AND FAMILY LEADERS.

COMMENTARY

President Ezra Taft Benson wrote: “Of Jesus’ preparation for His mission, the scripture states that He ‘increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man’ (Luke 2:52). This encompasses four main areas for goals: spiritual, mental, physical, and social. ‘Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?’ asked the Master, and He answered, ‘Verily I say unto you, even as I am’ (3 Nephi 27:27). Now, there is a lifetime goal—to walk in His steps, to perfect ourselves in every virtue as He has done” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 383–84).

Elder Spencer W. Kimball, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, testified: “The Savior had a pleasing personality, he was kind, he was pleasant, he was understanding, he never went off on tangents, he was perfectly balanced. No eccentricities could be found in his life” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 13).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “Given the uneven seasons of life, the Lord desires balance in His disciples as well as in the Church collectively. We cannot be all sail and no anchor. Moreover, as we grow, ‘the root and the top’ should be ‘equal in strength,’ providing a capacity to endure both heat and storm (Jacob 5:66)” (*If Thou Endure It Well* [1996], 122).

TEACHING IDEA

Have a student read Luke 2:52 aloud. List on the board the words in this verse that describe the ways Jesus Christ grew (*wisdom, stature, favour with God and man*). Next to these words write *mental, physical, spiritual, and social* (see the commentary). Have the students discuss the challenges of maintaining balance in these areas.

Consider discussing the idea that sometimes we temporarily lead an “unbalanced” life because of circumstances. For example, university students may spend an unusually large portion of their time studying. While this may be necessary for a time, students should not totally neglect developing other areas of their life and personality. A bishop’s schedule may seem “unbalanced” at times in the sense that his ward duties may keep him from spending as much time as he would like with his family. However, he must do all in his power to spend the necessary time with them and then rely on the Lord to help him meet their needs.

CONCEPT 3. LEADERS MUST LEARN TO BUDGET THEIR TIME.

COMMENTARY

Church leaders encourage us to establish priorities that are consistent with gospel principles. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Place the Savior, His teachings, and His church at the center of your life. Make sure that all decisions comply with this standard”

(in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 34). Later Elder Scott counseled: “Make your Eternal Father and His Beloved Son the most important priority in your life—more important than life itself, more important than a beloved companion or children or anyone on earth. Make their will your central desire. Then all that you need for happiness will come to you” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 34).

On another occasion Elder Scott warned: “Part of [our] testing [in mortality] is to have so many seemingly interesting things to do that we can forget the main purposes for being here. Satan works very hard so that the essential things won’t happen. . . .

“ . . . In quiet moments when you think about it, you recognize what is critically important in life and what isn’t. Be wise and don’t let good things crowd out those that are essential. . . .

“ . . . Study the things you do in your discretionary time, that time you are free to control. Do you find that it is centered in those things that are of highest priority and of greatest importance? Or do you unconsciously, consistently fill it with trivia and activities that are not of enduring value nor help you accomplish the purpose for which you came to earth? Think of the long view of life, not just what’s going to happen today or tomorrow. *Don’t give up what you most want in life for something you think you want now.*

“The essential things must be accomplished during your testing period on earth. They must have first priority. They must not be sacrificed for lesser things, even though they are good and worthwhile accomplishments” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 78–79; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 53–54).

Most of us feel at times that we do not have enough time to do all we should do or would like to do. Church callings, family obligations, work, hobbies, and so forth all compete for our attention. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, counseled us to use our agency “in such a way that we do the things that matter most, so that these things are not at the mercy of the things that matter least” (*Deposition of a Disciple* [1976], 58). Church and family leaders need to center their lives on heavenly treasures so they can help others do the same.

TEACHING IDEA

We budget our time for the same reason we budget our money: to make sure we have enough to spend for that which we most need and want.

Explain that the first step in managing our time is to figure out how much we have to spend. Ask students how many hours there are in one week (168). Ask students what activities they *have* to do each week (working, going to school, sleeping, eating, and so forth), and have them list them on a piece of paper. Have them write next to each item how many hours they spend at that activity weekly and subtract it from the total. For example, if they spend 40 hours a week working, they have 128 hours left. If they spend 8 hours a day sleeping, then they have 72 hours a week left. If they spend 3 hours at church each Sunday, they have 69 hours left.

When students arrive at a total, ask them what activities they *like* to do in their free time, and have them write them on their paper. Have them write next to each item how much time they think they should devote to it weekly and subtract it from the total. (If some of the activities they want to do were also included on their lists of things they have to do, do not have them subtract those hours a second time.)

Point out that the activities we value most do not necessarily take the most time. For example, we might only spend a few minutes on a given day in prayer, but prayer might be the most important thing we do that day.

Now give each student a generic weekly calendar. Have the students look at their list of activities they *have* to do and mark them on the calendar. Then have them write the activities they would *like* to do in the space that remains.

Stress the importance of giving the activities they value most the highest priority. Suggest that they budget time each week for the Church’s goals of proclaiming the gospel, redeeming the dead, and perfecting the Saints.

Tell students that as leaders we need to organize our time so that we can live according to gospel principles and help others do likewise.

Explain that a calendar can help them remember appointments and other commitments

and balance all the activities they value. Point out that a calendar is just one way to budget time, and encourage them to find a way that works for them.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder M. Russell Ballard
*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*
“Keeping Life’s Demands in
Balance,” in *Conference
Report*, Apr. 1987, 14–18; or
Ensign, May 1987, 13–16

Reexamine life’s priorities

My dear brothers and sisters, since last general conference, I have felt in my own life the power of priesthood blessings and the power of the faith and prayers of Church members. For many years, I have given blessings to others. I have fasted and prayed for their well-being and have exercised my faith for their recovery. Recently, during a serious illness, I was the recipient of such faith, prayers, and blessings. I thank you, brothers and sisters, for the prayers that you have offered in my behalf.

One of my colleagues said to me that some good would come from this illness. He suggested that it is good, on occasion, for everyone to face adversity, especially if it causes introspection that enables us to openly and honestly assess our lives. That is what I did.

The night before my surgery, my doctors talked about the possibility of cancer. When I was left alone, my mind filled with thoughts of my family and of my ministry. I found comfort in the ordinances of the gospel that bind me to my family if we are faithful. I realized that I needed to rearrange some of my priorities to accomplish the things that matter most to me.

Sometimes we need a personal crisis to reinforce in our minds what we really value and cherish. The scriptures are filled with examples of people facing crises before learning how to better serve God and others. Perhaps if you, too, search your hearts and courageously assess the priorities in your life, you may discover, as I did, that you need a better balance among your priorities.

All of us must come to an honest, open self-examination, an awareness within as to who and what we want to be.

Reviewing covenants helps us balance life’s demands

As most of you know, coping with the complex and diverse challenges of everyday life, which is not an easy task, can upset the balance and harmony we seek. Many good people who care a great deal are trying very hard to maintain balance, but they sometimes feel overwhelmed and defeated.

A mother of four small children said: “There is no balance at all in my life. I am completely consumed in trying to raise my children. I hardly have time to think of anything else!”

A young father, who felt the pressure of being the family provider, said: “My new business requires all of my time. I realize that I am neglecting my family and church duties, but if I can just get through one more year I will make enough money, and then things will settle down.”

A high school student said, “We hear so many contrasting views that it is hard to always know what is right and what is wrong.”

How often have we heard this one? “No one knows better than I do how important exercise is, but I just have no time in my day for exercising.”

A single parent said: “I find it next to impossible to accomplish all that I need to do to manage my home and lead my family. In fact, sometimes I think the world expects too much of me. Regardless of how hard I work, I never will live up to everyone’s expectations.”

Another mother of four remarked, “My struggle is between self-esteem, confidence, and feelings of self-worth versus guilt, depression, and discouragement for not doing everything I am told we must do to attain the celestial kingdom.”

Brothers and sisters, we all face these kinds of struggles from time to time. They are common human experiences. Many people have heavy demands upon them stemming from parental, family, employment, church, and civic responsibilities. Keeping everything in balance can be a real problem.

A periodic review of the covenants we have made with the Lord will help us with our priorities and with balance in our lives. This review will help us see where we need to repent and change our lives to ensure that we are worthy of the promises that accompany our covenants and sacred ordinances. Working out our own salvation requires good planning and a deliberate, valiant effort.

I have a few suggestions that I hope will be valuable to those of you concerned with balancing life's demands. These suggestions are very basic; their concepts can easily be overlooked if you are not careful. You will need a strong commitment and personal discipline to incorporate them into your life.

Use an eternal perspective to set priorities

First, think about your life and set your priorities. Find some quiet time regularly to think deeply about where you are going and what you will need to do to get there. Jesus, our exemplar, often “withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed” (Luke 5:16). We need to do the same thing occasionally to rejuvenate ourselves spiritually as the Savior did. Write down the tasks you would like to accomplish each day. Keep foremost in mind the sacred covenants you have made with the Lord as you write down your daily schedules.

Set reasonable short-term goals

Second, set short-term goals that you can reach. Set goals that are well balanced—not too many nor too few, and not too high nor too low. Write down your attainable goals and work on them according to their importance. Pray for divine guidance in your goal setting.

You recall that Alma said he would like to be an angel so he could “speak with the trump of God, . . . to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people!” (Alma 29:1). He then said, “But behold, I am a man, and do sin in my wish; for I ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me. . . .

“ . . . Why should I desire more than to perform the work to which I have been called?” (Alma 29:3, 6).

Become financially responsible and secure

Third, everyone faces financial challenges in life. Through wise budgeting, control your real needs and measure them carefully against your many wants in life. Far too many individuals and families have incurred too much debt. Be careful of the many attractive offers to borrow money. It is much easier to borrow money than it is to pay it back. There are no shortcuts to financial security. There are no get-rich-quick schemes that work. Perhaps no one needs the principle of balance in their lives more than those who are driven toward accumulating “things” in this world.

Do not trust your money to others without a thorough evaluation of any proposed investment. Our people have lost far too much money by trusting their assets to others. In my judgment, we never will have balance in our lives unless our finances are securely under control.

The prophet Jacob said to his people: “Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy. Hearken diligently unto me, and remember the words which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness” (2 Nephi 9:51).

Brothers and sisters, remember to always pay a full tithing.

Build close relationships with family and friends

Fourth, stay close to your spouse, children, relatives, and friends. They will help you keep a balance in your life. In a recent study by the Church, adults in the United States were asked to identify a time when they were very happy and to describe the experience. They were also asked to describe a time when they were very unhappy. For most people, one thing that had made them the most happy or the most sad was their personal relationships with others. Much less important were their personal health, employment, money, and other material things. Build relationships with your family and friends through open and honest communication.

A good marriage and good family relationships can be maintained through gentle, loving, thoughtful communication. Remember that often a glance, a wink, a nod, or a touch will say more than words. A sense of humor and good listening are also vital parts of good communication.

Study the scriptures

Fifth, study the scriptures. They offer one of the best sources we have to keep in touch with the Spirit of the Lord. One of the ways I have gained my sure knowledge that Jesus is the Christ is through my study of the scriptures. President Ezra Taft Benson has called upon members of the Church to make the study of the Book of Mormon a daily habit and a lifetime pursuit. The Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy is good counsel for each of us. He wrote, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:15–16).

Rest, exercise, and relax

Sixth, many people, including me, have difficulty finding the time for sufficient rest, exercise, and relaxation. We must schedule time on our daily calendars for these activities if we are to enjoy a healthy and balanced life. Good physical appearance enhances our dignity and self-respect.

"Teach one another the gospel"

Seventh, the prophets have taught repeatedly that families should teach one another the gospel, preferably in a weekly family home evening. This family practice, if we are not very careful, can slowly drift away from us. We must not lose this special opportunity to "teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom" (D&C 88:77), which will lead families to eternal life.

Satan is always working to destroy our testimonies, but he will not have the power to tempt or disturb us beyond our strength to resist when we are studying the gospel and living its commandments.

Pray often

My last suggestion is to pray often as individuals and as families. Parents need to exercise the discipline required to lead out and motivate children to join together for regular family prayers. Our youth can know the right decisions to make each day through constant, sincere prayer.

The prophet Alma summarized the importance of prayer in these words: "But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering" (Alma 13:28). When I am in tune spiritually, I find that I can balance everything in my life much more easily.

Do all things in wisdom and order

I realize, brothers and sisters, that other suggestions could be added to these. However, I believe that when we focus on a few basic objectives, we are more likely to be able to manage the many demands that life makes on us. Remember, too much of anything in life can throw us off-balance. At the same time, too little of the important things can do the same thing. King Benjamin counseled "that all these things are done in wisdom and order" (Mosiah 4:27).

Often the lack of clear direction and goals can waste away our time and energy and contribute to imbalance in our lives. A life that gets out of balance is much like a car tire that is out of balance. It will make the operation of the car rough and unsafe. Tires in perfect balance can give a smooth and comfortable ride. So it is with life. The ride through mortality can be smoother for us when we strive to stay in balance. Our main goal should be to seek "immortality and eternal life" (Moses 1:39). With this as our goal, why not eliminate from our lives the things that clamor for and consume our thoughts, feelings, and energies without contributing to our reaching that goal?

Help rather than hinder

Just a word to Church leaders: Be very careful that what you ask from members will help them

attain eternal life. For Church members to be able to balance their lives, Church leaders must be sure they do not require so much from members that they have no time to accomplish their personal and family goals.

Do your best each day

Not long ago, one of my children said, “Dad, sometimes I wonder if I will ever make it.” The answer I gave to her is the same as I would give to you if you have had similar feelings. Just do the very best you can each day. Do the basic things and, before you realize it, your life will be full of spiritual understanding that will confirm to you that your Heavenly Father loves you. When a person knows this, then life will be full of purpose and meaning, making balance easier to maintain.

Live every day with joy in your heart, brothers and sisters. I humbly testify that life can be wonderful, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- What can we do to encourage ourselves and those we lead to assess our priorities and seek balance in our lives?
- What role can adversity play in motivating us to assess our lives?
- What do you think should be the highest five or six priorities in your life? Should these priorities change with age and experience? Why or why not? Which priorities are flexible?
- Make a list of secular goals, then spiritual. Combine the lists according to priority. What lessons can we learn from this exercise?
- What danger is there in pursuing spiritual goals while ignoring physical ones?
- Discuss King Benjamin’s counsel that “all . . . things [be] done in wisdom and order” (Mosiah 4:27).
- How can we as Church leaders ensure that all programs and activities help strengthen families and support parents in their duty to teach the gospel in their home, rather than detracting from that duty?

HONORING PRIESTHOOD AND WOMANHOOD

“Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Church and family leaders should work in harmony with priesthood principles.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. The kingdom of God is governed by the priesthood.
2. We should honor the priesthood, and we should honor womanhood.
3. Leaders should respect those called to preside in the Lord’s kingdom.

CONCEPT 1. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS GOVERNED BY THE PRIESTHOOD.

COMMENTARY

President David O. McKay taught: “The greatest safeguard we have for unity and strength in the Church is found in the priesthood, by honoring and respecting it. Oh, my brethren—presidents of stakes, bishops of wards, and all who hold the priesthood—God bless you in your leadership, in your responsibility to guide, to bless, to comfort the people whom you have been appointed to preside over and to visit. Guide them to go to the Lord and seek inspiration so to live that they may rise above the low and the mean, and live in the spiritual realm” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 6).

Elder M. Russell Ballard, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, explained: “Holding the priesthood is more than just a great blessing. It also carries with it significant responsibilities such as watching over the Church; honoring all women, especially our wives, our mothers, our daughters, our sisters; visiting the home of each member, exhorting each ‘to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties’ [D&C 20:47] and to ‘stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places’ [Mosiah 18:9]” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 50–51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 37).

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve testified: “To all mankind we proclaim these everlasting truths: ‘The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world’ (D&C 107:8). This power holds ‘the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church’ (D&C 107:18). May we fully honor that priesthood” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 53; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 41).

TEACHING IDEA

Invite two or three students who work for organizations (for example stores or companies) to describe how they are organized. How do the people in the organization get the authority to do their jobs?

Ask how the Church is structured and where it received its authority.

Consider having a volunteer draw a diagram of how a ward, branch, or stake is organized. Have the volunteer explain the diagram. Or you could invite a returned missionary to describe how a mission is structured and the advantages of that organization for doing the Lord’s work.

Ask:

- How do priesthood leaders at the different levels watch over the members?

- How successful would the Church be if priesthood authority were suddenly removed? Why?

Explain that from time to time the Lord inspires the Church's leaders to make organizational changes to meet the needs of the expanding Church.

CONCEPT 2. WE SHOULD HONOR THE PRIESTHOOD, AND WE SHOULD HONOR WOMANHOOD.

COMMENTARY

Elder Russell M. Nelson explained: "This is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He who stands at the head of His restored Church so ordered His priesthood 'that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world' (D&C 1:20). Remarkable! He chose to honor us with His priesthood. So we honor Him by honoring His priesthood—both its power and those who bear it. By so doing, men, women, and children throughout the world will be blessed. Honoring the priesthood fosters respect, respect promotes reverence, and reverence invites revelation" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 49; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 38).

President N. Eldon Tanner, who was a Counselor in the First Presidency, said: "No man, young or old, who holds the priesthood of God can honor that priesthood without honoring and respecting womanhood. Any young man should be prepared to protect a woman's virtue with his life, if necessary, and never be guilty of lusting after a woman or doing anything that would degrade her or cause her to lose her virtue. Every young woman has a perfect right to feel safe in going out with a young man holding the priesthood, knowing that he will respect and protect her in every way" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1973, 124; or *Ensign*, July 1973, 95).

President Spencer W. Kimball gave the following reminder: "Tonight I plan to speak to the priesthood brethren, assembled in hundreds of locations around the world, and remind them that 'we have all been blessed with special women in our lives who have had a deep and lasting influence upon us. Their contribution has been and is important to us [brethren] and is something which will be of everlasting value to us.' (See *Ensign*,

Nov. 1979, p. 48.) I wish to emphasize that thought this morning. I cannot impress upon all of us too strongly the high place of honor and respect our wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters hold in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 6–7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 5).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask the sisters what men should do to honor their priesthood, and discuss their answers. Ask the brethren how priesthood holders can honor womanhood.

What blessings come to women because of priesthood authority? (Answers should include gospel ordinances.)

Have students read D&C 121:34–46 and list principles of leadership that apply to all Church and family leaders.

CONCEPT 3. LEADERS SHOULD RESPECT THOSE CALLED TO PRESIDE IN THE LORD'S KINGDOM.

COMMENTARY

President David O. McKay counseled: "Recognize those who preside over you and, when necessary, seek their advice. The Savior himself recognized this authority on earth. You will remember the experience that Paul had just as he neared Damascus with papers in his pocket to arrest all who believed in Jesus Christ. A light suddenly shone about him, and he heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?'"

"And Saul said: 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.' (Acts 9:4, 6.)

"He could have told Saul in a few words what he should do, but there was a branch of the Church in Damascus, presided over by a humble man named Ananias, and Jesus recognized that authority. . . .

"Here is a lesson for all of us in this Church. Let us, too, recognize the local authority. The bishop may be a humble man. Some of you may think you are superior to him, and you may be, but he is given authority direct from our Father

in heaven. Recognize it. Seek his advice and the advice of your stake president. If they cannot answer your difficulties or your problems, they will write to the General Authorities and get the advice needed. Recognition of authority is an important principle” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 6–7).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask if anyone has attended a general conference. If someone has, ask what the congregation does when the President of the Church enters. (They stand and become quiet until he takes his seat.) Why does the congregation respond this way?

Discuss the following questions:

- Why would it be inappropriate to seek counsel from a friend’s priesthood leader in another ward or stake, rather than from your own?
- What lessons can we learn from Paul’s experience in Acts 9:6? (see the commentary).
- The stake president announces that a new bishop will be sustained in your ward next Sunday. You know several members of your ward you feel would make excellent bishops. To your surprise, the stake president calls a man you did not think of as a strong leader. What should you do? Why is it important to always sustain those the Lord calls?
- A friend of yours has a doctrinal question and plans to write a General Authority because he thinks that will be the best source for an answer. What is wrong with that plan?
- Why is the adage true: “A great leader is also a great follower”?

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Russell M. Nelson
*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*
*“Honoring the Priesthood,”
in Conference Report, Apr.
1993, 49–53; or Ensign,
May 1993, 38–41*

Honoring the priesthood

Brethren, relatively little is written on my subject.¹ Yet we are all expected to know about it. I speak of honoring the priesthood.

This is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He who stands at the head of His restored Church so ordered His priesthood “that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world” (D&C 1:20). Remarkable! He chose to honor us with His priesthood. So we honor Him by honoring His priesthood—both its power and those who bear it. By so doing, men, women, and children throughout the world will be blessed. Honoring the priesthood fosters respect, respect promotes reverence, and reverence invites revelation.²

President Ezra Taft Benson has specifically asked us to follow proper priesthood protocol—principles, he noted, “that many of us have learned by observation while listening to senior brethren.” He said, “Protocol is a long-established practice prescribing complete deference to . . . an order of correct procedure.”³ I will quote from President Benson and other leaders because, as you will note, much of my message pertains to that protocol.

Types of organizations

Differences exist in practice and organization between the Lord’s Church and man-made institutions. Men and women may form associations for and among themselves and be governed by stipulations that are mutually acceptable. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, is neither a democracy nor a republic. His is a kingdom—the kingdom of God on earth. His is a hierarchical church, with ultimate authority at the top. The Lord directs His anointed servants. They testify to all the world that God has again spoken. The heavens have been opened. A living linkage has been formed between heaven and earth in our day.

That supreme authority is supported by a firm foundation following an organizational pattern established anciently. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, with Apostles and prophets and all the gifts, powers, and blessings that characterized the Church in earlier days (see 1 Corinthians 12:28).

Leaders and titles

Secular and spiritual institutions have differing patterns of leadership. Man-made organizations are governed by officers with titles that designate rank or accomplishment. A military officer, judge, senator, doctor, or professor is properly addressed

by title. We appropriately honor individuals who have attained such positions.

In contrast, the kingdom of God is governed by the authority of the priesthood. It is not conferred for honor, but for a ministry of service. Priesthood titles are not created by man; neither are they for adornment, nor do they express mastership. They denote appointment to service in the work of the Lord. We are called, sustained, and ordained—not by ourselves but “by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof” (Articles of Faith 1:5; see also Hebrews 5:4).

Titles pertaining to the holy priesthood deserve our utmost care and respect. Each member of the First Presidency is addressed and spoken of as “President” (see D&C 107:22). The title *President* is also used when referring to the presidency of a stake or mission, and in reference to a quorum or branch president. The title *Apostle* is sacred. It has been given of God and belongs only to those who have been called and ordained as “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23). An Apostle speaks in the name of Him whose special witness he is. This hallowed title is not used in ordinary forms of address. The preferred title for one of the Twelve is *Elder* or *Brother*.

The title *bishop* is also expressive of presidency; the bishop is the president of the Aaronic Priesthood in his ward and the presiding high priest of the ward organization. Reverently we refer to him as “the bishop.”

Elder is a sacred title shared by all who bear the Melchizedek Priesthood.

General counsel

May I offer counsel of a general nature, first with comments about General Authorities. We recognize them as instruments in the hand of the Lord, yet realize that they are ordinary human beings. They require haircuts, laundry services, and occasional reminders just like anyone else. President Benson once shared with us a story to illustrate this. He said:

“Orson F. Whitney . . . was a great man to concentrate. One day when he was traveling by train, he was so preoccupied that he did not notice

the train pass the station where he was to get off. So he had to [be driven] back to where he should have been. Meanwhile the stake president waited and waited. . . . Finally when he decided that something had more than likely happened to Brother Whitney and he was not going to make it, they commenced the meeting. As Elder Whitney approached, he was greeted by the opening hymn, which was ‘Ye Simple Souls Who Stray.’”⁴

We honor such a man because of his extraordinary calling. His official acts are valid on earth and in heaven. Well do I remember the first time I met one of the General Authorities. It was a feeling beyond description. Though I was but a boy, immediately—almost instinctively—I rose to my feet. Even now I feel that same way when one of the Brethren enters the room. A General Authority is an oracle of God.

Often we speak of *keys* of priesthood authority. Fifteen living men—the First Presidency and the Twelve—have been ordained as Apostles and have had *all* keys of priesthood authority conferred upon them. President Gordon B. Hinckley recently explained:

“Only the President of the Church has the right to exercise [those keys] in their fulness. He may delegate the exercise of various of them to one or more of his Brethren. . . .

“Such agency has been given by President Benson to his Counselors and to the Twelve according to various responsibilities delegated to them.”⁵

Under assignment from the First Presidency and the Twelve, General Authorities confer the appropriate keys upon presidents of stakes and of missions, who in turn confer the needed keys upon bishops and upon quorum and branch presidents.

Assigned to each man who bears the priesthood is a loving leader because “mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion” (D&C 132:8).

That order also defines bounds of revelation. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves.”⁶ That same principle precludes receiving revelation for anyone outside one’s defined circle of responsibility.

Honoring the priesthood also means to honor your personal call to serve. A few do's and don'ts may be helpful:

- **Do** learn to take counsel. Seek direction from file leaders and receive it willingly.
- **Don't** speak ill of Church leaders.
- **Don't** covet a calling or position.
- **Don't** second-guess who should or should not have been called.
- **Don't** refuse an opportunity to serve.
- **Don't** resign from a call. **Do** inform leaders of changing circumstances in your life, knowing that leaders will weigh all factors when prayerfully considering the proper timing of your release.

The one who extends *and* the one who receives a call are both under obligation of accountability. I quote from Elder James E. Talmage:

“Those through whom the call came to him . . . are as surely held answerable for their acts as is he for his; and of every one shall be demanded a strict and personal accounting for his stewardship, a report in full of service or of neglect, of use or abuse in the administration of the trust to him committed.”⁷

Some aspects of the priesthood are *not* related to position or title. Authority to administer a priesthood blessing, for example, is dependent only upon ordination and worthiness. The Lord would not withhold blessings from any of His children for want of a priesthood holder with a particular calling. Every elder in the Church holds the same priesthood as the President of the Church.

Brethren, please remember: the highest degree of glory is available to you only through that order of the priesthood linked to the new and everlasting covenant of marriage (see D&C 131:1–4). Therefore, your first priority in honoring the priesthood is to honor your eternal companion.

Specific counsel

Now for counsel more specific. **Husbands and fathers:** with your dear partner, shape attitudes at home. Establish a pattern of prayer. Pray regularly and vocally for your priesthood and auxiliary leaders, both local and general. Your manners of courtesy at home and of reverence in the chapel

will be copied by members of your family. Help your loved ones follow proper channels when they seek guidance. Teach that counsel should be obtained from trusted parents and leaders on a local level, not from General Authorities. In the past two decades, the First Presidency has sent out essentially the same letter six times to reaffirm that policy.

Fathers, you understand the principle of *temporal* self-reliance and try to provide for a year's supply, stored at home. Please also consider the need for *spiritual* food and self-reliance—not just for a year, but for a lifetime—also stored at home. A worthy father should have first opportunity to administer blessings to members of his family. As time moves on, his sons may then draw from that spiritual reservoir, worthy to administer to their own families and to their parents.

Now to **young men** who bear the Aaronic (or preparatory) Priesthood: if you honor it and prepare for and are worthy of a call to be a missionary, I promise that you will “speak in the name of God the Lord” and bring His light to searching souls. To them you will be as a ministering angel, remembered with love forever. (See D&C 13.)

Though I next speak to our beloved **presidents and bishops**, the principles apply to all. When one who presides over you comes into a meeting where you have been presiding, please consult with him immediately for instruction. Determine his desires. Be certain to allow adequate time for a message from him. A poignant illustration was once related by Elder James E. Faust:

“I learned some time ago of the distress felt by members of a stake in this valley when their stake presidency was reorganized. The presiding officer was one of the most venerated and unique Apostles in all the history of the Church. [Elder] LeGrand Richards was then in his nineties but was sharp and alert. During the conference, the local people who were called on to speak took most of the time. As a result, Elder Richards had only ten or fifteen minutes remaining in the meeting. What did he do? Go overtime? No. He bore a brief testimony and closed the meeting on time.

“The members of the stake did not necessarily want to go overtime. . . . They were upset, however, because the local membership, who would have

other opportunities to hear from their local leaders, would never again, and in fact never did again, have an opportunity to hear from this venerable Apostle. In short, the speakers did not respect the presiding officer.”⁸

When a presiding General Authority has spoken, no one speaks following him. After the meeting has concluded, presidents and bishops, remain at the side of your file leader until excused. He may be impressed to give additional teaching or direction. And you may also prevent problems. For example, if a member asks a question of your leader that should not be directed to him, you are there to respond.

Now for comments about the **stake high council**. It has no president. It has no autonomy and meets, even when divided into committees, only upon call from the stake presidency. Although high councilors may be seated in the order of their call to the council, no member has seniority over another.

In contrast, **seniority** is honored among ordained Apostles—even when entering or leaving a room. President Benson related to us this account:

“Some [years] ago Elder Haight extended a special courtesy to President Romney while they were in the upper room in the temple. President Romney was lingering behind for some reason, and [Elder Haight] did not want to precede him out the door. When President Romney signaled [for him] to go first, Elder Haight replied, ‘No, President, you go first.’

“President Romney replied with his humor, ‘What’s the matter, David? Are you afraid I’m going to steal something?’”⁹

Such deference from a junior to a senior Apostle is recorded in the New Testament. When Simon Peter and John the Beloved ran to investigate the report that the body of their crucified Lord had been taken from the sepulcher, John, being younger and swifter, arrived first, yet he did not enter. He deferred to the senior Apostle, who entered the sepulcher first. (See John 20:2–6.) Seniority in the Apostleship has long been a means by which the Lord selects His presiding high priest.

Rebuke and repentance

Brethren, these matters are important. More than a century and a half ago, the Lord issued a sharp rebuke to His people. These are His words:

“Verily, condemnation resteth upon you, who are appointed to lead my Church, . . . and also upon the Church; and there must needs be a repentance and a reformation among you, in all things, in your examples before the Church and before the world, in all your manners, habits and customs, and salutations one toward another; rendering unto every man the respect due the office, calling, and priesthood whereunto I, the Lord, have appointed and ordained you.”¹⁰

If any among us are also guilty of treating as trivial such things that are sacred, we may repent and resolve to honor the priesthood and those to whom the Lord has entrusted its keys.

Brethren, to all mankind we proclaim these everlasting truths: “The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world” (D&C 107:8). This power holds “the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church” (D&C 107:18). May we fully honor that priesthood, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. The reader may wish to consult James E. Talmage, “The Honor and Dignity of Priesthood,” in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–75), 4:305–9.
2. President George Q. Cannon said: “[Honoring the President of the Church] will cause us to draw nearer unto the Father and live so that we shall receive revelation from him for ourselves, that the knowledge of the Spirit shall be in our hearts, that the voice of the true Shepherd will be known to our ears, that when we hear it we will know it. . . . This is the privilege of the Latter-day Saints, and the man and woman in this Church who does not live so as to enjoy this privilege comes short of being what he should be” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 19:110).

3. "The Unique Commission of a General Authority" (address delivered at a General Authority training meeting, 2 Oct. 1985), p. 5.
4. "Commission," p. 1.
5. In Conference Report, Oct. 1992, p. 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, p. 54.
6. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938), p. 21.
7. *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:306.
8. James E. Faust, "A Seventy Is a General Authority" (address delivered at a special training session for the Seventy, 29 Sept. 1987), p. 4.
9. "Commission," p. 9.
10. *History of the Church*, 2:177.

STUDY HELPS

- If you are presiding over a meeting and an authority who presides over you suddenly joins the meeting, what should you do?
- Analyze the following statement: "Local Church leaders are called to positions both for what they can contribute and for what they can learn through their service."
- What is meant by *priesthood keys*. Who determines who holds what keys?
- What reasons can you see for each item in Elder Nelson's list of *do's* and *don'ts*?
- Which of the following statements do you think is true? (Explain your answers.)
 - Priesthood leaders are called to lead the people.
 - Priesthood leaders are called to serve the people.
 - Priesthood leaders are regular people like you and me.
- Discuss the leadership role of women in the Church.
- What qualities do good mothers have that can influence children in positive ways? What leadership role does motherhood play in the Lord's kingdom?
- Discuss Alma 56:47–48 as it relates to the impact of mothers on their children.
- Name sisters who have had a positive impact in your life (for example Primary leaders, Sunday School teachers, or visiting teachers), and describe your experiences with them.

HELPING OTHERS BECOME ANXIOUSLY ENGAGED

“For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward.

“Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

“For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves” (D&C 58:26–28).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders may need to help those they serve become “anxiously engaged in a good cause.”

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Leaders may need to encourage those they serve to become more Christlike and to help build the kingdom of God.

CONCEPT 1. LEADERS MAY NEED TO ENCOURAGE THOSE THEY SERVE TO BECOME MORE CHRISTLIKE AND TO HELP BUILD THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

COMMENTARY

The role of Church and family leaders is to help people become more like Jesus Christ and build the kingdom of God. Ideally everyone would be “anxiously engaged” in these activities, doing “many things of their own free will” (D&C 58:27). In practice leaders often must provide some motivation.

To motivate means to encourage, inspire, activate, influence, prompt, or rouse someone to good works. See Elder Dallin H. Oaks’s list of motives people have for serving (pp. 38–39). Church and family leaders might appeal to some of these motives as they help people become anxiously engaged in applying gospel principles.

Elder Gene R. Cook, a member of the Seventy, wrote: “Love is a divine motivation; it motivates the Lord and thus must also motivate us. Particularly is that so in dealing with our families” (*Raising Up a Family to the Lord* [1993], 176).

Leaders can often motivate those they lead simply by teaching them the truths of the gospel. Many of us are motivated to do good by our belief

in Heavenly Father and His plan of salvation. Elder Marion G. Romney, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “A Latter-day Saint’s belief that the second advent of Christ is imminent should motivate him to follow with increased diligence the Lord’s revealed plans for the abolition of war and the elimination of poverty and pollution. It should stimulate his desire for education, particularly for knowledge of God and eternal life” (in “Gospel Forum,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1971, 16).

In a similar vein, leaders can motivate by encouraging those they lead to study the scriptures and the words of modern prophets. Elder Parley P. Pratt, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote:

“At the age of seven years my mother gave me lessons to read in the Scriptures; I read of Joseph in Egypt,—his dreams, his servitude, his temptation and exaltation; his kindness and affection for his father and brethren. All this inspired me with love, and with the noblest sentiments ever planted in the bosom of man.

“I read of David and Goliath; of Saul and Samuel; of Samson and the Philistines—all these inspired me with hatred to the deeds of evil doers and love for good men and their deeds.

“After this I read of Jesus and his Apostles; and O, how I loved them! How I longed to fall at the feet of Jesus; to worship him, or to offer my life for his.

“At about twelve years of age I read of the first resurrection, as described by John the Apostle, in the 20th chapter of his Revelation; how they, martyrs of Jesus, and those who kept His commandments would live and reign with Christ a thousand years, while the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were ended. O, what an impression this made on my mind; I retired to rest after an evening spent in this way; but I could not sleep. I felt a longing desire and an inexpressible anxiety to secure to myself a part in a resurrection so glorious” (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* [1985], 2).

Building on these experiences with the Bible, Elder Pratt grew to become one of the great Church leaders of this dispensation.

The Prophet Joseph Smith warned leaders against “unrighteous dominion” or the unrighteous use of authority (D&C 121:39). “When we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. . . .

“No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

“By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile” (vv. 37, 41–42).

Leaders can use external rewards to motivate but should do so cautiously. An external reward is one not directly related to what is being rewarded, for example giving a person money for reading the scriptures. Such rewards can bring results, but if used unwisely, they can be detrimental to a person’s spiritual maturity. Lavish praise can come across as insincere or manipulative. External rewards can also diminish a person’s internal motivation.

Leaders can motivate by sharing stories and teachings of Jesus Christ. President Harold B. Lee, who was then a Counselor in the First Presidency, listed the following ways Jesus exemplified principles of good teaching, and they apply to leadership as well:

“1. The Master had a true love of God and God’s children.

“2. He had a burning belief in his mission to serve and save mankind.

“3. He had a clear and sympathetic understanding of human beings and their vital needs.

“4. He was a constant, earnest student. He knew the ‘law and the prophets.’ He knew history and the social conditions of his time.

“5. He could discern truth and was uncompromising in upholding it.

“6. His simple language enabled him to reach and hold hearers from every class and condition.

“7. His creative skill made the lessons live for all time.

“8. He led people to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

“9. He inspired active goodness—a desire to apply the gospel in uplifting service.

“10. He demonstrated his faith by living it constantly and courageously” (“And Ye Shall Teach,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1971, 5).

TEACHING IDEA

Explain that leaders often need to help people mature in the gospel and learn to serve effectively in their callings. Discuss some of the motives we may have for serving, both as leaders and followers, and list them on the board. Invite students to rank them from least to most worthy, and discuss their reasons.

Discuss Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–46. Identify motives and behaviors in these verses that constitute unrighteous dominion, as well as those that characterize righteous leadership. Stress the importance of being in tune with the Holy Ghost.

Discuss some of the disadvantages of using external rewards to motivate people to live gospel principles.

List ways Jesus Christ showed perfect leadership. Invite students to apply the positive traits discussed in these lessons in their leadership roles.

TEACHING IDEA

Read or tell Elder Hugh B. Brown's story of the currant bush from the Teacher Resources section below. Have students analyze the motives in Elder Brown's life before and after this experience.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Hugh B. Brown

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

"The Currant Bush,"
New Era, Jan. 1973, 14–15;
see also New Era, Apr. 2001,
12–14

You sometimes wonder whether the Lord really knows what he ought to do with you. You sometimes wonder if you know better than he does about what you ought to do and ought to become. I am wondering if I may tell you a story that I have told quite often in the Church. It is a story that is older than you are. It's a piece out of my own life, and I've told it in many stakes and missions. It has to do with an incident in my life when God showed me that *he knew best*.

I was living up in Canada. I had purchased a farm. It was run-down. I went out one morning and saw a currant bush. It had grown up over six feet high. It was going all to wood. There were no blossoms and no currants. I was raised on a fruit farm in Salt Lake before we went to Canada, and I knew what ought to happen to that currant bush. So I got some pruning shears and went after it, and I cut it down, and pruned it, and clipped it back until there was nothing left but a little clump of stumps. It was just coming daylight, and I thought I saw on top of each of these little stumps what appeared to be a tear, and I thought the currant bush was crying. I was kind of simple-minded (and I haven't entirely gotten over it), and I looked at it, and smiled, and said, "What are you crying about?" You know, I thought I heard

that currant bush talk. And I thought I heard it say this: "How could you do this to me? I was making such wonderful growth. I was almost as big as the shade tree and the fruit tree that are inside the fence, and now you have cut me down. Every plant in the garden will look down on me, because I didn't make what I should have made. How *could* you do this to me? I thought you were the gardener here." That's what I thought I heard the currant bush say, and I thought it so much that I answered. I said, "Look, little currant bush, I *am* the gardener here, and I know what I want you to be. I didn't intend you to be a fruit tree or a shade tree. I want you to be a currant bush, and some day, little currant bush, when you are laden with fruit, you are going to say, 'Thank you, Mr. Gardener, for loving me enough to cut me down, for caring enough about me to hurt me. Thank you, Mr. Gardener.'"

Time passed. Years passed, and I found myself in England. I was in command of a cavalry unit in the Canadian Army. I had made rather rapid progress as far as promotions are concerned, and I held the rank of field officer in the British Canadian Army. And I was proud of my position. And there was an opportunity for me to become a general. I had taken all the examinations. I had the seniority. There was just one man between me and that which for ten years I had hoped to get, the office of general in the British Army. I swelled up with pride. And this one man became a casualty, and I received a telegram from London. It said: "Be in my office tomorrow morning at 10:00," signed by General Turner in charge of all Canadian forces. I called in my valet, my personal servant. I told him to polish my buttons, to brush my hat and my boots, and to make me look like a general because that is what I was going to be. He did the best he could with what he had to work on, and I went up to London. I walked smartly into the office of the General, and I saluted him smartly, and he gave me the same kind of a salute a senior officer usually gives—a sort of "Get out of the way, worm!" He said, "Sit down, Brown." Then he said, "I'm sorry I cannot make the appointment. You are entitled to it. You have passed all the examinations. You have the seniority. You've been a good officer, but I can't make the appointment. You are to return to Canada and become a training officer and a transport officer. Someone else will be made a general." That for which I had been hoping and

praying for ten years suddenly slipped out of my fingers.

Then he went into the other room to answer the telephone, and I took a soldier's privilege of looking on his desk. I saw my personal history sheet. Right across the bottom of it in bold, block-type letters was written, "THIS MAN IS A MORMON." We were not very well liked in those days. When I saw that, I knew why I had not been appointed. I already held the highest rank of any Mormon in the British Army. He came back and said, "That's all, Brown." I saluted him again, but not quite as smartly. I saluted out of duty and went out. I got on the train and started back to my town, 120 miles away, with a broken heart, with bitterness in my soul. And every click of the wheels on the rails seemed to say, "You are a failure. You will be called a coward when you get home. You raised all those Mormon boys to join the army, then you sneak off home." I knew what I was going to get, and when I got to my tent, I was so bitter that I threw my cap and my saddle brown belt on the cot. I clinched my fists and I shook them at heaven. I said, "How could you do this to me, God? I have done everything I could do to measure up. There is nothing that I could have done—that I should have done—that I haven't done. How could you do this to me?" I was as bitter as gall.

And then I heard a voice, and I recognized the tone of this voice. It was my own voice, and the voice said, "I am the gardener here. I know what I want you to do." The bitterness went out of my soul, and I fell on my knees by the cot to ask forgiveness for my ungratefulness and my bitterness. While kneeling there I heard a song being sung in an adjoining tent. A number of Mormon boys met regularly every Tuesday night. I usually met with them. We would sit on the floor and have a Mutual Improvement Association. As I was kneeling there, praying for forgiveness, I heard their voices singing:

"It may not be on the mountain height
Or over the stormy sea;
It may not be at the battle's front
My Lord will have need of me;

But if, by a still, small voice he calls
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine:
I'll go where you want me to go."
(*Hymns*, no. 75.)

I arose from my knees a humble man. And now, almost fifty years later, I look up to him and say, "Thank you, Mr. Gardener, for cutting me down, for loving me enough to hurt me." I see now that it was wise that I should not become a general at that time, because if I had I would have been senior officer of all western Canada, with a lifelong, handsome salary, a place to live, and a pension when I'm no good any longer, but I would have raised my six daughters and two sons in army barracks. They would no doubt have married out of the Church, and I think I would not have amounted to anything. I haven't amounted to very much as it is, but I have done better than I would have done if the Lord had let me go the way I wanted to go.

I wanted to tell you that oft-repeated story because there are many of you who are going to have some very difficult experiences: disappointment, heartbreak, bereavement, defeat. You are going to be tested and tried to prove what you are made of. I just want you to know that if you don't get what you think you ought to get, remember, "God is the gardener here. He knows what he wants you to be." Submit yourselves to his will. Be worthy of his blessings, and you will get his blessings.

STUDY HELPS

- What were the factors that motivated Elder Brown to change his priorities?
- What principles can we draw from Elder Brown's talk for our own lives?
- What attitudes help us allow the Lord to shape our lives?
- How can "an attitude of gratitude" help us be good leaders?



Sister Margaret D. Nadauld

*Young Women
General President*

*“The Joy of Womanhood,”
in Conference Report,
Oct. 2000, 14–17; or
Ensign, Nov. 2000, 14–16*

Faithful women have a glorious mission

It is a remarkable blessing to be a daughter of God today. We have the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are blessed to have the priesthood restored to the earth. We are led by a prophet of God who holds all of the priesthood keys. I love and honor President Gordon B. Hinckley and all of our brethren who bear the priesthood worthily.

I am inspired by the lives of good and faithful women. From the beginning of time the Lord has placed significant trust in them. He has sent us to earth for such a time as this to perform a grand and glorious mission. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that even before we were born, we were among those who “received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men” (D&C 138:56). What a wonderful vision that gives us of our purpose on earth.

Where much is given, much is required. Our Heavenly Father asks His daughters to walk in virtue, to live in righteousness so that we can fulfill our life’s mission and His purposes. He wants us to be successful, and He will help us as we seek His help.

Women were given special qualities

That women were born into this earth female was determined long before mortal birth, as were the divine differences of male and female. I love the clarity of the teachings of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve in the proclamation on the family, where they state, “Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”¹ From that statement we are taught that every girl was feminine and female in spirit long before her mortal birth.

God sent women to earth with some qualities in extra capacity. In speaking to young women, President Faust observed that femininity “is the

divine adornment of humanity. It finds expression in your . . . capacity to love, your spirituality, delicacy, radiance, sensitivity, creativity, charm, graciousness, gentleness, dignity, and quiet strength. It is manifest differently in each girl or woman, but each . . . possesses it. Femininity is part of your inner beauty.”²

Care for outward appearance

Our outward appearance is a reflection of what we are on the inside. Our lives reflect that for which we seek. And if with all our hearts we truly seek to know the Savior and to be more like Him, we shall be, for He is our divine, eternal Brother. But He is more than that. He is our precious Savior, our dear Redeemer. We ask with Alma of old, “Have ye received his image in your countenances?” (Alma 5:14).

You can recognize women who are grateful to be daughters of God by their outward appearance. These women understand their stewardship over their bodies and treat them with dignity. They care for their bodies as they would a holy temple, for they understand Paul’s teaching, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Women who love God would never abuse or deface a temple with graffiti. Nor would they throw open the doors of that holy, dedicated edifice and invite the world to look on. How even more sacred is the body, for it was not made by man. It was formed by God. We are the stewards, the keepers of the cleanliness and purity with which it came from heaven. “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:17).

Grateful daughters of God guard their bodies carefully, for they know they are the wellspring of life and they reverence life. They don’t uncover their bodies to find favor with the world. They walk in modesty to be in favor with their Father in Heaven, for they know He loves them dearly.

Minister to others

You can recognize women who are grateful to be daughters of God by their attitude. They know that the errand of angels is given to women, and they desire to be on God’s errand to love His children and minister to them, to teach them the

doctrines of salvation, to call them to repentance, to save them in perilous circumstances, to guide them in the performance of His work, to deliver His messages.³ They understand that they can bless their Father's children in their homes and neighborhoods and beyond. Women who are grateful to be daughters of God bring glory to His name.

Magnify gifts

You can recognize women who are grateful to be daughters of God by their abilities. They fulfill their divine potential and magnify their God-given gifts. They are capable, strong women who bless families, serve others, and understand that "the glory of God is intelligence" (D&C 93:36). They are women who embrace enduring virtues in order to be all that our Father needs them to be. The prophet Jacob spoke of some of those virtues when he said their "feelings are exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God, which thing is pleasing unto God" (Jacob 2:7).

Reverence motherhood

You can recognize women who are grateful to be daughters of God by their reverence for motherhood, even when that blessing has been withheld from them for a time. In those circumstances, their righteous influence can be a blessing in the lives of children they love. Their exemplary teachings can echo the voice of a faithful home and resonate truth in the hearts of children who need another witness.

Grateful daughters of God love Him and teach their children to love Him without reservation and without resentment. They are like the mothers of Helaman's youthful army, who had such great faith and "had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them" (Alma 56:47).

When you observe kind and gentle mothers in action, you see women of great strength. Their families can feel a spirit of love and respect and safety when they are near her as she seeks the companionship of the Holy Ghost and the guidance of His Spirit. They are blessed by her wisdom and good judgment. The husbands and children

whose lives they bless will contribute to the stability of societies all over this world. Grateful daughters of God learn truths from their mothers and grandmothers and aunts. They teach their daughters the joyful art of creating a home. They seek fine educations for their children and have a thirst for knowledge themselves. They help their children develop skills that they can use in serving others. They know that the way they have chosen is not the easy way, but they know it is absolutely worth their finest efforts.

They understand what Elder Neal A. Maxwell meant when he said: "When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? The great armistices made by military men or the peacemaking of women in homes and in neighborhoods? Will what happened in cradles and kitchens prove to be more controlling than what happened in congresses?"⁴

Daughters of God know that it is the nurturing nature of women that can bring everlasting blessings, and they live to cultivate this divine attribute. Surely when a woman reverences motherhood, her children will arise up and call her blessed (see Proverbs 31:28).

Not like women of the world

Women of God can never be like the women of the world. The world has enough women who are tough; we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse; we need women who are kind. There are enough women who are rude; we need women who are refined. We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith. We have enough greed; we need more goodness. We have enough vanity; we need more virtue. We have enough popularity; we need more purity.

Oh, how we pray that every young woman will grow up to be all the wonderful things she is meant to be. We pray that her mother and father will show her the right way. May daughters of God honor the priesthood and sustain worthy priesthood holders. May they understand their own great capacity for strength in the timeless virtues that some would scoff at in a modern, liberated world for women.

Understand and nourish potential

May mothers and fathers understand the great potential for good their daughters inherited from their heavenly home. We must nourish their gentleness, their nurturing nature, their innate spirituality and sensitivity, and their bright minds. Celebrate the fact that girls are different from boys. Be thankful for the position they have in God's grand plan. And always remember what President Hinckley said: "Only after the earth had been formed, after the day had been separated from the night, after the waters had been divided from the land, after vegetation and animal life had been created, and after man had been placed on the earth, was woman created; and only then was the work pronounced complete and good."⁵

Fathers, husbands, young men, may you catch a vision of all that women are and can be. Please be worthy of God's holy priesthood, which you bear, and honor that priesthood, for it blesses all of us.

Sisters, regardless of your age, please understand all that you are and must be, all that you were prepared to be in royal courts on high by God Himself. May we use with gratitude the priceless gifts we have been given for the lifting of mankind to higher thinking and nobler aspirations, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. "Womanhood: The Highest Place of Honor," *Ensign*, May 2000, 96.
3. See Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 35.
4. In Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 14; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 10–11.
5. "Our Responsibility to Our Young Women," *Ensign*, Sept. 1988, 11.

STUDY HELPS

- List inspiring and positive expressions Sister Nadauld uses in her presentation (for example, "remarkable blessing," "inspired by," "wonderful vision"). What lesson can we as leaders learn from these expressions that we can apply in our communication with others?
- Compare the potential of positive and negative statements for motivating others.
- According to Sister Nadauld, what are some aspects of the outward appearance of a righteous person? Why are they important for a leader?
- Why are these aspects more important than physical beauty?
- How can we help others become more aware of their divine potential?

THE WORK OF LEADERSHIP

“Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls” (Alma 37:34).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Family and Church leaders must work diligently to help bring souls to the Lord and establish His kingdom.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Leaders must work diligently to bring souls to the Lord.

CONCEPT 1. LEADERS MUST WORK DILIGENTLY TO BRING SOULS TO THE LORD.

COMMENTARY

Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was then a member of the Seventy, wrote: “Work is the great basic principle which makes all things possible both in time and in eternity” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 847). President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “Nothing of real substance comes without work. Nothing happens in this world until there is work. . . . There must be work” (*Standing for Something: Ten Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes* [2000], 80).

Heavenly Father works to save and exalt His children (see Moses 1:39). Jesus Christ’s Atonement makes that possible, thus finishing the Father’s work (see John 4:34; 5:17; 9:4). He gives us the opportunity to help each other return to the Father. “Somebody has well said: ‘As it is the property of fire to burn, of snow to chill, so of God to work.’ And we are his children” (George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, ed. Philip C. Reynolds, 7 vols. [1955–61], 1:275).

The work of leaders not only helps others along their journey but also benefits the leader. “Dedicated work helps to develop attributes of godliness: self-discipline, perseverance, accountability, and integrity” (in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. [1992], 4:1586).

The opportunity for work began for mankind when the Lord put Adam “into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it” (Genesis 2:15). The necessity of work continued when God cast Adam out of the garden (see Genesis 3:17–19).

If we expect to become profitable leaders, we must be willing to work hard. President Spencer W. Kimball explained: “We must do more than ask the Lord for excellence. Perspiration must precede inspiration; there must be effort before there is excellence. We must do more than pray for these outcomes . . . , though we must surely pray. We must take thought. We must make effort” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* [1982], 402).

Leaders should also keep in mind the counsel of King Benjamin: “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength” (Mosiah 4:27).

Consider the following insights from Elder Neal A. Maxwell. While an Assistant to the Twelve, Elder Maxwell taught:

“God’s extraordinary work is most often done by ordinary people in the seeming obscurity of a home and family” (*That My Family Should Partake* [1974], 122).

“There is something holy about work; even in times of plenty, it is a necessity. While work is not all of life, it nevertheless can keep us mindful of our blessings” (*Look Back at Sodom: A Timely Account from Imaginary Sodom Scrolls* [1975], 10).

Later, as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, Elder Maxwell wrote:

“God gives the picks and shovels to the ‘chosen’ because they are willing to go to work and get callouses on their hands. They may not be the best or most capable, but they are the most available” (*Deposition of a Disciple* [1976], 54).

After he became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Maxwell taught:

“If we ponder just what it is that will rise with us in the resurrection, it seems clear that our intelligence will rise with us, meaning not simply our IQ, but also our capacity to receive and apply truth. Our talents, attributes, and skills will rise with us; certainly also our capacity to learn, our degree of self-discipline, and our capacity to work. Our precise form of work here may have no counterpart there, but the capacity to work will never be obsolete” (*We Will Prove Them Herewith* [1982], 12).

“Though we rightly speak of ‘faith and works,’ faith by itself . . . is constant work! It is a work to be done and a process best pursued while being not only ‘anxiously engaged’ but also engaged with ‘fear and trembling.’ Otherwise we may lose our concentration on Christ” (*Lord, Increase Our Faith* [1994], 111–12).

“For us, the goal is clearly to make God’s work our own—not the other way around” (*If Thou Endure It Well* [1996], 101).

TEACHING IDEA

Sing or read a hymn related to work (for example, “I Have Work Enough to Do,” *Hymns*, no. 224; “Improve the Shining Moments,” no. 226; “Today, While the Sun Shines,” no. 229; “Let Us All Press On,” no. 243; and “Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel,” no. 252). Discuss the role of work in family and Church leadership.

Have students read Alma 26 looking for the work that Ammon and his fellow missionaries performed before they succeeded. Help students understand that with leadership, as well as missionary work, the fruits follow the labor.

Divide your class into small groups and give each group one or more of Elder Neal A. Maxwell’s statements from the commentary. Invite the groups to discuss the statements, and then have a member

of each group report their observations to the class. Comment and discuss as appropriate.

Emphasize that the work we do in our families and callings is the most important work we will do in this life. Because it is the Lord’s work, we must rely on His Spirit to succeed.

Sing or read another hymn about the importance of work.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder Mark E. Petersen

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*“The Image of
a Church Leader,”
Ensign, Aug. 1980, 5–8*

“What manner of men ought ye to be?” the Savior asked of his Nephite Twelve as they were about to take over the ministry.

And what was the answer to that question? “Verily I say unto you, even as I am” (3 Ne. 27:27).

Even as he is! Think of it! Jesus the Christ is our pattern.

And when did he expect those brethren to adopt his pattern of life? It was not for any tomorrow or any future year. It was immediate. As his ministers, they had the responsibility then and there to reflect his image to all mankind.

That is the key to the manner in which all of us are to conduct his work.

But let us ask, what is his work? He says that his work and even his glory are to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. But what is eternal life? It is to become like God. Because we are his children, we have the potential of actually becoming perfect, as he is.

This opportunity is open to all mankind, in every land and clime. But it must come through faith in Christ. And how do people obtain that faith? Paul asked that same question in these words: “How . . . shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. 10:14–15).

We are his preachers. We have been duly sent. Then how do we conduct our ministry?

Be converted

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. Can we ever forget what the Lord said to him? “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

We relate this teaching to our being born of water and of the Spirit in baptism. Too often we rest with an explanation of water baptism alone and give little thought to the baptism of the Spirit.

We receive confirmation by the laying on of hands and are given the gift of the Holy Ghost. But we must remember that in that ordinance we also receive a newness of life. If we are sincere, we are literally born again. In a very real sense we become different and better persons. We receive a new heart. We put away the man of sin, as Paul describes it, and take upon ourselves the name and the image of Christ (see Col. 3:9–10).

We need that rebirth so that others may believe through us that indeed Jesus was sent from heaven by his Father, that he is the Savior, and that we are his servants, authorized to lead them in the way of truth. That is the beginning of their salvation and an extension of ours.

We must constantly preserve the effect of his rebirth in our own lives. We seek rebirth for others through our ministry, but we cannot give something we ourselves do not possess. If our house is not properly structured, we can hardly be effective architects and builders in the lives of others.

So what manner of men must we be? Even as he is.

The Lord taught many important things which he expects of his disciples. One of his most penetrating lessons was that we should be living witnesses that he is the Christ, thus convincing other people that his Father in Heaven truly sent him into the world to become our Savior.

And as he prayed for his disciples, he also prayed “for them also which shall believe on me through their word. . . .

“That the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20–21 [italics added]).

This is one of the most precise definitions of our divine calls that we have on record. What a purpose! What a responsibility! Those words should be our guiding star. But do we fully understand them?

They are the heart and core of our religion. No one can be saved without this basic faith. As officers of the Church, all we say and do must reflect this great truth. He is the Son of God. He is divine. He was sent into the world by the decree of heaven. We are his representatives, his witnesses, and he depends upon us to so labor that the world will believe that God did send him, and then perchance that many may live his gospel and be saved.

Be an example

As Paul told Timothy, we must be examples of the believers, “in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12).

How much attention do we give to the fourth section of the Doctrine and Covenants?

“Faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify [a person] for the work.

“Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence. . . .

“The field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle *with his might*, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul” (D&C 4:5–6, 4 [italics added]).

Our homes are foundation stones in the kingdom of God. Since we are his servants, what kind of home life do we have? Does love abound there? Do we set a Christlike example for our families that they, too, through us, may believe in him?

Are we clean and chaste in our intimate habits? Do we allow sin or filth, even secretly, to raise barriers against the Spirit of God, thus keeping holiness out of our lives? Or are we willing to uphold virtue to the point where we value it even above our lives?

Are we free from hypocrisy? Do we have a different mood while we are in Church, appearing before our pious neighbors, than we have in our daily business activities?

Can anyone take unrighteous license from what we say or do to justify evil acts on their part? Or do we rise above all such worldliness and inspire others to greater things?

As leaders, are we always examples of the believers? Or do we raise doubts in other people's minds by faulty attitudes which we may exhibit?

Are we kind and considerate of other people? Are we honest? Do our actions in any way belie our image as servants of God?

Are we forgiving? Are we just? Do we recall that forgiveness is granted to us only as we forgive others?

Do we practice the Golden Rule and do to others as we would be done by? All of this fits into the image of a true servant of God.

We are shepherds of the flock of God. That flock most certainly includes our families as well as other Church members.

Being Christlike ourselves, we will teach them to be Christlike. Being devoted ourselves, we will teach them devotion. Being willing to follow the program ourselves, we will teach them to follow instructions.

We will teach them the value of the inspiration of the Spirit, understanding that without it we cannot be in tune with God. If we are not in tune we are left to our own puny resources, and of how much real value are they?

Be united

One of the most striking characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry was his oneness with God. He desired earnestly that his disciples also should come into that circle of unity. It was essential to their mission. Prior to his passion he prayed that his disciples might be one, even as he and his Father were one (see John 17:20–21). And through Joseph Smith he said, “If ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27).

This became a basic standard for his disciples everywhere. It is the foundation of all our successes. Without it, we surrender to the opposition.

Christ is the Prince of Peace. We also must be messengers of peace. Conflict can destroy us if we allow it to arise. It could seriously hurt the Church. It destroyed the ancient Church, and it could wipe us out. Do we recall what the Lord said about contention?

“There shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been. . . .

“Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away” (3 Ne. 11:28, 30).

Do we remember what prevented the establishment of the city of Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith? Joseph had sought the Lord in anxious prayer because of the expulsion of our people from Jackson County. In reply the Lord said about the Saints:

“Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

“They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.

“In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me” (D&C 101:6–8). Is there any greater treatise on obedience?

Be obedient

The Lord gave an important parable through the Prophet Joseph urging the Saints to greater devotion, again showing how he expects us to follow his divine instructions. He said:

“A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants: Go ye unto my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive-trees;

“And set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower, that mine olive-trees may not be broken down when the enemy shall come to spoil and take unto themselves the fruit of my vineyard.

“Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive-trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower.

“And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

“And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

“Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

“And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

“And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees.

“Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them. Why! what is the cause of this great evil?

“Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge around about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you?” (D&C 101:44–53).

Note the doubts that were raised by the servants in the vineyard. What need hath my Lord of this tower? What need? What need?

Do such doubts occur to any of us? Do any of us say, what need hath the Church of this or of that? What need? What need?

How vital it is that we have an attitude of complete compliance with our instructions and fulfill them in detail!

The Lord also tells us: “Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence” (D&C 107:99). We must know our business, and work at it with all the intelligence of our minds, and with all the strength of our bodies.

Be devoted

Then what is the image of a Church leader? It must be the same as that of every other earnest minister for Christ.

Can it be different from that of a General Authority? Can it be different from that of a good regional representative, a good stake president, a good bishop, a good mission president, or a good elders quorum president?

Are we not all his chosen servants? Are we not all under the same covenant of the priesthood? Do any have special privilege? Is God a respecter of persons?

Are we in any manner ambitious for place, position, or distinction in the Church? Is such an attitude Christlike? Is it not devoid of humility?

The mother of Zebedee’s sons came to the Lord seeking a place for John and James above that enjoyed by the other brethren. The Lord rebuked her for having such unwarranted ambitions. “And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren” (Matt. 20:24).

The Savior then made it clear that there should be no inequalities among them, and added: “It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

“And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (Matt. 20:26–27).

In all cases, devotion to duty is the watchword.

Be producers

And next, the Lord expects us to be producers. He commands us to bring forth much fruit. This he illustrates with the parable found in the fifteenth chapter of John. There the Lord tells his servants how to conduct the work. There he establishes the image of a true servant of God.

This chapter begins with a parable concerning the vineyard of the Lord. He says that his Father is the husbandman, or the proprietor, and he likens himself to the vine in the vineyard. He says that we—his workers—are as branches on the vine, and that we are to bring forth much fruit in the vineyard of the Lord:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

Then he draws a picture which should be familiar to all of us. He speaks of pruning the vine to make it produce more. In his vineyard he prunes us—he purges us—he sanctifies us so that we will produce more of his kind of fruit.

He speaks next of branches that do not produce at all because they have become separated from the main part of the vine. And why do they not produce under those circumstances? Because the nourishing sap, the life-giving fluid, is cut off if the branch is severed from the vine. This fact persuaded the Lord to say to his servants: “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

And then he adds: “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

Here is a great lesson. As long as we are close to the Lord and are nourished by his Spirit, we bring forth much fruit. But except we *do* abide in the Lord and receive of his strength, we can no more produce than can a branch that is severed from the tree. Hence he says: “Without me ye can do nothing.”

To add further importance to this theme, the Lord says: “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

But there is yet another lesson in this scripture which should give us great concern. In verse 16 he says:

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.” To what purpose? “. . . That ye should go and bring forth fruit.”

But there is more. Not only are we chosen by him, not only are we ordained for the purpose of bringing forth fruit, but we are also called and ordained to so labor that our *fruit will remain*.

Note his words: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, *and that your fruit should remain*” [italics added].

What does that mean? Simply that we must plan and pray and work toward the end that there will be no dropouts because of our neglect, no one losing his testimony, no one going into inactivity. *Our fruit must remain*.

Then the image of any servant of God comes back to a matter of *attitude*. As a man thinketh in his heart so will he labor.

This Church is the kingdom of God. The world is his field, or his vineyard. We are his chosen laborers. Success can be ours only if we abide closely in the Vine. And if we do, he gives us a golden promise which is most desirable:

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you, . . .

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:1–2, 4–5, 7–8, 10–11, 16).

STUDY HELPS

- According to Elder Petersen, what is the key to leadership in the Church?
- Why must we be converted in order to be good examples to others?
- What is the relationship between a leader’s example and a group’s unity?
- What does Doctrine and Covenants 4 teach us about leadership?
- What principle of leadership does the Savior exemplify by His “oneness with God?” How can we apply this principle in our leadership?
- What paragraph in Elder Petersen’s talk do you think best explains the leadership principle of being productive? Explain your choice.

LEADERSHIP AND COUNCILS

“And the Gods took counsel among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness” (Abraham 4:26).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders can be more effective when they use councils in the leadership process.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Heavenly Father presides over the “great presiding council of the universe.”
2. The Church is governed by councils.
3. Family councils are the basic councils of the Church.
4. Certain principles allow leaders to have effective councils.

CONCEPT 1. HEAVENLY FATHER PRESIDES OVER THE “GREAT PRESIDING COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSE.”

COMMENTARY

Heavenly Father used councils in planning and creating this and other worlds. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost “constitute *one* Godhead or Supreme Council” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. [1957–66], 1:2). Elder L. Tom Perry of the Twelve referred to the Godhead as the “great presiding council of the universe” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 28; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 23).

The scriptures say that “the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods” met “before this world was” and made plans regarding the operation of the universe (see D&C 121:31–32). Elder Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: “In the grand council held in heaven, Jesus Christ voluntarily accepted the mission of Redeemer. . . . Adam was also chosen in this same council to fulfil his part as the progenitor of the human race” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 1:182).

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world

was” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 365).

TEACHING IDEA

Have students quickly read Abraham 4–5 looking for who planned and created the earth. Invite them to share what they discovered (note words such as *us*, *we*, *they*, *our*, and *the Gods*).

Besides creating the earth, what else did the council of Gods do? (see the commentary).

Help students understand that Heavenly Father set the example for leaders when He used councils in planning and creating this and other worlds.

CONCEPT 2. THE CHURCH IS GOVERNED BY COUNCILS.

COMMENTARY

The Lord governs His earthly kingdom through councils. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve pointed out that after the gospel was restored, “the Church was organized into quorums and councils, with various presidencies appointed ‘to administer in spiritual things’ (D&C 107:8)” (*Counseling with Our Councils: Learning to Minister Together in the Church and in the Family* [1997], 39). These councils “coordinate and schedule activities, gather information, plan future programs or events, and make decisions and resolve problems” (Daniel H. Ludlow, ed.,

Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 5 vols. [1992], 3:1141; in *Counseling with Our Councils*, 5). The purpose of these councils is to help “God’s children enjoy the full blessings of the gospel” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, 10). Elder Ballard explained:

“Through the years, the forms and formats of Church governance and administration have been adjusted to meet changing needs and times. But they have always been characterized by reliance upon councils for ongoing solidarity and strength. . . .

“ . . . The presiding council of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today is the First Presidency. It consists of the President of the Church and his two Counselors. . . .

“Next in Church authority to the First Presidency is the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, 43–45).

TEACHING IDEA

Display pictures of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. Explain that these councils, with the help of the Seventy, lead the Church. Discuss what these councils do to direct the Church and bring us to Christ.

Discuss some of the councils that function in stakes and wards.

CONCEPT 3. FAMILY COUNCILS ARE THE BASIC COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH.

COMMENTARY

A family council occurs when parents and children meet to consider important family matters. Elder M. Russell Ballard wrote: “The basic council of the Church is the family council” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, 154). Family councils serve the same purpose as other Church councils (see the commentary for concept 2).

Elder Ballard wrote of “the potential power of the family council in strengthening family bonds, building family unity, and creating wonderful memories.

“Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that . . . in family councils, . . . mothers and fathers can provide training in such topics as ‘temple preparation, missionary preparation, home management,

family finances, career development, education, community involvement, cultural improvement, acquisition and care of real and personal property, family planning calendars, use of leisure time, and work assignments.’ . . . (“For Whatsoever a Man Soweth, That Shall He Also Reap,” 9).

“ . . . [The family council] can help bring order to the home, provide a forum for soothing hurt feelings, give parents an important tool with which to combat outside influences, and create an opportunity to teach profound gospel truths” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, 148–49).

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss why family councils are the basic councils of the Church. Discuss what family councils do (see the commentary).

Invite students to share experiences in which they participated in a family council to make an important decision or accomplish an important task.

Explain that Heavenly Father set the example of leadership by using councils. The Church is governed on every level by councils. Members of families can also join in council to accomplish the purposes of the family.

CONCEPT 4. CERTAIN PRINCIPLES ALLOW LEADERS TO HAVE EFFECTIVE COUNCILS.

COMMENTARY

Elder M. Russell Ballard said, “When we act in a united effort, we create spiritual synergism, which is increased effectiveness or achievement as a result of combined action or cooperation, the result of which is greater than the sum of the individual parts” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 103; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 77). Earlier Elder Ballard said family and Church leaders need “to harness and channel spiritual power through councils” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 32; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 25).

Elder Ballard taught: “As members participate in councils, they learn about larger organizational issues. They see leadership in action, learning how to plan, analyze problems, make decisions, and coordinate across subunit boundaries. Participation in councils helps prepare members for future leadership responsibilities.” (“Priesthood

Councils,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 3:1141–42) . . .

“ . . . When more people feel ownership of the problem, more people are willing to become part of the solution. . . .

“ . . . One of the great strengths of the council system is the flexibility it provides to develop and implement local solutions to local problems” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, 6, 15).

Elder Ballard suggested several principles that are important to leading with councils:

- Leaders should bring a sense of vision or purpose to the council.
- Councils should provide time for discussing differing points of view.
- Leaders should respect the agency of council members.
- Leaders should give clear and precise instructions.
- Leaders should delegate.
- Leaders should set the example for members of their council.
- Leaders should serve with love.

(See *Counseling with Our Councils*, 23–36.)

Elder Ballard also gave suggestions for how a council might work to solve a problem:

- “The problem is clearly outlined and articulated, but the council isn’t allowed to dwell on negativity.”
- “The council leader controls the flow of the discussion without dominating it. He asks questions and calls for opinions, and then he listens.”
- “Council members speak from their own perspective as individuals and not just as representatives of their respective organizations.”
- Council members first “identify [the] desired end result, and then determine how to achieve it.”
- “In its deliberations, the council never strays far from the mission of the Church: bringing souls to Christ through proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead.”

- “Council members aren’t allowed to forget the importance of their individual influence and example.”
- “Input is solicited from everyone, but final decisions are left to the council leader, who relies upon inspiration more than personal opinion in guiding the decisions of the council.”

(*Counseling with Our Councils*, 165, 168.)

TEACHING IDEA

Ask students what synergism is. (*Synergism* is when the total effect is greater than the sum of the parts). Have a student read Elder M. Russell Ballard’s statement on spiritual synergism (see the commentary). Discuss why this principle is true of councils, and list examples on the board.

Discuss principles leaders should be aware of as they work with councils (see the commentary). Create a hypothetical leadership situation and discuss how these principles could be applied.

Review Elder M. Russell Ballard’s suggestions for councils, and encourage students to apply them in their councils.

TEACHER RESOURCES



Elder M. Russell Ballard

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*“Strength in Counsel,”
in Conference Report,
Oct. 1993, 102–6; or
Ensign, Nov. 1993, 76–78*

Councils in the Lord’s church

. . . God called a grand council in the premortal world to present His glorious plan for our eternal welfare. The Lord’s church is organized with councils at every level, beginning with the Council of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and extending to stake, ward, quorum, auxiliary, and family councils.

President Stephen L. Richards said:

“The genius of our Church government is government through *councils*. . . . I have had enough experience to know the value of councils. Hardly a day passes but that I see . . . God’s

wisdom, in creating councils . . . to govern his Kingdom. . . .

“ . . . I have no hesitancy in giving you the assurance, if you will confer in council as you are expected to do, God will give you solutions to the problems that confront you” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1953, p. 86).

How councils should function

As a member of the Twelve, I serve on several general Church councils and committees. I meet regularly with the leaders of the auxiliaries. Together, we counsel, we search the scriptures, and pray for guidance as we strive to learn how the auxiliaries can more effectively bless and strengthen the members of the Church.

In many respects, general Church councils function much the same as stake and ward councils. All councils in the Church should encourage free and open discussion by conferring with one another and striving to have clear, concise communication. Councils should discuss objectives and concerns, with mutual understanding being the ultimate goal. Stake and ward councils are ideal settings for leaders of all organizations to converse together and strengthen one another. The primary focus of stake and ward council meetings should be coordinating activities and stewardship, not calendaring. In these meetings, priesthood and auxiliary leaders should review together their responsibilities and find ways for Church programs to help members live the gospel in the home. Today individuals and families need wise and inspired help from the Church to combat the evils of the world.

Seek sisters' input in council meetings

In a recent council meeting with the presidencies of the women's auxiliaries, the sisters told me that very few women in the Church express any interest in wanting to hold the priesthood. But they do want to be heard and valued and want to make meaningful contributions to the stake or ward and its members that will serve the Lord and help accomplish the mission of the Church.

For example, not long ago we were talking about the worthiness of youth to serve missions. President Elaine Jack said, “You know, Elder

Ballard, the sisters of the Church may have some good suggestions on how to better prepare the youth for missions if they were just asked. After all, you know, we *are* their mothers!” The sisters' suggestions can help equally regarding temple attendance and a host of other matters with which priesthood leaders may be struggling.

Brethren, please be sure you are seeking the vital input of the sisters in your council meetings. Encourage all council members to share their suggestions and ideas about how the stake or ward can be more effective in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead.

All council members should participate

Ideally all members of any Church or any family council should share their concerns and should suggest solutions based on gospel principles. I believe the Church and our families would be strengthened if stake presidents and bishops would use their council meetings for finding answers to questions on how to improve sacrament meetings; how to improve reverence; how to focus on children; how to strengthen youth; how to help singles, including single parents; how to teach and fellowship investigators and new members; how to improve gospel teaching; and many similar issues.

During the last half of this year, we have been holding a special training meeting in conjunction with each stake conference to discuss the morality of our youth. Those who have been participating are members of stake and ward councils. Every question directed to me in the discussion period could be discussed most appropriately in a ward council meeting. Yet rarely do those asking the questions feel that they have had an opportunity in ward council meetings to raise their questions, voice their concerns, and offer their suggestions.

Create spiritual synergism in councils

In these perilous times we need the cooperative effort of men and women officers in the Church because absolute vigilance is required on the part of all who have been entrusted to help watch over the kingdom. We each have large individual responsibilities, but just as important is the responsibility we share with others to come together in council in a united effort to solve problems and bless all of our Church members. When we act in

a united effort, we create spiritual synergism, which is increased effectiveness or achievement as a result of combined action or cooperation, the result of which is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

The ancient moralist Aesop used to illustrate the strength of synergism by holding up one stick and asking for a volunteer among his listeners who thought he could break it. Of course, the volunteer was able to break one stick easily. Then Aesop would put more sticks together until the volunteer was unable to break them. The moral to Aesop's demonstration was simple: Together we generate synergism, which makes us much stronger than when we stand alone.

No one should stand alone

God never intended that His children should stand alone. Children have parents, and parents have the Church, with the scriptures, living prophets and Apostles, and the Holy Ghost to help them understand proper principles and act upon those principles in fulfilling their parental responsibilities.

The Apostle Paul taught that the Savior organized the Church, complete with Apostles, prophets, and other officers and teachers, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:12–13).

Paul compared the members of the Church and their various responsibilities to the body:

"For the body is not one member, but many. . . .

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. . . .

"But now are they many members, yet but one body.

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. . . .

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Corinthians 12:14, 18, 20–21, 26).

The scriptures state clearly that while our respective callings may be different and may

change from time to time, all callings are important to the operation of the Church. We need the priesthood quorums to assert themselves and fulfill their divinely mandated stewardship, just as we need the Relief Society, the Primary, the Young Women, the Sunday School, and the activities committees to perform their vital functions. And we need the officers and members of all of these inspired organizations to work together, assisting each other as needed for the benefit of individuals and families.

Suggestions for more effective councils

This is not man's work or woman's work; it is *all* God's work, which is centered on the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have some specific suggestions that, if followed, I believe can help us be more effective with our families and in our Church callings.

First, focus on fundamentals. We have certainly been taught about these fundamentals during this conference. Those who teach must make sure the doctrine remains pure and that it is taught. Teach by the Spirit, using the scriptures and the approved curriculum. *Do not* introduce or dwell on speculative and questionable topics. Study the teachings of this conference in family home evenings and in family discussions; they will strengthen your homes. In a world that is filled with sin, conflict, and confusion, we can find peace and safety in knowing and living the revealed truths of the gospel.

Second, focus on people. Coordination and calendaring have their time and place, but too many council meetings begin and end there. Rather than reciting a litany of organizational plans and reports, spend most of the time in council meetings reviewing the needs of individual members. In doing so, confidentiality is critical. Council members must hold all matters discussed in council meetings in strict confidence.

Third, promote free and open expression. Such expression is essential if we are to achieve the purpose of councils. Leaders and parents should establish a climate that is conducive to openness, where every person is important and every opinion valued. The Lord admonished, "Let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when *all* have spoken that *all* may

be edified” (D&C 88:122; italics added). Leaders should provide adequate time for council meetings and should remember that councils are for leaders to listen at least as much as they speak.

Fourth, participation is a privilege. With that privilege comes responsibility—responsibility to work within the parameters of the organization, to be prepared, to share, to advocate vigorously the position you believe to be right. But just as important is the responsibility to support and sustain the final decision of the council leader, even if you do not agree fully.

President David O. McKay told of a meeting of the Council of the Twelve Apostles where a question of grave importance was discussed. He and the other Apostles felt strongly about a certain course of action that should be taken, and they were prepared to share their feelings in a meeting with the First Presidency. To their surprise, President Joseph F. Smith did not ask for their opinion in the matter, as was his custom. Rather, “he arose and said, ‘This is what the Lord wants.’

“While it was not wholly in harmony with what he had decided,” President McKay wrote, “the President of the Twelve . . . was the first on his feet to say, ‘Brethren, I move that that becomes the opinion and judgment of this Council.’

“‘Second the motion,’ said another, and it was unanimous. Six months did not pass before the wisdom of that leader was demonstrated” (*Gospel Ideals* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], p. 264).

When a council leader reaches a decision, the council members should sustain it wholeheartedly.

Fifth, lead with love. Jesus taught that the first and greatest commandment in the law is to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:37, 39).

Priesthood leaders are to lead with “persuasion, . . . long-suffering, . . . gentleness and meekness, . . . love unfeigned; . . . kindness, and

pure knowledge” (D&C 121:41–42). Those are the principles that should guide us in our relationships as neighbors in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Those who hold the priesthood must never forget that they have no right to wield priesthood authority like a club over the heads of others in the family or in Church callings. The Lord told Joseph Smith that “when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man” (D&C 121:37).

In other words, any man who claims the special powers of heaven for his own selfish purposes and seeks to use the priesthood in any degree of unrighteousness in the Church or in the home simply does not understand the nature of his authority. Priesthood is for service, not servitude; compassion, not compulsion; caring, not control. Those who think otherwise are operating outside the parameters of priesthood authority.

Thankfully, most of our fathers and priesthood officers lead with love, just as most of our mothers and auxiliary leaders do. Leadership based on love brings incredible power. It is real, and it generates lasting results in the lives of our Father’s children.

Achieve inspired consensus and unity

May God bless you, brothers and sisters, to find inspired consensus and unity as you counsel together in your service one to another. Only in so doing can the Church and our families begin to approach their full potential for doing good among the children of God on earth.

I know God lives and Jesus is the Christ. I know we can accomplish their work better through unity and love as we sit in council one with another. May we be blessed to so do is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

**Elder M. Russell Ballard**

*Of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles*

*"Counseling with Our
Councils," in Conference
Report, Apr. 1994, 31–34;
or Ensign, May 1994, 24–26*

A well-tuned engine

Before I was called as a General Authority, I was in the automobile business, as was my father before me. Through the years I learned to appreciate the sound and the performance of a well-tuned engine. To me it is almost musical, from the gentle purring of an idling motor to the vibrant roar of a throttle that is fully open. The power that sound represents is even more exciting. Nothing is quite the same as sitting behind the wheel of a fine automobile when the engine is operating at peak performance with the assembled parts working together in perfect harmony.

On the other hand, nothing is more frustrating than a car engine that is not running properly. No matter how beautiful the paint or comfortable the furnishings inside are, a car with an engine that is not operating as it should is just a shell of unrealized potential. An automobile engine will run on only a part of its cylinders, but it never will go as far or as fast, nor will the ride be as smooth, as when it is tuned properly.

The one-cylinder ward

Unfortunately, some wards in the Church are hitting on only a few cylinders, including some that are trying to make do with just one. The one-cylinder ward is the ward where the bishop handles all of the problems, makes all of the decisions, and follows through on all of the assignments. Then, like an overworked cylinder in a car engine, he is soon burned out.

Our bishops have heavy demands placed upon them. They—and they alone—hold certain keys, and only they can fulfill certain responsibilities. But they are not called to be all things, at all times, to all people. They are called to preside and to lead and to extend God's love to His children. Our Heavenly Father does not expect them to do everything by themselves.

The same is true of our stake presidents, priesthood quorum and auxiliary presidents, and, for that matter, mothers and fathers. All have stewardships that require large amounts of their time, talent, and energy. But none is left to do it alone. God, the Master Organizer, has inspired the creation of a system of committees and councils. If understood and put to proper use, this system will decrease the burden on all individual leaders and will extend the reach and the impact of their ministry through the combined help of others.

Make wise use of councils

Six months ago I stood at this pulpit and talked about the importance of the council system in the Church. I spoke about the great spiritual power and inspired direction that come from properly conducted family, ward, and stake councils. The Spirit continues to bear witness to me of how vital efficiently run Church councils are to the accomplishment of the mission of the Church. For that reason, I have been anxious to see how well my remarks in October were understood, particularly by our faithful and diligent bishops.

During training sessions I have conducted in various locations since last general conference, I have focused attention on the ward council. As part of that training, I invited a ward council to participate. I gave to the bishop a theoretical problem about a less-active family and asked him to use the ward council to develop a plan to activate this family.

Without exception, the bishop took charge of the situation immediately and said, "Here's the problem, and here's what I think we should do to solve it." Then he made assignments to the various ward council members. This was a good exercise in delegation, I suppose, but it did not even begin to use the experience and wisdom of council members to address the problem.

Eventually I asked the bishop to try again, only this time to solicit ideas and recommendations from his council members before making any assignments. I especially encouraged him to ask the sisters for their ideas. When the bishop opened the meeting to council members and invited them to counsel together, the effect was like opening the floodgates of heaven. A reservoir of insight and inspiration suddenly began to flow between council

members as they planned for fellowshiping the less-active family.

As I watched this same scenario played out before me time after time during the past six months, I decided that it would not be out of order to speak about the importance of councils once again. I speak not to scold those who did not give serious attention last time, but because we have an urgent need in the Church for leaders, particularly stake presidents and bishops, to harness and channel spiritual power through councils. Family, ward, and stake problems can be solved if we seek solutions in the Lord's way.

In my experience, lives are blessed when leaders make wise use of committees and councils. They move the work of the Lord forward much faster and farther, like a fine automobile operating at peak efficiency. Committee and council members are unified. Together they experience a much more pleasant trip along the highway of Church service.

Three ward committees and councils

For my purpose today, let me review three ward committees and councils that always should follow a prearranged agenda.

First is the *priesthood executive committee*. It consists of the bishopric, high priests group leader, elders quorum president, ward mission leader, Young Men president, ward executive secretary, and ward clerk. This committee meets weekly under the direction of the bishop to consider ward priesthood programs, including temple and family history, missionary, welfare, home teaching, and member activation.

Second is the *ward welfare committee*. It includes the priesthood executive committee plus the Relief Society presidency. This committee meets at least monthly, again under the direction of the bishop, to consider the temporal needs of ward members. Only the bishop may allocate welfare resources, but the committee helps care for the poor by planning and coordinating the use of ward resources, including the time, talents, skills, materials, and compassionate service of ward members. In this and in other committee and council meetings, delicate matters often are discussed, requiring strict confidentiality.

The third is the *ward council*. It includes the priesthood executive committee; the presidents of the Relief Society, Sunday School, Young Women, and Primary; and the activities committee chairman. The bishop may invite others to attend as needed. This council meets at least monthly to correlate planning for all ward programs and activities and to review ward progress toward accomplishing the mission of the Church. The ward council brings a varied group of priesthood and women leaders together to focus on the broad range of issues that affect ward members and the community. The council reviews suggestions from home teachers and visiting teachers. . . .

Using councils to help retain converts

One major concern of the General Authorities is the lack of retention in full fellowship of some new converts and those who are less active in the Church. If ward councils are functioning as they should, every new convert will be fellowshiped, will have home teachers or visiting teachers, and will receive an appropriate calling within days after baptism. The less active will receive callings that assure them that they are needed and loved by the ward members. . . .

Become a problem-solving team

When stake presidents and bishops allow the priesthood and auxiliary leaders whom the Lord has called to serve with them to become part of a problem-solving team, wonderful things begin to happen. Their participation broadens the base of experience and understanding, leading to better solutions. You bishops energize your ward leaders by giving them a chance to offer suggestions and to be heard. You prepare future leaders by allowing them to participate and learn. You can lift much of the load from your shoulders through this kind of involvement. People who feel ownership of a problem are more willing to help find a solution, greatly improving the possibility of success.

Once the appropriate councils are organized and the brethren and the sisters have full opportunity to contribute, ward and stake leaders can move beyond just maintaining organizations. They can focus their efforts on finding ways to make their world a better place to live. Certainly ward councils

can consider such subjects as gang violence, child safety, urban blight, or community cleanup campaigns. Bishops could ask ward councils, “How can we make a difference in our community?” Such broad thinking and participation in community improvement are the right things for Latter-day Saints to do.

How the Apostles counsel together

For the past eight and one-half years I have served as a member of a council of twelve men. We come from different backgrounds, and we bring to the Council of the Twelve Apostles a diverse assortment of experiences in the Church and in the world. In our meetings we do not just sit around and wait for President Howard W. Hunter to tell us what to do. We counsel openly with each other, and we listen to each other with profound respect for the abilities and experiences our brethren bring to the council. We discuss a wide variety of issues, from Church administration to world events, and we do so frankly and openly. Sometimes we discuss issues for weeks before reaching a decision. We do not always agree during our discussions. But once a decision is made, we are always both united and determined.

Listen and reason in councils

This is the miracle of Church councils: listening to each other and listening to the Spirit! When we support one another in Church councils, we begin to understand how God can take ordinary men and women and make of them extraordinary leaders. The best leaders are not those who work themselves to death trying to do everything single-handedly; the best leaders are those who follow God’s plan and *counsel* with their *councils*.

“Come now,” said the Lord in an earlier dispensation through the prophet Isaiah, “and let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18). And in this dispensation He repeated that admonition: “Let us reason together, that ye may understand” (D&C 50:10).

Let us remember that the basic council of the Church is the family council. Fathers and mothers should apply diligently the principles I have discussed in their relationships with each other and with their children. As we do so, our homes can become a heaven on earth.

Brothers and sisters, let us work together as never before in our stewardships to find ways to make more effective use of the wondrous power of councils. I ask you to consider all that I said on this subject last October with what I have said today. I testify that we can bring the full force of God’s revealed plan for gospel governance into our ministries as we counsel together. May God bless us to stand united as we strengthen the Church and our members, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- In what sense are the Church and the family an extension of the premortal council in heaven?
- What should be “the primary focus of stake and ward council meetings”?
- What is “spiritual synergism”?
- What are some concerns on which stake and ward councils might appropriately focus?
- According to Elder Ballard, what do the best Church leaders do with their councils?

THE IMPORTANCE OF DELEGATION

“Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

“And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee” (Exodus 18:21–22).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Wise leaders use the principle of delegation to help those they serve meet righteous goals and become more like Jesus Christ.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Wise leaders delegate meaningful tasks and responsibilities to those they lead.

CONCEPT 1. WISE LEADERS DELEGATE MEANINGFUL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THOSE THEY LEAD.

COMMENTARY

During His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ delegated responsibilities to His disciples and gave them authority. For example, He commissioned His Apostles to “heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils” (see Matthew 10:5–8).

The Apostle Paul wrote: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11–12).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, explained that after Christ’s Resurrection, “the Twelve . . . realized that they had not been called to serve tables but, rather, to spread the word of God about the earth. Hence, they wisely delegated the welfare task to others. So the needs of the Greek widows—which were real—were met, but without sacrificing the Twelve’s higher calling [see Acts 6:1–7]” (*We Will Prove Them Herewith* [1982], 110).

The Prophet Joseph Smith exemplified the principle of delegation. Elder Spencer J. Condie, a member of the Seventy, observed, “A great strength of the Prophet was his ability to delegate and develop leadership skills in those around him” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 1990, 35; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 28). Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve said, “A bishop needs to be a skillful delegator, or he will be crushed under the burden of his responsibilities or frustrated at seeing so many of them unfilled” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 29; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 22).

Church and family leadership can be both joyful and demanding. The Holy Spirit strengthens and renews leaders, but wise leaders delegate responsibilities to the people they serve, because leaders cannot do everything themselves, and because people grow more when they participate.

Elder James E. Faust, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “One of the first principles we must keep in mind is that the work of the Lord goes forward through assignments. Leaders receive and give assignments. This is an important part of the necessary principle of delegating” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, 50; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 34).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, then a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, suggested the following reasons leaders sometimes fail to delegate:

“1. We would really rather do it ourselves.

“2. We are not really willing to use our time and talents in order to train others so they can help.

“3. We dislike asking others to help, forgetting that receiving help is as much a part of the gospel as giving help.

“4. We like to feel a bit harried because it gives us a false sense of being noble.

“5. We say we are concerned about ‘quality control’ if the task is delegated, and sometimes there is good reason for the concern; other times, however, we actually worry not about tasks being done poorly, but too well.”

Elder Maxwell advised: “The sense we may have at times of being devoured by duty . . . is at least partially avoidable. . . . We could, if we chose more often, delegate, thus developing others, including our children, more and, finally, thereby reducing unnecessary burdens on ourselves” (*Wherefore Ye Must Press Forward* [1977], 99–100).

Elder Sterling W. Sill, who was then an Assistant to the Twelve, wrote: “A leader does not lose his authority nor his responsibility when he delegates it. . . . He must inspect; he must train; he must encourage; he must supervise the one to whom the responsibility has been given. . . . Delegation without control is irresponsibility” (*Leadership* [1958], 213).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask students to define the word *delegate*. (“To entrust someone else with a portion of one’s responsibility.”) Discuss how this definition applies to leadership in the Church and family.

Invite students to find examples of delegation in the scriptures. Have them share examples of successful delegation in family or Church settings. Discuss why delegation is an important part of family and Church leadership.

Divide students into small groups. Invite each group to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of delegation. Have them report their findings, and then discuss them as a class.

Invite students to think about how important delegation is to effective leadership. Encourage them to notice how leaders in the Church and in families delegate responsibilities. Invite them to think about which responsibilities leaders can and cannot delegate and why.

Discuss some of the characteristics of successful delegators. For example, successful delegators:

- Give people clear and specific assignments.
- Specify what is to be done but not exactly how it should be done.
- Give people the authority to accomplish their assigned tasks.
- Train people, if necessary, in the skills they need to be successful.
- Make available the tools and resources the people need to be successful.
- Provide appropriate supervision as people work to accomplish their tasks.
- Give sincere encouragement and support to people when they do well.
- Make themselves available to give counsel and direction.
- Provide an opportunity for people to report on their assigned tasks.

Discuss what leaders can do to see that delegated responsibilities are met. Have students read Exodus 18:13–27. Discuss questions such as:

- What concerns did Jethro have regarding Moses’ leadership?
- How did Moses respond to Jethro’s concerns?
- What can we learn about leadership from this experience of Moses?

Read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson, who was then President of the Quorum of the Twelve: “This is the Lord’s organization through which we operate. We are dealing with voluntary workers—our Father’s children whom he loves, regardless of their mistakes and weaknesses. There must be no force, coercion, or intimidation in our delegation. To be effective, we must seek and obtain the Spirit if we are to delegate wisely” (*God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties* [1974], 130).

TEACHER RESOURCES



President N. Eldon Tanner

*First Counselor
in the First Presidency*

*"The Message: Leading
as the Savior Led,"*

New Era, June 1977, 4–7

In order to be a successful leader or teacher (and I will use these terms interchangeably) in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, it is important that each realizes and understands fully that he is a spirit child of God and that those he is leading are also spirit children of God. It is important also that those whom he is leading know and understand that *they* are spirit children of God, and that this knowledge is important in their lives. They must realize that God is interested in them, wants them to live the way they should, and is ready to answer their prayers and help them wherever possible if they will but listen.

Someone has said that leadership entails a certain boldness. It is, after all, essentially the business of venturing out front, going first, standing in front of the mob, the congregation, the faceless audience of thousands, or the hard-eyed gaze of only one doubter.

Everyone is a leader or has influence in the lives of others even though he may not realize it. The question is: What kind of leader will he be? What kind of influence will he have?

Each individual must make his own decision as to what kind he will be. He should be determined to be the kind who can say as Jesus said, "Come follow me and do as ye see me do," knowing that he is leading in the path of truth and righteousness. This should be the aim of every leader.

In order to lead as Jesus led, we are faced with many challenges. One of the first steps in meeting these challenges is to realize that Christ is a model of correct leadership; and as the scriptures record his life and his teachings, they become case studies of divine leadership. To lead as he led it is important that we search and understand the scriptures and apply them in our lives. As Nephi said, we should "liken all scriptures unto us" (1 Ne. 19:23); and as

the Lord said, "live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God" (D&C 84:44).

In 3 Nephi we read:

"And blessed are all they who are persecuted for my name's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"And blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake;

"For ye shall have great joy and be exceeding glad, for great shall be your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth; but if the salt shall lose its savor wherewith shall the earth be salted? The salt shall be thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

"And behold, I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Behold, ye have the commandments before you, and the law is fulfilled.

"Therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (3 Ne. 12:10–13, 19–20.)

When Christ came upon the earth to save mankind that they might return to live again with their Father in heaven, he did not say, "I will obey this law, but I will not obey that law." He did not say, as pertaining to the commandments, "This I will do; this I will not do." In spite of his experience and pain and suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane he persevered to the end and gave his life that man might have immortality and eternal life.

It is so important that we learn to obey and keep the commandments of God. It has been said that obedience is not the mark of a slave; it is one of the prime qualities of leadership.

Some people fail to become great leaders because they have not learned to follow instructions—even the teachings of Jesus Christ. In order, then, to lead as Jesus led, we must first learn to follow

Christ as he followed his Father in heaven. We must keep in mind those eternal goals to which I have referred, and as spirit children of God become more and more like him until we are perfect. Let us not just believe in Christ, but let us follow him. Let us worship him and always be obedient to his teachings.

When Joseph Smith was asked how he governed his people so well, he replied, “I teach them correct principles and they govern themselves.” This is the essence of the Lord’s approach to leadership, implying that we must be sure we are teaching correct principles with a testimony and understanding of the gospel. Understanding principles of the gospel allows infinitely more freedom and growth than does training in procedures only.

When asked the difference between a shepherd and a sheepherder, a man explained that a sheepherder drives his sheep and a shepherd leads them. Someone said, “Men are like spaghetti: If you get in front and pull, they will follow along behind; but if you get in back and push, they will all wad up.”

A leader in the Church is also a teacher, and one of the greatest tools in teaching is example, the tool Christ always used. A wise man once observed, “Your actions speak so loudly I cannot hear what you say.” Though we may not be conscious of it, what we teach by example becomes more persuasive than what we teach intentionally by precept, and it will leave a much more lasting impression on the observer.

To be an effective leader or teacher one must show love and actually feel love for the person he is trying to instruct. No power is as motivating as the power of love. Christ loved everyone—the weak, the sinner, the righteous. Sometimes the ones who need to be loved most are the ones who seem to deserve it the least. Though we may not appreciate or approve of what someone does, we must still show love for the individual.

At such times a leader needs patience and understanding. He cannot always act hastily, and he must never overreact. All people cannot move at his pace. President Joseph F. Smith said:

“In leaders undue impatience and a gloomy mind are almost unpardonable, and it sometimes

takes almost as much courage to wait as to act. It is to be hoped, then, that the leaders of God’s people, and the people themselves, will not feel that they must have at once a solution of every question that arises to disturb the even tenor of their ways.” (*Gospel Doctrine*, Deseret Book Co., 1939, p. 156.)

Another very important step in leadership is delegation. Those delegated must be given a meaningful stewardship. Assigning the stewardship is the duty of the leader. Each individual must accept the assigned stewardship and commit himself to perform the duties as he is taught. He must be given the authority as well as the responsibility. Socrates is reported to have said, “Whatever duty thou assignest me, sooner would I die a thousand times than to forsake it.”

A leader should never try to do the work of one to whom he has made an assignment. As President Harold B. Lee said, “Let them do everything within their power, and you stand in the background and teach them *how* to do it. I think therein is the secret of growth, to fix responsibility and then teach our people *how to carry* that responsibility.”

Give them freedom to do their tasks. Never criticize them, but praise success and encourage efforts.

We must make every person realize the great importance of his calling. A leader must never be one who is referred to or thought of as the boss, but as the Savior taught, one who serves with the people. He said, “He that is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matt. 23:11), and gave us the great example when washing his disciples’ feet. He also said, “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Matt. 23:12.)

I remember President Heber J. Grant saying so often that he would never make an assignment to anyone to do a job that he would not be prepared to do himself.

A good leader is concerned with the welfare of his followers or those he serves. As a cabinet minister in the government of the province of Alberta, I had many difficult decisions to make. I always asked myself, “What is the best for the province, for the people who will be affected, and

for the employees of the department?" I also discussed the problems with the leaders of the different divisions of the department, particularly the ones affected, and made them feel that they were accepting at least some of the responsibility, following which I always went to the Lord for guidance, and received it, and was able to make decisions that I could not have made otherwise.

As leaders we must realize that the Lord said, "This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) He also said, "Wherefore, as ye are agents, ye are on the Lord's errand; and whatever ye do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business." (D&C 64:29.)

Yes, we as leaders *are* on his errand and should give the utmost attention to the personal growth of each individual through teaching correct principles and try to lead that individual to prepare himself for immortality and eternal life. This we should do by example and precept and then be prepared to help and support him in his efforts, but we should let him make his own decisions and govern himself according to the free agency that is his gift.

Let us remember the words of the Lord to Joseph Smith regarding stewardship: "It is required of the Lord, at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity." (D&C 72:3.)

When a leader gives an assignment, it should be clearly understood, with the area of responsibility clearly defined, and then the individual should be free to act and complete the assignment, with a specified time set for a progress or final report. An accounting should always be made to the leader, and he should expect such accounting.

In Church administration the basic tool for accountability is personal interview. If the relationship between the interviewee and interviewer is as it should be, this can be a very rewarding experience for both parties, where there is opportunity to give a self-evaluation, and where communication should be open and constructive. It is an ideal setting for offering and receiving help and assistance.

My experience in the government and business world as well as in the Church has emphasized

this great need for proper delegation of authority, following through, and getting a report.

We might consider seven steps that Christ followed in delegation.

First, the organization of the church Jesus established was structured in a frame of delegated authority.

Second, in delegating, Jesus did not make the assignments sound easy, but he made them sound exciting and challenging.

Third, Jesus let those he called know and fully understand their duties.

Fourth, Jesus gave those delegated full confidence, as his father had given him.

Fifth, Jesus gave those he called his loyalty and expected theirs in return.

Sixth, Jesus expected much from those to whom he delegated responsibility and was prepared to give much.

Seventh, Jesus taught that he who leads should follow the progress of and receive an accounting from those to whom responsibility has been delegated, giving praise and reproof where necessary in a spirit of love. . . .

George Washington, in his farewell address to his fellow countrymen, warned them against thinking that they could have a great democracy without a deep and abiding faith in God. . . .

Winston Churchill emphasized, "We must become aware that the flame of Christian ethics is still our highest guide. . . . The fulfillment of spiritual duty in our daily lives is vital to our survival."

In essence they are . . . saying the same thing—our only hope of greatness lies in following the example of Christ. To be a great leader, then, one must do the following:

First, look to our Savior as the perfect leadership example.

Second, accept the role of teacher and servant.

Third, search the scriptures for correct principles.

Fourth, pray for guidance, listen, and respond.

Fifth, help the individual to develop self-government.

Sixth, hold individuals accountable for their work.

Seventh, express adequate appreciation.

Eighth, set a personal example consistent with that which he teaches.

Ninth, listen to the voice of the President of the Church, who is a prophet of God, and follow his counsel and example.

STUDY HELPS

- According to President Tanner, what must a leader do to delegate properly?
- How should a leader go about assigning responsibilities to people and defining how they meet those responsibilities?
- What role should personal interviews play in accountability? What are features of a good personal interview?

PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

“Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

“For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward” (D&C 58:27–28).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Good decision-making ability is necessary for Christlike leadership.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Leaders must be able to make wise decisions.

CONCEPT 1. LEADERS MUST BE ABLE TO MAKE WISE DECISIONS.

COMMENTARY

“Making decisions is probably the most important thing people ever do,” taught President Ezra Taft Benson, who was then President of the Quorum of the Twelve. “Nothing happens until someone makes a decision. . . .

“Fortunately the ability and judgment necessary to make decisions can be acquired” (*God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties* [1974], 145). See the Teacher Resource section for suggestions by President Benson on how to learn to make wise decisions.

TEACHING IDEA

Discuss the idea that leaders must make wise decisions to help people come to Christ. Explain that we all can improve in our ability to make wise decisions.

Select several points that you consider important for making decisions as a leader (see the Teacher Resource section), and discuss them with the class.

Divide the class into small groups. Have each group come up with a hypothetical situation in which a Church or family leader must make a decision. (For example, a bishopric might be concerned that ward members are not coming to

meetings on time, or a family might not know where to go for a vacation.)

Have each group exchange its hypothetical situation with another group. Invite the groups to apply the principles of decision making you discussed and come up with a decision and plan of action. Have each group share their decision and plans and how they arrived at them.

TEACHER RESOURCES



President Ezra Taft Benson

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

“Suggestions on Making Decisions,” in God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties (1974), 143–53

Our decisions have made us what we are. Our eternal destiny will be determined by the decisions we yet will make.

Wise decisions are the stepping stones of progress. They are the building blocks of life. Decisions are the ingredients of success. For individuals and institutions, they mark the way of progress. The mind of an individual or the collective mind of the council, committee, or board of directors decides what the present state and the future direction of the individual or institution will be.

Wise decisions will show the way to progress.

We live in a wicked world. Never in our memory has the adversary been so well organized and never had he had so many emissaries working for him. As a people we face difficult days—days of pressing decisions, for young and old.

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we face momentous decisions. Our people—heads of families, parents, children—must make important decisions. Help is needed and help is available.

As a church we hold the saving truths and ordinances which will bring salvation and exaltation to members of the human race. It is therefore most important that church leaders make the right decisions and guide those under them in the paths of truth and righteousness toward the accomplishment of our goals, but also our families, wards, stakes, missions, the Church, and the world.

If we are to make proper, Christ-like decisions, we must first of all live so we can reach out and tap that unseen power without which no man can do his best in decision making.

One of the greatest decisions of this age was when the boy Joseph Smith decided that he would follow the admonition in James: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” (James 1:5–6.)

The very salvation of millions of men and women in the dispensation of the fulness of times depends upon that decision! We must keep in mind that individuals do matter and that decisions they make may greatly affect the lives of others.

In addition to heavenly sources, it is important also that we realize that individual effort and resourcefulness are necessary not only in solving the day-to-day problems of the Church, but also in bringing growth and development to those required to make decisions.

There are some guiding principles that will assist church leaders in making decisions both in their own personal lives and in their important responsibility of leading others to their eventual goal of exaltation in the kingdom of God.

The biggest business of any life is making decisions. While one of the greatest gifts of God to man is free agency or the right of choice, he has also given man responsibility for these choices. We may choose between good and evil. We put our own lives in the direction of success or failure. We may not only choose our ultimate goals, but we may also determine and decide for ourselves, in many cases, the means by which we will arrive at those goals, and by our industry or lack of it determine the speed by which they may be reached. This takes individual effort and energy and will not be without opposition or conflict.

Making decisions is probably the most important thing people ever do. Nothing happens until someone makes a decision. Even the world itself circled into being as the result of God’s decisions. God said, “. . . In the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth,” “Let there be light; and there was light,” “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and it was so. . . .” (Moses 2:1, 3, 6.)

Fortunately the ability and judgment necessary to make decisions can be acquired. Certain methods and practices can bring to us all greater skill in every-day, every-week, every-month opportunities to make decisions.

There are some basic principles recommended and used by specialists in the field. It is generally recognized that there are five fundamental steps in decision making:

1. Defining the problem, its scope and significance:
 - a. What kind of problem is it?
 - b. What is its critical factor?
 - c. When do we have to solve it?
 - d. Why solve it?
 - e. What will it take to solve it?
 - f. What is the value or gain in solving it?
2. Collecting facts and analyzing and using them.
3. Developing and weighing possible solutions to arrive at conclusions.
4. Carrying a decision into action with plans and controls.
5. Follow-up on the results of the decisions and action.

Decisions should be based on correct principles and facts. A thorough knowledge of the principles and facts surrounding any particular problem usually leads to an easy and correct decision. A thorough knowledge of the facts surrounding a welfare problem, for example, will, when considered in connection with fundamental welfare principles, bring the bishop to the right answer in that particular case. One of the most basic elements of decision making, therefore, is to have possession of the facts and to understand and be familiar with the basic and underlying principles.

For another example, a bishop may feel that his ward should be doing better in temple work. How does he make a decision on this problem? He would first want to determine the facts by asking and finding the answers to several questions. How many temple recommends do my ward members hold? How is this number divided between the high priests, . . . elders, and sisters? . . . How does my ward . . . compare with other wards in the stake? Even if it compares favorably, is it good enough? How important is this work anyway? (See Malachi 4:5–6.) Why would the whole earth be smitten with a curse had not Elijah come with the keys of sealing which he held?

After discussing the problem and its solution with his counselors and the high priests group leader and perhaps the entire ward executive committee, the bishop would then decide on a course of action. He would write down the various steps to implement the course of action decided upon, activate the program by making assignments and delegation of responsibility, and then remember to follow up.

On a personal basis, a decision to turn down a proffered cigarette or a drink of liquor will be easy to make if one has the facts, understands the underlying principles and concepts of the Word of Wisdom, and has already determined in his mind that he will uphold and sustain this divinely revealed principle.

Again, if one understands the principle, he will already know the right decision when he is faced with a problem involving [sexual] morality. All he will need under the pressure of the moment will be the fortitude to make the decision he already knows is the right one.

One of the best ways for leaders to understand correct principles is to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the scriptures and the appropriate handbook. Most situations have already arisen before, perhaps many times, and policy and procedure have already been determined to handle the problem. It is always wise, therefore, to refer to and be familiar with existing written instructions and church policy on questions as they arise.

Decisions should be timely. Sometimes a lack of decision on a point is actually a decision in the opposite direction. We need to make up our minds. Elijah said to ancient Israel: “How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” (1 Kings 18:21.)

Joshua advocated this principle when he gathered all the elders and judges of the tribes of Israel to Shechem and told them, in effect, to make up their minds today. He said: “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15.)

Some people intend to make a decision and then never get around to it. They intend to paint the barn, to fix the fence, to haul away that old machinery or remove that old shed, but the time of decision just never arrives.

Some of us face a similar situation in our personal lives. We intend to pay a full tithing, to begin keeping the Word of Wisdom, to make our initial home teaching visits early in the month. However, without actual decision followed by implementation, the weeks and months go by and nothing is accomplished. We could drift into eternity on these kinds of good intentions. Thus lack of decision becomes our decision *not* to do those good things for which we had the best of intentions. The Lord apparently sensed this weakness in his children, for he said: “Wherefore, if ye believe me, ye will labor while it is called today.” (D&C 64:25.)

Get the facts—then decide promptly. As an excuse for postponing decisions, do not rely on the old clichés some people use, such as “I want

to sleep on it.” We don’t make decisions in our sleep. However, don’t jump to conclusions or make snap judgments. Get the facts, be sure of the basic principles, and weigh the consequences. Then decide!

The prophet Joel recognized the principle of timeliness as priesthood leaders should today, for now, as then, wickedness is almost everywhere. Sound decisions are needed. Joel said: “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, . . . for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.” (Joel 3:13–14.)

The decisions of which Joel spoke are the decisions that lead to eternal exaltation. May we help in showing the way.

Wise decisions are usually arrived at following work, struggle, and prayerful effort. The Lord’s response to Oliver Cowdery’s ineffective effort makes this clear: “But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.” (D&C 9:8.)

Let us begin, therefore, by saying that earnestly seeking our Father in heaven, having faith that he will answer our prayers, is a comforting base on which to begin. Joseph Smith also said the Lord will not take water from a dry well, so we must do our part. Sometimes attempting to find a correct decision takes great amounts of energy, study, and long-suffering.

Here are some effective suggestions our leaders can use to assist them in correctly deciding what actions should be taken.

1. Is the problem clearly understood? All too often our leaders haven’t defined what is to be decided. The problem must be expressed clearly on paper.

2. Is the stated problem the real one? Is our leader treating the symptoms or the causes? For example, a stake president was concerned with home teaching in his stake and wanted to make some decisions in order to improve it. The records established that fewer families were being visited each month. The stake president was upset with the home teachers without realizing that he wasn’t

properly communicating on a continuing basis with the bishops and quorum leaders about home teaching and its importance. The real problem wasn’t low home teaching activity; the difficulty was inadequate communication between the stake president and his subordinates. Once the stake president realized the difficulty and corrected it, the home teaching improved greatly in his stake.

3. Does the problem “feel” right? We in the Church are open to inspiration and should seek it, and our Father in heaven will let us know if the problem we are concerned about is one demanding a decision. Inspiration is an important aspect of decision making.

4. Diagnose the problem. The problem must be analyzed and divided into its parts. Common sense dictates that the items to be decided should be written down and each facet be listed. Assess the whole situation, looking to the experience of the past and present as much as possible. Keep an open mind.

5. Evaluate the available alternatives. Justice Benjamin Nathan Cardozo of the [United States] Supreme Court said, “There is in each of us a stream of tendency that gives coherence and direction to thought and action.” The selected facts must be carefully evaluated and listed in their order of importance as we best see them. How the Saints are affected must be of primary concern.

6. Pray and fast for inspiration. “Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good. . . .” (Alma 37:37.) After an adequate evaluation of the situation, prayer and fasting must then be brought in as the final step before the decision. Listen for an answer. Too often we pray without listening.

7. Make the decision. “Decision making is a lonely business,” said my good friend Clarence B. Randall, former head of Inland Steel Company, “and the greater the degree of responsibility, the more intense the loneliness.” After following the six steps previously mentioned, however, most decisions our priesthood brethren make will be for the best.

8. Determine how to accomplish the decision. Action must follow the decision. The procedures of accomplishment must be listed and assignments made.

9. Follow up and reevaluate. One good brother said, “If a decision has come from inspiration, then why evaluate?” Circumstances change and with change comes time to review and, at least some of the time, to begin the decision-making process all over again. In any event, a follow-up to see if the job is being done must be part of the procedure.

Our fellow workers will make better decisions in their callings if they will follow these nine steps. But remember, while the Lord will give us help in making decisions, he expects us to do our homework.

What are the tests that might well be applied to a proposed course of action—a pending decision? Here are six:

1. Could it retard or injure spiritual or moral progress?
2. Could it create unhappy or unpeaceful memories?
3. Is it contrary to the revealed will or commandments of God? “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.” (D&C 82:10.)
4. Could it harm any individual, family, or group?
5. Would the decision make a better person or a better associate as it pertains to God’s laws? For example, by living the Word of Wisdom, we are promised that we “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures.” (D&C 89:19.)
6. Could a blessing be derived from this particular action? “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundation of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.” (D&C 130:20–21.)

May I, in conclusion, offer the following ten points for the consideration of leaders as helps in making wise decisions:

1. Ask for guidance from the Lord in making decisions.
2. Do you get a burning in your bosom after you have made the decision?

3. Is it in keeping with the words of the prophets—that is, the Presidents of the Church, particularly the living President?

4. Some decisions are simply a matter of making good judgment, and simply coming to a decision. For instance, in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord tells the brethren he is not concerned whether they go by land or by sea, as long as they get going. (See D&C 61:22.)

5. There are a few cases where a decision cannot be made immediately, because the Lord wants to bring other factors to the attention of the decision maker. In that case, a man must learn to wait on the Lord or, as the Lord would say, “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10.)

6. In decisions of crucial importance, fasting combined with prayer can bring great spiritual insight.

7. While it is usually advisable to try to see the long-range view of the decision you make, sometimes the Lord will inspire you to make only temporary decisions that will lead to an end that only he knows about. A man should never hesitate to make such decisions. Wilford Woodruff [the fourth President of the Church] had to make a number of those decisions that required him to say “I know not save the Lord commanded it” [see Moses 5:6]. Nephi returned to Jerusalem without knowing exactly what his plan of action was going to be.

8. President Harold B. Lee tells, in his book *Decisions for Successful Living* (page 45), about talking with a church leader who sometimes, in trying to come to a decision on a given matter, would say to himself, “What would Jesus do in this situation?” This would mean, of course, that a man would have to know Jesus well enough through study and righteous living that he might ask that question intelligently.

9. A man should always be sure that he consults the Spirit in his decision making. In other words, he should keep the door ajar in case the Spirit wants to dictate a course other than the one he might have naturally followed. Brigham Young at one time said that he wanted to do a certain thing, but that the Spirit dictated otherwise.

10. It's always good to know what other Church leaders have done in making decisions on similar matters. That's why, in part at least, the Prophet Joseph had records kept of various meetings. Therefore a man should study the records, the prophets, and Church history.

We are engaged in a work in which we cannot fail—be it decision making or other—if we do our part. The Lord will not permit us to fail. This is his work. These are his children we are called to labor with, and he loves them. This is his program through which we work, his authority, and he will magnify us—yes, when necessary, even beyond our natural abilities. This I know, and I thank God for this priceless knowledge and blessing.

STUDY HELPS

- Which comments by President Benson help us understand how important wise decisions are to our eternal life?
- Which of the “five fundamental steps in decision making” seems most important to you in your development as a leader? Explain your answer. (*Note:* If you use this question in the classroom, ask something less personal, such as “Why is each of these five steps important in decision making?”)
- Why is it important that decisions be based on “correct principles and facts”?
- How can we test our decisions to see if they are correct?

CONDUCTING SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

“And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done” (Moroni 6:9).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

The purpose of Church and family meetings should be to help people become more Christlike.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. We hold Church and family meetings to help people achieve worthy goals and come unto Jesus Christ.
2. We can learn to plan and conduct effective meetings.

CONCEPT 1. WE HOLD CHURCH AND FAMILY MEETINGS TO HELP PEOPLE ACHIEVE WORTHY GOALS AND COME UNTO JESUS CHRIST.

COMMENTARY

During His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ met often with His disciples and others (see Matthew 5:1; Mark 2:2; Luke 4:14–15; John 6:3). He also met with His followers in Book of Mormon lands after His Resurrection (see 3 Nephi 12). In our dispensation He instructed Joseph Smith that the Saints should “meet together often” (D&C 20:55).

Bishop Robert L. Simpson, who was then a Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, said: “As we strive to know God the Father and his son, Jesus Christ, we must familiarize ourselves with the standard works of the church; we must attend the meetings as outlined by our modern-day prophets, that our hearts and minds might be filled with the teachings of truth and the spirit of testimony as borne by others and, from time to time, by ourselves, as we are called on or feel so inclined. Thus we build a testimony, a conviction that God is” (*The Powers and Responsibilities of the Priesthood*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [31 Mar. 1964], 3).

President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Avoid the tendency to crowd too many meetings in on the Sabbath day. When holding your regular meetings, make them as spiritual and effective as possible. Meetings need not be hurried nor rushed,

for they can be planned in a manner that permits their sacred purposes to be accomplished without difficulty” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, 62; or *Ensign*, May 1981, 45).

TEACHING IDEA

Ask students: Why do we have so many meetings in the Church and with our families? In what ways are some meetings more effective than others?

Read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson: “Faithful attendance at Church meetings brings blessings you can receive in no other way” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 56; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 44). Ask students to list some of the important meetings in the Church and explain how attending these meetings can bring blessings.

Tell students that there are required meetings and meetings that are helpful but not required. There are meetings where we worship and meetings where we plan activities. There are formal meetings and informal meetings. There are meetings where the public is welcome and others that only those who meet a standard of worthiness may attend. Explain that the leaders who hold any of these meetings can use them to help people achieve worthy goals and come unto Christ (see the commentary). In planning and holding meetings and activities, leaders should be careful not to interfere with the home, which is the most effective place to teach and learn the gospel.

CONCEPT 2. WE CAN LEARN TO PLAN AND CONDUCT EFFECTIVE MEETINGS.

COMMENTARY

Church leaders plan and conduct a variety of meetings. These can be for worship, instruction, or planning. Latter-day prophets teach that families should meet together weekly in a family home evening. Here parents and children encourage each other to live gospel principles and discuss family matters.

An early step in planning a good meeting involves understanding its purpose. For example, a bishop who plans a sacrament meeting should understand that the purpose of this meeting is to take the sacrament, worship, learn the gospel, perform ordinances such as confirmation, take care of ward business, and strengthen members spiritually. Once leaders understand the purpose of a meeting, they can look for the best way to achieve it.

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve gave the following counsel regarding meetings in general:

- “See that the written agenda . . . focuses mainly on people rather than programs.”
- “The purposes of the meeting should be clear, and it should start and end on time.”
- “Allow sufficient time to discuss people’s needs.”
- “After listening carefully and sincerely to [the] recommendations [of those present], make a decision or assignment that will result in a specific, measurable course of action.”
- “Make such decisions prayerfully.”
- Ask someone “to take responsibility for each assignment [and] to ‘return and report’ on an agreed-upon date.”
- “When an assignment is delegated, it should normally be communicated in terms of ‘what’ rather than ‘how’; that is, the person receiving it should be accountable for the result to be achieved rather than the specific methods to be used.”

(Counseling with Our Councils: Learning to Minister Together in the Church and in the Family [1997], 124–25.)

TEACHING IDEA

Using the material in the commentary and your own experience, discuss how to plan and conduct effective Church and family meetings. Divide your class into small groups. Have each group design a one-page outline to help them plan and conduct meetings. Invite the groups to explain their designs.

TEACHER RESOURCES



President Boyd K. Packer

*Acting President
of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles*

*The Unwritten Order of
Things, Brigham Young
University devotional,
15 Oct. 1996*

I speak to you today as a teacher. I reflect the influence of a teacher that I knew more than fifty years ago. As is often the case, the influence of that teacher did not center on the subject he taught. Dr. Schaefer was a professor of mathematics at Washington State University at Pullman, Washington. He was quite unimpressive in appearance. I don’t remember his first name, but I shall never forget the first thing he said the first day we met.

It was during World War II. We were in pilot training and had been sent to the university for what we were told would be a crash course in meteorology, weather, navigation, physics, aerodynamics, and other technical subjects. We thought the title “*Crash* course” was not very encouraging to student pilots. The word *intense* would have been better.

The pressure was enormous because those who failed the course would be washed out of the pilot program. I was in competition with cadets, many of whom had been to college; some of them had had some advanced training, while I had barely escaped from high school.

Dr. Schaefer was to take us from basic mathematics through calculus in just a matter of weeks. I thought it was hopeless, until that first few minutes in the first class. He began the class with this announcement: “While many of you

have had some college, even advanced courses in what we are to study, it will be my purpose to teach the beginners. I am asking those of you who know the subject to be patient while I teach the basics to those who do not.” Encouraged by what he said and more by how he taught, I was able to pass that course with reasonable ease. It might otherwise have been impossible.

When I decided to become a teacher, Dr. Schaefer’s example inspired me to try to the best of my ability to teach basic, simple truths in the most understandable way. I have learned how very difficult it is to simplify.

Years after the war, I returned to Washington State University and found Dr. Schaefer. He, of course, did not remember me. I was just one of many hundreds of cadets in his classes. I thanked him for what he had taught me. The math and calculus had long since faded away, but not his example as a teacher.

So, following that example, today I want to tell you something about the Church. The things that I shall tell you are not explained in the scriptures, although they conform to the principles taught in the scriptures.

A principle is an enduring truth, a law, a rule you can adopt to help you in making decisions. Generally principles are not spelled out in detail. That leaves you free to adapt and to find your way with an enduring truth, a principle, as an anchor.

The things I am going to tell you are not explained in our handbooks or manuals either. Even if they were, most of you don’t have handbooks—not the Melchizedek Priesthood or Relief Society handbooks and the others—because they are given only to the leaders.

I will be speaking about what I call the “unwritten order of things.” My lesson might be entitled “The Ordinary Things about the Church Which Every Member Should Know.” Although they are very ordinary things, they are, nevertheless, very important! We somehow assume that everybody knows all the ordinary things already. If you do know them, you must have learned them through observation and experience, for they are not written anywhere and they are not taught in classes. So, as we continue,

if you are ones that know it all, be patient while I teach those who do not—and take a nap.

The basic foundation of knowledge and testimony never changes—the testimony that God the Father lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that the Holy Ghost inspires us, that there has been a restoration, that the fullness of the gospel and the same organization that existed in the primitive church have been revealed to us. Those things are taught everywhere and always—in our classes, the scriptures, the handbooks and the manuals—in everything we do.

The fundamental doctrine and instructions on the organization of the Church are likewise found in the scriptures. In addition, there is another source of knowledge relating to what makes the Church work: We learn from experience and observation. If you learn about these things that are not written down, the unwritten order of things, you will be better qualified to be a leader—and you are going to be a leader. The most important positions of leadership are in the home—the father, mother, wife, husband, older brother and sister.

Then, in the Church, positions of leadership and teaching opportunities are available as nowhere else on earth.

While the things I will talk about are not written, they are really quite easily learned. Just be alert to the unwritten order of things and take an interest in them, and you will find that you will increase your ability and your value to the Lord.

Before I give you a few samples of this unwritten order of things, let me remind you what the Lord said: “My house is a house of *order*; saith the Lord God” (D&C 132:18; emphasis added). And he told his prophet: “See that all these things are done in *wisdom* and *order*; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in *order*” (Mosiah 4:27; emphasis added).

Paul told the Corinthians that “*all* things” were to “be done decently and in order” (see 1 Cor. 14:40; emphasis added). We’ll return to that in a moment or two.

The things I am going to tell you about are not so rigid that the Church will fall apart if they are not strictly observed all the time. But they do set a tone, a standard, of dignity and order and will improve our meetings and classwork; they will improve the activities. If you know them and understand them, they will greatly improve your life.

Our meetings should be conducted in such a way that members may be refreshed spiritually and remain attuned to the Spirit as they meet the challenges of life. We are to establish conditions under which members can, through inspiration, solve their own problems. There are simple things that help in that regard, and things that hinder. Alma taught “that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and small means in many instances doth confound the wise” (Alma 37:6).

I give as my first illustration of this unwritten order of things so simple a thing as this: The one who presides in a meeting should sit on the stand and sit close to the one conducting. It is a bit difficult to preside over a meeting from the congregation. The one who presides is responsible for the conduct of the meeting and has the right and the responsibility to receive inspiration and may be prompted to adjust or correct something that goes on in the meeting. That is true whether it be an auxiliary meeting presided over by the sisters or any of our meetings.

A new stake president sometimes will ask, “Must I sit on the stand in every meeting in the stake? May I not sit with my family?” I tell him, “While you preside, you are to sit on the stand.” I am tempted to say, but I don’t, “I can’t have that privilege; why should you?”

Another example: If you watch the First Presidency, you will see that the first counselor always sits on the right of the president; the second counselor on the left. That is a demonstration of doing things “decently and in order,” as Paul told us. Ordinarily, but not always, if the presiding officer speaks, it will be at the end of the meeting. Then clarification or correction can be given. I have had that experience many times at the close of meetings, “Well, brother or sister somebody said such and such, and I’m sure they meant such and such.”

Another illustration: We do not aspire to call in the Church, nor do we ask to be released. We are called to positions in the Church by inspiration. Even if the call is presented in a clumsy way, it is not wise for us to refuse the call. We must presuppose that the call comes from the Lord. The fifth article of faith tells us that we “must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.”

If some circumstance makes it difficult for you to continue to serve, you are free to consult with the leader who called you. We do not call ourselves and we do not release ourselves. Sometimes a leader or a teacher enjoys the prominence of a presiding position so much that, even after serving for a long time, they do not want to be released. That is a sign that a release is timely.

We should do as we are called. We should accept the calls and accept a release by the same authority.

When President J. Reuben Clark was called as second counselor in the First Presidency after having served for many years as first counselor, he responded at the Solemn Assembly where the sustaining of the new First Presidency took place: “In the service of the Lord, it is not *where* you serve but how. In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, one takes the place to which one is duly called, which place one neither seeks nor declines” [in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, p. 154; emphasis added]. The Church had been taught a very valuable lesson in the unwritten order of things.

I learned years ago that we do not choose where we serve—we just answer the call. Soon after our marriage, I was called as an assistant stake clerk. My bishop did not want to release me as Gospel Doctrine teacher. He told me that I had much more to offer as a teacher than in the very obscure assignment as assistant stake clerk. But he knew that, under the unwritten order of things, the stake president presided and that his call took precedence.

I cannot tell you all that I learned in that calling. I was able to see how a presidency works. I was the witness to revelation in the calling and the releasing of stake and ward officers. By watching

our stake president, I learned by observation and experience many things that are not in the handbook. It was in that calling that I first met members of the Twelve and others of the Brethren as they came to conference. It was a time of training in the unwritten order of things.

I was on a plane once with President Kimball who, I think, served for 19 years as a stake clerk. A member that lived in the stake at that time was on the plane. He said to me, “If I’d known that our stake clerk was going to be President of the Church, I’d have treated him a lot better.”

Brother Kimball was actually serving as second counselor in the stake presidency when the stake clerk moved. They called a clerk and that clerk moved. Brother Kimball had taken over the responsibility. Brother Melvin J. Ballard came to conference, and he said, “You shouldn’t have to be the second counselor and the stake clerk at the same time. You choose which you would rather be.”

Brother Kimball was not used to having a choice. He wanted to have Brother Ballard tell him, but Brother Ballard said, “No, you choose.” So Brother Kimball said, “I have a typewriter. [Very few people had typewriters then.] I know the system. I think I can make a bigger contribution if I stay as the stake clerk.” And so it was.

In those days the stake clerk received a small stipend, a little monthly something or other, I suppose to buy supplies. A sister, who knew him well, wrote and said, “Spencer, I’m surprised at you—to take a calling just because there is money involved.” Then she said, “If you don’t change your attitude, within two months, you’ll apostatize from the Church.” Well, she was a little off in her timing!

Now an example: On one occasion Elder Harold B. Lee presided over our stake conference. Between sessions we had lunch at the home of President Zundell. Donna and I arrived a little late because we had gone home to check on our young children. Elder Lee had come to the car to retrieve something from his car and was on the walk when we arrived. I am sure we were very visibly moved to be able to talk personally and to shake hands with an Apostle. He gestured toward the house and said, speaking of the stake presidency who were assembled there, “They are great men. Never fail to learn from men such as

these.” And I had been taught something of the unwritten order of things by an Apostle.

There is so much you can learn by watching experienced leaders in the wards and stakes in which you live. There is so much you can learn by listening to the older brethren and sisters who have had a lifetime of experience in the school of the unwritten.

Another illustration. There is an order of things as to where we go for counsel or blessings. It is simple—we go to our parents. When they are no longer available, if it is a blessing, then we may go to our home teacher. For counsel, you go to your bishop. He may choose to send you to his file leader—the stake president. But we do not go to the General Authorities. We do not write to them for counsel or suppose that someone in a more prominent position will give a more inspired blessing. If we could get this one thing taught in the Church, great power would rest upon us.

President Joseph F. Smith taught that should there be sickness in a home and should there be present “apostles, or even members of the first presidency of the Church, . . . the father is there. It is his right and it is his duty to preside” (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 286).

There is one authorized “end run” around the bishop, the stake president, the General Authority, and everyone else in our line of authority. That is to our Father in Heaven in prayer. If we do that, we will in most instances solve our own problems.

Another principle: Revelation in the Church is vertical. It generally confines itself to the administrative or geographic boundaries or limitations assigned to the one who is called. For instance, a bishop who is trying to solve a problem will not get revelation by counseling with a bishop from another ward or stake to whom he is related or with whom he might work at the office.

My experience has taught me that revelation comes from above, not from the side. However more experienced or older or however more spiritual someone to the side may appear to be, it is better to go up through proper channels.

Principle: A prime attribute of a good leader is to be a good follower. In a meeting with bishops, a new and struggling bishop once asked me, “How do I get people to follow me? I have called

nine sisters to be president of the Primary and none has accepted.” There was a good humor and pleasant spirit in the meeting which made it an ideal teaching moment. I answered that I doubted that he had “called” any of the nine sisters. He must only have asked or invited them.

I told him that if he had earnestly prayed and counseled with his counselors as to who should preside over the Primary, the first sister would have accepted the call. Perhaps he might have discovered in the interview some reason why it was not advisable or timely for that sister to serve and excused her from serving. But surely not more than one or two. If that many sisters turned down the call, something was out of order—the unwritten order.

Because there was such good spirit in the meeting, I said to him, “Bishop, I know something else about you. You’re not a good follower, are you? Aren’t you the one who is always questioning what the stake president asks of his bishops?” The other bishops in the room started to chuckle and nodded their heads—he was the one. He chuckled and said he supposed that was right. I said, “Perhaps the reason your members don’t follow their leader is because you don’t follow yours. An essential attribute of a leader in the Church is faithful and loyal followship. That is just the order of things—the unwritten order of things.”

When I was a young man, Elder Spencer W. Kimball came to our conference and he told this experience. When he was a stake president in Safford, Arizona, there was a vacancy in the office of superintendent of Young Men in the stake, as the office was then called. He left his office one day, went a few steps down the street, and had a conversation with the owner of a business. He said, “Jack, how would you like to be superintendent of the stake Young Men’s organization?”

Jack replied: “Aw, Spencer, you don’t mean me.”

Spencer replied, “Of course I do. You get along well with the youth.” He tried to convince him, but the man turned him down.

Later in the day, after smoldering with his failure and finally remembering what Jacob had said in the Book of Mormon—“having first obtained mine errand from the Lord”

(Jacob 1:17)—he returned to Jack. Calling him “brother” and by his last name, he said, “We have a vacancy in a stake office. My counselors and I have discussed it; we’ve prayed about it for some time. Sunday we knelt down together and asked the Lord for inspiration about who should be called to that position. We received the inspiration that you should be called. As a servant of the Lord, I am here to deliver that call.”

Jack said, “Well, Spencer, if you are going to put it that way. . . .”

“Well, I am putting it that way.”

You know the result. It helps to follow the proper order of things, even the unwritten order.

I have on my desk a letter from a brother who is greatly bothered because he was not called to office properly. He accepted the call and is willing to serve, but he said his bishop did not consult his wife first and otherwise did not handle it properly.

When I respond to him, I will try to teach him something of the unwritten order of things as it relates to being a little patient with how things are done in the Church. In the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord admonished every man to “speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world” (D&C 1:20). I think I’ll point out to him that he may one day be a bishop, overburdened with problems in the ward and with an extra burden of personal cares, and suggest that he give now what he would appreciate receiving then.

Another point of order: Bishops should not yield the arrangement of meetings to members. They should not yield the arrangement for funerals or missionary farewells to families. It is not the proper order of things for members or families to expect to decide who will speak and for how long. Suggestions are in order, of course, but the bishop should not turn the meeting over to them. We are worried about the drift that is occurring in our meetings.

Funerals could and should be the most spiritually impressive. They are becoming informal family reunions in front of ward members. Often the Spirit is repulsed by humorous experiences or jokes when the time could be devoted to teaching the things of the Spirit, even the sacred things.

When the family insists that several family members speak in a funeral, we hear about the deceased instead of about the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the comforting promises revealed in the scriptures. Now it's all right to have a family member speak at a funeral, but if they do, their remarks should be in keeping with the spirit of the meeting.

I have told my Brethren in that day when my funeral is held, if any of them who speak talk about me, I will [rise] up and correct them. The gospel is to be preached. I know of no meeting where the congregation is in a better state of readiness to receive revelation and inspiration from a speaker than they are at a funeral. This privilege is being taken away from us because we don't understand the order of things—the unwritten order of things—that relates to the administration of the Church and the reception of the Spirit.

Our bishops should not give our meetings away. That is true of our missionary farewells. We're deeply worried that they now have become kind of reunions in front of ward members. The depth of spiritual training and teaching which could go on is being lost. We have failed to remember that it is a sacrament meeting and that the bishop presides.

There are many things I could say about such matters as wearing Sunday best. Do you know what "Sunday best" means? It used to be the case. Now we see ever more informal, even slouchy, clothing in our meetings, even in sacrament meeting, that leads to informal and slouchy conduct.

It bothers me to see on a sacrament meeting program that Liz and Bill and Dave will participate. Ought it not be Elizabeth and William and David? It bothers me more to be asked to sustain Buck or Butch or Chuck to the high council. I just say, Can't we have the full names on that important record? There is a formality, a dignity, that we are losing—and it is at great cost. There is something to what Paul said about doing things "decently and in order."

Well, there is so much I want to tell you about the unwritten order of things, but then these are things that you must learn for yourself. If we could only put you in the circumstance where you begin to observe, begin to get that training, then you will know how the Church is to operate

and why it operates that way. You will find that it conforms to the principles which are outlined in the scriptures. If you will just "treasure up in your minds continually the words of life," the Lord will bless you and give "you in the very hour" what you should say and what you should do (D&C 84:85). Learn about this great pattern—the teachings that come to us from just watching and participating.

Soon after Spain had been opened for the preaching of the gospel, I was in Barcelona. Two of the first missionaries sent to Spain were sent to Barcelona to open the city. They had appealed to President Smith Griffin for forty chairs. He was in Paris at the time, and he didn't know why they wanted forty chairs when they had no members. He hesitated at the expense, but he thought he would encourage the missionaries. So he approved the forty chairs.

When we arrived at the meeting hall, upstairs in a business building, the forty chairs were filled. There were people standing. The elders had arranged for their first convert, a middle-aged man who worked in a fish market, to conduct the meeting. We watched as they taught him what to do, sometimes standing up to whisper to him.

Brother Byish nervously got through the meeting with their assistance. And then, as he stood to close, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon him and he preached with great power and at some length. It was an inspired testimony, an unforgettable moment. The two young elders, both converts from South America, had somehow learned something of the unwritten order of things. They were putting the Church in place in proper order in Barcelona. Now there are four stakes in that city.

And so it goes. The Lord uses the ordinary Saints, the rank and file, to move his work along.

*Isn't it strange that princes and kings
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings
And just plain folks like you and me
Are builders for eternity?*

*To each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass and a book of rules,
And each must build ere life has flown,
A stumbling-block or a stepping stone.*

—R. L. Sharpe, "Stumbling-Block or Stepping Stone"

The Church will move on, and it moves on just because the rank and file learn by observation, learn by teaching, learn by experience. Most of all, we learn because we are motivated by the Spirit. One day, of course, you who are young now will lead the Church. If in the intervening time you will learn and study the unwritten order of things, the power of the Lord will be upon you to the end that you might be the useful servant.

I bear witness that this is His Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and, as the Lord said, that all “might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world” (D&C 1:20).

I invoke his blessings upon you and bear witness to you in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

STUDY HELPS

- How do we learn important things about the Church that are not in the scriptures or in Church manuals?
- Why do you think we are more valuable to the Lord’s work when we learn the “unwritten order of things”?
- Why should the person who presides over a meeting sit on the stand during the meeting?
- Why isn’t it proper for a leader in the Church to ask to be released from a calling?
- Why shouldn’t a bishop go to the bishop of another ward for counsel on how to solve a problem in his ward?
- Who should plan the sacrament meetings during which departing missionaries and their families speak? Why?

INTROSPECTION

“I say unto you, can ye look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands? I say unto you, can you look up, having the image of God engraven upon your countenances?” (Alma 5:19).

PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP

Introspection helps leaders bring people to Jesus Christ.

LESSON CONCEPTS

1. Introspection is important for family and Church leaders.

CONCEPT 1. INTROSPECTION IS IMPORTANT FOR FAMILY AND CHURCH LEADERS.

COMMENTARY

Leaders should reflect regularly on their worthiness to be guided by the Spirit and on how well they apply sound leadership principles. The scriptures teach the importance of introspection. Nephi reflected: “And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?” (2 Nephi 4:27). Alma asked the people of Zarahemla: “Have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts? . . .

“And now behold, I say unto you, my brethren, if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:14, 26). The young Joseph Smith was reflecting on his “weaknesses and imperfections” and praying to the Lord for forgiveness when the Angel Moroni first appeared to him (see Joseph Smith—History 1:28–33).

Modern prophets and Church leaders have also taught the importance of introspection. President Gordon B. Hinckley, who was then a Counselor in the First Presidency, advised: “Every sacrament meeting ought to be a spiritual feast. It ought to be a time for meditation and introspection, a time for singing songs of praise to the Lord, a time of renewing one’s covenants with him and our

Eternal Father, and a time for hearing the word of the Lord with reverence and appreciation” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 66; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 47).

Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught: “The wise fisherman inspects his nets regularly. Should any flaw be detected, he repairs the defect without delay. An old saying teaches that ‘a stitch in time saves nine.’ Recorded revelation gives similar instruction. The Lord said, ‘Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works’ (Rev. 2:5).

“If we are wise, we assess personal cords of integrity on a daily basis. We identify any weakness, and we repair it. Indeed, we have an obligation to do so. . . .

“Private personal prayer is a good time for introspection. Morning prayer might include a petition for honesty, chastity, virtue, or for simply being of service to others. In the evening, there may be another quick checkup on all those attributes. We pray for the preservation of our spiritual integrity, then we work for it. Should any flaw be found, we will want to begin the process of prompt repair that will protect further disintegration of a threatened spiritual quality.

“Self-assessment is done best in many little steps, asking ourselves questions such as:

- What do we do when we make a mistake? Do we admit our error and apologize, or do we deny it and blame others?

- What do we do when we are in a group where wrong ideas or activities are promoted? Do we endorse error by our silence, or do we take a stand?
- Are we totally true to our employers, or are we less than loyal?
- Do we keep the Sabbath day, obey the Word of Wisdom, honor our father and mother?
- . . . How do we react when we hear evil-speaking against the Lord's anointed? Do we honor all [our covenants]? Or do we allow exceptions and rationalize our behavior to suit our preconceived preferences?
- How do we honor our word? Can our promises be trusted? . . .

“ . . . Proper diagnosis is essential to proper treatment. The Lord gave us this remarkable assurance: ‘Because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong’ (Ether 12:37). But wishing for strength won’t make us strong. It takes faith and work to shore up a weakened cord of integrity.

“We know the process of self-repair called repentance” (“Integrity of Heart,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 21).

TEACHING IDEA

Explain what *introspection* means (“an examination of one’s own thoughts and feelings” *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed. [1993], “introspection,” 615). Discuss why introspection is important for church and family leaders.

Ask students to name instances of introspection in the scriptures (see 1 Kings 19:4–13; Matthew 4:1–11; and the examples in the commentary). Discuss how introspection is often followed by a blessing.

Share with students President Gordon B. Hinckley’s statement in the commentary about introspection in sacrament meetings. Discuss some of the questions Elder Russell M. Nelson suggested we ask ourselves during our introspection.

Tell students that it is important for leaders to reflect on their relationship with the Lord, their responsibilities, the people they serve, and so

forth. Discuss with your students questions we might ask ourselves as we think about our worthiness and our callings as leaders. Suggest that they develop the habit of reflecting on questions like these.

TEACHER RESOURCES



President Spencer W. Kimball

*President
of the Church*

*“Jesus: The Perfect Leader,”
Ensign, Aug. 1979, 5–7*

There are far more things to be said about the Lord Jesus Christ’s remarkable leadership than any single article or book could possibly cover, but I want to point out a few of the attributes and skills he demonstrated so perfectly. These same skills and qualities are important for us all if we wish to succeed as leaders in any lasting way.

Fixed principles

Jesus knew who he was and why he was here on this planet. That meant he could lead from strength rather than from uncertainty or weakness.

Jesus operated from a base of fixed principles or truths rather than making up the rules as he went along. Thus, his leadership style was not only correct, but also constant. So many secular leaders today are like chameleons; they change their hues and views to fit the situation—which only tends to confuse associates and followers who cannot be certain what course is being pursued. Those who cling to power at the expense of principle often end up doing almost anything to perpetuate their power.

Jesus said several times, “Come, follow me.” His was a program of “do what I do,” rather than “do what I say.” His innate brilliance would have permitted him to put on a dazzling display, but that would have left his followers far behind. He walked and worked with those he was to serve. His was not a long-distance leadership. He was not afraid of close friendships; he was not afraid that proximity to him would disappoint his followers. The leaven of true leadership cannot lift others unless we are with and serve those to be led.

Jesus kept himself virtuous, and thus, when his closeness to the people permitted them to touch the hem of his garment, virtue could flow from him. (See Mark 5:24–34.)

Understanding others

Jesus was a listening leader. Because he loved others with a perfect love, he listened without being condescending. A great leader listens not only to others, but also to his conscience and to the promptings of God.

Jesus was a patient, pleading, loving leader. When Peter drew his sword and smote the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear, Jesus said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath" (John 18:11). Without being angry or perturbed, Jesus quietly healed the servant's ear (see Luke 22:51). His reproof of Peter was kind, yet firm.

Because Jesus loved his followers, he was able to level with them, to be candid and forthright with them. He reproofed Peter at times because he loved him, and Peter, being a great man, was able to grow from this reproof. There is a wonderful verse in the book of Proverbs all of us need to remember:

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

"He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding." (Proverbs 15:31–32.)

It is a wise leader or a wise follower who can cope with the "reproof of life." Peter could do this because he knew that Jesus loved him, and thus Jesus was able to groom Peter for a very high place or responsibility in the kingdom.

Jesus saw sin as wrong but also was able to see sin as springing from deep and unmet needs on the part of the sinner. This permitted him to condemn the sin without condemning the individual. We can show forth our love for others even when we are called upon to correct them. We need to be able to look deeply enough into the lives of others to see the basic causes for their failures and shortcomings.

Selfless leadership

The Savior's leadership was selfless. He put himself and his own needs second and ministered to others beyond the call of duty, tirelessly, lovingly, effectively. So many of the problems in the world

today spring from selfishness and self-centeredness in which too many make harsh demands of life and others in order to meet their demands. This is a direct reversal of the principles and practices pursued so perfectly by that perfect example of leadership, Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus' leadership emphasized the importance of being discerning with regard to others, without seeking to control them. He cared about the freedom of his followers to choose. Even he, in those moments that mattered so much, had to choose voluntarily to go through Gethsemane and to hang on the cross at Calvary. He taught us that there can be no growth without real freedom. One of the problems with manipulative leadership is that it does not spring from a love of others but from a need to use them. Such leaders focus on their own needs and desires and not on the needs of others.

Jesus had perspective about problems and people. He was able to calculate carefully at long range the effect and impact of utterances, not only on those who were to hear them at the moment, but on those who would read them 2,000 years later. So often, secular leaders rush in to solve problems by seeking to stop the present pain, and thereby create even greater difficulty and pain later on.

Responsibility

Jesus knew how to involve his disciples in the process of life. He gave them important and specific things to do for their development. Other leaders have sought to be so omniscient that they have tried to do everything themselves, which produces little growth in others. Jesus trusts his followers enough to share his work with them so that they can grow. That is one of the greatest lessons of his leadership. If we brush other people aside in order to see a task done more quickly and effectively, the task may get done all right, but without the growth and development in followers that is so important. Because Jesus knows that this life is purposeful and that we have been placed on this planet in order to perform and grow, growth then becomes one of the great ends of life as well as a means. We can give corrective feedback to others in a loving and helpful way when mistakes are made.

Jesus was not afraid to make demands of those he led. His leadership was not condescending or soft. He had the courage to call Peter and others to leave their fishing nets and to follow him, not after the fishing season or after the next catch, but now! today! Jesus let people know that he believed in them and in their possibilities, and thus he was free to help them stretch their souls in fresh achievement. So much secular leadership is condescending and, in many ways, contemptuous of mankind because it treats people as if they were to be coddled and cocooned forever. Jesus believed in his followers, not alone for what they were, but for what they had the possibilities to become. While others would have seen Peter as a fisherman, Jesus could see him as a powerful religious leader—courageous, strong—who would leave his mark upon much of mankind. In loving others, we can help them to grow by making reasonable but real demands of them.

Jesus gave people truths and tasks that were matched to their capacity. He did not overwhelm them with more than they could manage, but gave them enough to stretch their souls. Jesus was concerned with basics in human nature and in bringing about lasting changes, not simply cosmetic changes.

Accountability

Jesus taught us that we are accountable not only for our actions but also for our very thoughts. This is so important for us to remember. We live in an age that stresses “no-fault insurance”—and “no fault” in other human behavior as well. Accountability is not possible, of course, without fixed principles. A good leader will remember he is accountable to God as well as to those he leads. By demanding accountability of himself, he is in a better position, therefore, to see that others are accountable for their behavior and their performance. People tend to perform at a standard set by their leaders.

Wise use of time

Jesus also taught us how important it is to use our time wisely. This does not mean there can never be any leisure, for there must be time for contemplation and for renewal, but there must be no waste of time. How we manage time matters so very much, and we can be good managers of time without being frantic or officious. Time

cannot be recycled. When a moment has gone, it is really gone. The tyranny of trivia consists of its driving out the people and moments that really matter. Minutia holds momentous things hostage, and we let the tyranny continue all too often. Wise time management is really the wise management of ourselves.

Secular leadership

Those individuals whom we most love, admire, and respect as leaders of the human family are so regarded by us precisely because they embody, in many ways, the qualities that Jesus had in his life and in his leadership.

Conversely, those leaders in history who have been most tragic in their impact on mankind were tragic precisely because they lacked to almost any degree the qualities of the Man of Galilee. Where Jesus was selfless, they were selfish. Where Jesus was concerned with freedom, they were concerned with control. Where Jesus was concerned with service, they were concerned with status. Where Jesus met the genuine needs of others, they were concerned only with their own needs and wants. Where Jesus was concerned with the development of his disciples, they sought to manipulate mortals. Where Jesus was filled with compassion balanced by justice, they have so often been filled with harshness and injustice.

Perhaps all of us would not be the perfect example of leadership, but all of us can make a serious effort toward approaching that great ideal.

Our potential

One of the great teachings of the Man of Galilee, the Lord Jesus Christ, was that you and I carry within us immense possibilities. In urging us to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect, Jesus was not taunting us or teasing us. He was telling us a powerful truth about our possibilities and about our potential. It is a truth almost too stunning to contemplate. Jesus, who could not lie, sought to beckon us to move further along the pathway to perfection.

We are not yet perfect as Jesus was, but unless those about us can see us striving and improving, they will not be able to look to us for example, and they will see us as less than fully serious about the things to be done.

Each of us has more opportunities to do good and to be good than we ever use. These opportunities lie all around us. Whatever the size of our present circle of effective influence, if we were to improve our performance even a little bit, that circle would be enlarged. There are many individuals waiting to be touched and loved if we care enough to improve in our performance.

We must remember that those mortals we meet in parking lots, offices, elevators, and elsewhere are that portion of mankind God has given us to love and to serve. It will do us little good to speak of the general brotherhood of mankind if we cannot regard those who are all around us as our brothers and sisters. If our sample of humanity seems unglamorous or so very small, we need to remember the parable Jesus gave us in which he reminded us that greatness is not always a matter of size or scale, but of the quality of one's life. If we do well with our talents and with the opportunities around us, this will not go unnoticed by God. And to those who do well with the opportunities given them, even more will be given!

The scriptures contain many marvelous case studies of leaders who, unlike Jesus, were not perfect but were still very effective. It would do us all much good if we were to read them—and read them often. We forget that the scriptures present us with centuries of experience in leadership, and, even more importantly, the fixed principles upon which real leadership must operate if it is to succeed. The scriptures are the handbook of instructions for the would-be leader.

The perfect leader

I make no apology for giving something of the accomplishments of Jesus Christ to those who seek success as leaders.

If we would be eminently successful, here is our pattern. All the ennobling, perfect, and beautiful qualities of maturity, of strength, and of courage are found in this one person. As a large, surly mob, armed to the teeth, came to take him prisoner, he faced them resolutely and said, “Whom seek ye?”

The mob, startled, mumbled his name, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

“I am he,” answered Jesus of Nazareth with pride and courage—and with power: the soldiers “went backward, and fell to the ground.”

A second time he said, “Whom seek ye?” and when they named him, he said, “I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these [his disciples] go their way.” (John 18:4–8.)

Perhaps the most important thing I can say about Jesus Christ, more important than all else I have said, is that he lives. He really does embody all those virtues and attributes the scriptures tell us of. If we can come to know that, we then know the central reality about man and the universe. If we don't accept that truth and that reality, then we will not have the fixed principles or the transcendent truths by which to live out our lives in happiness and in service. In other words, we will find it very difficult to be significant leaders unless we recognize the reality of the perfect leader, Jesus Christ, and let him be the light by which we see the way!

STUDY HELPS

- What did President Kimball say about leaders who change their position to fit the situation?
- Why is it important for leaders to serve those they lead?
- What should leaders listen for, in addition to the voices of those they lead?
- What can leaders who love those they lead accomplish that other leaders could not?
- In what ways is manipulative leadership self-serving? Why is it wrong for Church and family leaders to be self-serving?
- How do people benefit when their leaders delegate to them?
- What does Jesus Christ teach leaders about how to see the people they lead?
- To whom are leaders accountable?
- What does President Kimball mean by the “tyranny of trivia”?
- Choose a secular leader you admire and identify instances in which this person displayed some of the leadership traits of Jesus Christ.
- According to President Kimball, how can we become better leaders?

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

