



By President Thomas S. Monson

He Is Risen!

The empty tomb that first Easter morning was the answer to Job's question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

This has been a remarkable session. In behalf of all who participated thus far in word or music, as the President of the Church, I have chosen simply to say to you at this moment just two words, known as the two most important words in the English language. To Sister Cheryl Lant and her counselors, the choir, the musicians, the speakers, those words are "Thank you."

Many years ago, while in London, England, I visited the famed Tate art gallery. Works by Gainsborough, Rembrandt, Constable, and other renowned artists were displayed in room after room. I admired their beauty and recognized the skill which had been required to create these masterpieces. Tucked away in a quiet corner of the third floor, however, was a painting which not only caught my attention but also

captured my heart. The artist, Frank Bramley, had painted a humble cottage facing a windswept sea. Two women, the mother and the wife of an absent fisherman, had watched and waited the night through for his return. Now the night had passed, and the realization had set in that he had been lost at sea and would not return. Kneeling at the side of her mother-in-law, her head buried in the lap of the older woman, the young wife wept in despair. The spent candle on the window ledge told of the fruitless vigil.

I sensed the young woman's heartache; I felt her grief. The hauntingly vivid inscription which the artist gave to his work told the tragic story. It read, *A Hopeless Dawn*.

Oh, how the young woman longed for the comfort, even the reality, of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Requiem":

*Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the
bill.¹*

Among all the facts of mortality, none is so certain as its end. Death comes to all; it is our "universal heritage; it may claim its victim[s] in infancy or youth, [it may visit] in the period of life's prime, or its summons may be deferred until the snows of age have gathered upon the . . . head; it may befall as the result of accident or disease, . . . or . . . through natural causes; but come it must."² It inevitably represents a painful loss of association and, particularly in the young, a crushing blow to dreams unrealized, ambitions unfulfilled, and hopes vanquished.

What mortal being, faced with the loss of a loved one or, indeed, standing himself or herself on the threshold of infinity, has not pondered what lies beyond the veil which separates the seen from the unseen?

Centuries ago the man Job—so long blessed with every material gift, only to find himself sorely afflicted by all that can befall a human being—sat with his companions and uttered the timeless, ageless question, "If a man die, shall he live again?"³ Job spoke what every other living man or woman has pondered.

This glorious Easter morning I'd like to consider Job's question—"If a man die, shall he live again?"—and provide the answer which comes not only from thoughtful consideration but also from the revealed word of God. I begin with the essentials.

If there is a design in this world in which we live, there must be a Designer. Who can behold the many wonders of the universe without believing that there is a design for all mankind? Who can doubt that there is a Designer?

In the book of Genesis we learn that the Grand Designer created the heaven and the earth: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.”

“Let there be light,” said the Grand Designer, “and there was light.” He created a firmament. He separated the land from the waters and said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, . . . the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself.”

Two lights He created—the sun and the moon. Came the stars by His design. He called for living creatures in the water and fowls to fly above the earth. And it was so. He made cattle, beasts, and creeping things. The design was nearly complete.

Last of all, He created man in His own image—male and female—with dominion over all other living things.⁴

Man alone received intelligence—a brain, a mind, and a soul. Man alone, with these attributes, had the capacity for faith and hope, for inspiration and ambition.

Who could persuasively argue that man—the noblest work of the Great Designer, with dominion over all living things, with a brain and a will, with a mind and a soul, with intelligence and divinity—should come to an end when the spirit forsakes its earthly temple?

To understand the meaning of death, we must appreciate the purpose of life. The dim light of belief must yield to the noonday sun of revelation, by which we know that we lived before our birth into mortality. In our premortal state, we were doubtless among the sons and daughters of God who shouted for joy because of the opportunity to come to this challenging yet necessary mortal existence.⁵ We knew that our purpose was to gain a physical body, to overcome trials, and to prove that we would keep the commandments of God. Our Father knew that because of the nature of mortality, we would be tempted, would sin, and would fall short. So that we might have every chance of success, He provided a Savior, who would suffer and die for us. Not only would He atone for our sins, but as a part of that Atonement, He would also overcome the physical death to which we would be subject because of the Fall of Adam.

Thus, more than 2,000 years ago, Christ, our Savior, was born to mortal life in a stable in Bethlehem. The long-foretold Messiah had come.

There was very little written of the boyhood of Jesus. I love the passage from Luke: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”⁶ And from the book of Acts, there is a short phrase concerning the Savior which has a world of meaning: “[He] went about doing good.”⁷

He was baptized by John in the river Jordan. He called the Twelve Apostles. He blessed the sick. He

caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear. He even raised the dead to life. He taught, He testified, and He provided a perfect example for us to follow.

And then the mortal mission of the Savior of the world drew to its close. A last supper with His Apostles took place in an upper room. Ahead lay Gethsemane and Calvary’s cross.

No mere mortal can conceive the full import of what Christ did for us in Gethsemane. He Himself later described the experience: “[The] suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit.”⁸

Following the agony of Gethsemane, now drained of strength, He was seized by rough, crude hands and taken before Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod. He was accused and cursed. Vicious blows further weakened His pain-racked body. Blood ran down His face as a cruel crown fashioned of sharp thorns was forced onto his head, piercing His brow. And then once again He was taken to Pilate, who gave in to the cries of the angry mob: “Crucify him, crucify him.”⁹

He was scourged with a whip into whose multiple leather strands sharp metals and bones were woven. Rising from the cruelty of the scourge, with stumbling steps He carried His own cross until He could go no farther and another shouldered the burden for Him.

Finally, on a hill called Calvary, while helpless followers looked on, His wounded body was nailed to a

cross. Mercilessly He was mocked and cursed and derided. And yet He cried out, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”¹⁰

The agonizing hours passed as His life ebbed. From His parched lips came the words, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”¹¹

As the serenity and solace of a merciful death freed Him from the sorrows of mortality, He returned to the presence of His Father.

At the last moment, the Master could have turned back. But He did not. He passed beneath all things that He might save all things. His lifeless body was hurriedly but gently placed in a borrowed tomb.

No words in Christendom mean more to me than those spoken by the angel to the weeping Mary Magdalene and the other Mary when, on the first day of the week, they approached the tomb to care for the body of their Lord. Spoke the angel:

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?

“He is not here, but is risen.”¹²

Our Savior lived again. The most glorious, comforting, and reassuring of all events of human history had taken place—the victory over death. The pain and agony of Gethsemane and Calvary had been wiped away. The salvation of mankind had been secured. The Fall of Adam had been reclaimed.

The empty tomb that first Easter morning was the answer to Job’s question, “If a man die, shall he live again?” To all within the sound of my voice, I declare, If a man die, he

shall live again. We know, for we have the light of revealed truth.

“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”¹³

I have read—and I believe—the testimonies of those who experienced the grief of Christ’s Crucifixion and the joy of His Resurrection. I have read—and I believe—the testimonies of those in the New World who were visited by the same risen Lord.

I believe the testimony of one who, in this dispensation, spoke with the Father and the Son in a grove now called sacred and who gave his life, sealing that testimony with his blood. Declared he:

“And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father.”¹⁴

The darkness of death can always be dispelled by the light of revealed truth. “I am the resurrection, and the life,” spoke the Master.¹⁵ “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.”¹⁶

Over the years I have heard and read testimonies too numerous to count, shared with me by individuals who testify of the reality of the Resurrection and who have received, in their hours of greatest need, the peace and comfort promised by the Savior.

I will mention just part of one such account. Two weeks ago I received a touching letter from a father of seven who wrote about his family and, in particular, his son Jason, who had become ill when 11 years of age. Over the next few years, Jason’s illness recurred several times. This father told of Jason’s positive attitude and sunny disposition, despite his health challenges. Jason received the Aaronic Priesthood at age 12 and “always willingly magnified his responsibilities with excellence, whether he felt well or not.” He received his Eagle Scout Award when he was 14 years old.

Last summer, not long after Jason’s 15th birthday, he was once again admitted to the hospital. On one of his visits to see Jason, his father found him with his eyes closed. Not knowing whether Jason was asleep or awake, he began talking softly to him. “Jason,” he said, “I know you have been through a lot in your short life and that your current condition is difficult. Even though you have a giant battle ahead, I don’t ever want you to lose your faith in Jesus Christ.” He said he was startled as Jason immediately opened his eyes and said, “Never!” in a clear, resolute voice. Jason then closed his eyes and said no more.

His father wrote: “In this simple declaration, Jason expressed one of the most powerful, pure testimonies of Jesus Christ that I have ever heard. . . . As his declaration of ‘Never!’ became imprinted on my soul that day, my heart filled with joy that my Heavenly Father had blessed me to

be the father of such a tremendous and noble boy. . . . [It] was the last time I heard him declare his testimony of Christ.”

Although his family was expecting this to be just another routine hospitalization, Jason passed away less than two weeks later. An older brother and sister were serving missions at the time. Another brother, Kyle, had just received his mission call. In fact, the call had come earlier than expected, and on August 5, just a week before Jason’s passing, the family gathered in his hospital room so that Kyle’s mission call could be opened there and shared with the entire family.

In his letter to me, this father included a photograph of Jason in his hospital bed, with his big brother Kyle standing beside the bed, holding his mission call. This caption was written beneath the photograph: “Called to serve their missions together—on both sides of the veil.”

Jason’s brother and sister already serving missions sent beautiful,

comforting letters home to be shared at Jason’s funeral. His sister, serving in the Argentina Buenos Aires West Mission, as part of her letter, wrote: “I know that Jesus Christ lives, and because He lives, all of us, including our beloved Jason, will live again too. . . . We can take comfort in the sure knowledge we have that we have been sealed together as an eternal family. . . . If we do our very best to obey and do better in this life, we will see [him again].” She continued: “[A] scripture that I have long loved now takes on new significance and importance at this time. . . . [From] Revelation chapter 21, verse 4: ‘And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.’”

My beloved brothers and sisters, in our hour of deepest sorrow, we can receive profound peace from the words of the angel that first

Easter morning: “He is not here: for he is risen.”¹⁷

*He is risen! He is risen!
Tell it out with joyful voice.
He has burst his three days’ prison;
Let the whole wide earth rejoice.
Death is conquered; man is free.
Christ has won the victory!*¹⁸

As one of His special witnesses on earth today, this glorious Easter Sunday, I declare that this is true, in His sacred name—even the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior—amen.

NOTES

1. Robert Louis Stevenson, “Requiem,” in *An Anthology of Modern Verse*, ed. A. Methuen (1921), 208.
2. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 20.
3. Job 14:14.
4. See Genesis 1:1–27.
5. See Job 38:7.
6. Luke 2:52.
7. Acts 10:38.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 19:18.
9. Luke 23:21.
10. Luke 23:34.
11. Luke 23:46.
12. Luke 24:5–6.
13. 1 Corinthians 15:21–22.
14. Doctrine and Covenants 76:22–23.
15. John 11:25.
16. John 14:27.
17. Matthew 28:6.
18. “He Is Risen!” *Hymns*, no. 199.

Teachings for Our Time

Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society lessons on fourth Sundays will be devoted to “Teachings for Our Time.” Each lesson can be prepared from one or more talks given in the most recent general conference. Stake and district presidents may choose which talks should be used, or they may assign this responsibility to bishops and branch presidents. Leaders should stress the value of Melchizedek Priesthood brethren and Relief Society sisters studying the same talks on the same Sundays.

Those attending fourth-Sunday lessons are encouraged to study and bring to class the latest general conference issue of the magazine.

Suggestions for Preparing a Lesson from Talks

Pray that the Holy Spirit will be with you as you study and teach the talk(s). You may be tempted to pre-

pare the lesson using other materials, but the conference talks are the approved curriculum. Your assignment is to help others learn and live the gospel as taught in the most recent general conference of the Church.

Review the talk(s), looking for principles and doctrines that meet the needs of class members. Also look for stories, scripture references, and statements from the talk(s) that will help you teach these truths.

Make an outline of how to teach the principles and doctrines. Your outline should include questions that help class members:

- Look for principles and doctrines in the talk(s).
- Think about their meaning.
- Share understanding, ideas, experiences, and testimonies.
- Apply these principles and doctrines in their lives.

MONTHS	FOURTH-SUNDAY LESSON MATERIALS
May 2010– October 2010	Talks published in the May 2010 <i>Liahona</i> *
November 2010– April 2011	Talks published in the November 2010 <i>Liahona</i> *

**These talks are available (in many languages) at conference.lds.org.*



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

Help Them on Their Way Home

We help God's children best by providing ways to build faith in Jesus Christ and His restored gospel when they are young.

Brothers and sisters, our Heavenly Father wants and needs our help to bring His spirit children home to Him again. I speak today of young people already within His true Church and so are started on the strait and narrow way to return to their heavenly home. He wants them to gain early the spiritual strength to stay on the path. And He needs our help to get them back to the path quickly should they begin to wander.

I was a young bishop when I began to see clearly why the Lord wants us to strengthen children when they are young and rescue them quickly. I will tell you one story of a young person who represents many whom I have tried to help over the years.

She sat across from me at my

bishop's desk. She spoke to me of her life. She had been baptized and confirmed as a member of the Church when she was eight. There were no tears in her eyes as she recounted the more than 20 years that followed, but there was sadness in her voice. She said that the downward spiral began with choices to associate with what she thought were exciting people. She began to violate what at first seemed to be less important commandments.

She felt at first a little sadness and a twinge of guilt. But the associations with her friends provided a new feeling of being liked, and so her occasional resolutions to repent seemed less and less important. As the gravity of the commandments she was breaking increased, the dream of a happy eternal home seemed to fade.

She sat across from me in what she called misery. She wanted me to rescue her from the trap of sin in which she found herself bound. But the only way out was for her to exercise faith in Jesus Christ, to have a broken heart, to repent, and so be cleansed, changed, and strengthened through the Lord's Atonement. I bore my testimony to her that it was still possible. And it was, but so much harder than it would have been to exercise faith early in her life on the journey home to God and when she first began to wander.

So we help God's children best by providing ways to build faith in Jesus Christ and His restored gospel when they are young. And then we must help rekindle that faith quickly before it dims as they wander off the path.

So you and I can expect a nearly continuous opportunity to help travelers among God's children. The Savior told us why that would be so when He described the perilous journey home for all of God's spirit children through the mists which sin and Satan create:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, which leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat;

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."¹

Foreseeing the needs of His children, a loving Heavenly Father placed directions and rescuers along their way. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to make safe passage possible and visible. He called as

His prophet in these times President Thomas S. Monson. Since his youth President Monson has taught not only how to stay on the path but also how to rescue those who have been led away into sorrow.

Heavenly Father has assigned us to a great variety of stations to strengthen and, when needed, to lead travelers to safety. Our most important and powerful assignments are in the family. They are important because the family has the opportunity at the start of a child's life to put feet firmly on the path home. Parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles are made more powerful guides and rescuers by the bonds of love that are the very nature of a family.

The family has an advantage in the first eight years of a child's life. In those protected years, because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, Satan's use of the mists of darkness to hide the path to return home is blocked. In those precious years the Lord helps families by calling Primary workers to help strengthen children spiritually. He also provides holders of the Aaronic Priesthood to offer the sacrament. In those sacramental prayers, the children hear the promise that they may someday receive the Holy Ghost as a guide if they are obedient to God's commandments. As a result, they are fortified to resist temptation when it comes and then, sometime in the future, to go to the rescue of others.

Many bishops in the Church are inspired to call the strongest people

in the ward to serve individual children in the Primary. They realize that if the children are strengthened with faith and testimony, they will be less likely to need rescue as teenagers. They realize that a strong spiritual foundation can make the difference for a lifetime.

We all can help. Grandmothers, grandfathers, and every member who knows a child can help. It doesn't take a formal calling in Primary. Nor is it limited by age. One such woman, as a younger person, was on the Primary general board that helped create the CTR motto.

She never tired of serving the children. She taught in the Primary of her ward, at her own request, until she was almost 90 years old. Little children could feel her love for them. They saw her example. They learned from her the simple principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And above all, because of her example they learned to feel and recognize the Holy Ghost. And when they did, they were well on their way to the faith to resist temptation. They would be less likely to need to be rescued and would be prepared to go to the rescue of others.

I learned the power of simple faith in prayer and in the Holy Ghost when our children were small. Our oldest son was not yet baptized. His parents, Primary teachers, and priesthood servants had tried to help him feel and recognize the Spirit and know how to receive His help.

One afternoon my wife had taken him to the home of a woman who

was teaching him to read. Our plan was that I was to pick him up on my way home from work.

His lesson ended earlier than we had expected. He felt confident that he knew the way home. So he started to walk. He said afterward that he had complete confidence and liked the idea of being alone on the trip. After he had gone about half a mile (0.8 km), it started to grow dark. He began to sense that he was still very far from home.

He can still remember that the lights of the cars as they streamed past him were blurred by his tears. He felt like a little child, not the confident boy who had begun to walk home alone. He realized that he needed help. Then something came to his memory. He knew he was supposed to pray. And so he left the road and headed toward some trees he could barely see in the darkness. He found a place to kneel down.

Through the bushes he could hear voices coming toward him. Two young people had heard him crying. As they approached, they said, "Can we help you?" Through his tears he told them he was lost and that he wanted to go home. They asked if he knew his home phone number or address. He didn't. They asked if he knew his name. He did know that. They led him to the nearby place where they lived. They found our family name in a phone book.

When I got the phone call, I rushed to the rescue, grateful that kind people had been placed along his way home. And I have been ever

grateful he was taught to pray with faith that help would come when he was lost. That faith has led him to safety and brought him more rescuers more times than he can count.

The Lord has placed a pattern of rescue and rescuers in His kingdom. In His wisdom the Lord has inspired His servants to place some of the most powerful ways to strengthen us and to put in place the best rescuers as we pass through the teenage years.

You know of two powerful programs provided by the Lord. One, for young women, is called Personal Progress. The other, for Aaronic Priesthood holders, is called Duty to God. We encourage young people in the rising generation to see their own potential to build great spiritual strength. And we plead with those who care about those young people to rise to what the Lord requires of us to help them. And since the future of the Church depends upon them, all of us care.

The two programs have been improved, but their purpose remains unchanged. President Monson put it this way: we must “learn what we should learn, do what we should do, and be what we should be.”²

The *Personal Progress* booklet for young women makes the purpose clear for them: “The Personal Progress program uses the eight Young Women values to help you understand more fully who you are, why you are here on the earth, and what you should be doing as a daughter of God to prepare for the

day you go to the temple to make sacred covenants.”

It goes on to say that young women will “make commitments, carry them out, and report your progress to a parent or leader.” It also promises that “the patterns you establish as you work on Personal Progress—such as prayer, scripture study, service, and journal keeping—will become personal daily habits. These habits will strengthen your testimony and help you learn and improve throughout your life.”³

The Duty to God program for young men in the Aaronic Priesthood has been strengthened and focused. It will be contained in one simple book for all three Aaronic Priesthood offices. The young men and their leaders will receive a copy of this new book. It is a powerful tool. It will strengthen the testimonies of young men and their relationship with God. It will help them learn and want to fulfill their priesthood duties. It will strengthen their relationships with their parents, among quorum members, and with their leaders.

Both of these programs put great responsibility on the efforts of the young people themselves. They are invited to learn and do things that would be challenging for anyone. As I reflect on my own youth, I cannot remember being so challenged. Oh, on a few occasions I was invited to rise to such tests, but only now and then. These programs expect consistency, great effort, and the accumulation of learning and spiritual experiences over years.

On reflection I realized that the contents of these booklets are a physical representation of the Lord’s trust in the rising generation and in all of us who love them. And I have seen evidence that the trust is well placed.

In visits I watched Aaronic Priesthood quorums in action. I have seen young men following patterns of learning, making plans to do what God wants of them, then moving out to do what they have committed to do and sharing with others how they were changed spiritually. And as I watched and listened, it became clear that fathers, mothers, leaders, friends, and even neighbors in a congregation were touched by the Spirit as they heard youth testify how they had been strengthened. The youth were lifted as they bore testimony, and so were those who were trying to help them rise.

The Young Women program has in it that same powerful pattern to develop spiritual strength in the young women and to offer the opportunity for us to help. Personal Progress helps young women prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple. They are helped by the examples of mothers, grandmothers, and every righteous woman around them in the Church. I have seen how parents helped a daughter achieve her goals and dreams by noticing and appreciating all the good things she does.

Just a few days ago I watched a mother stand with her young daughter as they received recognition for

having together become examples of outstanding womanhood. And as they shared with me what it had meant to them, I felt the Lord's approval and encouragement for us all.

Of all the help we can give these young people, the greatest will be to let them feel our confidence that they are on the path home to God and that they can make it. And we do that best by going with them. Because the path is steep and sometimes rocky, they will at times feel discouraged and even stumble. They may at times become confused about their destination and wander after less eternally important goals. These inspired programs make that less likely because they will lead the young person to invite and receive the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

The best counsel for us to give young people is that they can arrive back to Heavenly Father only as they are guided and corrected by the Spirit of God. So if we are wise, we will encourage, praise, and exemplify everything which invites the

companionship of the Holy Ghost. When they share with us what they are doing and feeling, we must ourselves have qualified for the Spirit. Then they will feel in our praise and our smiles the approval of God. And should we feel the need to give corrective counsel, they will feel our love and the love of God in it, not rebuke and rejection, which can permit Satan to lead them further away.

The example they most need from us is to do what they must do. We need to pray for the gifts of the Spirit. We need to ponder in the scriptures and in the words of living prophets. We need to make plans which are not only wishes but covenants. And then we need to keep our promises to the Lord. And we need to lift others by sharing with them the blessings of the Atonement which have come in our lives.

And we need to exemplify in our own lives the steady and prolonged faithfulness that the Lord expects of them. As we do, we will help them feel from the Spirit an assurance that if they will persist, they will

hear the words from a loving Savior and Heavenly Father: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."⁴ And we who help them along the way will hear those words with joy.

I testify that the Lord loves you and every child of God. This is His kingdom, restored with priesthood keys through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Thomas S. Monson is the Lord's prophet today. I promise each of you, as you follow inspired direction in this, the true Church of Jesus Christ, that our youth and we who help and love them can be delivered safely to our home with Heavenly Father and the Savior to live in families and in joy forever. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. 3 Nephi 14:13-14.
2. Thomas S. Monson, "To Learn, to Do, to Be," *Liabona*, Nov. 2008, 67.
3. *Young Women Personal Progress* (booklet, 2009), 6.
4. Matthew 25:21.