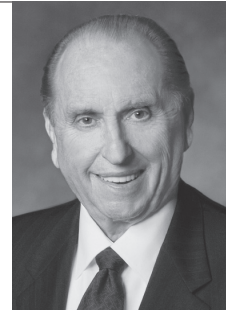


By President
Thomas S. Monson



He Is Not Here, but Is Risen

Today only ruins remain of Capernaum, that city by the lakeshore, heart of the Savior's Galilean ministry. Here He preached in the synagogue, taught by the seaside, and healed in the homes.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus took a text from Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1; see also Luke 4:18)—a clear pronouncement of a divine plan to rescue the sons and daughters of God.

But Jesus's preaching in Galilee had been merely prelude. The Son of Man had always had a dread rendezvous to keep on a hill called Golgotha.

Arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane after the Last Supper, deserted by His disciples, spat upon, tried, and humiliated, Jesus staggered under His great cross toward Calvary. He progressed from triumph to betrayal, torture, and death on the cross.

In the words of the song "The Holy City":

*The scene was changed. . . .
The morn was cold and chill,
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill.¹*

For us our Heavenly Father gave His Son. For us our Elder Brother gave His life.

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: the human race, the earth, and all the life that ever inhabited it.

No words in Christendom mean more to me than those spoken by the angel to the weeping Mary Magdalene and the other Mary as they approached the tomb to care for the body of their Lord: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen" (Luke 24:5–6).

With this pronouncement, those who have lived and died, those who now live and one day will die, and those yet to be born and yet to die had just been rescued.

As the result of Christ's victory over the grave, we shall all be resurrected. This is the redemption of the soul. Paul wrote:

"There are . . . celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead"
(1 Corinthians 15:40–42).

It is the celestial glory that we seek. It is in the presence of God that we desire to dwell. It is a forever family in which we want membership.

Of Him who delivered each of us from endless death, I testify He is a teacher of truth—but He is more than a teacher. He is the exemplar of the perfect life—but He is more than an exemplar. He is the great physician—but He is more than a physician. He is the literal Savior of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One of Israel, even the risen Lord, who declared, “I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:4).

“Oh, sweet the joy this sentence gives: ‘I know that my Redeemer lives!’”²

Of this I testify.

NOTES

1. Frederick E. Weatherly, “The Holy City” (1892).
2. “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” *Hymns*, no. 136.

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Good teachers encourage unity among those they teach. As people share their insights and listen to one another respectfully, they not only enjoy a positive atmosphere for learning but also become more unified (see *Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 63). Unity will develop among those you teach as you and they reverently bear

testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection. This unity can help families follow President Monson’s counsel to become a “forever family.”

YOUTH

He Showed Us the Way to Return Home

The Savior came to the earth to show us how to live the plan that was authored in heaven—a plan that, if lived, will make us happy. His example showed us the way to return home to our Heavenly Father. No other who has ever lived has been so ‘steadfast and immovable’ (Mosiah 5:15). He was never distracted. He was focused on carrying out the will of the Father, and He remained true to His divine mission. . . .

“You are a part of that wondrous plan that was presented in the premortal realms. Your coming to the earth now has been anticipated since the plan was accepted. Your position in time and place is no accident. Your ‘exceeding faith and good works’ (Alma 13:3) then has laid the foundation for what you may accomplish now if you are faithful and obedient. . . . You have a great work to do. In order to accomplish your divine mission and live the plan of happiness, you too must be steadfast and immovable.”

Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president, “At All Times, in All Things, and in All Places,” *Liahona*, May 2008, 116.



Faith • Family • Relief

The Purpose of Relief Society

Prayerfully study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

When our presidency was first called, we were given some resources about the history of Relief Society. We studied them prayerfully, wanting to know the purpose of Relief Society and what the Lord would have us do. We learned that the purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life.

To fulfill this purpose of Relief Society, the Lord has commissioned each sister and the organization as a whole to:

1. Increase in faith and personal righteousness.
2. Strengthen families and homes.
3. Provide relief by serving the Lord and His children.

We can do this work in the Lord's way only when we seek, receive, and act on personal revelation. Without personal revelation, we cannot succeed. If we heed personal revelation, we cannot fail. The prophet Nephi instructs us that the Holy Ghost will show us "all things what [we] should do" (2 Nephi 32:5). We must allow ourselves to be still enough and quiet enough to listen to the voice of the Spirit.

Sisters, we have a vital role to play in helping build the kingdom of God and preparing for the Lord's coming. In fact, the Lord's work cannot be accomplished without the help of His daughters. Because of that, the Lord expects us to increase our offering. He expects us to fulfill the purpose of Relief Society as never before.

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

From the Scriptures

Deuteronomy 6:5–7;
Luke 10:30–37; James 1:27;
2 Nephi 25:26; Mosiah 3:12–13

From Our History

At a June 9, 1842, meeting of the Relief Society, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught the sisters that their society was "not only to relieve the poor, but to save souls."¹ This statement of a spiritual as well as a temporal purpose has characterized Relief Society throughout its history. In 1906 President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught: "[Relief Society] has not only to deal with the necessities of the poor, the sick and the needy, but a part of its duty—and the larger part, too—is to look after the spiritual welfare

and salvation of the mothers and daughters of Zion; to see that none is neglected, but that all are guarded against misfortune, calamity, the powers of darkness, and the evils that threaten them in the world."² In 2001 Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reiterated, "Every sister in this Church who has made covenants with the Lord has a divine mandate to help save souls, to lead the women of the world, to strengthen the homes of Zion, and to build the kingdom of God."³

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:25.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 185.
3. M. Russell Ballard, "Women of Righteousness," *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 39.

What Can I Do?

1. What inspiration have I received to help my sisters increase in faith and personal righteousness and strengthen their families and homes? What relief can I provide?
2. How will I use this message to strengthen my faith and increase my own commitment to personal righteousness?

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

