

By President
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Brother, I'm Committed

Two young brothers stood atop a small cliff that overlooked the pristine waters of a blue lake. This was a popular diving spot, and the brothers had often talked about making the jump—something they had seen others do.

Although they both wanted to make the jump, neither one wanted to be first. The height of the cliff wasn't that great, but to the two young boys, it seemed the distance increased whenever they started to lean forward—and their courage was fading fast.

Finally, one brother put one foot at the edge of the cliff and moved decisively forward. At that moment his brother whispered, "Maybe we should wait until next summer."

The first brother's momentum, however, was already pulling him forward. "Brother," he responded, "I'm committed!"

He splashed into the water and surfaced quickly with a victorious shout. The second brother followed instantly. Afterward, they both laughed about the first boy's final words before plunging into the water: "Brother, I'm committed."

Commitment is a little like diving into the water. Either you are committed or you are not. Either you are moving forward or you are standing still. There's no

halfway. We all face moments of decision that change the rest of our lives. As members of the Church, we must ask ourselves, "Will I dive in or just stand at the edge? Will I step forward or merely test the temperature of the water with my toes?"

Some sins are committed because we do wrong; other sins are committed because we do nothing. Being only sort of committed to the gospel can lead to frustration, unhappiness, and guilt. This should not apply to us because we are a covenant people. We make covenants with the Lord when we are baptized and when we enter the house of the Lord. Men make covenants with the Lord when they are ordained to the priesthood. Nothing can be more important than keeping a commitment we have made with the Lord. Let us remember the reply of Rachel and Leah to Jacob in the Old Testament. It was simple and straightforward and showed their commitment: "Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do" (Genesis 31:16).

Those who are only sort of committed may expect to only sort of receive the blessings of testimony, joy, and peace. The windows of heaven might only be sort of open to them. Wouldn't it be foolish to think, "I'll commit myself 50 percent now, but when Christ appears at the Second Coming, I'll commit myself 100 percent?"

Commitment to our covenants with the Lord is a fruit of our conversion. Commitment to our Savior and His Church builds our character and strengthens our spirit so that when we meet Christ, He will embrace us and say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21).

There is a difference between intention and action. Those who only intend to commit may find excuses at every turn. Those who truly commit face their challenges squarely and say to themselves, “Yes, that would be a very good reason to delay, but I made covenants, and so I will do what I have committed to do.” They search the scriptures and earnestly seek the guidance of their Father in Heaven. They accept and magnify their Church callings. They attend their meetings. They do their home or visiting teaching.

A German proverb says, “Promises are like the full moon. If they are not kept at once, they diminish day by day.” As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we have committed to walk in the path of discipleship. We have committed to follow the example of our Savior. Imagine how the world will be blessed and transformed for good when all members of the Lord’s Church live up to their true potential—converted in the depth of their souls and committed to building the kingdom of God.

In some way, each of us stands at a decision point overlooking the water. It is my prayer that we will have faith, move forward, face our fears and doubts with courage, and say to ourselves, “I’m committed!”

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

“One way to help learners understand gospel principles is to have them draw pictures. Drawing allows them to explore and express their understanding and feelings of gospel stories and principles” (*Teaching, No*

Greater Call [1999], 166). Consider reading the article, discussing the principle of commitment to the gospel, and then asking those who wish to do so to draw a picture of a gospel activity that demonstrates commitment. Younger children may need suggestions about what to draw.

YOUTH

All I Can Give

By Alyssa Hansen

I was stressing about how I was going to pay for the things I wanted to do over the summer: classes, workshops, summer camps, and so on. I thought I was going to cry. Then I remembered all the things I’d been taught about having trust and faith in the Lord. I decided to put the situation in the Lord’s hands and trust that if it was His will, He would provide a way.

Not too long after that, my mom found an uncashed check from a job I had had earlier that year, and the very next day I got a small cash prize in the mail for taking second place in a competition. This was a great testimony to me that God does live, that He loves and cares about me and will provide.

I was so filled with gratitude and love for my Heavenly Father and Savior. I felt as if I might burst! I longed to show how thankful I was, to praise God the best that I could, and to share that feeling. Others have done this by composing a song, writing a poem, or painting a picture, but I felt inadequate to do any of those things. I realized the only thing I could give that would be adequate praise would be my life—to be “an example of the believers” (1 Timothy 4:12), to give my life to Christ. That’s all He asks, and that’s all I can give.

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Faith • Family • Relief

Come to the Temple and Claim Your Blessings

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.

Sisters, we are most blessed. The Savior stands at the head of this Church. We are led by living prophets. We have the holy scriptures. And we have many holy temples throughout the world where we can obtain the ordinances necessary to help us return to our Heavenly Father.

We go first to the temple for ourselves. “The primary purpose of the temple,” explained Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “is to provide the ordinances necessary for our exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Temple ordinances guide us to our Savior and give us the blessings that come to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Temples are the greatest university of learning known to man, giving us knowledge and wisdom about the Creation of the world. Endowment instructions give guidance as to how we should conduct our lives here in mortality. . . . The ordinance consists of a series of instructions on how we should live and covenants we make to live righteously by following our Savior.”¹

But our temple service does not end there. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught: “Acting as proxy for someone who has gone

beyond the veil, you will have reviewed before you the covenants that you have made. You will have reinforced in your mind the great spiritual blessings that are associated with the house of the Lord. . . . In the covenants and ordinances center the blessings that you may claim in the holy temple.”²

Come to the temple and then come again. Making and keeping temple covenants will keep us on course to the greatest of all blessings—eternal life.

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

From the Scriptures

Isaiah 2:3; 1 Corinthians 11:11; Revelation 7:13–15; Doctrine and Covenants 109

From Our History

The Prophet Joseph often spoke to Relief Society sisters at their meetings. With the Nauvoo Temple under construction, the Prophet instructed the sisters in doctrine, preparing them to receive more knowledge through temple ordinances. In 1842 he said to Mercy Fielding Thompson that the endowment “will bring you out of darkness into marvelous light.”³

An estimated 6,000 Latter-day

Saints received temple ordinances before the exodus from Nauvoo. President Brigham Young (1801–77) said, “Such has been the anxiety manifested by the saints to receive the ordinances [of the temple], and such the anxiety on our part to administer to them, that I have given myself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the Temple night and day, not taking more than four hours sleep, upon an average, per day, and going home but once a week.”⁴ The strength and power of temple covenants fortified the Saints as they left their city and temple for a journey into the unknown.

NOTES

1. Robert D. Hales, “Blessings of the Temple,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2009, 14.
2. Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 170, 171.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 414.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (1997), 299.

What Can I Do?

1. What experience will I share to strengthen those I visit in their determination to “come to the temple”?
2. How can I personally claim the blessings of the temple?

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