

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Make the Sabbath a Delight All Day

By Elder Johnny L. Leota

Area Seventy



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On the 1st February 1980, when the consolidated Sunday meeting schedule was announced, the First Presidency issued a message that included the following:

“A greater responsibility will be placed upon the individual members and families for properly observing the Sabbath day. More time will be available for personal study of the scriptures and family-centered gospel study.

“Other appropriate Sabbath activities, such as strengthening family ties, visiting the sick and homebound, giving service to others, writing personal and family histories, genealogical work, and missionary work, should be carefully planned and carried out.

“It is expected that this new schedule of meetings and activities will result in greater spiritual growth for members of the Church” (in Hal Knight, “Meeting Schedule Approved,” *Church News*, Feb. 2, 1980, 3).

In the October 1991 general conference, Elder James E. Faust said the following regarding the First Presidency’s 1980 announcement: “It is hoped that priesthood leaders and members of the Church will honor the spirit of more family togetherness on Sunday” (“The Lord’s Day,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 34).

In the April 2015 general conference, Elder Russell M. Nelson suggested some Sabbath day activities to strengthen family relationships:

“The Sabbath provides a wonderful opportunity to strengthen family ties. . . .

“We make the Sabbath a delight when we teach the gospel to our children. . . .

“As you teach the gospel, you will learn more . . .

“Such study of the gospel makes the Sabbath a delight. . . .

“In addition to time with family, you can experience true delight on the Sabbath from family history work. Searching for and finding family members who have preceded you on earth—those who did not have an

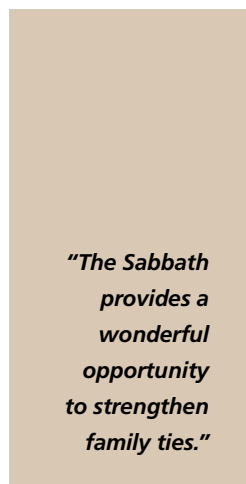
opportunity to accept the gospel while here—can bring immense joy. . . .

“. . . Routine and recreational activities can be done some other time” (“The Sabbath Is a Delight,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 130, 131, 132).

One of the Pacific Area goals for 2016 is to “make the Sabbath a delight all day”. In the First Presidency’s announcement on the 1st February 1980, they charged the Saints that Sabbath day activities “should be carefully planned and carried out.”

I invite you to “carefully plan” and counsel together with your family about appropriate Sabbath day activities for you and your family.

A few simple things our family decided to do on the Sabbath was to not watch television programmes,





“God gave us this special day, not for amusement or daily labour but for rest from duty, with physical and spiritual relief.”

including sports, or listen to worldly music. We simply replaced these with Church video programmes and Church music. One very helpful resource we found was the LDS Media Library on LDS.org. The effect of our decision has made an amazing difference in our family.

Now in our home the *feeling* of the Sabbath is so different from other days of the week. I feel more persuaded to worship our Heavenly Father more fully. I feel a stronger desire to attend sacrament meeting to partake of the sacred emblems, to renew all of my covenants. I feel a profound peace in my life and a deepening love and reverence for our Heavenly Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost. I feel nearer to Them. I honour Them more. I want to serve Them more diligently; I want to be like Them. My relationship with my wife, children, and family members is strengthened when I keep the Sabbath day holy.

Some Sunday mornings my family wakes up to the sound of music coming from the piano. Our daughter sometimes feels inspired to play a few hymns and other music from seminary and institute before we go to church. Our home is filled with a spirit of love, reverence, forgiveness, joy and peace.

The inspiring and soothing music sets the tone for the home and family and allows the Spirit of the Lord to abide.

After our Church services, our family enjoys Sunday dinner together and then gathers together in the living room to unwind, relax, and enjoy one another's company. This time together has become a wonderful tradition in our family. We reflect upon the lessons taught in our Sunday classes. We share our thoughts and insights about gospel topics taught and testified of in sacrament meeting. Sometimes we talk about challenges and successes of the week, and often find ourselves drawn to the scriptures and other writings of the prophets, which have enlightened and deepened our understanding of the gospel. At the same time one may be quietly watching a Church video, another reading scriptures, or writing in a journal, or drawing a picture on the floor. Our family tradition has strengthened our faith and trust in our Heavenly Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost. My relationship with my wife, children, and family members has deepened and has drawn us closer together as a family.

On Sundays when I was a young Aaronic Priesthood holder, my father and I visited a homebound elderly

brother who lived down a steep hill. He lived with his faithful and loyal wife, who lovingly cared for him. The routine was always the same. My father would set up the sacrament on a small table next to the brother's bed, fill a few sacrament cups with water, lay the bread on a clean plate from the kitchen, and then gently cover the emblems with a white sheet. My father then humbly knelt next to the table and quietly and reverently blessed the emblems, then passed the plate with the broken bread to me to serve to the elderly couple, then the sacrament cups filled with the blessed and sanctified water. Words cannot express the spiritual and tender feelings I felt each time my dad and I visited to perform our duty. The couple were always so appreciative and grateful for our visit. I am forever grateful for the example of my dad, the holy priesthood, and especially the love of our Heavenly Father for all His children.

Elder Russell M. Nelson said: “What did the Savior mean when He said that ‘the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath’? I believe He wanted us to understand that the Sabbath was His gift to us, granting real respite from the rigors of daily life and an opportunity for spiritual and physical renewal. God gave us this special day, not for amusement or daily labor but for a rest from duty, with physical and spiritual relief” (“The Sabbath Is a Delight,” 129). ■

LOCAL PAGES

FSY 2016

By Chantal and Kendall Pitman

From the 12 January 2016 to the 16 January 2016, 1,400 Latter-day Saint youth and 250 young single adults were at the University of Queensland to enjoy a climate of revelation under the theme “Embark in the Service of God” at the For the Strength of Youth (FSY) conference.

The Brisbane FSY week was a great success for the youth, who fundraised and attended from all over Queensland, as far up as Thursday Island, and all the way down to Lismore in New South Wales.

Activities included morningsides, family home evening, a variety show, dances, devotionals, and classes. A highlight was the testimony meeting on Thursday night, where participants felt the Spirit and were able to share their feelings with each other.

The youth also enjoyed speakers and teachers, who inspired and assisted them to not only love the Lord but to love themselves and know their self-worth. President and Sister Henderson of the Australia Brisbane Mission presented the youth with 1,400 copies of the Book of Mormon and taught them how to “Preach My Gospel” and “Share My Gospel” as future missionaries.

Elder Keith Walker (Area Seventy) and the Brisbane stake presidents and their wives were special guests one evening, as they attended the musical program to enjoy and share the wonderful spirit of our future leaders and missionaries.

The week experienced by the youth showed parents and leaders alike that the upcoming generation are not only great but also deserving of the blessings the Lord promises each of us when we live the gospel.

This inspiring event would not have been possible without the young single adults, who not only served tirelessly 24 hours a day throughout FSY but also prepared for many

1,400 young men and young women attended the 2016 FSY conference in Brisbane this year.



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months and served with kind hearts and love.

The FSY parents for the event—Brother and Sister Kendall and Chantal Pitman, and Brother and Sister Dale and Leanne Maurer—delighted in the reverence displayed by the youth during FSY and the friendships that were formed as the youth lived the *For the Strength of Youth* gospel standards.

The next FSY conference is scheduled for January 2018, where the youth can again feel the special spirit that was felt. Parents look forward to these events, knowing their children will come home with a better understanding of why the Lord so dearly loves them, and how they can experience the true happiness that can only be found through living the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■

President and Sister Henderson from the Australia Brisbane Mission distributed over 1,400 copies of the Book of Mormon to participants.



Dale and Leanne Maurer, and Kendall and Chantal Pitman were FSY parents at the conference.

Bicycle Lessons

By John Millar

Years ago I had the opportunity to teach our children how to ride a bicycle. Initially they used training wheels. Later I walked with them holding the bike as they tried to get their balance. As they gained more confidence, I would let go and allow them to try to do it on their own. Eventually, after many attempts, they gained enough confidence and balance to do it on their own. Even then it would take many more rides before they were fully confident they could ride the bicycle without my assistance. Our life is often like learning to ride a bike.

We all have to lose the training wheels sometime

I would say, “I know you feel uncertain, and you feel much better with them on, but the only way you are going to learn is to take those training wheels off. You might fall over, and you might get hurt, but you will also go much further than you ever imagined you could”. At some time in our life we have to do things on our own and maybe get hurt in the process, until we learn what life is all about.

Check your equipment

Tyres pumped? Brakes working? Helmet on correctly? We always have a much better chance of getting where



Our life is often like learning to ride a bike. . . . May each of us learn to ride through this life with safety and an assurance that God is there to help.

we want to go when we are well prepared. As we progress through Primary and Young Men and Young Women, we need to ensure we are assisting ourselves by scripture study, prayer, and attendance at church and seminary. This is the “equipment” that will help when you learn “how to ride.”

Keep eyes straight ahead

“Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,” said the Saviour (Matthew 7:14). We need to keep focussed on the goal of eternal life. It may look a long way off, but if you look straight ahead and stay focussed, you will get there in the end.

Don’t look behind you

There is the tendency when you ride to want to look back and see where you have been, but that will

distract you from where you need to go. Too often in life we want to look back. Remember the counsel to Lot and his family: “Look not behind thee” (Genesis 19:17). The Lord knew that there would be times in our lives when we made bad choices, but we should not look back, as we cannot change the past. You also don’t need to look back to see if God is there. Just as a parent is there, so too will God be there to help us and guide us through life’s journey.

Keep pedalling

Keep going even when you are tired and the going gets hard. Sometimes in life you just need to keep pedalling and hang on in the midst of trials and temptations. Stay true to what you have been taught and never give up. Keep the faith—keep pedalling.

There will always be someone faster

There will always be someone going faster than you, and, conversely, there will always be someone going slower than you. You are going at exactly the right speed for you at that time. There were recently new members called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They probably feel like they are going much slower than the more experienced members of the Twelve. One of them said that he had “a tsunami of indescribable emotion, most of which were feelings of inadequacy” (Gary E. Stevenson, “Plain and Precious Truths,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 91), but he will catch up with more experience.

If you fall off, then get back on

It’s hard to get back on, but it will help you to not be as afraid the next time. It will take a few goes before you

get it right, and it means that somewhere inside you'll have found where your courage lies. You may remember that Corianton, son of Alma, had forsaken the ministry and broken the law of chastity and was chided for his disobedience (see Alma 39:3–4). He had fallen off his bike. Later, however, we learn that he repented and was called to preach again (see Alma 42:31; 49:30). He got back on his bike.

Stay where I can see you

When we get confident, we want to ride off as fast as we can and go where we want to. Just as we should keep near a loving parent as we strive to learn to ride our bike, we need to stay close to the Lord so He can see where we are going and give us guidance and counsel. While the Lord spoke with the brother of Jared “for the space of three hours,” the Lord chastened him “because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord” (Ether 2:14). We need to stay close to the Lord so he can guide us and counsel us as we learn to “ride like he does”.

May each of us learn to ride through this life with safety and an assurance that God is there to help. He wants us to be like Him and will provide the needed guidance and tuition to us so we can enjoy the ride of life. As we learn to ride our way through this life and stay on the path, we will enjoy the beauties that God has provided for us to see and experience. ■

Dandelion Children in Papua New Guinea

By David H. Yuwa

Last semester a highly qualified Danish lecturer took us for criminology and penology. This subject deals with crime and punishment. We learned that there are many reasons some children grow up to become criminals. Social factors such as their upbringing, rough neighbourhood, dysfunctional families, the poor economy, and the negative influence of friends all contribute to criminal tendencies.

Sometimes the environment causes issues. For example, a child growing up in a home with no father figure, and a mother who is unable to find a job, might steal to eat. That child may not be able to focus at school and then drop out. His environment has an impact on him. It seems he has very little choice.

The lecturer stated that this was not always the case. She taught us of an old Swedish expression “dandelion children”.¹ Not everyone in rough and unfavourable circumstances ends up bad. Those who do make it to become responsible and law-abiding citizens, regardless of their adverse family or social circumstances, were known as dandelion children.

They are called dandelion children because of the nature of the dandelion flower.

Dandelions are small yellow flowers that can grow and blossom in any circumstance, even in the harshest of conditions.

Some of the rarest and prettiest orchids in the world grow in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Orchids can only grow in the most favourable of conditions. They must have moist, dark, healthy soil and the right amount of water and sunlight, or they will die.

The Church is still relatively young in PNG. There are a great many converts of the Church and many families who do not have the ideal setting to raise children in the gospel. Most of our members did not see examples of an ideal Mormon family while growing up. Most of the youth are converts and are the only Church members in their families. Many do not come from homes that have favourable conditions to raise future missionaries, faithful priesthood holders, and worthy mothers.

Our returned missionaries and young married couples do not have it any easier either. They return home after serving a mission, accept a calling, get married, have children, and seek a quality education, all at the same time. Papua New Guinea's economy makes it difficult for this to happen.

So how can our converts, youth, and returned missionaries grow like

dandelions in PNG's unfavourable conditions?

The answer is shown in the example of Lehi and his family in the Book of Mormon. In 1 Nephi, having faith in Jesus Christ, being obedient, they left behind their comfortable homes and travelled into the wilderness. They lived in a tent and hunted wild animals to eat. At the same time, Lehi's four sons were married in the wilderness at the beginning of their journey. These were some very faithful and humble women, who married men who had almost nothing. Their younger brothers, Jacob and Joseph, were born in the wilderness. Their wives gave birth to children in the wilderness, on the move, in tents, with minimal provisions, in the scorching desert.

Despite challenges throughout their journey, and disagreement and murmuring, they successfully made it to the land Bountiful. Nephi looked back to those eight years of insurmountable odds and came to this conclusion recorded in 1 Nephi 17:2: "And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings."

He goes on to state in verse 3 that "thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled. And if it so be that the children of men keep

the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness."

Dandelion children can grow in any condition, while orchids will wither away. This generation of converts, youth, and returned missionaries must be strong and resilient like dandelions, because we are growing in harsh and unfavourable soil. Let us also be like Lehi and Nephi of old, having faith, being obedient to keeping His commandments, so that as we sojourn through our wilderness, the Lord will nourish us, strengthen us, and provide the means for us to serve missions, enter into eternal marriage covenants, have children, and gain an education in these conditions.

If we pay our tithing, keep the law of chastity, obey the Word of Wisdom,

and keep the Sabbath day holy, the Lord will provide the way for us to accomplish all that is required, even in the most unfavourable of conditions.

Opposition will help us expand and grow. We will never become who Heavenly Father wants us to be if we develop like orchids. Orchids are beautiful, but soft.

All things work for the good of those who love God.² He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."³ Keep his commandments. Have faith and obey.

As we keep His commandments, we will soar above the most unfavourable conditions in our spiritual and temporal growth, just as a strong and resilient dandelion thrives in harsh conditions. ■

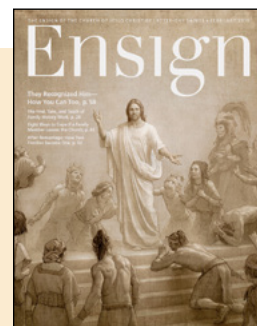
NOTES

1. See Bruce J. Ellis and W. Thomas Boyce, "Biological Sensitivity to Context," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, vol. 17, no. 3 (June 2008), 183–87.
2. See Romans 8:28.
3. John 14:15.

SHARE YOUR STORIES

Your local pages section is produced by members in your own area under the guidance of the Area Presidency so that it can address the needs and experiences of members where you live. The inclusion of the local pages in each issue depends on the availability of local content. We

invite you to contribute your faith-promoting thoughts and experiences by contacting your local editor at: ensign-australia@ldschurch.org ■



TIP OF THE MONTH

Don't Worry, Be Happy

A common experience that most human beings have is the tendency to worry. We seem to worry about nearly everything. Indeed the Savior seems to have had this in mind when he described Martha as being “careful and troubled about many things.”¹ Oxford online dictionaries define *worry* as to “feel or cause to feel anxious or troubled about actual or potential problems” and “to keep thinking about unpleasant things that might happen or about problems that you have.”²

Continual worrying can actually develop into a habit of looking at things negatively. While it's an almost natural thing for us to worry, it doesn't serve any useful purpose. Prolonged worry has been associated with poor sleep, poor health, anxiety and even panic.

Here are a few ideas that may help us overcome the propensity to worry.

Firstly, we can be aware of our thought patterns and remember that worrying is optional.

Secondly, because worry rarely leads to effective action, looking at what we can do will usually lead to a positive outcome.

Thirdly, we can develop a habit of looking at life's challenges positively.

Finally, we can apply the excellent counsel President Gordon B. Hinckley

Put your trust in God, and move forward with faith and confidence in the future.



(1910–2008) provided when we find ourselves caught up in worry: “It isn't as bad as you sometimes think it is. It all works out. Don't worry. I say that to myself every morning. It will all work out. If you do your best, it will all work out. Put your trust in God, and move forward with faith and confidence in the future.”³

Our lives will be a lot happier as we learn to overcome the natural human tendency to worry excessively. ■

NOTES

1. Luke 10:41.
2. Oxford Dictionaries, “worry,” [oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/worry](https://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/worry); [oxforddictionaries.com/definition/learner/worry](https://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/learner/worry).
3. “Excerpts from Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2000, 73.



We can develop a habit of looking at life's challenges positively.