

MESSAGE FROM A MEMBER OF THE SEVENTY

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

By Elder Claude R. Gamiette

Of the Seventy

We live in an exciting time, a time of great challenges and of great opportunities, We live in a time when the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored and is moving forward, a time when angels have come and restored the keys of the priesthood, when God Himself has ushered in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

I was baptized when I was 21 years old in Guadeloupe. As I was taught, I sincerely tried to repent of my sins to be able to receive the Holy Ghost. I became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and experienced a change of heart; my desires were for the gospel. But even though I had been baptized, I was still struggling with aspects of my life and character that were not proper.

I often wondered how I could be forgiven and have my heart completely changed. Often I felt like Nephi and would exclaim, “O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities” (2 Nephi 4:17).

From the time I was baptized, I kept all the commandments that came with the ordinance of baptism, paid a full tithe, honored the Sabbath day, and lived the word of wisdom and the law of chastity, etc.

But still I was struggling with some aspects of my life. I worked on those things for years, sometimes doubting that I would ever overcome them. I often came pleading for help at the sacrament table.

One day as I was seeking to obtain the remission of my sins and pleading for help, something peculiar happened. As I listened to a talk, the Spirit of God rested upon me and my eyes were opened to see the reality of how my sins were grievous to my God, how I would be terribly ashamed to be brought back into His presence, how I would dread that time. A fire had been lit in my soul. I saw myself even less than the dust of the earth; I mourned for my sins and cried bitterly, and at the same time I recognized that for many years I had pleaded for what was happening now. I could see my weaknesses in a very tangible way (see Ether 12:27). I knew that the Savior would not let

me suffer for my sins without coming to the rescue, and I pleaded for His help. I then understood better the people of King Benjamin:

“And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and behold they had fallen to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them.

“And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men.



Elder Claude R.
Gamiette

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“And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had

in Jesus Christ who should come, according to the words which king Benjamin had spoken unto them” (Mosiah 4:1–3).

I cannot tell you exactly when the peace came, but in the days that followed, I knew that my guilt was swept

away and I feared no more. I had no more desires for the things of the past; I had experienced another change of heart even deeper than at my baptism.

I recognized the blessing of the sacrament in my life to receive peace and comfort from the Lord. I desired to

keep the commandments even better, to be more diligent in my service.

A very well known Sermon of the Savior took a new meaning to me:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit [who come unto me]: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3–10).

I had been poor in Spirit, I had mourned for my sins, I had been comforted, and as a consequence meekness had grown within me. I hungered and thirsted after keeping the commandments. I realized that with my desire for more righteousness came the danger of judging myself and other harshly. I needed to be merciful with myself and others, as the Lord had been with me for many years and continues to be.

I long to see the next promised blessing come to pass in my life.

As we press forward to Him, we will see our weaknesses, we will be comforted, we will be sanctified, and our light will shine brighter as the Lord refines us through His glorious gospel.

I want to be a peacemaker, and I pray for courage to suffer the afflictions that come with preaching the gospel with joy in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He lives. He is our Redeemer, our Savior.

This is the time when He calls us to come unto Him. As we press forward to Him, we will see our weaknesses, we will be comforted, we will be sanctified, and our light will shine brighter as the Lord refines us through His glorious gospel. ■

CHURCH NEWS

Jamaican Saints Welcome Elder Quentin L. Cook

Sunday, November 19, 2017, marked a special time for Jamaican Latter-day Saints as they welcomed Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Sister Mary Cook, to a special stake

conference held at the Constant Spring meetinghouse of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the capital city of Kingston. This session was made available via broadcast to other areas in the Kingston Jamaica





Elder Cook spoke about the harsh world that we live in and distracting influences that could lead us away from the gospel of Jesus Christ. He shared that while praying for the countries on this tour, he felt the overwhelming impression that Latter-day Saints need to create Zion in “our hearts and homes,” as a protection against evil across the world. Also, he taught that a reliance on coming to church, or encouragement from the bishop and other members, would not be enough; we would need personal religious observance, which includes scripture study, family prayers, and family home evenings. He spoke about taking care when correcting our children for mistakes, being kinder, and having far less criticism and for Saints to undertake the goal of love and unity in the home.

Elder Cook advised husbands and wives that by working together and relying on the Lord as a couple, they can make all important decisions as a family council. The Saints were also reminded to be visible within their communities, work, and schools, to honour the Sabbath day, and to focus on temple worship. He spoke about his feelings of gratitude and peace as he was called by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) 10 years earlier to the apostleship of the Church, and he bore his special witness of Jesus Christ. He then closed the meeting by leaving an apostolic blessing with the members. ■



Stake. After Saturday’s inaugural priesthood leadership conference for English-speaking countries of the Caribbean, the Sunday meeting for all members concluded the second part of a two-day visit to the island. This trip to Jamaica was part of Elder Cook’s tour of the Caribbean where he visited the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Guadeloupe.

Accompanying Elder Cook as part of the visiting contingent were Caribbean Area President, Elder Walter F. Gonzalez, and his wife, Sister Gonzalez; Panama City Panama Temple president, William H.

Wingo, and his wife, Sister Wingo; and Elder Claude Gamiette, Area Authority Seventy. Local leaders on the ground included Jamaica Kingston Mission president, Scott C. Pearson, and Kingston Jamaica Stake president, Andrew George Lue, who all addressed the gathering.

The central theme of their messages was inspired by the prophetic mission of the Church, and the talks focused on strengthening individual conversion of the members, helping members live the gospel, family history and temple work, member-missionary work, and self-reliance.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

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:

gutierrezgr@ldschurch.org ■

INCREASING FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST BY SETTING GOALS

Alma 5:15-16 | Alma 32:41 | Ether 12:19



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

MY GOALS 2018

1. Personal Goals.

a. I will read the Book of Mormon every day.

b. I will be more self-reliant by:

c. I will share the gospel with:

2. Sabbath Day Observance.

a. I will attend Sacrament Meeting every Sunday.

b. I will invite others to attend Sacrament Meeting.

c. _____

3. Temple.

a. I will be worthy of and keep a valid temple recommend.

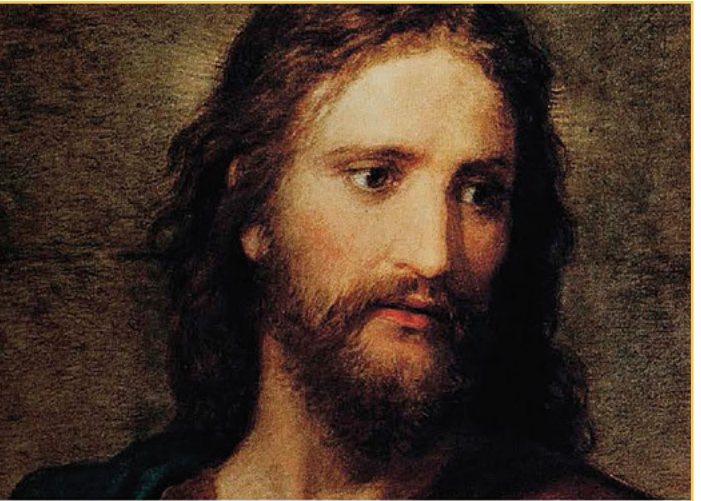
b. I will do the work in the temple for my ancestors.

c. _____



2018 CARIBBEAN AREA

VISION FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.



VISION

Invite all to increase faith in Heavenly Father and in His Son Jesus Christ to strengthen individuals and families, as they study the Book of Mormon, strive to become self-reliant, and prepare to receive saving ordinances and keep the associated covenants. (Luke 17:5; D&C 128:22)

PRIORITIES

Preach the Gospel

Helaman 3:24-25
Alma 31:34
Alma 45:22
Handbook 2, 7.6.2

Sabbath Day

Isaiah 58:13-14
Exodus 31:13
D. & C. 59:9-10

Self-Reliance

2 Nephi 5:17
Mosiah 1:2

Temple and Family History

D. & C. 2:2-3

GOALS

Preach the Gospel

- Teach repentance and baptize converts with emphasis on the rising generation and families as we retain and reactivate others.
- Ordain converts to the Aaronic Priesthood, normally the week after confirmation.
- Ordain adult converts as elders as soon as they are prepared, normally between two months and a year. (Handbook 2, 7.6.2)

Sabbath Day

- Observe the Sabbath Day at home and in Church.

Self-Reliance

- Strengthen personal conversion by reading and pondering the Book of Mormon daily.
- Achieve spiritual and temporal self-reliance, resulting in a stronger temple-worthy Melchizedek Priesthood base.

Temple and Family History

- Youth and adults maintain recommends and attend the temple for themselves and for their dead relatives.
- Youth and adults participate in family history, including indexing.
- Worthy young men and women serve missions.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS *(John 15:16)*

- Increased numbers of converts.
- Increased Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood ordinations, which will help to qualify stakes.
- Increased Sacrament meeting attendance.
- Increased numbers of self-reliant members paying tithes and offerings.
- Increased numbers of youth and adults with valid temple recommends.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Priesthood and Auxiliary leaders will minister one-on-one, name by name, in their efforts to increase faith in our Heavenly Father and in His Son Jesus Christ to strengthen individuals and families. They will take the initiative to report back to their file leaders on these efforts, which will be reflected in the indicators of progress as youth and adults receive saving ordinances and keep their covenants. Stake and Ward councils will review the indicators of progress monthly and quarterly.

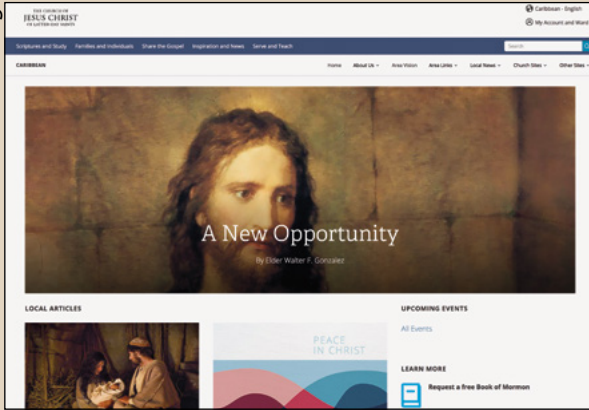
IMPLEMENTATION

At least the following tools and means will be used to help members to internalize the priorities and to achieve their goals. Priesthood and auxiliary leaders will:

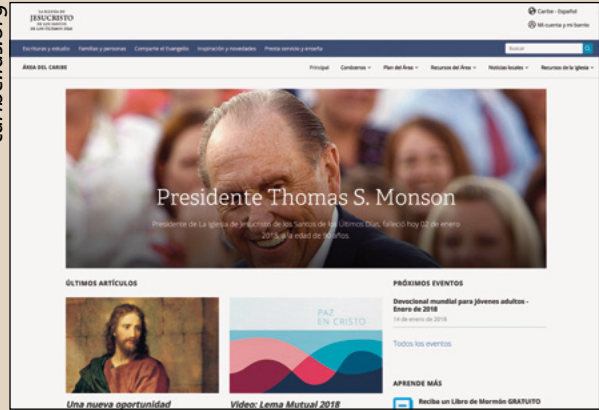
- Use the council system with emphasis on shorter meetings to better minister one-on-one.
- Teach, preach, and minister in one-on-one interviews, home visits, councils, conferences and other teaching settings, using especially the Book of Mormon and "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."
- Teach how to set goals and exercise faith in Jesus Christ to achieve them.
- Use technology, with help from the rising generation, to better communicate, share the gospel, and foster faith-promoting events.
- Strengthen units and quorums by improving teaching and leadership skills including simplification, using teacher councils and other resources.

LOCAL AREA WEBSITES

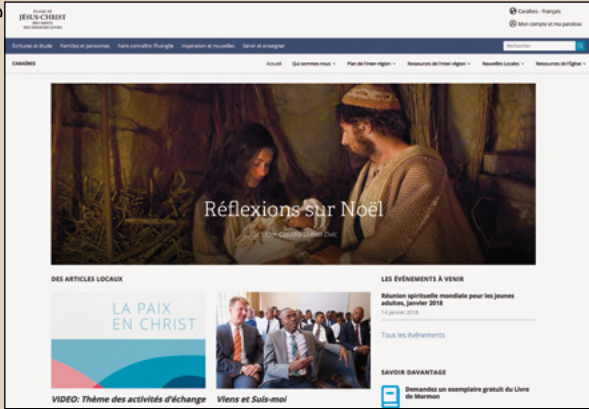
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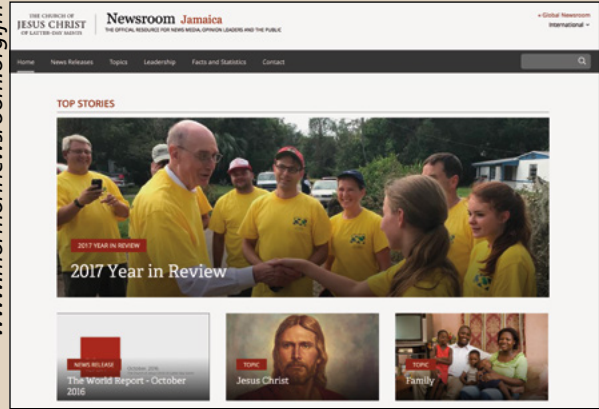
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