

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

What Is in a Name?

By Elder S. Mark Palmer

President, Africa Southeast Area

“The next time you are asked what church you belong to, pause and think of the name you have taken upon yourself, then with a smile, testify of Him by boldly declaring, ‘I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’.”

One of the many traditions in Africa I have come to love is hearing the names parents choose for their children. Names such as Precious, Blessing, Gift, Innocence, Patience, or God’s Love. When I hear names like these, I always smile and think to myself how wonderful to grow up with a name which tells the world what hopes and dreams loving parents have for you. Or as in some African cultures, what feelings the parents were experiencing at the time of birth.

Several months ago, my wife and I spent some delightful time with the Okot family, who come from Uganda and are serving a mission in Bulawayo. These wonderful parents have named their five children Hope, Faith, Charity, Love Divine, and Peace. We have grown to love this family and have no doubt these outstanding children will grow up inspired by each having the names of one of these Christlike virtues.

Other cultures choose names in different ways. In some cultures, the grandparents choose the name of the firstborn. Many children are named

after parents and grandparents or favorite uncles and aunts. Some choose the names of kings and queens. Native Americans often use events in nature, animals, or birds to name their children. Some use names of ancient or modern prophets or apostles. Not long ago I met a wonderful young couple in Tanzania who have named their little baby boy Bednar.

In Proverbs we read, “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Proverbs 22:1).



Elder S. Mark Palmer

I love what Helaman taught his two sons, Lehi and Nephi, about why he chose their names:

“I have given you the names of our first parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem; and this have I done that when you remember your names ye may remember them; and when you remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know how that it is said, and also written, that they were good.

“Therefore, my sons, I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them” (Helaman 5:6–7).



Okot Family
Love Divine, Charity, Faith, Sister Okot,
Peace, President Okot, Hope



Brother and Sister Lungelo, with their son, Bednar

No matter what culture we come from, when we are baptized and confirmed, the Apostle Paul teaches that we become “new creatures” and “saints.”¹ At baptism, we covenant to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ. And every Sunday we renew that covenant and promise to take upon ourselves His name during the sacrament prayer.

President Russell M. Nelson taught us what it means to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ by saying: “Taking the Savior’s name upon us includes declaring and witnessing to others—through our actions and words—that Jesus is the Christ.”² He also invited us to “be intentional about talking of Christ” and to seek

opportunities to share our testimonies of Him with our families and friends.³

Here in Africa, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are still a small minority, and the Church itself is relatively unknown. But many Africans love Jesus Christ and reverence His name. Think of how often we see His name on taxis or businesses. A friend recently spoke of a tire repair store cleverly and devoutly called “Jesus Will Alignment.”⁴

In other parts of the world, the Church has often been defined by others. But in Africa, where the desire to know Jesus Christ is so strong and where the Church is emerging out of obscurity, we can forever correctly define the Church as the restored

Church of Jesus Christ. We will do this by using the correct name of the Church and by living the gospel of Jesus Christ in our hearts and homes.

Therefore, the next time you are asked what church you belong to, pause and think of the name you have taken upon yourself, then with a smile, testify of Him by boldly declaring, “I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” or even “I am a member of the restored Church of Jesus Christ.”

So, what’s in a name? President Nelson says that when it comes to the name of the Lord’s Church the answer is, “Everything!”⁵

And when it comes to our own personal names? No matter how our parents chose our given names, the most important name is that which we take upon ourselves each Sunday during the sacrament ordinance, even the name of Jesus Christ. May we each live worthy of that name by always remembering Him and by being true disciples of Jesus Christ. ■

S. Mark Palmer was named a General Authority Seventy in April 2016. He is married to Jacqueline Ann Wood; they are the parents of six children.

REFERENCES

1. See 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 1:7; Ephesians 2:19.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “The Correct Name of the Church,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 88.
3. See Russell M. Nelson, “Sisters’ Participation in the Gathering of Israel,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 70.
4. Terence M. Vinson, Benoni South Africa Stake Conference.
5. Russell M. Nelson, “The Correct Name of the Church,” 89.

LOCAL PRIESTHOOD LEADER MESSAGE

Self Reliance: A Principle for All

By Elder Clement M. Matswagothata

Area Seventy

“The principle of self-reliance requires for us to seek direction from Father in Heaven on things to do that will best suit our needs and circumstances.”

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we sometimes see the commandments as a list of do’s and don’ts and hence at times overlook the countless blessings that come from simply obeying. Everywhere in the world, individuals and families are constantly bombarded with messages of getting rich quickly, and on the other extreme we see others who have fallen into the trap of entitlement. We are encouraged by prophets, past and present, to be self-reliant both spiritually and temporally. In *Handbook 2* we learn that “Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. As members become self-reliant, they are also better able to serve and care for others” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 6.1.1).

Brother Ephraim Pheto is one person who has embraced the principles of self-reliance in his life. (He has given me permission to tell his story.) Upon coming back from his mission, he worked for a small printing and advertising company—and started developing himself by getting involved in self-study programs in graphics. Soon after, he was able to

start a small business that enabled him to provide for his family.

He wasn’t satisfied by just doing graphics—and after much prayer and consultation with his family—he decided it was best for him to continue his studies. He then identified a gap in the market and studied project management. This opened a new stream of revenue for him, which led him into the construction industry. (Brother Pheto loves working with his hands.) He now finds himself out of the office more than before; but importantly he is able to provide for his family, pay an

honest tithe, and serve in the Church. He is known by many within his community as the ‘go-to person’ when it comes to anything—installing electricity, building, welding, and many other construction services.

He also went a step further by planting a garden in his yard where he grows items like spinach and onions. This means that he saves money that he would have spent on purchasing vegetables by growing his own. His obedience to the principles of self-reliance has blessed him and his family and has inspired others around him to strive to do the same.

The principle of self-reliance requires us to seek direction from Father in



Elder Clement M.
Matswagothata



Ephraim Pheto

Heaven on things to do that will best suit our needs and circumstances. It is therefore very important for us as sons and daughters of our Father in Heaven to approach Him prayerfully for guidance in what we need to do individually and as families to become self-reliant. President Russell M. Nelson counselled, “In the coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost” (“Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives,” *Liahona*, May 2018, 96). As we strive to be obedient to the principles of self-reliance, we will be blessed with ideas that are specific to our individual circumstances. The principle of self-reliance is not meant for a select few, but to be embraced by all of us.

I would like to emphasize a few areas discussed in *Handbook 2* that may assist us in becoming self-reliant:

1. **Health:** It may be prudent for us to ask ourselves if we have sufficient health cover. In certain countries within the Africa South East Area, it is possible for us to contribute monthly to a health cover that will ensure that our health is taken care of as and when illness strikes. It is also very important for us to keep the Word of Wisdom by ensuring that we exercise regularly. This can be done by taking a walk as a family, which in turn will give us time
2. **Education:** Whether formal or informal, it is important that we educate our minds and our hands. I know a wonderful sister who served in a stake Relief Society presidency a few years ago. She put her children through schooling, and in her more mature years, she decided to go back to complete high school. This now serves as a great example to her grandchildren on the importance of getting an education.
3. **Employment:** In order for us to become self-reliant, we must learn to appreciate the sacred opportunity we have to work and provide for ourselves and our families.
4. **Finances:** It is important that we not only earn but also save money for a rainy day. As we faithfully pay our tithes—and a generous fast offering—we are promised by the prophet Malachi that, “I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground.” (Malachi 3:11) As we learn to manage our finances, we will be better able to stay out of debt.
5. **Spiritual Strength:** Our faith and testimonies will be enhanced as we learn to trust in our Father in Heaven and develop faith in Jesus Christ (see *Handbook 2*, 6.1.1).

Brothers and sisters, it is important for us to remember that we

are personally responsible for our spiritual and temporal welfare. We cannot push that on the Church. As we become self-reliant, we will also become a happier people. I remember while serving as a stake president, I was approached by a faithful brother who felt that his bishop was not doing enough to help him and his family with welfare assistance. His wife had a health challenge and needed to see a private doctor for consultation, which was quite expensive. To help solve the issue, I approached the stake Relief Society president, seeking her direction in how best the Church could assist this faithful family. She reassured me that she would look into it and give me feedback. In about a week or two, she helped identify a specialist who was able to assist the wife of this good brother without their needing to approach the Church for financial assistance. This was a lesson not only for the family themselves, but for me as their leader at the time.

Brothers and sisters, I encourage you to be prayerful as you look for ways to become self-reliant. I assure you that Heavenly Father will bring thoughts into your mind and will bless you not only to become self-reliant but with the ability to serve others. ■

Clement M. Matswagothata was named an Area Seventy at the April 2018 general conference. He is married to Busisiwe Novelty Buthelezi; they are the parents of three children. Elder and Sister Matswagothata reside in Gaborone, Botswana.

CHOOSE A MEANINGFUL SABBATH SERIES

Promises from Keeping a Holy Sabbath

By Susan Gregory

“Keeping the Sabbath day holy isn’t about lists of do’s and don’ts. It is about learning and growing, recharging our spirits and refocussing ourselves and our lives on achieving our eternal potential—striving to become more like the Saviour.”

Before becoming a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the age of 25, I had stopped attending my former church on Sundays. I had spent my teenage years visiting various churches in the towns where I grew up, where I was invited to play the guitar and sing. I accepted invitations from different churches each week, and I promised myself that when I found the “right” church—where they knew who God is and where I felt at home—I would stay. Depending on how many churches were in a town, I simply repeated the cycle after a few months.

Then one cold winter’s day, two missionaries knocked on my door. By then, I was married with two young children and living in a very small town. I seemed to be their only prospect, and the Elders came around to teach me on a daily basis. On the Friday, they invited me to attend church with them that Sunday. PANIC! In our discussions, they had mentioned the importance of the Sabbath: that members refrained from shopping and time-wasting frivolities and spent the day attending church (THREE hours?!?) and engaging in

various activities that would build the family and bring them nearer to God. They had also discussed reverence and showing respect through our clothing choices—the expression ‘Sunday best’ was mentioned. Why the PANIC? I didn’t own a dress or a skirt!

NEW DRESS

There was only one dress shop in the town and I didn’t rate my chances of finding anything suitable too high. Sadly, I was right. The only option was a cream-coloured pleated skirt that my grandmother would have loved! I shuddered . . . and to add insult to injury, the price was exorbitant! But, I couldn’t walk away from the church that not only knew that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Father and a separate personage, but also showed reverence by dressing and behaving in an appropriate way. So I bought the *hideous cream-coloured skirt*—thinking I would at least blend in. The reality was that there were only three members in the branch and 12 missionaries—so I stood out anyway!

Decades later, I still remember the feeling that choice inspired: the

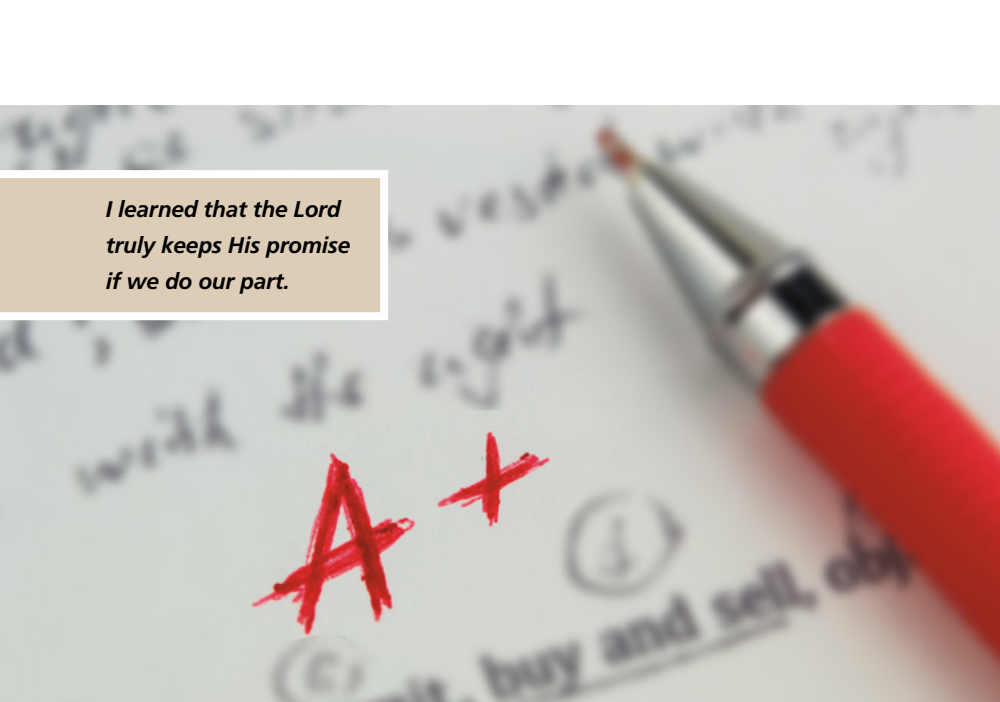
opportunity to show my love and reverence for my Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, by choosing my ‘best’ clothes and going to learn more of Them. Of course it’s not actually about the clothes—Heavenly Father loves us every day, barefoot and wearing jeans. It’s about honouring Them and showing respect.

Six weeks later I was baptised and committed to becoming the very best I could be. My testimony was much bigger than my actual knowledge of the gospel, so I was frantically studying and seeking answers. Trying to keep the Sabbath day holy was difficult with a husband who was not a member.

DO’S AND DON’TS

I asked a visiting District Presidency member to give me a list of things to avoid—what I was not allowed to do. He told me to avoid any activity that would pull me away from God. So I asked him for a list of things I must or should do. He told me to do all those things that would help me draw nearer to God.

At the time I didn’t think he was very helpful at all, but keeping the Sabbath day holy isn’t about lists of do’s and don’ts. There is no scorecard where we add up the ticks to pass. For me it is about learning and growing, recharging my spirit and refocussing myself and my life on achieving my eternal potential—striving to



I learned that the Lord truly keeps His promise if we do our part.

become more like the Saviour. This week I may spend six hours working on family history; next week I may lie on cushions in the lounge reading Book of Mormon stories with my granddaughter. The 2-hour church schedule gives us a little more time to work on the areas where we need the most growth. The new curriculum materials are designed to empower us as we teach our families AND strive to perfect ourselves. We all have different strengths and weaknesses, and we're all at different stages of our development, so our choices will be personal and may be totally different from those of another family.

SABBATH PROMISES

Another valuable lesson I learned as a new member was the value of the promise in D&C 82:10. "I the Lord am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise."

I was studying by correspondence at the time and my wonderful, diligent missionaries taught me this principle and promised me that if I didn't study

on Sundays, I would be entitled to call upon the Lord for His help with my exams with confidence that He would help me. I thought that was a more than fair deal.

As I sat in the exam hall for a 4-hour accounting paper, I started reading the exam paper with horror! I had to answer five of the six questions. The first question was incomplete with essential information missing, so I no longer had a choice, I had to answer the other 5. All went well until I realised the last question was on an aspect not covered in my notes. I prayed and started writing an answer.

When I got home afterwards and re-looked at the paper, I realised that the first question was not missing information; it was simplified and had I read it properly, I would definitely have received an A for the exam. At the same time, the answer to the question for which I hadn't studied had flowed so easily—but I had no way of checking to see if my thinking had been correct.

The result? I received an A+ for the paper, which meant the

misunderstood question and my answer had to have been correct. But the REAL result? A strengthened testimony that is unwavering. I learned that the Lord truly keeps His promise if we do our part. ■

Give With a Loving Heart

By Desirée van Schalkwyk

"What better time to serve one another than when hearts and minds are more open and receptive to acts of kindness—during this season when the Christian world celebrates Easter as the culmination of the Saviour's ministry?"

I am a product of ministering from almost forty years ago. I had been baptized when I was nine years old, but my family had become less active during my twelfth year and so I drifted away. I started going to a different local church with my friend, who was my next-door neighbor. Over the next few years, life went on and after I married, I was contacted by my assigned Visiting Teachers. They called faithfully each month and over time set the foundation for Home Teachers to be assigned to our family. During those visits we never discussed the fact that I was not attending church; and my husband who knew very little about the Church and was not

really interested in religion, didn't feel pressured or uncomfortable accepting them into our home. We felt only genuine concern and friendship coming from them during their visits.

What struck us most was the kindness and joyful spirit that our Home and Visiting Teachers brought into our home. We developed a close relationship with one of our Home Teachers, who never ceased to offer his assistance when needed—inviting us into his home and in time, inviting me to a conference where Elder Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke.

During that conference it was as if Elder Monson knew what was in my heart and that he was speaking directly to me that day. I left with a strong desire to return to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to become once again a part of His fold. A few months later, after the missionary

discussions, my son was baptized, and we started to attend Church.

At the recent April 2018 General Conference, principles of the new Ministering program were announced. It's not just that we are now free to extend our nurturing or ministering efforts without the use of a restrictive handbook and a standardized message, but more importantly, to serve as true disciples of our Saviour, who innately knew how to succour and uplift His brethren and sisters.

As I look back through the years, I have seen so many examples of service around me and even as we recently moved for the umpteenth time, acts of kindness were there to smooth the way. This motivates me; as I know that if do not respond in kind, I will be pulling myself away from the light and love that I find from being actively involved in ministering to others.

“So, what does this have to do with Easter?” you ask as the season quickly

approaches. Well, it has everything to do with it!

What better time to serve one another than when hearts and minds are more open and receptive to acts of kindness—during this season when the Christian world celebrates Easter as the culmination of the Saviour's ministry?

In ministering we have a unique opportunity to learn empathy and to give with a loving heart, and in so doing we expand our capacity and talents. Plus, we become closer to the Saviour as we are prompted and guided to places and circumstances where we are needed. Over time, we become more like Him.

All the Saviour asks in return is that we come to him with a contrite spirit and thankful heart. A willingness to serve His children, our brothers and sisters, is our way of showing our love and appreciation for all that we have and is the true gift we can give this Easter and throughout the year. ■

CALL FOR ARTICLES

At the October 2018 General Conference, Church members were encouraged “to hold home evening and to study the gospel at home on Sunday—or at other times as individuals and families choose. A new resource, *Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families*, provides ideas for personal scripture study, family scripture study, and home evening”.

As you adapt your Sabbath activities to the new 2-hour meeting schedule—and increase the depth of your personal

and family study—we invite you to contribute your experiences and feelings about the new Sabbath program and tell us how you and your family are being blessed.

You can submit your manuscript—or just a few thoughts—by email at:

africasoutheast-communications@ldschurch.org

Please include your full name and the name of your ward and stake. ■

Africa Southeast Area

Online and Social Media Resources

Area Online Web Pages

Visit the Area online channels to find essential information about the Church, uplifting and inspirational content, and instruction from Area leaders.

English

africasoutheast.lds.org

French

afriquedusudest.lds.org

Portuguese

africasudeste.lds.org

Area Social Media Pages

Follow the Area social media channels—by clicking “*Like*”—and automatically receive informational and inspirational posts into your own Facebook feed. Click “*Share*” to share with those in your social media community.

English

fb.com/ldsafrique

French

fb.com/eglisedejesuschristafriquedusudest

Portuguese

fb.com/igrejadejesuscristoafricasudeste

“I believe the time has come for us as disciples of Christ to use these inspired tools appropriately and more effectively to testify of God the Eternal Father, His plan of happiness for His children, and His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of the world; to proclaim the reality of the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days; and to accomplish the Lord’s work.”

— Elder David A. Bednar

*Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
BYU Education Week, August 2014*

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS