

MESSAGE FROM A MEMBER OF THE SEVENTY

Deuteronomy 5:15 The Lord thy God Commanded Thee to Keep the Sabbath Day

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The Lord's Day

One of the days of the week that I enjoy most is Sunday—the Sabbath, or even better, the Lord's day. On this day we are given the opportunity to show the great love we have for our Heavenly Father, for His Son, Jesus Christ, and for our fellow human beings by punctually attending sacrament meeting, taking the sacrament with seriousness and reverence, renewing our covenants, and fulfilling our callings and assignments; as well as spending time with our family, studying things that are inspiring, and doing so with the aim only of the glory of God (Doctrine & Covenants 4:5).

Regarding the commandment to honor the Sabbath, we read in the Old Testament: “And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them.

“Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord” (Exodus 35:1–2).

“And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out

thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day” (Deuteronomy 5:15).

So, we have been commanded to rest from the daily things of the week and we have been commanded to honor this day and dedicate it completely to the Lord.

Our Baptismal Covenant

When we are baptized, we make an agreement with God. In this covenant we promise to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, keep His commandments, and serve Him to the end.

In return, Our Heavenly Father promises us the remission of our sins and, through the ordinance of confirmation, we are granted the gift of the Holy Ghost.

By participating in the sacrament each week, we renew our covenant with God, and in doing so worthily, our sins are erased, and we are given the promise to have the constant companionship and guidance of the Holy Spirit. That's wonderful!

I remember very well the day after I was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I had the opportunity to partake of the sacrament for



the first time, which I did in a spirit of joy and gratitude and I felt in my heart the great love of Our Heavenly Father towards us.

From that moment to this day, sacrament meeting has a special meaning in my life and, of course, now in the life of our family. Attending Church and partaking of the sacrament is a priority in our family, and it is expected to be a priority for each one of us.

The Sacrament

I like what the Lord has revealed regarding the commandment to take the sacrament:

“And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

“For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High” (Doctrine & Covenants 59:9–10).

Attending sacramental meeting is a commandment which is accompanied by great promise. I have learned that if we participate weekly in the ordinance of the sacrament, having a broken heart and a contrite spirit, we will deserve the promise that we “may always have his Spirit” to be with us (Doctrine & Covenants 20:77).

The blessing of having His Spirit with us

That Spirit is the foundation of our testimony; not only does the Spirit testify to us of the Father and the Son, but He also reminds us of all things and

leads us to the truth. It is the compass that guides us on our way to eternal life.

The apostle Paul, writing to the Saints in Corinth, told them that “no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3). Knowing that God lives, and that Jesus Christ is His Son and our Savior and Redeemer is absolutely essential to understanding the purpose of life.

My experience

The Savior instituted the ordinance of the sacrament so that we would always remember His Atonement. This is the most sacred and important ordinance in the Church. It is the only Sabbath meeting in which the whole family can and should attend together. I have learned by the good examples of faithful people who put the Lord first and honored the Sabbath with courage.

My wife’s mother was a very faithful and dedicated woman. She often had family members visiting over the weekend. She was a very good hostess, but on Sunday, she did not stay to attend to relatives nor for any other commitment. She told her relatives that they were invited to attend Church with her and her family, but that, if they did not want to, they could stay at home and wait for her to return. For her, the Lord was first.

My testimony

On the Sabbath we can, in addition to attending Church, study the scriptures, have family home evening, study gospel materials as a family, do Family History, update our diary,

write to missionaries, or minister in a special way.

We can also rest from regular work, taking time to meditate, to pray and to seek personal revelation. In Isaiah we read, “Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil” (Isaiah 56:2).

I know that God lives and that His Son Jesus Christ lives. I know that they love us, and I know that one of the ways to show them my love is to honor the Sabbath, to declare that Sunday is His day, the Lord’s day! ■

LOCAL PAGES

Special Dominican Republic San Gerónimo Stake Conference with Elder D. Todd Christofferson

On Sunday, November 11, 2018, a special conference was held for members of the Church in the Santo Domingo San Gerónimo stake. Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles presided, accompanied by his wife. Also attending were Elder Candido Fortuna, Area Seventy, and his wife, and John Edwin



President Lopez



Elder Christofferson



Sister Christofferson

Rappleye, president of the Santo Domingo temple, and his wife. Jhon Lopez, president of the San Gerónimo Stake, conducted. It was a historic event for the 1,140 attendees.

The meeting began with a beautiful hymn performed by the choir and the congregation, “Come, Listen to a Prophet’s Voice” after which brother Leonardo Vidal from the San Gerónimo ward offered the invocation.

President Lopez was the first to address the overflow congregation. He began by thanking everyone for everything they do “to build the kingdom in this stake of San Gerónimo. We love you.”

Quoting the scripture found in Psalm 27, he taught: “It strikes me when the term ‘inheritance’ is used, speaking about our children. They are an inheritance that . . . our Heavenly Father allows us at birth in this life. . . . He gives us the power to give life, to procreate.” He remarked that our children are highly esteemed by our Heavenly Father and should be by us as well.

Sister Christofferson began her remarks by saying, “Elder Fortuna gave my speech, but my husband told me that an important message requires two witnesses.” She taught about something she learned at a regional conference she attended many years ago in

Washington, D.C. One of the authorities who spoke explained that by reading The Book of Mormon as a family they could overcome the great trials that would come to them. They would come closer as a family to the Lord when they studied together the precepts therein. He testified that reading this book and following the teachings found in it helped them come closer as a family. Sister Christofferson then said: “Upon hearing the promise of an apostle that [by studying the Book of Mormon as a family] the contamination in the family would diminish, I felt very eager to put it into practice.” She finished her remarks inviting everyone to study the Book of Mormon and find the peace that lies within its pages.

Before the concluding teachings by Elder Christofferson, the choir and congregation sang the hymn “Secret Prayer.”

Elder Christofferson began his remarks by recalling that he was present at a conference in this same stake

about 18 years ago. He thanked our Heavenly Father for the opportunity to be here again and also thanked those who made this meeting possible. In his message he stressed the importance of the temple and of attending it. He shared something he had read from the journal of Brother Coors, a pioneer member of the Church. Brother Coors had two deceased relatives appear to him in a dream, one at a time. The first relative told him that he was in the spirit world where he heard more about the restored gospel and accepted it. He asked him to please perform the ordinance of baptism on his behalf once the temple in Salt Lake City was built.

The other deceased relative, for whom the ordinance had already been carried out in the Navoo temple, appeared with a light surrounding him. He indicated that he needed the sealing ordinance to be performed for him because: “I cannot progress anymore.” “It is interesting to point



out that even after this life, our spirits continue with the same strength, individual personality, reasoning power, and the power to speak, to listen, and to learn,” said Elder Christofferson.

“What a privilege we have of receiving these ordinances for ourselves,” he said. He then invited us to share these beautiful truths with everyone. He invited us to say, “Come and see,” as the Lord did, to welcome others with open arms and happiness, to share these beautiful blessings.

“We will have a special opportunity on December 23, two days before Christmas. The First Presidency said that this should be ‘the invitation Sunday.’ On this day, Sacrament meeting will be ‘focused only on the Lord,’ he said. ‘In this natural way we should invite everyone to enjoy what the Lord has so generously given us.’”

To conclude, he left a special blessing upon the congregation, that there would be food, clothing and everything necessary in each home. “I testify that Jesus Christ lives, that He is at the head of the Church. I testify that He lives, that I have seen His hand working and directing this great work.”

The meeting concluded with the choir and the congregation singing “God Be with You Till We Meet Again,” and the benediction was offered by Sister Nathalie Vargas of the Enriquillo Ward.

After the meeting, Elder Christofferson and those who accompanied him shook hands with and greeted each of the children and youth in the congregation one by one. ■



International Day of Service: 150 projects, 55,000 beneficiaries

On Saturday, November 3, 2018, the sixth edition of the International Day of Service “Hands and Hearts” was held, in which a total of 5,269 volunteers in Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic and other countries of the Caribbean region donated a total of 31,614 hours of service in several projects, benefitting the lives of more than 55,000 people.

This day of service kicked-off various additional activities commemorating the 40th anniversary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Dominican Republic. One hundred service projects were performed throughout the country with government institutions, mayors, nongovernmental entities, leaders and friends of the Church.

A total of 204 square kilometers were cleaned or rejuvenated on streets, avenues, roads, parks, schools and other public centers, collecting a total of 3,874 garbage bags of 55 gallons each.

In addition, 6,687 units of many medications were distributed in six medical operations in different cities of the country, directly benefitting 1,658 people.

“We are extremely pleased with the integration of members of the Church with our friends in the different communities of the country and the entire Caribbean region. What has happened on the International Day of Service this year is a sign of the good that can be accomplished when we unite with the

purpose of doing good for our neighbors as Jesus taught,” said Elder Julio Cesar Acosta, Area Seventy.

Other humanitarian services were completed in Puerto Rico where dozens of volunteers helped distribute 1,400 boxes of water to the community of Lares, Mayagüez, in coordination with officials of the local mayor’s office. In addition, about 200 lunches were distributed to the elderly and to needy people in the streets of Caguas.

In Haiti, police departments were cleaned by volunteers. “The officers in the police departments showed the happiness on their faces and deeply appreciated the gesture of the members of the Church to perform this altruistic work,” said Berthony Theodor, president of the Port-au-Prince Haiti Stake.

Jamaica also left its mark on this International Day. “The service and sacrifice of the volunteers at the Jamaica Red Cross School of Transformation for at-risk youths in Kingston, Jamaica, strengthened our testimony of the importance of serving others,” said Raia Richards, National Director of Public Affairs in Jamaica.

Everywhere, the smile of children, youth and adults was seen while they served with dedication. Whether in streets or in care centers for the elderly, the slogan was the same: to have hands and hearts intertwined in service to others with love and diligence. ■