

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

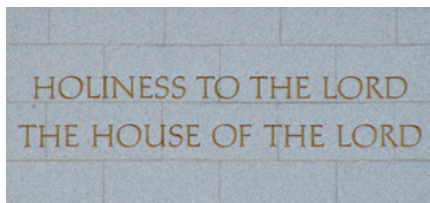
Come to the Temple

By Elder Kevin S. Hamilton

President of the Africa Southeast Area

Sister Hamilton and I were in Zambia recently and met a new convert to the Church, 84-year-old Sister Christine Namwinga (see photo). Her story was told in the local pages of the September 2016 *Liahona*. Sister Christine was baptized at 82 years of age and just a year later was blessed to go to the temple in Johannesburg where she was able to do the temple work for all 10 of her deceased children, as well as her deceased husband and her parents. Think of the joy in heaven on that special day when an entire family was baptized, confirmed, endowed, and sealed in the house of the Lord for time and eternity. Sister Namwinga related her feelings and testimony: “I know that my Heavenly Father loves

me very much, in that He has made it possible for me to reach this age and special time to allow me to visit the temple. I am happy that I was sealed to my husband, children, and my parents because this assures me that one day we will see each other and be together forever in the life to come.”¹



Above the door of every temple are these words: “Holiness to the Lord / The House of the Lord.” We teach and believe that the sacred temples are the house of the Lord. We go to the temple and are spiritually in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the temples, “we organize families according to the order that the Lord has revealed. . . .

“In the temples members of the Church who make themselves eligible can participate in the most exalted of the redeeming ordinances that have been revealed to mankind.”²

Our Heavenly Father desires that His children have access to temples, so He has commanded His prophets to build temples throughout the earth,

bringing the sacred temple ordinances ever closer to His people.

In this last, great dispensation of the gospel,³ ancient prophets came to the temple and conferred upon Joseph Smith the sacred keys of the priesthood that would permit temple work to move forward. These keys of authority were held by Adam and by other prophets such as Elijah, the Old Testament prophet who never tasted death but was taken up directly to heaven (see 2 Kings 2:11). Elijah held these priesthood keys, and Malachi referred to them when he said that Elijah would be sent “before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord,” and that he would “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” This was such an important event that Malachi warned that unless Elijah came and brought these keys, God would “smite the earth with a curse” (Malachi 4:5–6).

After the completion of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, Joseph Smith received a series of heavenly visits from messengers with various priesthood keys, culminating with the appearance of this very same Elijah. He recorded this experience as follows:

“After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us;



Kevin S. Hamilton



Sister Namwinga
with Sister Hamilton



**Johannesburg
Temple**

for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said:

“Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—

“To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse” (D&C 110:13–15).

Sacred priesthood keys had once again been restored to the earth. The power to seal on earth and seal in heaven was again found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. “This signal event went unheeded by the world, but it would influence the destiny of every soul who has ever lived or will live. Things began quietly to happen. The Church became a temple-building church.

“In the world there emerged here and there, in a way thought to be spontaneous, people and organizations and societies interested in tracing genealogies. This has all taken place since the appearance of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple.”

“From that very day, April 3, 1836, the hearts of the children began to turn to their fathers. Thereafter ordinances were not tentative, but permanent. The sealing power was with us. No authorization transcends it in value. That power gives substance and eternal permanence to all ordinances performed with proper authority for both the living and the dead.”⁴

Temples are now being built across the continent of Africa—in Kinshasa, Durban, and Harare. More will likely follow, but for now the temple of our people is in Johannesburg, South Africa. Members of the Church should do everything in their power to come to the temple in order to claim their blessings. It will require sacrifice, but then, as we read in *Lectures on Faith*, “a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation.”⁵

Great blessings await you as you come to the temple. “The temple transforms the individual and makes abundantly worthwhile any efforts made to get there. . . .

“If you will go to the temple and remember that the teaching is symbolic you will never go in the proper spirit

without coming away with your vision extended, feeling a little more exalted, with your knowledge increased as to things that are spiritual.”⁶

It is not enough to go to the temple just once. We are blessed to be able to go the first time for our own ordinances, but then we can return again for our deceased ancestors in order to provide these sacred ordinances for them as well.

Not long ago, I stood in one of the sacred sealing rooms of a temple for the sealing of our last-born daughter to her faithful returned-missionary husband. As I entered the sealing room with the bride and groom, I was overcome with emotion as I saw all of our children and their spouses, my widowed mother, and my wife’s parents. There in one sacred place was everything and everyone that I hold dear and precious. I felt the sweet joy that comes as we go to the temple. I was reminded yet again that this is indeed the house of the Lord.

So, dear brothers and sisters, come to the temple. Come and claim your blessings. Come and be lifted and renewed. Come to the temple. It is a sacred work. ■

NOTES

1. In Susan Lowe, “Christine Namwanga: A Zambian Matriarch,” from the local pages in *Liahona*, Sept. 2016, A5.
2. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (2002), 1.
3. The time in which we now live. The days (or dispensation of time) just before the Second Coming of the Lord.
4. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, 27–28.
5. *Lectures on Faith* (1985), 69.
6. *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, 1–2, 8.

LOCAL PRIESTHOOD LEADERS

The Christlike Attribute of Kindness

By Elder Daniel P. Hall



Daniel P. Hall

To the ancient Israelites and to us today, the Lord has promised “For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

“In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee” (Isaiah 54:7–8).

“Love is one of the chief characteristics of Deity.”¹ An essential element or component of this love is kindness. Jesus was and is the perfect example of one who is kind. The Book of Mormon teaches that even though He was judged “to be a thing of naught,” scourged, smitten, and spat upon, “he

suffered it, because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men” (1 Nephi 19:9). Can we not imagine Him pleading with everlasting kindness, “Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life” (D&C 45:5)?

Kindness is more than just refraining from being unkind, and it is more than just doing charitable deeds. Kindness is a state of mind, an attribute within us that leads us to think and become like Christ in every way, possessing the very same attributes of love and

kindness that He has and ultimately manifesting these attributes through charitable thoughts and kind acts of service and love.

The 2016 Africa Southeast Area Plan has as one of its main objectives to “encourage all members to reach out in love and service to one another, their neighbors, and their community.”² How do we reach out in love and service to others?

First, we should watch what we say and how we say it. We have been encouraged to “oft speak kind words to each other.”³ Sometimes, especially in our families, we can let pride and unkindness govern our tongues and speak words that cause pain to those who should be most dear to us.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “I invite each one of us individually to recognize that how we disagree is a real measure of who we are and whether we truly follow the Savior. It is appropriate to disagree, but it is not appropriate to be disagreeable.”⁴

Let us do all we can to speak soft, gentle, and kind words; to think before we speak; and to uplift and edify wherever we go. Perhaps we can ask ourselves after every encounter with others, “Did I uplift and edify the person I was speaking to?” “Are they better because of me?” “Have I



“Jesus was and is the perfect example of one who is kind.”



ORIGINAL ARTWORK BY MARGARET BLAKE

I shall never forget our family kneeling on the kitchen floor of our home that day, pouring out our souls to God, thanking Him for the kindness of people who willingly and anonymously gave of what they had to people in need.

“Let us do all we can to speak soft, gentle, and kind words; to think before we speak; and to uplift and edify wherever we go.”

helped them grow just a little closer to the Savior?”

Second, we can serve others. One of the poems quoted by President Thomas S. Monson reads:

*I have wept in the night
For the shortness of sight
That to somebody’s need made
me blind;
But I never have yet
Felt a tinge of regret
For being a little too kind.⁵*

How wonderful it is to receive kind acts of service from others. Some years ago while serving as a stake president, my family and I suffered a financial reversal. It was a difficult

and trying time for the family. What was my surprise when arriving at the stake office one day I discovered the room full of groceries of every item imaginable. I shall never forget our family kneeling on the kitchen floor of our home that day, pouring out our souls to God, thanking Him for the kindness of people who willingly and anonymously gave of what they had to people in need. Whilst even today we do not know who these kind people are, we know the Lord loves them and we know that they practiced true religion in giving of themselves to us (see James 1:27; see also Jacob 2:17–19). As we serve others, we lead them closer to the Lord. Heaven is opened a little more for them, and they see

His goodness and His mercy in their lives clearer than ever before.

Third, we can do more to rescue our fellow brothers and sisters who have lost their way. At the April 2016 general conference, as I sat in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, listening to the words of prophets and apostles, the Spirit whispered to me that it was time to do something more for members of our family who had wandered from the path of discipleship and were out of the Church. Upon returning home, I mentioned this experience to my wife, who shared that she too had felt the Spirit communicate during conference that we needed to act on behalf of these family members.

So the very next Sunday evening we took some food and treats and knocked on their door. As we sat and visited, the mother, weeping, said, “How did you know to come? We have been praying for someone to come.” A lovely spirit filled the room, and as we invited them back to church, they committed to come. Since that day, this lovely family has been back in the Church. They are serving in their local ward and preparing to return to the temple.

My dear brothers and sisters, as we seek to rescue those that are lost, the Holy Ghost will tell us what to do and when to do it. As President Monson has repeatedly taught, “if we are on the Lord’s errand, . . . we are entitled to the Lord’s help.”⁶

I witness that Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, lives, that His kindness is everlasting, and that He loves us perfectly. I know that as we speak kind words, serve those in need, and rescue those that are lost, we, like those we serve, will feel the sweet influence of the Spirit in our lives and heaven will be near, even at our door. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 330.
2. Africa Southeast Area 2016 Area Plan, africase.lds.org/2016-area-plan-in-english.
3. “Let Us Oft Speak Kind Words,” *Hymns*, no. 232.
4. Quentin L. Cook, “We Follow Jesus Christ,” *Liahona*, May 2010, 85.
5. See Thomas S. Monson, “Love—the Essence of the Gospel,” *Liahona*, May 2014, 91; author unknown, in Richard L. Evans, “The Quality of Kindness,” *Improvement Era*, May 1960, 340.
6. Thomas S. Monson, “Examples of Righteousness,” *Liahona*, May 2008, 65.

The Shadow of Death Was on Her Face

By Victoria Ekong

Shortly after our baptism, my husband and I were faced with unexpected adversity concerning our children. For nearly two years, it seemed as though no week passed without one of them being admitted to the hospital, so our income as civil servants went toward medical bills.

The financial strain was so great that my husband and I had to sell many of our belongings and clothing just to obtain food. We lost everything we had worked for. These trials did not shake our faith. We remained active in

our branch and true to our covenants. Even when we did not have money for transport, we walked to church on Sunday mornings.

Then one December evening in 1997, our daughter, Pricilla, fell ill. She had a high fever and was extremely weak. My husband was not home, and I was confused and afraid. I could see the shadow of death on her face.

As I prayed for help, the Spirit prompted me to take her to our branch president, who lived far from us. Somehow I managed to carry her on my back down three flights of stairs and out to the main road. It was too late to catch a bus, so I desperately tried to get a taxi. The first taxi driver refused to take us, saying, “I don’t want to carry a dead person in my car.” However, a second taxi driver



responded to my pleas and helped us even though I had no money.

When we got to our branch president's compound, the guard at the entrance refused to let us in. After a phone call, the president came out and carried Pricilla up to his flat. He laid her on his couch, placed his hands on her head, and gave her a priesthood blessing. I heard him sigh and pause, then tell Pricilla that it was not yet time for her to go home and that she must fight to live. Immediately after the blessing, Pricilla opened her eyes.

We took her to the hospital, where we learned she had cerebral malaria. We also learned this disease could kill her. For the next eight days she remained unconscious in the hospital. The doctors did not believe she would survive at that time. Luckily she began to recover slowly.

The day that Pricilla was discharged—healthy and normal—the doctor told me that few people survived who were as sick as she had been. Those who lived were usually left disabled. “Pricilla is a lucky girl,” he said. But I knew luck had nothing to do with her recovery. She had been saved by priesthood power.

Today, Pricilla is a healthy and happy girl. She has not been sick one day since leaving the hospital. She is everything a parent could want a daughter to be. Furthermore, the sicknesses that so beset our family have passed. We have outlasted these trials and have truly been blessed. ■

Seashells and Sunbeams

By Amanda Holmes

Jessica stood at the window of the family's holiday apartment in Uvongo, on the South Coast of KwaZulu Natal, holding her baby daughter, Carly. Down below her she could see the figures of her husband, Hyrum, and their six-year-old daughter, Leah, as they made their way along the seashore. Leah was skipping happily and laughing joyously as she stopped every so often to pick up seashells. As they

made their way along the beach, Jessica could see how the dark, rainy clouds parted and warm rays of sunshine seemed to dance over their heads. Jessica felt humbled and grateful for a husband and daughter who had taught her a lesson on faith that morning.

The family had been on holiday for three days. For three days it had rained and they had not been able to get to the beach. Leah was disappointed and restless; she had been looking forward to playing on the beach and collecting seashells to take back to her school to show her teacher and friends.

“I have always admired the great faith my husband has in the Lord,” said Jessica, “but when he suggested we kneel down that morning and ask Heavenly Father to please allow Leah the opportunity to collect seashells on the beach, I must admit my faith was lacking. I looked out the window at the heavy rain clouds and felt doubt.”

The Solomon family knelt in prayer, and Leah heard her father explaining to the Lord that she really wanted to take some seashells back home with her and could she please have a chance to do that. When the family rose from their knees, the weather still looked dark and rainy, but Leah excitedly ran



“They returned with a bucket full of beautiful seashells and hearts full of gratitude and strengthen faith.”

to collect her bucket. Without a trace of doubt in their hearts, Hyrum and Leah set out for the beach.

Later that morning they returned to the apartment with a bucket full of beautiful seashells and hearts full of gratitude and strengthened faith. Hyrum and Leah had seen the clouds parting above their heads and felt the warm rays of the sun over them as they collected the treasures along the beach that morning.

That rainy December morning, the Solomon family gained more than a bucketful of shells. They gained a testimony-building experience of eternal consequence. ■



I Found Peace and Hope in the Gospel

By Bryan Chatima

I was born the youngest of six children in a small town called Bindura, Zimbabwe. My good, loving mother had to raise us—four girls and two boys—by herself. Life was tough for us. I had to walk nearly five kilometers (3 miles) to school for an education. It's miraculous to consider how well we were raised in spite of our difficulties. It's all because of the love of our Father in Heaven.

My mother liked going to church, and because I was the youngest, I would go with her. In 1998 when I was 13 years old, two missionaries came to

our neighborhood to visit less-active members. I was playing soccer with my friend when the missionaries passed through. We spoke with them, and the missionaries asked if they could visit us the following week. They taught us, and we accepted the invitation to be baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My full-time mission call came in July 2004 to serve in the South Africa Durban Mission. I was in the mission field just a few months when my mother died. Four months later another sister died. My father and

another sister had died prior to my mission.

As a missionary, I had been teaching people about the restored gospel, life after death, and the sealing ordinances for families. Because of my testimony, I never worried about my losses. I had peace of mind and hope that in due time I would see my parents and sisters again.

On the way home from my mission in July 2006, I went to the Johannesburg South Africa Temple and was baptized on behalf of my male family members who had passed on, and I had baptisms performed for my sisters who had died.

Our challenges can sometimes overwhelm us, but we can find peace

and hope in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord said, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

God watches over and guides His Church and His children. Despite life’s challenges, may we keep hoping for good, never doubting and never questioning the Lord’s will. I thank Him for the temple, which gives us peace and hope that we will be with our families again. ■

The Lord is Her Business Partner

Sister Buyisile Zuma is discovering what it’s like to have Heavenly Father as her business partner! Buyisile attends a “Starting and Growing My Business” group at the self-reliance center in Durban, South Africa.

Buyisile is 47 and a single mother of 5 children ages 10–26. They are all active members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She was born in rural South Africa and was raised in another church. It was through her brother that she found the gospel and was baptized in 2010.

She earns money for her family by working as a domestic. This, however, is not enough to meet her family’s

financial needs, so she has started a small business sewing insulated bags that can slow cook dishes, saving power. She joined the self-reliance group to grow her business so that she can better provide for her family.

Buyisile can only work on her business after she’s finished her day job, so that often means sewing long hours into the evening. Recently, she got a very good order to produce more of her bags. She was busily sewing when her very old sewing machine stopped working!

The machine had a tool kit, but Buyisile didn’t know how to use it. It was almost midnight so she could not call out a mechanic to repair her machine, and she couldn’t afford a mechanic anyway. At that time of night there was no one else she could turn to.

Buyisile then remembered what she’d learned in the course about faith and putting one’s trust in the Lord. So she went to the Lord in humble prayer. “Help me fix this machine so I can make the order for my customer to collect in the morning.” With no time to waste and with pure and simple faith, she pleaded for guidance. “Heavenly Father, help me!”

She then had a distinct impression to use the screwdriver from the tool kit and push in a particular part of the sewing machine. She had no mechanical experience and didn’t know what she was doing, but she listened and acted on the promptings. She then switched the machine on. IT



Sister Buyisile Zuma



She was busily sewing when her very old sewing machine stopped working!

WORKED! She felt so shocked that this miracle had happened that she wanted to shout and tell her family, but they were all fast asleep. The family shared her story and excitement the following morning. The deadline was met and her customer was happy.

Buyisile knows that her business venture will be blessed if she practices what she has learned in the self-reliance course. She has already seen signs of success and is determined to progress to greater self-reliance. ■