

ASIA AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Raising Christ-Centered Children

By Elder Wisit Khanakham

Of the Seventy

I sustain the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators. I bear witness that they are called of God. *Teaching in the Savior's Way* was revealed to them to help prepare parents and guardians of individual families to learn how to raise Christ-centered children in their respective homes.

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, said, "Our priesthood obligation is to put our families and the families

of those around us at the center of our concern."¹

I encourage all priesthood holders to understand that "every priesthood effort and every priesthood ordinance is intended to help Heavenly Father's children be changed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ to become members of perfected family units. It follows that 'the great work of every man is to believe the gospel, to keep the commandments, and to create and perfect an eternal family unit.'"²



Elder Wisit
Khanakham

I respect and honor individuals who come from different backgrounds, environments, and life conditions. With the same faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are taught to raise children in our home with faith—by teaching them in the Savior's way.

- Love our children whom we raise: There may be times that our children are disobedient to, have no desire to follow, or even ignore the teachings of Christ. We as parents and guardians are to fill our hearts with Christlike love and seek every possible way to help them learn of Christ and come unto Him. Love should be the cause and incentive for our teaching.³ We can learn this from the prophet Lehi teaching his children in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 8:11–38) and also the parable of the prodigal son in the New Testament (see Luke 15:11–32).
- Teach our children by the Spirit: "Only through the Holy Ghost can we accomplish the ultimate goal of gospel teaching—to build faith in Jesus Christ and help [our children] become more like Him. The Holy Ghost bears witness of the truth, He testifies of Christ, and He changes hearts."⁴ We as parents and guardians can be instruments in God's



hands to help our children learn by the Spirit and help invite the influence of the Spirit into their lives. The best practice is to lead our children in daily prayer and scripture study, including the *Liahona* magazine.

- Teach our children the doctrine of Christ: We encourage our children to learn about Christ and His doctrine. We teach them that men must follow Christ, be baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and endure to the end to be saved (see 2 Nephi 32). Parents and guardians also help their children be able to say in their hearts silently as Nephi told in the Book of Mormon, “For my soul delighteth in plainness; for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men” (2 Nephi 31:3). They also inspire them to know that eternal life will come to all who keep the Lord’s commandments after receiving baptism.
- Invite our children to diligently learn: It’s been true in my personal life that “learning by doing is the best teacher.” Truly engaged parents and guardians are not satisfied when their children simply listen to what they have to say but when they act in faith with diligence. When we teach our children, we ask ourselves “What will our children do to learn?” and “How shall we inspire them to act?”⁵ Aristotle once said, “For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we

learn by doing them.”⁶ I know that all of us are working toward personal salvation and being together forever as eternal families. We continue to teach our children to diligently learn, as “a lifelong learner is a lifelong winner.”⁷

Parents and guardians should always remember that we teach what we are as we teach by example. As long as we live the gospel and follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our children will learn from us. “Children learn from anything and everything they see. They learn wherever they are, not just in special learning places.”⁸ “Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared this familiar saying, ‘Giving a man a fish feeds him for one meal. Teaching a man to fish feeds him for a lifetime.’ He then taught, ‘As parents and gospel instructors, you and I are not in the business of distributing fish; rather, our work is to help our children learn “to fish” and to become spiritually steadfast.’”⁹

My beloved brothers and sisters, I testify that the best way to keep our children on the straight and narrow path is by raising them as Christ-centered children. We help by inspiring and inviting them to put all they have learned into action for lifelong continuous improvement. In this regard, I leave my blessing and testimony with you in the sacred name of our Savior Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Henry B. Eyring, “Eternal Families,” *Liahona*, May 2016, 82.
2. Henry B. Eyring, “Eternal Families,” *Liahona*, May 2016, 81.
3. See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way* (2016), 6, lds.org/manual/teaching-in-the-saviors-way/part-1-love-those-you-teach/love-those-you-teach.
4. *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 10, lds.org/manual/teaching-in-the-saviors-way/part-2-teach-by-the-spirit/teach-by-the-spirit.
5. See *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 29, lds.org/manual/teaching-in-the-saviors-way/part-4-invite-diligent-learning/invite-diligent-learning.
6. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross (2005), 15.
7. Attributed to Matshona Dhlwayo.
8. John Holt, *Learning All the Time* (1989), 162.
9. David A. Bednar, in *Teaching in the Savior’s Way*, 29, lds.org/manual/teaching-in-the-saviors-way/part-4-invite-diligent-learning/invite-diligent-learning; see also “Watching with All Perseverance,” *Liahona*, May 2010, 42–43.

LOCAL NEWS

My Mission Changed My Nature

Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day (D&C 4:2).

I’m really happy to share a wonderful incident that happened recently. I have witnessed a miracle in my life. I could literally feel the Spirit, and the joy that I had could not be described merely by words.



“Choosing to live the commandments free us from the shackles of sin and allows us to experience true happiness.”

For the past seven to eight years, many missionaries have been teaching my mother. I had no hope that my mother would get baptized, but I could really feel the Spirit asking me to be obedient on my mission and to regularly pray that she would have a change of heart and come to church. My prayer was answered. I received a call from Elders Prasad and Sarikonda, who were teaching my mother, and they gave me the happiest news—my mother was going to be baptized and they got permission from the mission president for me to perform

her baptism. I was in tears hearing this. I felt the love of Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father overwhelm me. Now I understood the plan of our Heavenly Father. He wanted me to be on a mission and then baptize my mother. On the day of her baptism, tears flowed down my cheeks as I hugged her, knowing that it had taken eight years to get to this moment. I am grateful to God for giving me this opportunity to baptize my mother.

I want to thank all the missionaries who have taught my mother and especially thank Elder Prasad and Elder

Sarikonda who helped, encouraged, and followed up with her to make this wonderful decision.

“I would like to tell you . . . a true story about a man named Abinadi. Abinadi was a prophet who preached repentance to a wicked people and a wicked king. He preached boldly and courageously. . . .

“Wicked King Noah angrily ordered his priests to kill Abinadi. . . .

“. . . [But Abinadi] withstood them, saying: “Touch me not, for God shall smite you if ye lay your hands upon me, for I have not delivered



Elder Shanmugham

the message which the Lord sent me to deliver. . . . I must fulfill the commandments wherewith God has commanded me.”

“The people of King Noah were afraid to touch Abinadi because the Spirit of the Lord was with him. . . .

Abinadi declared that he would finish the message that God had sent him to deliver—and then it wouldn’t matter what King Noah and the people did to him. (See Mosiah 13:1–9.)

“When Abinadi concluded his message, King Noah demanded that he deny the words he had spoken—or he would be put to death. But Abinadi refused. . . .

“. . . What a powerful example Abinadi should be to all of us! He courageously obeyed the Lord’s commandments—even though it cost him his life! [See Mosiah 17.] . . .

“. . . Choosing to live the commandments free us from the shackles of sin and allows us to experience true happiness. . . .

“. . . Let our lives reflect our love of the Lord by being obedient to the commandments and reaping the promised blessings both in this life and in

the life to come” (Robert D. Hales, “If Thou Wilt Enter into Life, Keep the Commandments,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 35, 36, 37).

I’m so happy to be serving a mission and following the commandments, which have helped me and are helping me always be obedient. At this time, I want to thank Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ for giving me this life and also for helping me be obedient and making my life bright through the gospel. I am grateful for Jesus Christ’s Atonement and for His love toward me and my family. Through repentance I’m always closer to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

I testify that Jesus is the Christ, my Savior and Redeemer who loves and guides me always, and I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Elder Shanmugham, India Bangalore Mission

Grateful to Serve a Mission

My name is Elder Rajendran. I served my mission in the India Bangalore Mission from June 20, 2014, to June 20, 2016. I am really grateful to have served a mission. My brother and my cousins have served missions and all have returned home. They are my role models. When I saw the missionaries and how they behaved, spoke

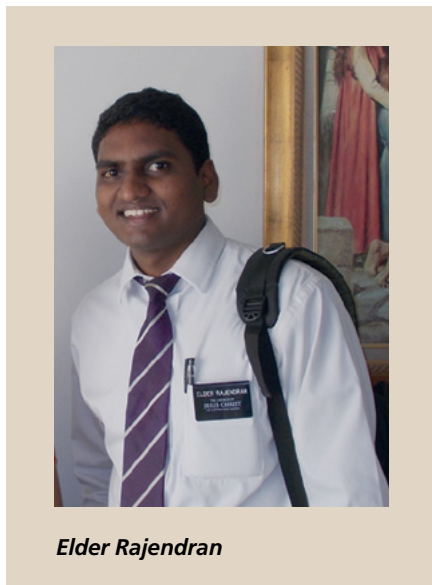
respectfully, and taught the gospel, these characteristics impressed my young mind to form a desire to serve a mission and to serve the Lord. My father ordained me to the Melchizedek Priesthood. My institute class was a wonderful class where I learned more about the gospel. I was called as the seminary and institute teacher,

which further helped me gain gospel knowledge. We need to attend and participate in the seminary and institute programs because we can learn so much there. One day I was praying to God about the decision to serve a mission or not. I received an answer from God to serve a mission. After I received this revelation, I began to prepare myself by talking to and listening to the advice given from my elder brothers and also from the missionaries.

My family had some financial challenges. My brother had already served a mission, and I would be leaving my parents and my job so that I could serve a mission. When I told my parents that I wanted to serve a mission, they were silent for a long time. They were sad because I was leaving them. My father said, “Pray to God, God will tell you what is best for you.” In the coming week, I prayed and fasted to know what God would have me do. After some time, I felt to once again talk to my parents and surprisingly they said, “OK.” My family told me, “Do your work diligently, and according to that, God will bless our family.” I was really happy and excited because God had heard my prayer and my family was allowing me to serve a mission. It was a dream come true! That event marked the beginning of my success.

When I left for my mission, my brother was blessed with a government job. That was one of the great blessings that my family received while I was serving my mission.

I stayed in the missionary training center for 12 days. It was a wonderful time because that is where I learned how to be a great missionary. It was a pleasure to be able to wear my name tag because it showed that I served Jesus Christ and carried my father's name. While there I began to feel more spiritual and my desire to return to India to share the things that



Elder Rajendran

I was learning grew stronger. One of the greatest moments that happened while I stayed in Philippines was that I went to the temple. I was able to attend the temple many times and every time I entered I felt so good. I enjoyed every visit.

Once back in India, my first area was Rajahmundry. I began to think, “Why I am going Rajahmundry? What will I do?” At first I felt very different because before my mission I never really saw missionaries except when they were outside of their apartment. I never knew what happened when they were inside their apartment, but pretty soon I found out that missionaries did lots of study and preparation. These studies proved really helpful because over time my teaching began to improve and my knowledge of how to be a good missionary grew.

I learned how to talk to and teach people according to their needs and also how to behave with other missionaries and people. One thing that helped me whenever I felt sad was to read this scripture that is found in Alma 37:37:

“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day.” The words in this scripture would always encourage me to do the Lord's work diligently. This scripture motivated me to always abound in good works.

I became the trainer for a new missionary. Following that, I then became a district leader and then eventually a zone leader. All of these opportunities came with great responsibilities, but I believed that they came according to God's direction through President Berrett. I was able to fulfill my responsibilities very well because great results came. God really blessed me as I was being a good missionary with good leadership skills. I developed more confidence in my work because I would always ask for suggestions from my companions on what we could do better and how our teaching could improve. I began showing my love more toward the

people and in that way I received good success in my missionary work. My companions and I were able to find and teach wonderful investigators and as a result we had many wonderful baptisms. That was a great success in my mission, but I would

never would have been able to have this great success without great companions. I am grateful to have served with great companions! ■

*Elder Rajendran, Hyderabad India Stake.
Brother Rajendran has now returned from his mission.*

Sabbath and Blessings

I am grateful to my Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, for giving me this opportunity to share my feelings about Sabbath-day observance.

Since I was born in a Christian family, I went to church every Sunday and learned stories from the Bible and gospel songs. I enjoyed going to church.

But since joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have come to know what the Sabbath is and the importance of observing the Sabbath as a holy day. Not only that, but I also learned how to apply those principles of Sabbath observance in my life and I can see the great changes in me. I am able to teach my children the importance of attending church, whatever the circumstances around us. It doesn't matter the long distance we traveled every week; it did not matter what the weather conditions were, we

made the effort to be in the church on the Sabbath with our children.

My parents are the greatest examples to me. Now I am doing the same with my children and I hope my children will do the same. Now I can see immense blessings my family and I have received. My eyes were opened to the greatest understanding of the gospel. My faith in Heavenly Father and in Jesus Christ increased. I am gaining the strength to overcome any sort of trials and challenges ahead, and the Lord has blessed me with greater strength to uplift others too.

He has restored His peace in me! What else do I need in this mortal life?

I am grateful that the Holy Ghost has helped me deliver this message to you all. I share this in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Sister Vincy, Coimbatore, India

It Is a Different Me!

As I look back to how I was before my mission and to how I am now, I can see a different me. My perception about myself and others has changed for good. Those 18 months of my missionary service taught me and prepared me to help people come unto Christ. My companions and I were able to be a part of the beginning of their journey toward eternal life. We have seen our growth immensely as we walked along with those whom we taught.

I have been strengthened beyond measure and lifted by the Lord at times whenever my hands hung down. I see that despite the challenges I've gone through, my testimony of Heavenly Father's love for me and for His children has only increased and grown stronger. The Atonement of the Savior has become more vital to me than ever before. I learned to rely on the Savior's atoning power for everything, for it is truly a strength beyond my own. He endured all things because He loves me, and it is now my turn to express my love for Him. My weaknesses over time have become my strengths. I consider that to be a great miracle of His Atonement.

Before my mission I always had a hard time recognizing the Spirit, even though I knew his role in my life. Now, I have never given more



Jiji Raman

preference to what he has to say than I do now. The Spirit of God brings the difference. I may do what I want to, but humbly seeking for the Spirit's confirmation and counsel has given me a state of peace in my heart, though it is difficult to accept the Lord's will at times. It is truly a blessing to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I've felt the joy that comes from serving God's children—our brothers and sisters—selflessly and lifting them to the path they belong to, the path

Holy Sabbath Day

Jesus taught that the Sabbath day was made for **our benefit** (see Mark 2:27).

Now is the time to bind ourselves to act in all holiness before the Lord. We need to decide on specific actions to bring about needed changes in our lives. This action is called faith, and the changes are repentance. Blessings always follow these two principles. If we do not take action quickly, then the very thing that could have sanctified us may turn to our condemnation.

of Christ. Oh, what great work the Lord has entrusted to us! I know that Christ's gospel was restored in its fulness through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Mormon being an evidence of it. Christ continues to show His love by guiding us through a living prophet to help us prepare for His Second Coming.

Oh, what joy fills my heart! I am also a witness that these things are true. I know it. I believe it. This is truly the Lord's work. He trusts us and He needs us, and He is always willing to help as we truly plead for His help in my humble testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Jiji Raman (Sister Raman), Chennai 1st Branch

Meaning of Sabbath

Our Savior Jesus Christ was resurrected on the third day—a Sunday. So we celebrate that day as holy every week and we partake the sacrament on the same day. The Sabbath does not end when we leave the church; it does not end if someone calls on the phone or knocks at our door inviting us to come out and play, go for a ride, to a ball game, or shopping; it does not end because we are on vacation or someone is visiting us, whether member or nonmember.

The Lord commanded: “Go ye out from among the wicked. Save

yourselves. Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord” (D&C 38:42). A critical element in observing this commandment is to “remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8; Mosiah 13:16).

“The Sabbath is a holy day in which to do worthy and holy things. Abstinence from work and recreation is important, but insufficient. The Sabbath calls for constructive thoughts and acts, and if one merely lounges about doing nothing on the Sabbath, he is breaking it. To observe it, one will be on his knees in prayer, preparing lessons, studying the gospel, meditating, visiting the ill and distressed, sleeping, reading wholesome material, and attending all the meetings of that day to which he is expected. [Failure] to do these proper things is a transgression on the omission side.”¹

“Jesus taught, ‘the sabbath was made for man’ [Mark 2:27]. What



Prem Kumar

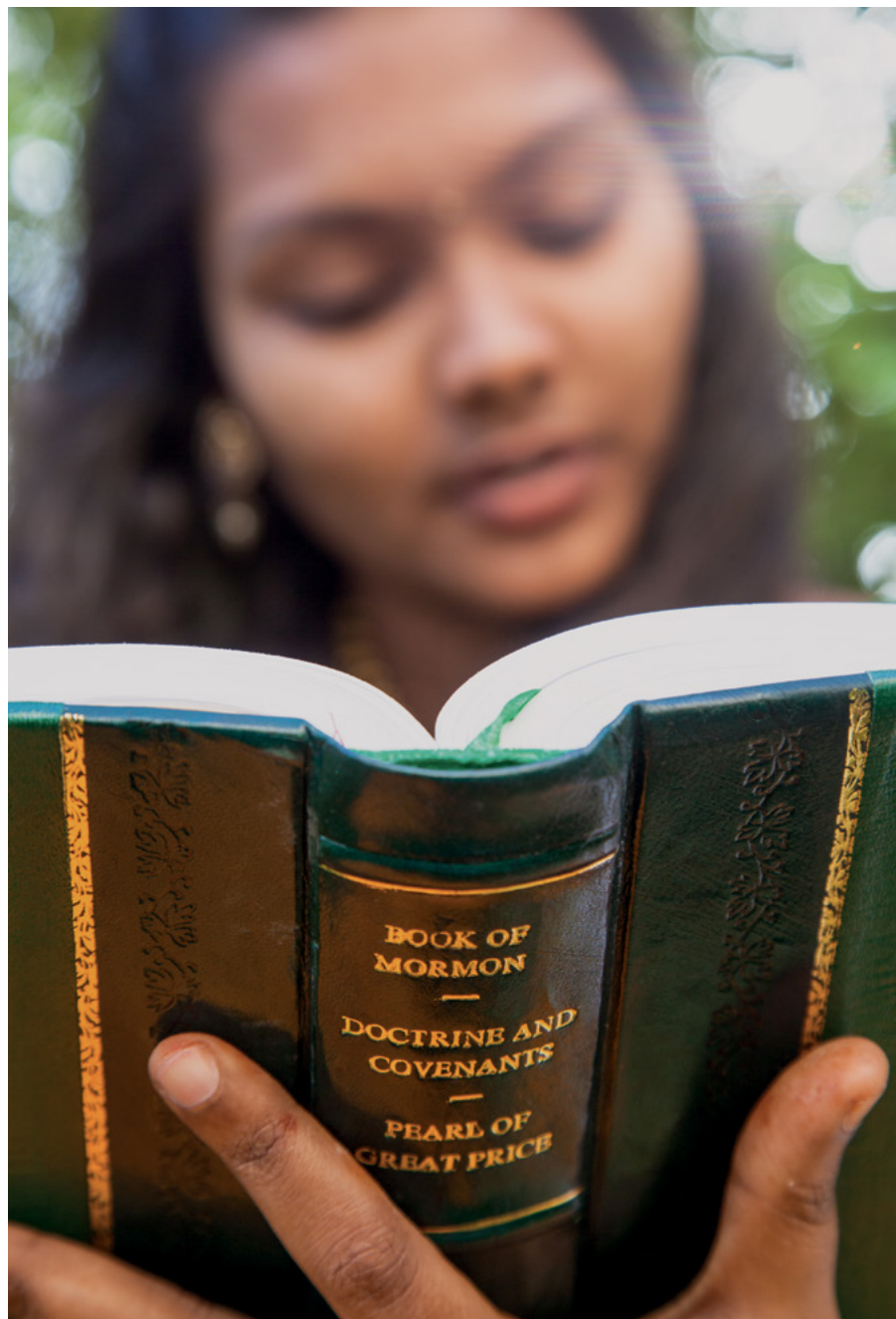
does that mean? It means for a man to have the joy and happiness which the gospel promises, on this day he must sacrifice the world, set aside his employment as possible, and keep the eternal covenant of the Sabbath day. The Lord commanded: ‘Wherefore the children of Israel [which includes all Latter-day Saints] shall keep the sabbath . . . throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever’ [Exodus 31:16–17].”²

How I try to keep the Sabbath day holy

The first thing is **showing love** to others as we love ourselves. We can keep the Sabbath day holy by attending Church meetings, gospel classes, and particularly partaking of the sacrament, which allows us to renew our covenants and promises with our Heavenly Father. It is a **great blessing**.

We have six days to fulfill our responsibilities. The Lord has helped us fulfill our responsibilities. We should sacrifice that one remaining day for the Lord in thanksgiving for all blessings given by God. Before coming to the church we should remember and count our countless blessings.

We should start the Sabbath day with a prayer to get revelation. “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the



scribes and Pharisees,” said the Lord, “ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20).

In my personal experience, I start and prepare for the Sabbath day by fasting, and from that moment I will get a great joy in my heart. Partaking of the sacrament is a wonderful thing. It’s a **feast** of the Lord. It helps me to get more confidence to live the gospel, and by sharing the gospel with others I

will increase my faith. To help keep the Sabbath day holy, I also spend my time visiting my relatives and family members. I get more happiness in my heart and peace of mind. I share this all things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Prem Kumar, Coimbatore 3rd Branch

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 96–97.
2. H. Aldridge Gillespie, “The Blessing of Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 79.