

## TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

from **MORMON DOCTRINE** by Elder Bruce R. McConkie

**HOLY:** One of Christ's names is HOLY, using the designation in the noun sense and not as an adjective. Obviously the purpose of the name is to convey to man the concept of the supreme holiness and perfection embodied in Him who is the Son of Man of Holiness.

from **TEACHINGS OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE CHURCH: Harold B. Lee, Chapter 19**

President Harold B. Lee often taught the importance of nourishing ourselves spiritually. Our bodies can be compared to fortresses that must be kept well-supplied to withstand enemy attack which can be:

- both physical and spiritual
- unexpected sorrow
- a family disgrace
- a shock in your finances
- the disloyalty of a supposed friend
- a secret sin against the laws of God

### WE CAN NOURISH OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES.

- 1) **Food to satisfy your spiritual needs must come from spiritual sources**, and the spirit is maintained only by intelligent connection with spiritual fountains of truth.
- 2) **We develop our spiritual selves by practice, daily exercise through:**
  - prayer
  - doing good deeds
  - sharing with others
  - studying the scriptures
  - family home evening
  - attendance at meetings
  - partaking of the sacrament

The righteous man strives for self-improvement knowing that he has daily need of repentance for his misdeeds or his neglect. He is not so much concerned with what he can get but more about how much he can give to others.

### KEEPING THE SABBATH DAY HOLY NOURISHES THE SPIRIT.

Sunday is more than a rest day from ordinary occupations of the week; **it is a feastday for your spirit bodies.** Through the holy sacrament, you pledge again your loyalty to the name of the Savior. . . **Do not rob your spiritual bodies of essential strength by breaking the Sabbath Day**, but receive from the fountain of light nourishment and strength sufficient to every day's need.

### FASTING AND PAYING FAST OFFERINGS BENEFIT US SPIRITUALLY.

"Every living soul among the Latter-day Saints that fasts two meals once a month will be benefited spiritually and be built up in the faith of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

### MEDITATION BRINGS US CLOSER TO THE LORD.

You can come closer to the Lord than you imagine when you learn to meditate. **Let your spirits be taught by the Spirit. . . When the whisperings of the Spirit come, it is a gift and our privilege to have them. They come when we are relaxed and not under pressure of appointments.**

Don't get so busy that you don't have time to meditate. Take the time. **The most important testimony does not come by sight, but by the inner witness.** Christ may be nearer than we have knowledge. "I am in your midst, but you do not see me. The Holy Ghost bears the sure witness. Mine eyes are upon you. The day cometh when ye shall know that I am" (D&C 38:7-8).

from **WITH FULL PURPOSE OF HEART** by Elder Dallin H. Oaks

The process of attaining the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ requires far more than acquiring knowledge. It is not even enough for us to be **convinced** by the gospel; we must act and think so that we are **converted** by it. In contrast to the institutions of the world, which teach us to **know** something, the gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us to **become** something.

Elder Oaks on reading scriptures: "I had never seen these verses until I read the Doctrine and Covenants for the fifteenth or twentieth time. Their direction came to my mind with such freshness and impact that I thought they might have been newly inserted in my book. That is the way with prayerful study of the scriptures. The scriptures do not change, but we do, and so the old scriptures can give us new insights every time we read them."

from **NO DOUBT ABOUT IT** by Sister Sheri Dew

**It seems easy here in mortality to lose sight of who we are and what we're here for, and as a result to become distracted from what is really important.** If we don't have a clear sense of our identity and purpose, we

are much more vulnerable to Lucifer. He knows this and accordingly attempts to blur our vision. He lies. He shades and obliterates truth. **He makes evil look good and good look unenlightened and unsophisticated.** Make no mistake about it: **Lucifer will do *anything* to derail, disappoint, dishearten, discourage, and deceive us**—and particularly those who have made and are seeking to keep sacred covenants. His motives are entirely self-centered, selfish, destructive, and evil.

**When we increase our interaction with the Lord, we learn for ourselves that He will never betray us.** . . . There are many ways to draw near, seek, ask, and knock.

- If our prayers have become a little casual, we could **recommit ourselves to meaningful prayer**, offered in unrushed solitude and with a repentant heart.
- We could regularly **partake of the ordinances of the temple**, pleading with the Lord to help us understand how what we are learning can strengthen, protect, guide, and help us with our daily problems.
- When we find that **ongoing immersion in the scriptures** increases our sensitivity to the Spirit, we should consider incorporating the word of God into our lives more consistently and with greater intent.

Truly, **there is nothing more vital to our success and our happiness here in mortality than learning to hear the voice of the Spirit, for it is the Spirit who reveals to us our identity.** . . . And when we know, our lives take on a purpose so stunning that we are changed forever.

There are so many loud voices in the world today, and most of them are wrong. Most of them could care less about what is good for us or will really make us happy. Many, if not most, of them—both blatant and subtle—are inspired by the adversary. See if any of the following techniques are familiar. **Satan, the Adversary, would:**

- 1) **Blur our vision of why we're here** and to get us preoccupied with, distracted by, involved in anything in this life except what we came for.
- 2) **Tell us** it doesn't matter what we do not because **there's plenty of time to pull our spiritual lives together later.** It's the Sin-Now-Repent-Later Plan.
- 3) **Feed our vanity** with promises of popularity, power, and prosperity, and tries to seduce us into believing they are the only true measure of greatness.
- 4) **Deceive us into feeling that we're not worth a whole lot**, that no matter how hard we try, we'll never make much of a difference, never make "the grade," never really measure up.
- 5) **Wear us down** by creating the image that there is nothing glamorous in enduring to the end.
- 6) **Tell us** what we want to hear: **that life is supposed to be easy and fun**, and that if we experience pain or undeserved difficulties, the gospel must not be working.
- 7) **Promote shortcuts**, though there are no shortcuts to anywhere worth going.
- 8) **Encourage us to criticize, judge, and evaluate each other**—a practice demeaning to both.
- 9) **Whisper that life's not fair** and that if the gospel were true, we would never have problems or disappointments. Bad things shouldn't happen to good members of the Church.
- 10) **Attempt to numb us into accepting a sliding scale of morality.** The measuring standard for entertainment? Can you watch or participate in it and still have the Spirit with you?
- 11) **Promote feelings of guilt—about anything.**
- 12) **Undermine our innate tendency to nurture and care for others.** He wants us to become separated from each other. Voice messaging and pagers doesn't replace a listening ear and a caring heart.
- 13) **Rejoice in even small breaches in our integrity.** Blatant sin is preceded by dishonesty.
- 14) **Have us hung up on perfection** and stymied by the commandment to become perfect.
- 15) **Have us be so busy** with family, friends, careers, sports, that there's no time to actually *live* the gospel.
- 16) **Want us to rely on others for spiritual strength.** He loves it when we don't develop our own spiritual sensitivities and skills.
- 17) Delight in **portraying religion as something restrictive** and austere rather than liberating and life-giving. He wants us to know just enough to focus on the rule and regulations rather than the joy of following Christ.
- 18) **Have us seek for security in bank accounts, social status, or professional credentials** when ultimate security comes from a connection with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance increases our desire to be obedient; our obedience is fundamental to hearing the voice of the Lord.

Practice is a wonderful concept. To do anything well—whether it's mastering a Rachmaninoff concerto, or excelling at open-heart surgery—we've got to practice. The same is true with developing our faith, our spiritual sensitivity, our ability to hear the voice of the Lord—in other words, our spiritual skills. **THEY REQUIRE PRACTICE.**

The Atonement is the ultimate source of redeeming power. If there were no Atonement, there would be no opportunity to repent, no cleansing of the sinner's soul.

### **WHAT, THEN, IS TRUE REPENTANCE AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE ATONEMENT?**

- It is not merely the cessation of wrongdoing, the passage of time or the expression of sorrow
- **True repentance is a melting, softening, refining process that brings about a mighty change of heart. If is a burning resolve to make amends with God at any cost.** . . Repeatedly throughout the scriptures repentance is associated with the heart. It is a new heart, a broken heart, a changed heart, a contrite heart.

### **HOW DOES THIS CHANGE OF HEART OCCUR?**

1) **There must be an honest, unqualified recognition, not a rationalization, of our sins.** . . There cannot simultaneously be repentance and rationalization. Rationalization is the world's answer to sin; repentance is the Lord's.

2) **When we honestly recognize that we are "not excusable in {our} transgressions"** (D&C 24:21), then we are on the road to repentance.

3) **The principal barrier to repentance is always self.** Those who choose to live a life of denial, to defend themselves against God's law will discover "your sins are not pardoned because you seek to counsel {rationalize} in your own ways" (D&C 56:14)

4) Since all of us, like Nephi, have sinned, the issue is not just whether we have done wrong, but **whether having done wrong, we are now willing to repent.**

5) Those who experience a change of heart will **manifest sorrow**, not just any sorrow, but **godly sorrow**.  
--Godly sorrow is of an infinitely transcending quality. **There is no need for outside pressure. The transformation will come from within.**

6) **There will be an absence of excuses, alibis, and blaming of others.** There will be a complete acceptance of responsibility for our attitudes and actions, and an unyielding commitment to be right with God. In essence, repentance brings us to a moment of total intellectual, emotional, and spiritual integrity.

7) **If a person hasn't suffered, he hasn't repented.** He has to go through a change in his system whereby he suffers and then forgiveness is a possibility. **Without suffering, you haven't repented; you've just stopped doing something.**

8) **There is no forgiveness without forsaking.** When there is a mighty change of heart and a new mind to make the Lord's will supreme in our lives, regardless of our own passionate desires--when there is an unequivocal resolve to put behind us our former ways, then repentance is in the works. **It is not the passage of time, but a change of attitude, a change of heart that is the key.**

9) **Confession is necessary.** Elder Marion G. Romney: "There are many among us whose distress and suffering are unnecessarily prolonged because they do not complete their repentance by confessing their sins." . . . There must be a total submissiveness to the will of the Lord, a broken heart and a contrite spirit even confession if necessary. Why does the Lord require confession? It is the one act more than any other that drives us to our knees in the depths of humility. . . **How much better to voluntarily disclose one's true character than to be involuntarily discovered.**

10) **THE LORD'S FORGIVENESS IS TOTAL AND UNCONDITIONAL ONCE WE HAVE REPENTED.**

### **THE BLESSING OF PEACE OF MIND**

As our understanding of the Atonement increases, our ability to forgive ourselves and others increases as well.

- The answer to attaining peace of mind is to understand and partake of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Peace can be found in no man; it comes only through the Savior.
- Neither the healing of the body nor the healing of the spirit is complete without peace of mind.
- The atoning sacrifice of Christ, and our full acceptance of it, is the spiritual antidote that heals the wounded soul.
- **THE ATONING SACRIFICE WAS DESIGNED TO MOTIVATE US, TO DRAW US UNTO HIM, TO LIFT US TO HIGHER GROUND, AND ULTIMATELY TO ASSIST US IN BECOMING AS HE IS.**