**Unit 6 Part 2 The Family in Society: Transcript:**

**Family Redefined/Dedefined:**

General Relief Society President Julie B. Beck reminds us that even before the Proclamation was given, the Lord was preparing His Prophets for the future - our day. Take note of President Spencer W. Kimball's prophetic warning regarding how the family is defined and how it is being toppled by the selfish interests of individuals.

“This generation will be called upon to defend the doctrine of the family as never before in the history of the world. If they don't know it, they can't defend it. They need to understand temples and priesthood. If you don't know that they are meant to be fathers and mothers, then they won't know that they are meant to be fathers and mothers and the effort will be wasted.

"President Kimball said this in 1980. So this is almost 30 years ago, and I find it prophetic and very applicable to us:

‘Many of the social restraints which in the past have helped to reinforce and to shore up the family are dissolving and disappearing. The time will come when only those who believe deeply and actively in the family will be able to preserve their families in the midst of the gathering evil around us…

'… There are those who would define the family in such a nontraditional way that they would define it out of existence. …

'We of all people, brothers and sisters, should not be taken in by the specious arguments that the family unit is somehow tied to a particular phase of development a moral society is going through. We are free to resist those moves which downplay the significance of the family and which play up the significance of selfish individualism. We know the family to be eternal. We know that when things go wrong in the family, things go wrong in every other institution in society.'” (Former General Relief Society President, Sister Julie B. Beck, *Ensign*, March 2011, video from an address given to Seminaries and Institutes, August 2009, quoting from President Kimball, "Families can be Eternal," General Conference, October 1980)

**When We Need it Most:**

"In recent decades the Church has largely been spared the terrible misunderstandings and persecutions experienced by the early Saints. It will not always be so. The world is moving away from the Lord faster and farther than ever before. The adversary has been loosed upon the earth. We watch, hear, read, study, and share the words of prophets to be forewarned and protected.

"For example, 'The Family: A Proclamation to the World' was given long before we experienced the challenges now facing the family. 'The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles' was prepared in advance of when we will need it most." (5:56-6:56) (Elder Robert D. Hales, “Strengthening Faith and Testimony,” General Conference, October 2013, video from lds.org)

**Proclamation – Promote the Family:**

The Proclamation concludes with a call to “promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.” In our final presentation we will explore the counsel given by the Lord through His chosen servants about how to do this in the most Christ-like ways. (President Gordon B. Hinckley (September 1995))

**Antifamily is Anti-Christ:**

The Book of Mormon was written for our day, and in that great ensign to the nations prepared for the restored Church, we read about the nature of the struggle our ancient brothers and sisters faced in their families and their society.

"Korihor was an anti-Christ. Anti-Christ is anti-family. And any doctrine or principle they hear from the world that is anti-family is also anti-Christ. It's that clear...

"So we're in danger of getting a generation like we see described in Mosiah chapter 26 where many of the rising generation don't believe in the traditions of their fathers. And they become a separate people as to their faith and remain so ever after. Despite all the money, all the effort you put in, they could be led away if they don't understand their part in the plan." (Former Relief Society General President, Sister Julie B. Beck, *Ensign*, March 2011, video from an address given to Seminaries and Institutes, August 2009, starting at)

**Evil Attacks the Question:**

Recall from the previous presentation that Elder Ballard listed some of the specific assaults against the family in society today. His list included:

1. Disregard the Law of Chastity
2. Confusion over gender
3. Desensitization of violence
4. Making crude and blasphemous language the norm
5. Making immoral and deviant behavior seem like the rule rather than the exception.

What can we do to help shore up the family in society against this rising tide of wickedness and filth.

**The Great Proclamation:**

“Today I call upon members of the Church and on committed parents, grandparents, and extended family members everywhere to hold fast to this great proclamation, to make it a banner not unlike General Moroni’s ‘title of liberty,’ and to commit ourselves to live by its precepts. As we are all part of a family, the proclamation applies to everyone.” (4:51-5:18) (Elder M. Russell Ballard, “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” General Conference, October 2005, video from lds.org)

"Policies are being made every day that are anti-family, and the definition of family is changing legally around the world…"

"There are media messages everywhere that are anti-family. And our young people are very connected with media. Internet, TV, the things they get on their phones, all electronic devices are delivering anti-family messages to them every day. And increasingly they're seeing no reason to form a family or get married in spite of all the teaching you teach them. They're being desensitized about the need to form eternal families.

"Let's read about how this is happening. Let's turn to Alma 30 -- and this is Korihor -- ... and what I'm finding interesting in verse 18, that, '...He did preach unto them, leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men, to commit whoredoms' (Alma 30:18). But these messages that you're hearing, a lot of them are targeting your young women. Anti-family messages targeting young women. Satan knows this: he will never have a body; he will never have a family. And he will target those young women, who create the bodies to come and who should teach the families -- and they don't even know what they're being taught -- and the messages, it's just seeping in almost through their pores. Because Satan can't have it, he's luring away many women -- and also men. And they're losing confidence in their ability to form eternal families.”

**Our Title if Liberty:**

Consider how Captain Moroni and those who followed his lead worked to protect their families against the dangers of their day. What is similar about their experience and ours, such that Elder Ballard would effectively call us to hoist the Proclamation in a similar fashion as they erected the Title of Liberty? Take a moment to review Alma 46 and list several ideas that come to you through this analysis.

**The Centrality of the Family:**

The reduction of the importance of and happiness found in families has coincided with an increased interest in individual desires and drives. Think of the temptations and terrible outcomes listed in the following statements.

From General Conference, Elder Hafen of the Seventy shares that …

“The adversary has long cultivated this overemphasis on personal autonomy, and now he feverishly exploits it. Our deepest God-given instinct is to run to the arms of those who need us and sustain us. But he drives us away from each other today with wedges of distrust and suspicion. He exaggerates the need for having space, getting out, and being left alone.” (6:21-6:49) (Elder Bruce C. Hafen, "Covenant Marriage," General Conference, October 1996, video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X\_HjaPG\_bQw (start-6:21;stop-6:49))

Only two years earlier than Elder Hafen’s address, Sister VanDenBerghe wrote this in an Ensign article about families, religion, and society.

“In the 1980s, for example, research increasingly reflected evidence that emphasis on self-fulfillment negatively affects marriage and family life. “Individualistic” attitudes, studies showed, pit the individual’s needs against the family’s and greatly undermine the welfare of marriage and children.” (Elizabeth VanDenBerghe, "Religion and the Abundant Life," *Ensign*, October 1994)

As a result of an increasing individualistic mentality, we are seeing:

* An increase in divorce
* A decrease in the desire to make children a part of family systems
* An increased effort to define marriage in whatever way best suits ones own personal desires

Laws, Morality, and Doctrine: 1:

Due to the rise of individualism and the acceptance or more and more that is anti-family and anti-Christ, the Prophets have needed to clarify that even the laws of the land - which change with public opinion and political leadership - do not establish what is truly right and wrong. Even the laws of the land can become corrupted and stray from God's commandments and divinely ordained morality which alone can provide the happiness we desire.

"Laws legalizing so-called “same-gender marriage” do not change God's law of marriage or His commandments and our standards concerning it. We remain under covenant to love God and keep His commandments and to refrain from serving other gods and priorities-even those becoming popular in our particular time and place." (13:23-13:53) (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, "No Other Gods," General Conference, October, 2013, video from lds.org)

"Regardless of what civil legislation may be enacted, the doctrine of the Lord regarding marriage and morality cannot be changed. Remember: sin, even if legalized by man, is still sin in the eyes of God!" (12:09-12:28) (Elder Russell M. Nelson, "Decisions for Eternity," General Conference, October 2013, video from lds.org)

“There are many political and social pressures for legal and policy changes to establish behaviors contrary to God's decrees about sexual morality and contrary to the eternal nature and purposes of marriage and childbearing. These pressures have already authorized same-gender marriages in various states and nations. Other pressures would confuse gender or homogenize those differences between men and women that are essential to accomplish God's great plan of happiness.

“Our understanding of God's plan and His doctrine gives us an eternal perspective that does not allow us to condone such behaviors or to find justification in the laws that permit them. And, unlike other organizations that can change their policies and even their doctrines, our policies are determined by the truths God has identified as unchangeable.

“Our twelfth article of faith states our belief in being subject to civil authority and “in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.” But man's laws cannot make moral what God has declared immoral. Commitment to our highest priority-to love and serve God-requires that we look to His law for our standard of behavior. For example, we remain under divine command not to commit adultery or fornication even when those acts are no longer crimes under the laws of the states or countries where we reside. Similarly, laws legalizing so-called “same-sex marriage” do not change God's law of marriage or His commandments and our standards concerning it. We remain under covenant to love God and keep His commandments and to refrain from serving other gods and priorities-even those becoming popular in our particular time and place.” (11:25-13:53)

(Elder Dallin H. Oaks, "No Other Gods," General Conference, October, 2013, video from lds.org)

Calling on Culture Creators…

In order to help society to establish just and moral laws, Elder Ballard gives the following suggestions to those in the public sector. Consider how you could become a participant in encouraging these culture-influencing individuals and entities to promote family-friendly measures.

"Further, we call upon all public institutions to examine themselves and to do less that might harm families and more that will help them.

"We call upon the media to offer more that promotes traditional family values and is uplifting and supportive of families and less that popularizes immorality and materialism.

"We call upon government and political leaders to put the needs of children and parents first and to think in terms of family impact in all legislation and policy making.

"We call upon Internet providers and Web site creators to become more responsible regarding their potential for influence and to adopt the conscious objective of protecting children from violence, pornography, filth, and sleaze.

"We call upon educational entities to teach universal values and family and parenting skills, supporting parents in their responsibility to raise children to become the leaders of families in generations yet to come." (14:57-16:13) (Elder M. Russell Ballard, “What Matters Most Lasts Longest,” General Conference, October 2005, video from lds.org)

**The Old Immorality:**

"Conspiring men and women, intent on gain rather than goodness, 'stir up the people' to 'all manner of … wickedness' (see Alma 11:20), preventing the noble uses to which the media could be employed.

"The new morality preached from the media's pulpit is nothing more than the old immorality. It attacks religion. It undermines the family. It turns virtue into vice and vice into virtue. It assaults the senses and batters the soul with messages and images that are neither virtuous, nor lovely, nor of good report, nor praiseworthy.

"The time has come when members of the Church need to speak out and join with the many other concerned people in opposition to the offensive, destructive, and mean-spirited media influence that is sweeping over the earth." (7:32-8:34) (Elder M. Russell Ballard, "Let Our Voices Be Heard," General Conference, October 2003, video from lds.org)

**Marriage is Essential:**

Be it our own families, or the family in our broader communities, Elder Bednar highlights the ultimate fact - the way things really are, about why the family is so significant. As you listen to this Apostle's inspired teaching, note what it is that will provide the direction, protection, and hope for us and others in the midst of the adversary's attacks.

“We frequently speak about and highlight marriage as a fundamental unit of society, as the foundation of a strong nation, and as a vital sociological and cultural institution. But the restored gospel helps us to understand that it is so much more!

“Do we perhaps talk about marriage without adequately teaching the importance of marriage in the Father's plan? Emphasizing marriage without linking it to the simple and fundamental doctrine of the plan of happiness cannot provide sufficient direction, protection, or hope in a world that grows increasingly confused and wicked.” (Elder David A. Bednar, "Marriage is Essential to His Eternal Plan," Worldwide Leadership Training, June 2006, also found in the *Ensign*, June 2006)

**Families Temple Sealed: 1:**

"Remember that the conversion of individuals is only part of the work. Always seek to strengthen families. Teach with a vision of the importance of families being sealed in the temple." (9:33-9:50)

"When you have the vision of the sealing ordinances of the temple, you will help build the kingdom of God on earth. …" (10:15-10:25)

"To be effective and to do as Christ has done, concentrate on this basic principle of the gospel: the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes possible our becoming more like our Father in Heaven so that we can live together eternally in our family units." (12:18-12:44) (Elder Richard G. Scott, "I Have Given You an Example," General Conference, April 2014, video from lds.org)

**The Plan of Salvation:**

Take a moment to review this model of the plan of salvation - as you reflect on this eternal plan of happiness, consider the fact that in our Heavenly Father's plan the family has always been present - it is truly the eternal sociality that has characterized our existence from our pre-mortal life through mortality and into the eternal realms of our futures!

**Can’t Compromise Commandments:**

“My young brothers and sisters, this church can never dumb down its doctrine in response to social goodwill, or political expediency, or any other reason. It is only the high ground of revealed truth that gives us any footing on which to lift another who may feel troubled or forsaken. Our compassion and our love--fundamental characteristics and requirements of our Christianity--must never be interpreted as compromising commandments. As the marvelous George MacDonald once said, 'In such situations we are not bound to say all that we believe, but we are bound, not even to look like what we do not believe'.” (38:08-39:10) (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Israel, Israel, God is Calling," CES Fireside, 2012, video from lds.org)

**Responsibility to Speak Up:**

In light of this, Elder Nelson calls for us to not simply know the truth, but to speak up in defense of truth in the public sphere.

"[I invite] you to consider the deficiency of the notion that simple truth alone somehow confers immunity from any other thoughtful consideration of its use and its power. …

"Each member of the BYU faculty and staff bears the weight of responsibility to consider the instrument of truth and more. If truth is used by anyone in any degree of unrighteousness, others, in the spirit of unity, must act, bearing a responsibility to turn and to help enlarge that person's perspective.

"For if the true and righteous people are silent, those who use truth in unrighteousness will prevail. Speaking from his viewpoint in history, Winston Churchill observed 'how the malice of the wicked was reinforced by the weakness of the virtuous, … how the middle course adopted from desires for safety and a quiet life may be found to lead direct to the bull's-eye of disaster'.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, “Truth and More,” BYU Devotional, August 1985, also found in the *Ensign*, January, 1986) (Audio from the devotion, Part I start-2:34;stop-2:47, Part II start-27:28;stop-28:30) (Quote of Sir Winston Churchill is from "The Follies of the Victors," pages 15-16)

**Help and Support:**

"In today's world, where Satan's aggression against the family is so prevalent, parents must do all they can to fortify and defend their families. But their efforts may not be enough. Our most basic institution of family desperately needs help and support from the extended family and the public institutions that surround us." (13:28-13:53) (Elder M. Russell Ballard, "What Matters Most Lasts Longest, General Conference, October 2005, video from lds.org)

**Opportunities to Share:**

Prophets with godly vision see opportunities where the natural man only sees obstacles. Consider how Elder Robert D. Hales recognizes the overall opportunity in a season of societal challenge, and note the specific and practical ways this Apostle suggests we can take advantage in sharing and teaching the truth about the eternal family.

"Experience shows that seasons of negative publicity about the Church can help accomplish the Lord's purposes. In 1983 the First Presidency wrote to Church leaders, 'Opposition may be in itself an opportunity. Among the continuing challenges faced by our missionaries is a lack of interest in religious matters and in our message. These criticisms create … interest in the Church. … This provides an opportunity [for members] to present the truth to those whose attention is thus directed toward us.'

We can take advantage of such opportunities in many ways: a kind letter to the editor, a conversation with a friend, a comment on a blog, or a reassuring word to one who has made a disparaging comment. We can answer with love those who have been influenced by misinformation and prejudice-who are 'kept from the truth because they know not where to find it' (D&C 123:12). I assure you that to answer our accusers in this way is never weakness. It is Christian courage in action." (4:58-6:13) (Elder Robert D. Hales, “Christian Courage - The Price of Discipleship”, General Conference, October 2008, video from lds.org)

**Spirit-Directed Responses:**

Considering the array of options in responding to others who are struggling with and/or oppose the eternal truths of the gospel, Elder Hales counsels us to look for the Lord's direction in each case.

"As we respond to others, each circumstance will be different. Fortunately, the Lord knows the hearts of our accusers and how we can most effectively respond to them. As true disciples seek guidance from the Spirit, they receive inspiration tailored to each encounter. And in every encounter, true disciples respond in ways that invite the Spirit of the Lord." (6:16-6:46) (Elder Robert D. Hales, "Christian Courage", General Conference, October 2008, video from lds.org)

Make Things Better:

Note how Elder Holland teaches us to respond in such a way as to make the situation better.

“How we respond in any situation, has to make things better, not worse. We can't act or react in such a way that we are guilty of a greater offense than [they are]. That doesn't mean that we don't have opinions, or standards, that we somehow disregard divinely mandated ‘thou shalts' and ‘thou shalt nots' in life. But it does mean that we have to live those standards and defend [them] in a righteous way. To the best of our ability and the way the Savior lived and defended them, and He always did what He should have done to make the situation better. From teaching the truth, to forgiving sinners, to cleansing the temple.” (35:03-36:03) (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Israel, Israel, God is Calling”, CES Fireside, 2012 video from lds.org)

**Boldness without Overbearance:**

As we work to follow the Spirit's directions in responding to challenges posed by others, note how Elder Hales counsels us about the mindset and feelings we should promote in ourselves as we seek to love and help others.

"Surely our Heavenly Father is saddened-and the devil laughs-when we contentiously debate doctrinal differences with our Christian neighbors.

"This is not to suggest that we compromise our principles or dilute our beliefs. We cannot change the doctrines of the restored gospel, even if teaching and obeying them makes us unpopular in the eyes of the world. Yet even as we feel to speak the word of God with boldness, we must pray to be filled with the Holy Ghost (see Acts 4:29, 31). We should never confuse boldness with Satan's counterfeit: overbearance (see Alma 38:12). True disciples speak with quiet confidence, not boastful pride.

"As true disciples, our primary concern must be others' welfare, not personal vindication. Questions and criticisms give us an opportunity to reach out to others and demonstrate that they matter to our Heavenly Father and to us. Our aim should be to help them understand the truth, not defend our egos or score points in a theological debate. Our heartfelt testimonies are the most powerful answer we can give our accusers. And such testimonies can only be borne in love and meekness. We should be like Edward Partridge, of whom the Lord said, 'His heart is pure before me, for he is like unto Nathanael of old, in whom there is no guile' (D&C 41:11). To be guileless is to have a childlike innocence, to be slow to take offense and quick to forgive." (8:09-9:54) (Elder Robert D. Hales, “Christian Courage - The Price of Discipleship”, General Conference, October 2008, video from lds.org)

Godly vs. Adversarial:

Elder Hales contrasted well the two fundamentally different approaches we might take as we work to promote and strengthen the family in our discussions and interactions with others. Decide which approach is Godlike versus Satan's counterfeit and then drag and drop the word or phrase from Elder Hale's talk onto the most representative interaction. When you are done step back and contemplate a recent opportunity you had to talk with others about the family. Consider any adjustments that you can make to improve in the future.

* Uncompromised
* Diluted Beliefs
* Quick to forgive
* Concern for others
* Overbearance
* Compromised doctrines
* Prayer to be filled with the Holy Ghost
* Slow to take offense
* Undiluted beliefs
* Defend our egos
* Personal vindication
* Bold
* Spirit Directed
* Score Personal points
* Love and meekness
* Debate
* Boastful Pride
* Heartfelt testimony

**Judge Righteously:**

Some have used the virtue of tolerance to undermine righteous judgment. Consider carefully how Elder Holland and Elder Nelson explain what righteous judgment is and how tolerance should work in protecting us from the Korihor-like sophistries alive today.

“There is sometimes a chance for a misunderstanding, especially among young people who may think we are not supposed to judge anything, that we are never to make a value assessment of any kind. We have to help each other with that because the Savior makes it clear that in some situations we have to judge, we are under obligation to judge-as when He said, 'Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.' That sounds like a judgment to me. The alternative is to surrender to the moral relativism of a deconstructionist, postmodern world which, pushed far enough, posits that ultimately nothing is eternally true or especially sacred and, therefore, no one position on any given issue matters more than any other. And that simply is not true.” (39:20-40:36) (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Israel, Israel, God is Calling", CES Fireside, 2012, video from lds.org)

**Tolerant Without Being Permissive: 1:**

"I have been impressed to speak on the subject of tolerance-a virtue much needed in our turbulent world. But in discussing this topic, we must recognize at the outset that there is a difference between tolerance and tolerate. Your gracious tolerance for an individual does not grant him or her license to do wrong, nor does your tolerance obligate you to tolerate his or her misdeed. That distinction is fundamental to an understanding of this vital virtue." (0:19-0:52)

"Intolerance seeds contention; tolerance supersedes contention. Tolerance is the key that opens the door to mutual understanding and love. Now may I offer an important note of caution. An erroneous assumption could be made that if a little of something is good, a lot must be better. Not so! Overdoses of needed medication can be toxic. Boundless mercy could oppose justice. So tolerance, without limit, could lead to spineless permissiveness. The Lord drew boundary lines to define acceptable limits of tolerance. Danger rises when those divine limits are disobeyed. Just as parents teach little children not to run and play in the street, the Savior taught us that we need not tolerate evil. 'Jesus went into the temple of God, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers.' Though He loved the sinner, the Lord said that He 'cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance'." (12:28-13:35) (Elder Russell M. Nelson, "Teach Us Tolerance and Love," General Conference, April 1994, video from lds.org)

**Love Them!:**

"To my inquiring sister and all who seek to know how we should respond to our accusers, I reply, we love them. Whatever their race, creed, religion, or political persuasion, if we follow Christ and show forth His courage, we must love them. We do not feel we are better than they are. Rather, we desire with our love to show them a better way-the way of Jesus Christ. His way leads to the gate of baptism, the strait and narrow path of righteous living, and the temple of God. He is 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). Only through Him can we and all our brothers and sisters inherit the greatest gift we can receive -- eternal life and eternal happiness. To help them, to be an example for them, is not for the weak. It is for the strong. It is for you and me, Latter-day Saints who pay the price of discipleship by answering our accusers with Christian courage." (14:35-15:50) (Elder Robert D. Hales, "Christian Courage - The Price of Discipleship", General Conference, October 2008, video from lds.org)

**Compensatory Revelation & Power:**

As we conclude our study of the Eternal Family through the Proclamation to the world, take counsel and comfort from the following inspired teachings of the Lord's Apostles.

"This is a wonderful time to live upon the earth. The youth you teach live at a time that has long been anticipated. The gospel is restored in its fullness. Part of their responsibility in mortality is to help prepare for the Savior's return. As prophesied, the times prior to the breathtaking events of the Savior's return are to be days of deceit, iniquity, commotion, and confusion. President Thomas S. Monson has said:

'Evolving at a rapid rate has been the moral compass of society. Behaviors which once were considered inappropriate and immoral are now not only tolerated but also viewed by ever so many as acceptable. Where once the standards of the Church and the standards of society were mostly compatible, now there is a wide chasm between us, and it's growing ever wider.'

Brigham Young prophesied:

'It was revealed to me in the commencement of this Church, that the Church would spread, prosper, grow and extend, and that in proportion to the spread of the Gospel among the nations of the earth, so would the power of Satan rise.'

"Our days are not unexpected days, and the Lord has provided for our spiritual safety and for the safety of our students. As evil increases in the world, there is a compensatory power of revelation and spiritual gifts given to the righteous. The Lord gives us added power as we are willing to remain righteous in a wicked world." (Elder Neal L. Andersen, CES Evening with a General Authority, 28 Feb. 2014, video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4hYpb1sFZk (start-16:16;stop-18:09))

**What Matters Most Lasts Longest:**

“Brothers and sisters, as we hold up like a banner the proclamation to the world on the family and as we live and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will fulfill the measure of our creation here on earth. We will find peace and happiness here and in the world to come. We should not need a hurricane or other crisis to remind us of what matters most. The gospel and the Lord's plan of happiness and salvation should remind us. What matters most is what lasts longest, and our families are for eternity.” (16:58-17:40) (Elder M. Russell Ballard, "What Matters Most Lasts Longest", General Conference, October 2005, video from lds.org)

**Christlike Love:**

“Christlike love is the greatest need we have on this planet in part because righteousness was always supposed to accompany it. So if love is to be our watchword, and it must be, then by the word of Him who is love personified, we must forsake transgression and any hint of advocacy for it in others. Jesus clearly understood what many in our modern culture seem to forget: that there is a crucial difference between the commandment to forgive sin (which He had an infinite capacity to do) and the warning against condoning it (which He never ever did even once).

"Friends, especially my young friends, take heart. Pure Christlike love flowing from true righteousness can change the world. I testify that the true and living gospel of Jesus Christ is on the earth and you are members of His true and living Church, trying to share that gospel. I bear witness of that gospel and that Church, with a particular witness of restored priesthood keys which unlock the power and efficacy of saving ordinances. I am more certain that those keys have been restored and that those ordinances are once again available through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints than I am certain I stand before you at this pulpit and you sit before me in this conference.

"Now be strong. Live the gospel faithfully even if others around you don't live it at all. Defend your beliefs with courtesy and with compassion, but defend them. A long history of inspired voices, including those you will hear in this conference and the voice you just heard in the person of President Thomas S. Monson, point you toward the path of Christian discipleship. It is a strait path, and it is a narrow path without a great deal of latitude at some points, but it can be thrillingly and successfully traveled, “with … steadfastness in Christ, … a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men.” (2 Nephi 31:20). In courageously pursuing such a course, you will forge unshakable faith, you will find safety against ill winds that blow, even shafts in the whirlwind, and you will feel the rock-like strength of our Redeemer, upon whom if you build your unflagging discipleship, you cannot fall (Helaman 5:12). In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.” (11:19-14:38) (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Cost and Blessings of Discipleship, General Conference, April 2014, video from lds.org)