

Christ," and remind ourselves that "it is by grace that we are saved, *after all we can do*" (2 Nephi 25:23, 26; italics added).

Therefore, we must "be up and doing" (Alma 60:24) and make an honest appraisal of ourselves as members of family units, members of the Church, and professed Christians. The living Christ invites us to come unto Him and to become more like Him. Is this not the object and essence of the holy Atonement?

Let us worship Him in spirit and in truth and celebrate His triumph over sin

and death by looking to God and following the straight course to eternal happiness with even greater resolve and steadfastness.

For this I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder Carlos E. Asay of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve.

Elder Henry B. Eyring

Create and convey a legacy of testimony

Hearts were touched by the proclamation on the family read by President Hinckley last fall (see *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102) because we want for our families what God wants for them: that they will live in love and righteousness. But in our thoughtful moments we know that we will need help. We will need to invite the powers of heaven to guide our families in days when we are not there and to face spiritual dangers we may not foresee.

Our families can be given a gift to know what God would have them do and to learn it in a way that will encourage them to do it. God has provided such a guide. It is the Holy Ghost. We cannot give that to our family members as a companion, but they can earn it. The Holy Ghost can be their constant companion only after they have been faithful and after they have received the ordinances of baptism and the laying on of hands by those with proper authority. But even before baptism, a child or an adult can have the Holy Ghost testify to their hearts of sacred truth. They must

act on that testimony to retain it, but it will guide them toward goodness, and it can lead them to accept and keep the covenants which will in time bring them the companionship of the Holy Ghost. We would, if we could, leave our families a legacy of testimony that it might reach through the generations.

What we can do to create and transmit that legacy comes from an understanding of how testimony is instilled in our hearts. Since it is the Holy Ghost who testifies of sacred truth, we can do at least three things to make that experience more likely for our families. First, we can teach some sacred truth. Then we can testify that we know what we have taught is true. And then we must act so that those who hear our testimony see that our actions conform with what we said was true. The Holy Ghost will then confirm to them the truth of what we said and that we knew it to be true.

Testimony of John Bennion

That is how a legacy of testimony is created, preserved, and transmitted in a family. It isn't easy, but ordinary people

have done it. Like many of you, I had such ancestors. One was my great-grandfather John Bennion. We cannot duplicate what he did because the world has changed, but we can learn from it.

He was a convert to the Church from Wales. He, his wife, and his children came into the Salt Lake Valley in one of the early companies of pioneers. We know something of his life because after that time he kept a journal, making a short entry nearly every day. We have the journals from 1855 to 1877. They were published in one bound volume because his descendants hoped to transmit that legacy of testimony. My mother was one of them. Her last labor before she died was to transform the daybooks in which he'd written into a manuscript for publication.

His short entries don't have much preaching in them. He doesn't testify that he knew Brigham Young was a prophet. He just records having answered "yes" every time the prophet called him on a mission from "over Jordan" to the Muddy mission, then on to a mission back to Wales. He also answered "yes" to the call to ride into the canyons to track Johnston's army and the call to take his family south when the army invaded the valley. There is even a family legend that the reason he died so close to the day when Brigham Young was buried was to follow the prophet one more time.

The fact that he wrote every day makes clear to me that he knew his ordinary life was historic because it was part of the building of Zion in the latter days. The few entries which record his testimony seem to appear when death took a child. His testimony is to me more powerful because he offered it when his soul was tried.

Here is his record of one of those times. His daughter Elizabeth died in his arms. He reported her burial and the location of her grave in a few lines. But

then the next day, November 4, 1863, this is the entire entry:

"Wednesday. Repairing up the stable my little children prattling around me but I miss my dear Lizzy. I pray the Lord to help me to indure faithfull to his cause to the end of my days, that I may be worthy to receive my children back into the family circle, who have fallen asleep in Christ in the days of their innocence: Ann, Moroni, Esther Ellen & Elizabeth, blessed & happy are they because of the atonement of Jesus Christ."

All the elements are there. He taught the truth. He testified that it was true. He lived consistent with his testimony and prayed that he might endure faithful until he could be united with his dear family. I feel his love and a desire to be included in that circle.

Gain our own testimonies first

We must find other ways to convey our legacy of testimony, but the process of teaching, testifying, and living the truth will be the same.

The scriptures, living prophets, and common sense tell us where to begin. We need to start with ourselves as parents. No program we follow or family tradition we create can transmit a legacy of testimony we do not have. We must start where Alma started so that our descendants can know that we testified from the same ground from which he testified. Here are his words as recorded in the Book of Mormon. It is what we must be able to say:

"And this is not all. Do ye not suppose that I know of these things myself? Behold, I testify unto you that I do know that these things whereof I have spoken are true. And how do ye suppose that I know of their surety?

"Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed

many days that I might know these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me" (Alma 5:45-46).

As we gain that assurance, most settings we will be in with our families will be good ones to create a legacy of testimony. Some of the best are already familiar to us. Here are some ways to make those common settings more likely to invite the experiences which bring testimony to our families.

Hold weekly family home evening

First, plan for our weekly family night to be a setting for the bearing of testimony. Be sure that some truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ is taught simply and plainly so that even a child could understand. A child could do the teaching. The child may choose to end with a testimony, if that is the way we end our teaching. A shy child may not easily bear testimony in larger settings but may in the safety of our homes. And the Holy Ghost will testify to those who hear and to the child who testifies.

Read scriptures as a family

Second, read the scriptures aloud together as a family. It may take unusual determination and inspiration to find a time and a setting. But reading and hearing the words of life from the scriptures will invite the Holy Ghost to confirm their truth. The Savior said it this way: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

From this pulpit years ago, President Marion G. Romney recounted reading the Book of Mormon aloud, alternating paragraphs with his young son, he on the bottom level of a double-decker bed and

his son on the upper. He thought his son was catching a cold but then learned that the tears came from his son feeling testimony that the book was true. And because they read together, both were blessed. (See Conference Report, Apr. 1949, 41.)

Pray as a family

Third, kneel together in humble prayer as a family, each having the opportunity to be voice. There may be times when the prayer seems rote and when those not praying let their minds wander. But there will be other priceless moments when someone will petition in faith for real needs and the Holy Ghost will touch hearts with testimony. I don't remember as much of my mother's teaching as I do her prayers for us. I could feel her love, and the Spirit confirmed in my heart that she loved Heavenly Father and the Savior and that her prayers would be answered. She brought blessings down on our heads then, and the memory of her prayers still does.

Fast and pay generous fast offerings

Fourth, fast and allow your children to fast once a month before the meeting in which they will partake of the Lord's Supper, hear others bear testimony, and perhaps themselves feel prompted to testify. The spiritual blessing will be even greater for them if they know that their choice to overcome their physical desires for food is making possible the caring for the poor. That can't happen unless we pay a generous fast offering with a joyful heart. It can if we do. And the likelihood will be greatly increased that they will feel the Spirit confirm that this is the true Church of Jesus Christ if we have first taught and testified that the Savior always organizes His disciples to care for the poor and the needy among them.

Receive home teachers; give blessings

We could extend the list of things to do to invite the confirmation of the Holy Spirit. For instance, the warmth and confidence with which we receive home teachers can allow our children to feel confirmation that they come as God's servants. The giving of priesthood blessings as children start a school year or leave home invites the Spirit at a time when hearts are humble and thus receptive to the whisperings of the Spirit.

Respond to tragedy with faith

Some of the greatest opportunities to create and transmit a legacy of testimony cannot be planned. Tragedy, loss, and hurt often arrive unanticipated. How we react when we are surprised will tell our families whether what we have taught and testified lies deep in our hearts. Most of us will have taught our children of the power of the Savior to carry us through whatever befalls us. These words are from the Book of Mormon:

"And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:12).

When tragedy strikes or even when it looms, our families will have the opportunity to look into our hearts to see whether we know what we said we knew. Our children will watch, feel the Spirit confirm that we lived as we preached, remember that confirmation, and pass the story across the generations.

Grandmother Eyring's faith in adversity

I have one such story in my legacy. Grandmother Eyring learned from a doctor in his office that she would die of stomach cancer. My father, her oldest

son, had driven her there and was waiting for her. He told me that on the way home she said, "Now, Henry, let's be cheerful. Let's sing hymns." They sang "O My Father" (*Hymns*, no. 292) and "Come, Come, Ye Saints," where the last verse begins, "And should we die before our journey's through" (*Hymns*, no. 30).

I wasn't there, but I imagine they sang loudly—they didn't have very melodic voices—with faith and no tears. She spent part of her last months in the home of her oldest child, her daughter. Aunt Camilla told me that Grandma complained only once, and then it was not really a complaint but just to say that it hurt.

Now, there are many people who have been cheerful and brave in the face of death. But it means far more to her family when the person has taught and testified of the power of the Savior to succor, of the sureness of the Resurrection, and of the hope of eternal life. The Spirit confirmed to me that Grandma's peace and her courage were signs that her testimony was true, and because of that, all was well, all was well.

Hope for those who reject testimony

Sadly, each of us knows that even teaching, testifying, and living true to that testimony may not pass on the legacy. Great and good parents have done that and then seen their families or some in their families reject that testimony. There is reason for us to have great hope and optimism. It comes first from our testimony of the nature of our Heavenly Father: He loves our family members; He is their Heavenly Father as well as ours. It also comes from our testimony of the mission of Jesus Christ: He paid the price to redeem them. And it comes from our testimony of the restoration of priesthood keys. Because of that, the power is on the earth again to make covenants with God which seal families together—covenants which God honors.

That is why we must not despair. As we offer the legacy of testimony to our families, some may not receive it. It may even seem to skip over generations. But God will reach out to offer the legacy again and again. More than we can imagine, our faithful effort to offer to our family the testimony we have of the truth will be multiplied in power and extended in time.

We have all seen evidence of that in families we have known. I saw it in South America as I looked into the faces of missionaries. Hundreds of them passed by me, shaking my hand and looking deeply into my eyes. I was nearly overwhelmed with the confirmation that these children of Father Lehi and of Sariah were there in the Lord's service because our Heavenly Father honors His promises to families. To nearly his last breath, Lehi taught and testified and tried to bless his children. Terrible tragedy came among his descendants when they rejected his testimony, the testimonies of other prophets, and of the scriptures. But in the eyes and faces of those missionaries I felt confirmation that God has kept His promises to reach out to Lehi's covenant children and that He will reach out to ours.

I testify that I know that God, our Heavenly Father, lives and that He loves us and that He knows us. I know that Jesus Christ lives and that we will be resurrected and can be sanctified because of His sacrifice. I testify that we can know the truth by the power of the Holy Ghost. I know that we can live together in families in eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God. I pray that we may, with all our hearts for all our lives, offer testimony of the truth to our families. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder Henry B. Eyring, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, has just addressed us.

Following my remarks, the Tabernacle Choir will sing "Each Life That Touches Ours for Good."

The benediction will then be offered by Elder Cecil O. Samuelson of the Seventy.

A one-half hour video production, *The Lamb of God*, will be broadcast following this session for those across the nation. The concluding session of this conference will begin at 2:00 this afternoon.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

Announcement of a new meeting hall

Now, my brothers and sisters, if I may say a few words. First I'd like to say that it's wonderful to see all of you gathered in the Tabernacle this Easter morning. You're a wonderful sight. It is a remarkable thing to contemplate the many more who are assembled in more than 3,000 halls in various parts of the world.

I regret that many who wish to meet with us in the Tabernacle this morning are unable to get in. There are very many

out on the grounds. This unique and remarkable hall, built by our pioneer forebears and dedicated to the worship of the Lord, comfortably seats about 6,000. Some of you seated on those hard benches for two hours may question the word *comfortably*.

My heart reaches out to those who wish to get in and could not be accommodated. About a year ago I suggested to the Brethren that perhaps the time has come when we should study the feasibility of constructing another dedicated