

## Elder Dallin H. Oaks

### Many are heavy laden

The Savior said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

Many carry heavy burdens. Some have lost a loved one to death or care for one who is disabled. Some have been wounded by divorce. Others yearn for an eternal marriage. Some are caught in the grip of addictive substances or practices like alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or pornography. Others have crippling physical or mental impairments. Some are challenged by same-gender attraction. Some have terrible feelings of depression or inadequacy. In one way or another, many are heavy laden.

To each of us our Savior gives this loving invitation:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).

### Jesus healed every kind of affliction

The scriptures contain many accounts of the Savior’s healing the heavy laden. He caused the blind to see; the deaf to hear; the palsied, withered, or maimed to be restored; lepers to be cleansed; and unclean spirits to be cast out. Often we read that the person healed of these physical ailments was “made whole” (see Matthew 14:36; 15:28; Mark 6:56; 10:52; Luke 17:19; John 5:9).

Jesus healed many from physical diseases, but He did not withhold healing from those who sought to be “made whole” from other ailments. Matthew writes that He healed every sickness and every disease among the people (see

Matthew 4:23; 9:35). Great multitudes followed Him, and He “healed them all” (Matthew 12:15). Surely these healings included those whose sicknesses were emotional, mental, or spiritual. He healed them all.

In His early sermon in the synagogue, Jesus read aloud from this prophecy of Isaiah: “He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised” (Luke 4:18). As Jesus declared that He was come to fulfill that prophecy, He expressly affirmed that He would heal those with physical ailments and He would also deliver the captive, liberate the bruised, and heal the brokenhearted.

The Gospel of Luke contains many examples of that ministry. It tells of the time when “great multitudes came together to hear [Jesus], and to be healed by him of their infirmities” (Luke 5:15). On other occasions it records that Jesus “cured many of their infirmities” (Luke 7:21) and that He “healed them that had need of healing” (Luke 9:11). It also describes how a great multitude of people out of Judea and Jerusalem and the sea-coast of Sidon came down to the plain “to hear him, and to be healed” (Luke 6:17).

When the Savior appeared to the righteous in the New World, He called for persons to come forward who were lame or blind or had other physical ailments. He extended the same invitation to those “that are afflicted in any manner” (3 Nephi 17:7). “Bring them hither,” He said, “and I will heal them” (v. 7). The Book of Mormon tells how the multitude brought forward “all them that were afflicted in any manner” (v. 9). This must have included persons with every kind of physical or emotional or mental affliction,

and the scripture testifies that Jesus “did heal them every one” (v. 9).

### Healing power of the Atonement

The Savior teaches that we will have tribulation in the world, but we should “be of good cheer” because He has “overcome the world” (John 16:33). His Atonement reaches and is powerful enough not only to pay the price for sin but also to heal every mortal affliction. The Book of Mormon teaches that “he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people” (Alma 7:11; see also 2 Nephi 9:21).

He knows of our anguish, and He is there for us. Like the good Samaritan in His parable, when He finds us wounded at the wayside, He binds up our wounds and cares for us (see Luke 10:34). Brothers and sisters, the healing power of His Atonement is for you, for us, for all.

His all-encompassing healing power is sought in the prayerful words of our hymn “Master, the Tempest Is Raging”:

Master, with anguish of spirit  
I bow in my grief today.  
The depths of my sad heart are  
troubled.  
Oh, waken and save, I pray!  
Torrents of sin and of anguish  
Sweep o’er my sinking soul,  
And I perish! I perish! dear Master.  
Oh, hasten and take control!  
[Hymns, no. 105]

### Healings through priesthood authority

We can be healed through the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Jesus gave His Apostles power “to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease” (Matthew 10:1; see also Mark 3:15; Luke 9:1–2), and they went forth “preaching the gospel, and healing every where”

(Luke 9:6; see also Mark 6:13; Acts 5:16). The Seventy were also sent forth with power and direction to heal the sick (see Luke 10:9; Acts 8:6–7).

Although the Savior could heal all whom He would heal, this is not true of those who hold His priesthood authority. Mortal exercises of that authority are limited by the will of Him whose priesthood it is. Consequently, we are told that some whom the elders bless are not healed because they are “appointed unto death” (D&C 42:48). Similarly, when the Apostle Paul sought to be healed from the “thorn in the flesh” that buffeted him (2 Corinthians 12:7), the Lord declined to heal him. Paul later wrote that the Lord explained, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (v. 9). Paul obediently responded that he would “rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong” (vv. 9–10).

### Blessings suited to individual needs

Healing blessings come in many ways, each suited to our individual needs, as known to Him who loves us best. Sometimes a “healing” cures our illness or lifts our burden. But sometimes we are “healed” by being given strength or understanding or patience to bear the burdens placed upon us.

The people who followed Alma were in bondage to wicked oppressors. When they prayed for relief, the Lord told them He would deliver them eventually, but in the meantime He would ease their burdens “that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses . . . that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions” (Mosiah 24:14). In that case the people did not have their burdens removed, but the Lord strengthened them so that “they could bear up their burdens

with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (v. 15).

This same promise and effect applies to you mothers who are widowed or divorced, to you singles who are lonely, to you caregivers who are burdened, to you persons who are addicted, and to all of us whatever our burden. “Come unto Christ,” the prophet says, “and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32).

At times we may despair that our burdens are too great. When it seems that a tempest is raging in our lives, we may feel abandoned and cry out like the disciples in the storm, “Master, carest thou not that we perish?” (Mark 4:38). At such times we should remember His reply: “Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” (v. 40).

The healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ—whether it removes our burdens or strengthens us to endure and live with them like the Apostle Paul—is available for every affliction in mortality.

### **Overcoming pornography**

After I gave a general conference talk on the evils of pornography (see Conference Report, Apr. 2005, 91–95; or *Ensign*, May 2005, 87–90), I received many letters from persons burdened with this addiction. Some of these letters were from men who had overcome pornography. One man wrote:

“There are several lessons I’ve gleaned from my experience coming out of the darkness of a sin that so thoroughly dominates the lives of the people it ensnares: (1) This is a major problem that is unbelievably difficult to overcome. . . . (2) The most important source of support and strength in the repentance process is the Savior. . . . (3) Intense, daily scripture study, regular temple worship, and serious, contemplative participation in the ordinance of the sacrament are all indispensable parts of a true repentance process. This, I assume, is

because all of these activities serve to deepen and strengthen one’s relationship with the Savior, one’s understanding of His atoning sacrifice, and one’s faith in His healing power” (letter dated Oct. 24, 2005).

“Come unto me,” the Savior said, “and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29). That heavy-laden man turned to the Savior, and so can each of us.

A woman whose marriage was threatened by her husband’s addiction to pornography wrote how she stood beside him for five pain-filled years until, as she said, “through the gift of our precious Savior’s glorious Atonement and what He taught me about forgiveness, [my husband] finally is free—and so am I.” As one who needed no cleansing from sin, but only sought a loved one’s deliverance from captivity, she wrote this advice:

“Commune with the Lord. . . . He is your best friend! He knows your pain because He has felt it for you already. He is ready to carry that burden. Trust Him enough to place it at His feet and allow Him to carry it for you. Then you can have your anguish replaced with His peace, in the very depths of your soul” (letter dated Apr. 18, 2005).

### **Man dealing with same-gender attraction**

A man wrote a General Authority about how the power of the Atonement helped him with his problem of same-gender attraction. He had been excommunicated for serious transgressions that violated his temple covenants and his responsibilities to his children. He had to choose whether to attempt to live the gospel or whether to continue a course contrary to its teachings.

“I knew it would be difficult,” he wrote, “but I didn’t realize what I would have to go through.” His letter describes the emptiness and loneliness and the incredible pain he experienced from deep

within his soul as he sought to return. He prayed mightily for forgiveness, sometimes for hours at a time. He was sustained by reading the scriptures, by the companionship of a loving bishop, and by priesthood blessings. But what finally made the difference was the help of the Savior. He explained:

“It [was] only through Him and His Atonement. . . . I now feel an overwhelming gratitude. My pains have been almost more than I could bear at times, and yet they were so small compared to what He suffered. Where there once was darkness in my life, there is now love and gratitude.”

He continues: “Some profess that change is possible and therapy is the only answer. They are very learned on the subject and have so much to offer those who struggle . . . , but I worry that they forget to involve Heavenly Father in the process. If change is to happen, it will happen according to the will of God. I also worry that many people focus on the causes of [same-gender attraction]. . . . There is no need to determine why I have [this challenge]. I don’t know if I was born with it, or if environmental factors contributed to it. The fact of the matter is that I have this struggle in my life and what I do with it from this point forward is what matters” (letter dated Mar. 25, 2006).

### **Atonement gives strength to endure**

The persons who wrote these letters know that the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the healing it offers do much more than provide the opportunity for repentance from sins. The Atonement also gives us the strength to endure “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind,” because our Savior also took upon Him “the pains and the sicknesses of his people” (Alma 7:11). Brothers and sisters, if your faith and prayers and the power of the priesthood do not heal you from an affliction, the power of the Atonement will surely give you the strength to bear the burden.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,” the Savior said, “and I will give you rest . . . unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28–29).

As we struggle with the challenges of mortality, I pray for each of us, as the prophet Mormon prayed for his son, Moroni: “May Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death, . . . and his mercy and long-suffering, and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your mind forever” (Moroni 9:25).

I testify of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who invites us all to come unto Him and be perfected in Him. He will bind up our wounds and He will heal the heavy laden. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## **Elder Richard H. Winkel**

### **Temples are about families**

As President Hinckley just mentioned, the 123rd temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was recently dedicated by President Hinckley in Sacramento, California. This beautiful temple serves more than 80,000 wonderful and excited members of the Church in Sacramento and surrounding areas. Over

168,000 visitors toured the temple during the open house. They were told that members can draw closer to the Savior Jesus Christ in these magnificent edifices than anywhere else in the world. Our members know that through Him they can find the peace and hope that will sustain them and their families in today’s troubled world.

When you come to the temple you will love your family with a deeper love