

of individuals. “Do your part to build a happy home” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 10). Establish patterns of righteousness in your life. And be an example of the believers. The Lord is depending on you to assist in the exaltation of your eternal family.

I know that Jesus Christ lives. He knows you and loves you. He has blessed me and my family, and I know He will bless you and yours. Of this I humbly testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Enrique R. Falabella

Blessings of Church membership

The promise of eternal family relationships

Why are we members of the only true Church? Even though I cannot answer this question for all 13 million members of the Church, I would like to express from my heart some answers that probably will fit with your own answers.

“Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich” (D&C 6:7).

Riches were not a part of my childhood. We were a family of five: my father and four siblings. My mother had passed away when I was five years old. My father’s meager income was used to buy our food; the purchase of clothing was put off as long as possible.

One day, somewhat bothered, I came up to my father and said, “Daddy, why don’t you buy me some shoes? Look at these; they’re worn out, and you can see my big toe through the hole in the shoe.”

“We’ll fix that up,” he replied and, with some black polish, gave a shine to my shoes. Later on he told me, “Son, it’s fixed up.”

“No,” I answered, “you can still see my big toe.”

“That can also be fixed,” he told me. He again took the polish and put some on my toe, and before long it shined like my shoes. So it was early on in life I learned that happiness does not depend on money.

As time went by, a pair of missionaries taught us the *riches* of the restored

gospel, of the doctrine of the plan of salvation, and of eternal families. We were baptized, and when my father began his calling as district president, his first objective was to journey to the temple and receive the blessings which would come because of that sacrifice. It was a 15-day journey covering 4,800 miles—a journey filled with difficulties and setbacks, highways in poor condition, uncomfortable buses, not even knowing the route, but with great hope in the ordinances we would participate in.

Upon arriving in the city of Mesa, Arizona, we headed down an avenue at the end of which we could see the house of the Lord, gleaming and beautiful. I remember the joy which filled our hearts; we all broke out in songs and praising, and tears ran down the cheeks of many Saints.

Later in the temple we knelt as a family to hear the beautiful promises about an eternal family, with the certainty that our mother, though absent, was now our mother forever, and we felt the peace which comes from knowing that we are an eternal family.

The promise of life eternal thus gave us the riches of eternity! “Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich” (D&C 6:7).

The power of the restored priesthood

The Church of Jesus Christ is a church of priests, “a royal priesthood, an holy nation” (1 Peter 2:9).

The restored Church gives to each home a priesthood holder with the power of God to bless. How many times I have been able to hear the soft, sweet voice of a little child at home say, “Daddy, could you give me a blessing?” and put my hands upon his or her head in moments of pain and difficulty and pronounce blessings of comfort and healing and see the power of the priesthood exercise its influence and the next day hear that little voice say, “Thanks, Daddy, I slept just fine last night.” We don’t need to go out looking for someone having that power—it is among us! What a blessing to be able to teach this principle to our children! This is the only church upon the earth which offers such a blessing to families.

Through this power I was able to ordain each of my sons to the priesthood and thus give them the power of God to administer His ordinances.

So then this is also why I am a member of this Church: because the power of the priesthood is again upon the earth and has reached even unto our homes.

A testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ

The most valuable power we can possess is the treasure of a personal testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning power.

A testimony comes to us as we live a worthy life and seek it in prayer. “And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith” (D&C 42:14), our Lord counseled through the Prophet Joseph.

When my son Daniel was six years old, he saw that I was worried because I had to attend a stake conference. I was unsure about what to teach the Saints. He came up to me and said, “Daddy, that’s really easy.” That’s how children see everything.

“Let’s see, Son,” I told him. “Since it’s easy, tell me what I can talk to them about.”

“Talk to them about prayer,” he told me.

“That’s a good subject,” I said, “but they’ve heard a lot of talk about prayer; what could I tell them that’s new?”

“That’s easy too, Daddy. First tell them, ‘Before you start to talk to Heavenly Father, think about the things you want to tell Him.’”

“That sounds like a magnificent idea,” I replied. “And then?”

“Well, once you’ve thought of it, tell it to Him! When you finish, wait and see if He has something to tell you.”

So, through our prayers, the Spirit speaks to our spirit and testifies to us of the reality of our Savior.

I am filled with wonder at the love my Savior Jesus Christ showed by descending from the heavenly mansions and coming to a world where the majority rejected His message, and even though they did not have the power to take His life, they condemned Him to death. Christ paid for my sins, for my illnesses, afflictions, and sorrows. His pain was indescribable; Luke only makes mention that “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44).

Above all else, this is the reason for my membership in the Church: because the Holy Spirit has penetrated my heart and has made it known to me that Christ lives, that He is my Savior, that He paid for my sins, and that He has prepared the way so that if I live according to His precepts, I can enjoy all other promised blessings.

A few weeks ago my father also passed away, and now more than ever I feel thankfulness to my God for the richness and beauty of His doctrine.

Because family life can continue beyond the thresholds of death. Because the royal priesthood has been restored upon the earth. And because the Spirit has spoken to my spirit, giving me a testimony that my Savior Jesus Christ lives

and that through His intercession I shall be able, in accordance to my faithfulness, to live with Him. For these reasons and others still, I am a member of the only true Church upon the face of the earth,

and I shall be eternally grateful for this. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir and congregation sang
“Now Let Us Rejoice.”

Elder Spencer J. Condie

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

I bring you the love and greeting of the faithful Saints in the South Pacific.

The first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This includes faith in His divine birth and heavenly heritage and faith that, under His Father’s direction, He created the earth and all things that dwell therein (see John 1:10; Mosiah 3:8). At the very heart of our faith in Christ is the assurance that through His atoning sacrifice, though our sins may be as scarlet, they can become as white as snow (see Isaiah 1:18).

Faith in Christ includes the knowledge that following His Crucifixion, He arose from the tomb, and His Resurrection made it possible for all mankind to live again (see 1 Corinthians 15:21–23). Faith in Christ is the assurance that He and His Heavenly Father appeared to a young man, Joseph Smith, paving the way for the restoration of all things in the dispensation of the fulness of times. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, which bears His holy name.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is evident when we believe His teachings and claim His “exceeding great and precious promises” and become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). Innumerable promises are proclaimed by His prophets, and the Lord assures us, “My word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

In these latter days the Lord revealed that “when we obtain any blessing from

God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:21). The Lord makes generous promises, and He certifies that He will not vary from these promises, for, said He, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise” (D&C 82:10).

Exceeding great and precious promises

The Lord’s countless exceeding great and precious promises include forgiveness of our sins when we “confess them and forsake them” (D&C 58:43; see also D&C 1:32). Opening the windows of heaven is a promise claimed by those who pay a faithful tithe (see Malachi 3:10), and finding “great treasures of knowledge” accrues to those who observe the Word of Wisdom (D&C 89:19).

Becoming unspotted from the world is a promise to those who keep the Sabbath holy (see D&C 59:9; Exodus 31:13). Divine guidance and inspiration are promised to those who “feast upon the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 32:3) and who “liken all scriptures” unto themselves (1 Nephi 19:23).

The Lord also promised that “whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you” (3 Nephi 18:20). We are promised that the Holy Ghost will be our constant companion when we “let virtue garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly” (see D&C 121:45–46). We can claim the spiritually liberating promise of fasting, which will “loose the bands of wickedness,” undo our “heavy