

pornography and to wash away guilt. The priesthood has the power to unlock the influence of our habits, even to unchain from addiction, however tight the grip. It can heal over the scars of past mistakes.

I know of no more beautiful and consoling words in all of revelation than these: “Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.”²¹

Sometimes, even after confession and paying penalties, the most difficult part of repentance is to forgive one’s self. You must come to know that forgiveness means forgiveness.

“As often as my people repent will I forgive them their trespasses against me.”²²

Don’t look back

President Joseph Fielding Smith told me of a repentant woman struggling to find her way out of a very immoral life. She asked him what she should do now.

In turn, he asked her to read to him from the Old Testament the account of Lot’s wife, who was turned to a pillar of salt.²³ Then he asked her, “What lesson do you gain from those verses?”

She answered, “The Lord will destroy the wicked.”

“Not so!” President Smith said that the lesson for this repentant woman and for you is “Don’t look back!”²⁴

Strangely enough, it may be that the simplest and most powerful prevention and cure for pornography, or any unclean act, is to ignore and avoid it. Delete from the mind any unworthy thought that tries to take root. Once you have decided to remain

clean, you are asserting your God-given agency. And then, as President Smith counseled, “Don’t look back.”

I promise that ahead of you is peace and happiness for you and your family. The ultimate end of all activity in the Church is that a man and his wife and their children can be happy at home. And I invoke the blessings of the Lord upon you who are struggling against this terrible plague, to find the healing that is available to us in the priesthood of the Lord. I bear witness of that power in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. Doctrine and Covenants 1:20.
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
3. Abraham 4:27–28.
4. Abraham 3:25.
5. 2 Nephi 2:25.
6. 2 Nephi 2:26.
7. 1 Corinthians 3:16.
8. 2 Nephi 2:27.
9. Matthew 13:45.
10. Matthew 13:44.
11. Jacob 6:8; Alma 34:31.
12. Alma 42:8.
13. Alma 41:10.
14. 1 Corinthians 10:13.
15. Alma 13:28.
16. Isaiah 5:20.
17. Doctrine and Covenants 130:20.
18. Doctrine and Covenants 82:10.
19. See 2 Nephi 32:3.
20. Doctrine and Covenants 19:16.
21. Doctrine and Covenants 58:42.
22. Mosiah 26:30.
23. See Genesis 19:26.
24. See Boyd K. Packer, *The Things of the Soul* (1996), 116.

Elder Jay E. Jensen

A testimony gained in the mission field

As a young elder, I had been in the mission field about one year, and while

reading scriptures and words of the latter-day Apostles about revelation and the Holy Ghost, I had a stunning awakening. I did not have a testimony of my own, specifically

of the Father and the Son. I went on my mission living on the borrowed light of my wonderful parents. Never doubting their words, I had not thought about seeking my own spiritual witness. On a February night in San Antonio, Texas, in 1962, I knew that I had to know for myself. In our small apartment I found a place where I could quietly pray out loud, pleading, “Heavenly Father, are You there? I must know for myself!”

Sometime later that night I came to know for myself for the first time in my life that God and Jesus are real. I did not hear an audible voice nor see a heavenly being. I knew in the same way you too may have come to know—which is “by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost” (D&C 121:26) and the spirit of revelation (see D&C 8:1–3) speaking peace to my mind (see D&C 6:23) and assurances to my heart (see Alma 58:11).

From that experience I witnessed the results of Alma’s counsel to “awake and arouse [my] faculties . . . to [conduct] an experiment upon [His] words” (Alma 32:27). These words or seeds have grown into trees, indeed giant trees of testimony. The process continues with more experiments upon the word, resulting in additional trees of testimony, now a veritable forest based on revelation through and by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is a desired gift

When the Savior visited the Americas, He called twelve disciples. One of His messages to them and the people was about the Holy Ghost. After teaching them, the Savior departed and promised to return the next day. The people worked through the night to gather as many as possible to hear Him.

The disciples gathered the people into 12 groups to teach them what the Savior taught them. Foremost among their teachings was the importance of the Holy Ghost. (See 3 Nephi 11–19.) Then the people knelt and prayed. Their heartfelt

desire was to be given the Holy Ghost (see 3 Nephi 19:8–9).

The Savior appeared to them and reinforced the importance of the Holy Ghost as He prayed to the Father:

“Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen. . . .

“Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words” (3 Nephi 19:20–21).

Based on this Book of Mormon event, I understand better why President Wilford Woodruff said that “the gift of the Holy Ghost is the greatest gift that can be bestowed upon man. . . .

“. . . [It] is not restricted to men, nor to apostles or prophets; it belongs to every faithful man and woman, and to every child who is old enough to receive the gospel of Christ” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* [2004], 49).

Revelation provides answers in times of need

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, and with the Father and the Son, He knows all things (see D&C 35:19; 42:17). He has several important roles; foremost among them is to teach and testify of the Father and the Son (see 3 Nephi 28:11). Other roles are that He reveals the truth of all things (see Moroni 10:5) and He leads to do good (see D&C 11:12).

President Thomas S. Monson exemplifies this important role of being led to do good. He follows the example of the Savior, “who went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). He has taught the importance of not ignoring a spiritual prompting from the Holy Ghost to visit someone and to minister to him or her and to rescue the one.

But sometimes there is no one like President Monson, no home teacher, no caring sister available to minister in time of need. In those situations I have come to find solace and direction from

the Comforter, another role of the Holy Ghost (see D&C 36:2).

Our grandson Quinton was born with multiple birth defects and lived three weeks short of a year, during which time he was in and out of the hospital. Sister Jensen and I were living in Argentina at that time. We truly wanted to be there with our children to comfort them and be comforted by them. This was our grandchild, whom we loved and wanted to be near. We could only pray, and we did so fervently!

Sister Jensen and I were on a mission tour when we received word Quinton had died. We stood in the hallway of a meetinghouse and hugged and comforted each other. I witness to you that assurances came to us from the Holy Ghost, a peace which passes all understanding and continues to this day (see Philippians 4:7). We also witnessed the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost in the lives of our son and daughter-in-law and their children, who to this day speak of that time with such faith, peace, and comfort.

Revelation and the Book of Mormon

That same gift of revelation has influenced my testimony of the Book of Mormon. I have read, studied, searched, and feasted upon it again and again. The Holy Ghost has revealed to me its truth and divinity.

President Gordon B. Hinckley called the Book of Mormon one of the four essential cornerstones of the Church, the others being Joseph Smith's First Vision, the restoration of the priesthood, and of course our testimony of Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone (see Ephesians 2:19–21). "These four great God-given gifts," he explained, "are the unshakable cornerstones which anchor The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as the individual testimonies and convictions of its members" ("Four Cornerstones of Faith," *Ensign*, Feb. 2004, 7).

These four God-given gifts have become the anchors to my faith and testimony, each one confirmed to me by revelation through the Holy Ghost. However, for a few minutes I would like to focus on two of these cornerstone gifts—the First Vision and the Book of Mormon. It is significant that each begins in a family setting where children were born of goodly parents and were taught well by them (see 1 Nephi 1:1). Events in the lives of Lehi and Joseph Smith parallel each other (see 1 Nephi 1 and Joseph Smith—History 1):

- Each has a specific need. Lehi's is to save himself and his family from Jerusalem's imminent destruction, and Joseph Smith's is to know which church is true.
- Each prays.
- Each has a vision of the Father and the Son.
- To each is given a book.
- Both preach.
- Each receives revelation from the Holy Ghost and by visions or dreams.
- Finally, wicked people threaten them. Lehi and his people escape and survive. Joseph is martyred.

Is it any wonder that missionaries invite sincere seekers of truth to begin their study of the Book of Mormon in 1 Nephi? This book is *saturated* with the Spirit of the Lord. In these early chapters there is a clear message that revelation and the Holy Ghost are given not only to prophets but also to fathers and mothers and children.

The message about revelation and the Holy Ghost continues throughout the Book of Mormon. These truths are summarized by the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 196).

As Latter-day Saints, we have testimonies of the Book of Mormon given to us by revelation, assuring us that this religion

and its doctrines are true (see introduction to the Book of Mormon).

The things of the Spirit are sacred and hard to express. We, like Ammon, declare, “Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel” (Alma 26:16).

However, I witness that the Holy Ghost is real and He is the testator, revelator, comforter, guide, and supernal teacher.

Humbly I bear witness that this true and living Church, this religion, rests on these four cornerstones. I testify that Jesus Christ is in very deed the chief cornerstone (see Ephesians 2:19–21). President Thomas S. Monson is the Lord’s prophet, and these 15 men seated behind me are prophets, seers, apostles, and revelators. They hold the holy priesthood and keys

of the kingdom. I love, honor, and sustain them. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Uchtdorf

The choir and congregation will now join in singing “Redeemer of Israel.” Following the singing, we will be pleased to hear from Sister Mary N. Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, and she will be followed by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The choir will then sing “Love One Another.”

The choir and congregation sang
“Redeemer of Israel.”

Mary N. Cook

Setting good examples for our youth

A short time ago little Ruby was born into our family. As I looked into her sweet face, I marveled at the knowledge that before she came to earth, she lived in the presence of our Heavenly Father. She had accepted His great plan of happiness and chose to follow Him and Jesus Christ, our Savior.¹ Because of her decision, she was permitted to come to earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. With her spirit united with her body, Ruby has entered a time of learning in which she can prove herself, choose to follow Christ, and prepare to be worthy of eternal life.

Ruby came to this earth pure, but as part of the plan, she will face trials and temptations and she will make mistakes. Through our Savior’s Atonement, however, Ruby can be forgiven, receive a fulness of joy, and be pure again—ready to live forever in the presence of our Heavenly Father.

A few hours after her birth, I was privileged to hold this precious child in my arms. I said to her mother, “Oh, we have

to teach Ruby how to be a virtuous woman, pure and priceless as her name implies.”²

Her mother replied, “I am starting today.”

What will Ruby’s mother do to “start today”? How can we as parents, grandparents, and leaders start and keep our children—our youth—on the path to eternal life? We must “be . . . [examples] of the believers.”³

The prophet Brigham Young said: “We should never permit ourselves to do anything that we are not willing to see our children do. We should set them an example that we wish them to imitate.”⁴ Each of us can start today by being that good example.

Today I would like to invite you to “be . . . an example of the believers . . . in faith [and] in purity”⁵—two principles required for salvation.

Being an example in faith

Be an example of the believers in faith. Actively strengthen your own faith and