



By Elder David P. Homer
Of the Seventy

Trusting Our Father

God trusts us to make many important decisions, and in all matters He asks us to trust Him.

On June 1, 1843, Addison Pratt left Nauvoo, Illinois, to preach the gospel in the Hawaiian Islands, leaving his wife, Louisa Barnes Pratt, to care for their young family.

In Nauvoo, as persecutions intensified, forcing the Saints to leave, and later at Winter Quarters as they prepared to migrate to the Salt Lake Valley, Louisa faced the decision of whether to make the journey. It would have been easier to stay and to wait for Addison to return than to travel alone.

On both occasions, she sought guidance from the prophet, Brigham Young, who encouraged her to go. Despite the great difficulty and her personal reluctance, she successfully made the journey each time.

Initially, Louisa found little joy in traveling. However, she soon began to welcome the green prairie grass, colorful wildflowers, and patches of ground along the riverbanks. “The gloom on my mind wore gradually away,” she recorded, “and there was not a more mirthful woman in the whole company.”¹

Louisa’s story has deeply inspired me. I admire her willingness to set aside her personal preferences, her ability to trust God, and how exercising her faith helped her to see the situation differently.

She has reminded me that we have a loving Father in Heaven, who cares for us wherever we are, and that we can trust Him more than anyone or anything else.²

The Source of Truth

God trusts us to make many important decisions, and in all matters He asks us to trust Him.³ This is especially difficult when our judgment or public opinion differs from His will for His children.

Some suggest that we should redraw the lines between what is right and what is wrong because they say that truth is relative, reality is self-defined, or God is so generous that He does not actually care about what we do.

As we seek to understand and accept God’s will, it is helpful to remember that the boundaries between right and wrong are not for us to define. God has established these

boundaries Himself, based on eternal truths for our benefit and blessing.

The desire to change God’s eternal truth has a long history. It started before the world began, when Satan rebelled against God’s plan, seeking selfishly to destroy human agency.⁴ Following this pattern, people like Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor have argued that faith is foolish, revelation is irrelevant, and whatever we want to do is right.⁵ Sadly, so very often these deviations from God’s truth have led to great sorrow.

While some things may depend on context, not everything does. President Russell M. Nelson has consistently taught that God’s saving truths are absolute, independent, and defined by God Himself.⁶

Our Choice

Whom we choose to trust is one of life’s important decisions. King Benjamin instructed his people, “Believe in God; believe that he is . . . ; believe that he has all wisdom . . . ; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.”⁷

Fortunately, we have the scriptures and guidance from living prophets to help us understand God’s truth. If



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clarification beyond what we have is needed, God provides it through His prophets. And He will respond to our sincere prayers through the Holy Ghost as we seek to understand truths we do not yet fully appreciate.

Elder Neil L. Andersen once taught that we should not be surprised “if at times [our] personal views are not initially in harmony with the teachings of the Lord’s prophet. These are moments of learning,” he said, “of humility, when we go to our knees in prayer. We walk forward in faith, trusting in God, knowing that with time we will receive more spiritual clarity from our Heavenly Father.”⁸

At all times, it is helpful to remember Alma’s teaching that God gives His word according to the attention and effort we devote to it. If we heed God’s word, we will receive more; if we ignore His counsel, we will receive less and less until we have none.⁹ This loss of knowledge does not mean that the truth was wrong; rather, it shows that we have lost the capacity to understand it.¹⁰

Look to the Savior

In Capernaum, the Savior taught about His identity and mission. Many found His words difficult to hear, leading them to turn their backs and “[walk] no more with him.”¹¹

Why did they walk away?

Because they did not like what He said. So, trusting their own judgment, they walked away, denying themselves blessings that would have come had they stayed.

It is easy for our pride to come between us and eternal truth. When we don’t understand, we can pause, let our feelings settle, and then choose how to respond. The Savior urged us to “look unto [Him] in every thought; doubt not, fear not.”¹² When we focus on the Savior, our faith can start to overcome our concerns.

As President Dieter F. Uchtdorf encouraged us to do: “Please, first doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith. We must never allow doubt to hold us prisoner and keep us from the divine love, peace, and gifts



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that come through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹³

Blessings Come to Those Who Stay

As the disciples walked away from the Savior that day, He then asked the Twelve, “Will ye also go away?”

Peter answered:

“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

“And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”¹⁴

Now, the Apostles lived in the same world, and they faced the same social pressures as the disciples who walked away. However, in this moment, they chose their faith and trusted God, thus preserving blessings God gives to those who stay.

Perhaps you, like me, sometimes find yourself on both sides of this

decision. When we find it difficult to understand or embrace God’s will, it is comforting to remember that He loves us as we are, wherever we are. And He has something better for us. If we reach out to Him, He will assist us.

While reaching out to Him can be difficult, just as the father who sought healing for his son was told by the Savior, “All things are possible to him that believeth.”¹⁵ In our moments of struggle, we too can cry out, “Help thou [my] unbelief.”¹⁶

Submitting Our Will to His

Elder Neal A. Maxwell once taught that “the submission of one’s will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God’s altar.”¹⁷ No wonder King Benjamin was so eager that his people become “as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full

of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”¹⁸

As always, the Savior set the perfect example for us. With a heavy heart, and knowing the painful work He had to do, He submitted to His Father’s will, fulfilling His messianic mission and opening the promise of eternity to you and me.¹⁹

The choice to submit our will to God’s is an act of faith that lies at the heart of our discipleship. In making that choice, we discover that our agency is not diminished; rather, it is magnified and rewarded by the presence of the Holy Ghost, who brings purpose, joy, peace, and hope we can find nowhere else.²⁰

Several months ago, a stake president and I visited a sister in his stake and her young adult son. After years away from the Church, wandering difficult and unfriendly paths, she had returned. During our visit, we asked her why she had come back.

“I had made a mess of my life,” she said, “and I knew where I needed to be.”

I then asked her what she had learned in her journey.

With some emotion, she shared that she had learned that she needed to attend church long enough to break the habit of not coming and that she needed to stay until it was where she wanted to be. Her return was not easy, but as she exercised faith in the Father’s plan, she felt the Spirit return.

And then she added, “I have learned for myself that God is good and that His ways are better than mine.”

I bear witness of God, our Eternal Father, who loves us; of His Son, Jesus Christ, who saved us. They know our hurts and challenges. They will never forsake us and know perfectly how to succor us. We can be of good cheer as we trust Them more than anyone or anything else. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Louisa Barnes Pratt, in *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*, vol. 2, *No Unhallowed Hand, 1846–1893* (2020), 103; see also *Saints*, vol. 1, *The Standard of Truth, 1815–1846* (2018), 494–95.
2. After all, He is our Father. He loves us. And, as Elder Patrick Kearon taught, “[He] is in relentless pursuit of [us]. He ‘wants all of

His children to choose to return to Him’ [*General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1.1, Gospel Library], and He employs every possible measure to bring [us] back” (“God’s Intent Is to Bring You Home,” *Liahona*, May 2024, 87).

3. See 2 Nephi 4:34.
4. See Moses 4:3.
5. See Jacob 7:7; Alma 1:4; 30:13–18, 23–28.
6. See Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!” *Liahona*, Nov. 2023, 117–19; “The Love and Laws of God” (Brigham Young University devotional, Sept. 17, 2019), speeches.byu.edu; “Pure Truth, Pure Doctrine, and Pure Revelation,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2021, 6–7.
7. Mosiah 4:9.
8. Neil L. Andersen, “The Prophet of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 26.
9. See Alma 12:9–11.
10. See Alma 32:38–39.
11. John 6:66; see also verse 60.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 6:36.
13. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Come, Join with Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 23.
14. John 6:67–69.
15. Mark 9:23.
16. Mark 9:24.
17. Neal A. Maxwell, “Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 24.
18. Mosiah 3:19.
19. See Doctrine and Covenants 19:18–19.
20. See Acts 5:32; Galatians 3:2; Jarom 1:4; Alma 32:28; Mormon 9:25; Ether 4:11.

