

Twelve Apostles, the First Quorum of the Seventy, and those I love most—the rank-and-file members of the Church. I express my love to my wife; without her love and understanding, I literally would not be standing at this pulpit today. I love my children, who must also give up their anonymity, as well as some time with their father. How I wish I could embrace my oldest son, who is serving a mission in the Cook Islands!

I thank God I was born of goodly parents. I begged my mother not to stand and take my picture as I came to the stand for the first time yesterday morning! But what would I have done if, during my formative years, she had not demonstrated that same pride and enthusiasm for everything I accomplished, however small. My father, Bishop Kenneth L. Pace, was the bishop of the Bonneville Ward in the East Provo Stake during my teens. He remains uppermost in my mind as exemplifying the pure love of Christ throughout his life.

Prayer of my heart

Finally, I share the prayer of my heart with you at this time. May I display in my service the courage of my convictions in a manner like unto that displayed by Bishop Victor L. Brown. May I acquire the inspired, objective judgment of Bishop H. Burke Peterson. And may I acquire the open, warm, Christlike personality of Bishop J. Richard Clarke. May I exhibit the love and loyalty to Bishop Hales taught to us so beautifully by Joseph's beloved brother, Hyrum. And lastly, may we as a Bishopric acquire the same love, respect, and unity I felt in the bishopric of the Bountiful Thirteenth Ward with Bishop Lee J. Lalli and D. Ray Alexander, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks spoke without further announcement.

Elder Dallin H. Oaks

To partake of the sacrament

On this Easter Sunday we rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This is a holy day for all of Christianity. Countless Christians attend worship services on this day to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which many call communion. (See 1 Corinthians 10:16.)

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are commanded to partake of the sacrament each week. (See D&C 59:9, 12.) In doing so, they witness unto God the Eternal Father, as stated in the prayer on the bread, that they are "willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them" (D&C 20:77, Moroni 4:3). We

should ponder these sacred covenants during the sacrament service.

On this Easter Sunday it is appropriate to reflect on what it means to partake of the sacrament. I will focus on the first of these solemn "witnesses" to God the Eternal Father: that we are willing to take upon us the name of his Son. What does this mean?

Taking upon us the name of Jesus Christ

Our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ has several different meanings. Some of these meanings are obvious, and well within the understanding of our children. Others are only evident to those who have searched the scriptures and pondered the wonders of eternal life.

One of the obvious meanings renews a promise we made when we were baptized. Following the scriptural pattern, persons who are baptized "witness before the Church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end" (D&C 20:37; see also 2 Nephi 31:13, Moroni 6:3). When we partake of the sacrament, we renew this covenant and all the other covenants we made in the waters of baptism. (See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-56], 2:341, 346.)

As a second obvious meaning, we take upon us our Savior's name when we become members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By his commandment, this church bears his name. (See D&C 115:4, 3 Nephi 27:7-8.) Every member, young and old, is a member of the "household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). As true believers in Christ, as Christians, we have gladly taken his name upon us. (See Alma 46:15.) As King Benjamin taught his people, "Because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you" (Mosiah 5:7; see also Alma 5:14, 36:23-26).

We also take upon us the name of Jesus Christ whenever we publicly proclaim our belief in him. Each of us has many opportunities to proclaim our belief to friends and neighbors, fellow workers, and casual acquaintances. As the Apostle Peter taught the Saints of his day, we should "sanctify the Lord God in [our] hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us]" (1 Peter 3:15). In this, we keep the modern commandment: "Take upon you the name of Christ, and speak the truth in soberness" (D&C 18:21).

A third meaning appeals to the understanding of those mature enough to know that a follower of Christ is obligated to serve him. Many scriptural ref-

erences to the name of the Lord seem to be references to the work of his kingdom. Thus, when Peter and the other Apostles were beaten, they rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41). Paul wrote certain members who had ministered to the Saints that the Lord would not forget the labor of love they had "shewed toward his name" (Hebrews 6:10). According to this meaning, by witnessing our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we signify our willingness to do the work of his kingdom.

In these three relatively obvious meanings, we see that we take upon us the name of Christ when we are baptized in his name, when we belong to his Church and profess our belief in him, and when we do the work of his kingdom.

There are other meanings as well, deeper meanings that the more mature members of the Church should understand and ponder as he or she partakes of the sacrament.

Authority of God and exaltation

It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we *take upon us* the name of Jesus Christ. We witness that we are *willing* to do so. (See D&C 20:77.) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense.

What future event or events could this covenant contemplate? The scriptures suggest two sacred possibilities, one concerning the authority of God, especially as exercised in the temples, and the other—closely related—concerning exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

The name of God is sacred. The Lord's prayer begins with the words, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9). From Sinai came the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the

Lord thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7, Deuteronomy 5:11). Latter-day revelation equates this with using the name of God without authority. "Let all men beware how they take my name in their lips," the Lord declares in a modern revelation, for "many there be who . . . use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority" (D&C 63:61-62).

Consistent with these references, many scriptures that refer to "the name of Jesus Christ" are obviously references to the authority of the Savior. This was surely the meaning conveyed when the seventy reported to Jesus that "even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). The Doctrine and Covenants employs this same meaning when it describes the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation as "they who shall desire to take upon them my name with full purpose of heart" (D&C 18:27). The Twelve are later designated as "special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world," and as those who "officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church" (D&C 107:23, 33).

The significance of temples

By way of further illustration, the Old Testament contains scores of references to the name of the Lord in a context where it clearly means the authority of the Lord. Most of these references have to do with the temple.

When the children of Israel were still on the other side of the Jordan, the Lord told them that when they entered the promised land there should be a place where the Lord their God would "cause his name to dwell" (Deuteronomy 12:11; see also Deuteronomy 14:23-24, 16:6). Time after time in succeeding revelations, the Lord and his servants referred to the future temple as a house for "the name" of the Lord God of Israel. (See 1 Kings 3:2; 5:5; 8:16-20, 29, 44, 48; 1 Chronicles 22:8-10, 19; 29:16; 2 Chronicles 2:4; 6:5-10, 20, 34, 38.) After the temple

was dedicated, the Lord appeared to Solomon and told him that He had hallowed the temple "to put my name there for ever" (1 Kings 9:3, 2 Chronicles 7:16).

Similarly, in modern revelations the Lord refers to temples as houses built "unto my holy name" (D&C 124:39, 105:33, 109:2-5). In the inspired dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord for a blessing upon "thy people upon whom thy name shall be put in this house" (D&C 109:26).

All of these references to ancient and modern temples as houses for "the name" of the Lord obviously involve something far more significant than a mere inscription of his sacred name on the structure. The scriptures speak of the Lord's putting his name in a temple because he gives authority for his name to be used in the sacred ordinances of that house. That is the meaning of the Prophet's reference to the Lord's putting his name upon his people in that holy house. (See D&C 109:26.)

Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Called by his name

Another future event we may anticipate when we witness our willingness to take that sacred name upon us concerns our relationship to our Savior and the incomprehensible blessings available to those who will be called by his name at the last day.

King Benjamin told his people, "There shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of

Christ, the Lord Omnipotent" (Mosiah 3:17; see also 2 Nephi 31:21). Peter proclaimed "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" to the leaders of the Jews, declaring that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:10, 12; see also D&C 18:21).

The scriptures proclaim that the Savior's atoning sacrifice was for those who "believe on his name." Alma taught that Jesus Christ, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, would come "to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name" (Alma 5:48, 9:27, 11:40; Helaman 14:2). In the words of King Benjamin, "Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ" (Mosiah 5:9).

Thus, those who exercise faith in the sacred name of Jesus Christ and repent of their sins and enter into his covenant and keep his commandments (see Mosiah 5:8) can lay claim on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who do so will be called by his name at the last day.

When the Savior taught the Nephites following his resurrection, he referred to the scriptural statement that "ye must take upon you the name of Christ." He explained, "For by this name shall ye be called at the last day; And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day" (3 Nephi 27:5-6). That same teaching is repeated in a modern revelation, which adds the caution that "if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father" (D&C 18:25; see also Alma 5:38).

The Book of Mormon explains the significance of being called by the name of Jesus Christ. When the Savior showed his spirit body to the brother of Jared, he introduced himself as the Father and the Son, declaring that through his redeeming sacrifice all mankind

who believed on his name should have life eternal through him, "and they shall become my sons and my daughters" (Ether 3:14). Abinadi said of those who believed in the Lord and looked to him for a remission of their sins "that these are his seed, or they are heirs of the kingdom of God" (Mosiah 15:11). He continued this explanation as follows:

"For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed?" (Mosiah 15:12).

Speaking through the prophet Alma, the Lord explained the significance of this relationship: "For behold, in my name are they called; and if they know me they shall come forth, and shall have a place eternally at my right hand" (Mosiah 26:24).

Faith, repentance, compliance with laws and ordinances

In these great scriptures from the Book of Mormon, we learn that those who are qualified by faith and repentance and compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel will have their sins borne by the Lord Jesus Christ. In spiritual and figurative terms they will become the sons and daughters of Christ, heirs to his kingdom. These are they who will be called by his name in the last day.

According to this meaning, when we witness our *willingness* to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we are signifying our commitment to do all that we can to achieve eternal life in the kingdom of our Father. We are expressing our candidacy—our determination to strive for—exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

Those who are found worthy to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ at the last day are described in the great revelations recorded in the ninety-third and seventy-sixth sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. Here the Savior revealed to Joseph Smith that in due time, if we keep the commandments of God, we can receive the

“fulness” of the Father (D&C 93:19–20). Here the Savior bears record that “all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the [Father], and are the church of the Firstborn” (D&C 93:22). “They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things. . . . Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods” who “shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever” (D&C 76:55, 58, 62). “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3; see also D&C 88:4–5). This is the ultimate significance of taking upon us the name of Jesus Christ.

When the priest offers the scriptural prayer on the bread at the sacrament table, he prays that all who partake may “witness” unto God, the Eternal Father, “that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son” (D&C 20:77, Moroni 4:3). This witness has several different meanings.

Candidacy for exaltation

It causes us to renew the covenant we made in the waters of baptism to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and serve him to the end. We also take upon us his name as we publicly profess our belief in him, as we fulfill our obligations as members of his Church, and as we do the work of his kingdom.

But there is something beyond these familiar meanings, because what we witness is not that we *take* upon us his name but that we are *willing* to do so. In this sense, our witness relates to some future event or status whose attainment is not self-assumed, but depends on the authority or initiative of the Savior himself.

Scriptural references to the name of Jesus Christ often signify the authority of Jesus Christ. In that sense, our willingness to take upon us his name signifies our willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ in the sacred ordinances of the temple, and to receive the highest blessings available

through his authority when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Finally, our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ affirms our commitment to do all that we can to be counted among those whom he will choose to stand at his right hand and be called by his name at the last day. In this sacred sense, our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ constitutes our declaration of candidacy for exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is eternal life, “the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7).

That is what we should ponder as we partake of the sacred emblems of the sacrament. As we do so, we glory in the mission of the risen Lord, who lived and taught and suffered and died and rose again that all mankind might have immortality *and eternal life*. Of this I testify in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose witness I am, amen.

President Benson

We have just heard from Elder Dallin H. Oaks, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Before hearing President Hinckley’s concluding remarks, we should like to express appreciation and our sincere gratitude to the Tabernacle Choir, the Primary children’s choir, and the Brigham Young University priesthood choir, and to their conductors and organists.

We thank our city officials for the cooperation given this conference, the Relief Society and Church Health Unit nurses who have been on hand to render service throughout the conference, and the ushers and interpreters.

We express appreciation to the local and national press representatives for the coverage given to the conference and to the owners and managers of the many radio and television stations and cable systems who have given public service time to carry sessions of this conference to many countries.