

Moses 1:10) only at the Day of Judgment. Now and every day in our mortal lives, He wants to sharpen our awareness, that we may become our own judges, as He calls us to a continuous process of repentance.

After Alma had spoken about repentance and desires of righteousness until the end of life, he said, "They . . . are redeemed of the Lord; . . . for behold, they are their own judges" (Alma 41:7). The Apostle Paul also explained, as stated in 1 Corinthians 11:31, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

It seems that we can effectively go through the process of continuous repentance only if we literally learn to become our own judges. We ourselves and the Lord are the only ones who really know us. We do not even know ourselves unless we have learned to walk the lonely and most challenging road toward self-honesty, as constantly prompted by the Spirit.

This is the sacrifice we have to learn to offer. Nobody will ever be able to understand or even to accept principles of truth unless he or she, to some degree, has developed a painful awareness of the dimensions of self-honesty. Without the capability to recognize truth, we will not be really free: we will be slaves to habits or prejudices heavily covered with excuses. But learning to become aware of the depth of the dimensions of truth will make us free. We cannot remove a stumbling block unless we see it first. We cannot grow unless we know what is holding us back.

Understanding gained in the temple

My dear brothers and sisters, I know of no better place where we can grow in

the understanding of the principles of honesty than in the house of the Lord. I know of no better place to learn to grow in the dimensions of becoming our own judge than in the house of the Lord. We have reason to rejoice because the understanding that this life is a time for men to prepare to meet God has come to us while we still have time to consider the consequences of this message. We are still alive, and our probationary state is not yet over. Temples have been erected as houses of the Lord. They are standing ready to serve as instruments to our own gradual awakening to the full dimensions of truth on our inevitable road to eternity.

I personally have been humbled deeply in these days of quietness in the temple as I have been granted a deeper understanding of the nothingness of man, the need for a process of continuous repentance, and the need for temple covenants, which are based upon the principles of the atonement of Christ.

I know that the Lord Jesus Christ lives. I know that this is His church. I know that He stands at the helm of this work. It is a great joy to see the continuously increasing numbers of members who are understanding the importance of the temple for their own spiritual education and, therefore, for their own spiritual preparation for eternal life.

I leave you this testimony as your brother and your servant, and I do this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Sister Joy F. Evans, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency.

Sister Joy F. Evans

Ministering to the sick and needy

We read in the book of Matthew that when the Son of Man shall come in his

glory, all the nations of the earth shall be gathered before him and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. Those on

his right hand shall be blessed and shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. (See Matthew 25:31-34.) And the King shall say unto them:

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

"Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous answer . . . , Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

"When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

"Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?"

"And the King shall answer . . . , Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:35-40).

Almost every day we have the opportunity to feed the hungry, to visit the sick, to help bear one another's burdens, even as the Savior taught. Sometimes the service is given to our family, our children, our husbands or wives, our parents, our loved ones. Sometimes it is a neighbor or a friend in need, sometimes a stranger.

Having compassion on those who are hurting for whatever reason and then translating the response of the heart into the needed act is truly ministering as God would have us do.

Relief Society service

At the time of the organization of the Relief Society, the Prophet Joseph Smith told the sisters that they were now in a position to act according to those sympathies which God had placed in their bosoms (see *History of the Church*, 4:605).

Today, countless women in the Church reach out to others through visiting teaching and compassionate service, which are still the heart of Relief Society. They bless the lives of others and buoy up those who may be discouraged or homesick, frightened or disheartened. They remember the counsel given us by a

prophet that "God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another person that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other in the kingdom" (Spencer W. Kimball, "Small Acts of Service," *Ensign*, Dec. 1974, p. 5). The book of Proverbs admonishes us to "withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (3:27).

Perhaps a personal experience will help to illustrate this loving, watchful care that we are to extend to one another.

My husband and I have been blessed with ten wonderful children. Seven of them are living, which means, of course, that three of them are not. During the times that I was pregnant I had to stay in bed much of the time, and it was always a great worry that I carry those precious babies until they were big enough to survive. During many weeks, my visiting teachers came with lunch for me or dinner for my family. They tended our toddlers and sent library books for me to read.

When our twins were born, we were totally surprised by having two babies! How wonderful to have two little people with only one pregnancy! It was not to be for long, however—at least in this life. Our baby boy lived two days; our baby girl lived three. The sisters were there again, not only with food, but with a beautiful rose bush called "Duet" which flourished and grew. It was a sweet reminder of a tender time. The lovely blossoms helped us to remember our little ones, our friends, our gratitude for the gospel and for the Church.

Reaching out in love

We must take seriously our responsibility to reach out in love to those among us who may be lonely or unhappy—who are struggling with problems or temptations. They will find friends somewhere; they will find comfort somewhere. What is our failure if they find it elsewhere because we were not there, were not welcoming?

"I needed you—I couldn't find you—I don't need you anymore." We

must not let this happen if there is any way for us to be there when we are needed.

Responding to chronic and terminal illness

Response to the needs of the sick, and especially the terminally ill and their families, has been a part of the work of love assigned to the Relief Society since its very beginning. Times have changed greatly since those early days in Nauvoo when the sisters gave much of the only care given to the sick and dying, when they sewed the casket linings, made the burial clothes, cared tenderly for the bodies of the dead, and comforted the living. Life is not so hard now in our time and generation and has been lengthened for most of us and made infinitely more comfortable.

But chronic and terminal illness still exist—sometimes for the young, sometimes for the elderly—and death must still be faced. We still are to help “bear . . . one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2), “comfort those that stand in need of comfort,” and “mourn with those that mourn” (Mosiah 18:9).

Compassionate service can be a sweet, sustaining help to the patient and the family during such times. “I was sick, . . . and ye came unto me” (Matthew 25:36).

Many times people do nothing in such a situation simply because they do not know what to do. They are afraid of intruding or of saying the wrong thing. Perhaps they do not know how to relate to a dying person or to the family. They may feel emotions of anger, sadness, or confusion. Nevertheless, even they can find many ways to help.

One woman tells the story of a tragedy she experienced when five of her close family members from another state were killed in a fiery automobile accident. She herself was struggling to absorb the news, trying to pack for her own little family to leave the following day for the funeral. A good friend and neighbor ar-

rived at her door with the announcement that he had come to clean their shoes. She had not even thought about shoes.

He knelt on their kitchen floor with a pan of soapy water, a sponge, shoe polish, and a brush and soon had everyday shoes and Sunday shoes gleaming and spotless. He quietly slipped away when he finished, leaving the shoes ready to pack; even the soles were washed.

The mother says, “Now, whenever I hear of an acquaintance who has lost a loved one, I no longer call with the vague offer, ‘If there’s anything I can do . . .’ Now I try to think of one specific task that suits that person’s need—such as washing the family car, taking the dog to the boarding kennel, or house-sitting during the funeral. And if the person says to me, ‘How did you know I needed that done?’ I reply, ‘It’s because a man once cleaned my shoes.’” (Madge Harrah, “I’ve Come to Clean Your Shoes,” *Reader’s Digest*, Dec. 1983, pp. 21–24).

Total care of a patient with serious chronic or terminal illness is not an easy, short-term project. It is most often a profound emotional and physical experience. The sick person and the family usually welcome regular emotional and spiritual support.

Giving respite to those who care for the chronically or terminally ill can allow them to regain their strength and coping skills. The length of such care depends upon individual circumstances; even an hour or two can make a great difference to an overburdened family.

The mother who cannot spend needed time with a teenage daughter because of the demands of caring for a grandmother who has had a stroke, the family that feels guilty because it expresses the desire to be away from the problem for a little while, the parents who are too fatigued to care properly for their little ones, the mother who spends so much time with a handicapped child that other children in the family feel (and sometimes are) neglected—all need loving support and relief from overwhelming responsibilities.

Helping others through a time of special challenge requires understanding and patience. People respond to grief in different ways. Not everyone recovers in the same period of time, and not everyone acts the same. The griever might be irritable, depressed, quiet, or withdrawn, but through kindness and friendship, he or she will almost always recover and will come to acceptance.

A testimony of the reality of Jesus Christ and of his resurrection is the knowledge that sustains and comforts in times of trial. This assurance guides those bowed down with grief out of the shadow and into the light. This knowledge we can share with one another: "I know that my Redeemer lives. What comfort this sweet sentence gives!" ("I Know That My Redeemer Lives," *Hymns*, no. 136).

Being sensitive to such needs helps everyone find joy in the precious reality of everyday living and look forward with faith to the future, knowing that sorrow and struggle and endurance to the end are necessary parts of mortality.

Being sensitive to special problems

It is said that love is tested and proved in the fire of suffering and adversity. How sensitive we should be to those who are suffering or hurting, to those with special problems—the sister who has had a miscarriage or a stillbirth, a premature or handicapped child; the one whose beloved husband has died; the lovely woman to whom marriage and family have not yet come; the new convert whose family has rejected her because of her baptism.

What we do or say is not as important as that we do or say something—"I care about you," or "Let me help." Where love is, heart will respond to heart and burdens will be lightened.

We must never feel that we have done our share or had our turn. I love something Dag Hammarskjöld once said when he was secretary general of the United Nations: "You have not done enough, you have never done enough as long as there is something more that you can contribute" (in Richard L. Evans, Jr., *Richard L. Evans—The Man and the*

Message [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973], p. 256).

Pouring down your calm light

For those among us who, for some reason, such as age or health, cannot give the kind of service we've been discussing, we would say, as someone said: "Among the people whom we know, it is not necessarily those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible charge and work to whom we owe the most. It is often the lives, like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage. It is good to know that even when we can no longer do something for our fellowmen, we can still be something for them; to know, and this surely, that no man or woman of the humblest sort can really be strong, gentle, and good without the world's being better for that goodness."

Almost everyone can do or be something for someone else in need.

Helping those whose faith is weak

Perhaps there are days or times when, faced with overwhelming problems, we want to believe. We may worry or fret or doubt, yet we want to believe. It is comforting to me to know that the Lord knew even that this would be so and gave us in the book of Mark a wonderful story of a distraught father who brought his son to the Savior to be healed of a condition which sounds perhaps like epilepsy (see 9:14-29).

Jesus said: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:23-24).

We can help each other, also, on our days of unbelief. We can strengthen and lift and bless those whose faith might be weak. As Alma said, "Even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you" (Alma 32:27). This is the planting of the seed of faith.

On the right hand of the Lord

We must recognize that life is a precious gift (Florence Nightingale called it a "splendid gift"), that trust and tenderness are fragile, that we must love and serve one another, must encourage one another, forgive one another—all this not once, but over and over again. Then perhaps we shall be remembered among those on the right hand of the Lord when he shall come in his glory.

"Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?"

"Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?"

"And the King shall answer . . . , Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these

my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:37–40).

That we may do so, brothers and sisters, each of us, as we have the opportunity, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Excellent instruction and a sweet spirit. We have just heard from Sister Joy F. Evans, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," following which Elder Royden G. Derrick, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak to us.

The choir and congregation sang "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Elder Royden G. Derrick

The way to perfection

In October of 1833, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation in which the Lord said, "I will raise up unto myself a pure people, that will serve me in righteousness" (D&C 100:16). The Lord was speaking of our pioneer forefathers, and also of the Saints of this day. In view of that implied responsibility, I would like to discuss with you today the way to perfection, which not only applies to this life but to the next one as well.

A fortnight ago I received an interesting letter from a member of the Church who grew up in a country located high in the Himalaya Mountains of southern Asia. He wrote: "I was brought up in a royal, aristocratic, Hindu priest family. I was taught to work but not to hope for a reward. I thought, Why should I work if there is no reward? Am I following the right way? I was offended with polytheistic and pantheistic philosophy. I wanted to know the *real* truth and the [right] way." He told how he had found the truth and the only right way through

the Mormon missionaries in Seoul, Korea. He bore a powerful testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ that brought tears to my eyes.

I was intrigued by his statement concerning the need for a reward. The Lord has promised us resurrection and immortality, but these are not a reward. According to Webster's dictionary, a reward is "something that is given for some service or attainment."

Resurrection is the reuniting of the body and the spirit. As Jesus was resurrected, eventually every person who was ever born into this world will be resurrected, whether he wants to be or not. When a person is resurrected, he receives immortality, which is to live forever in the resurrected state. Likewise, every person who was ever born into this world will receive immortality regardless of his or her behavior in this life. Thus, *resurrection* and *immortality* are synonymous. They are not a reward—they are a gift—for we have rendered no service nor attained any accomplishment to warrant