

can be baptized vicariously for our ancestors who may not have had a chance to hear the gospel during their mortal lives (see 1 Corinthians 15:29).

In Japan I witnessed a 21-year-old man accept the gospel. After baptism, he was the only member of the Church in his family. He completed the family history work for his deceased grandfather so he could perform ordinance work vicariously for him, literally doing something for his grandfather that his grandfather could no longer do for himself. As this young man came up out of the baptismal font, he had tears in his eyes. He said, "Now I know and feel, I have a witness, that I am not the only member of this Church in my family." These ordinances strengthened his relationship with his family and brought a new closeness into his life.

The gates of heaven are open

At the dedication of the Manti Temple, Elder Lorenzo Snow prayed, "May this holy Temple be to them as one of the gates of heaven, opening into the straight and narrow path that leads to endless

lives and eternal dominion" (quoted in N. B. Lundwall, comp., *Temples of the Most High* [1941], 111).

Brothers and sisters, the gates of heaven are open to us, and the Lord Jesus Christ is inviting us to come unto Him, I humbly testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "My Redeemer Lives."

President Hinckley

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Twelve and Elder David E. Sorensen of the Seventy have just spoken to us. The choir then sang "My Redeemer Lives."

The choir and congregation will now sing "How Firm a Foundation." Following the singing, Sister Susan L. Warner, second counselor in the Primary general presidency, will address us.

The choir and congregation sang "How Firm a Foundation."

Sister Susan L. Warner

All things bear record of Him

Because our Heavenly Father wants us to know Him and to feel His love, He planned a world filled with magnificent creations that bear record of Him and His Son, Jesus Christ. Have you ever counted all the things that bear record of the Savior? There are sunsets and seashells, lilacs and lakes, insects and animals, miraculous mornings and star-strewn skies.

The Lord Himself told Adam, "All things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are tempo-

ral, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: *all things bear record of me*" (Moses 6:63; italics added).

Wherever we live in this world, we see the glorious rising sun, which bears record of the Light of Christ that fills our hearts and enlightens our minds. The mighty rivers and the meandering streams bear record that the Savior is the source of the living water that can quench our thirst for spiritual things.

The lilies of the field and even the smallest sparrow bear record of His generous and personal care.

We should bear record of Him

But of all God's remarkable creations, only we, His children, are created in His image and likeness. Only we, His children, have the capacity to develop our own spiritual convictions. And only we, His children, can give voice and expression to our witness of Him. We, His children, rejoice in our privilege and sacred obligation to bear record of Him and His gospel.

Not long ago our granddaughter Susie received a copy of the scriptures. She lives in an area where her classmates and teacher are not members of the Church, so she wanted to share with them the Articles of Faith that were recorded in her new scriptures. She decided it would be appropriate to do this at school during the time that was scheduled for sharing something newsworthy. When the time came, eight-year-old Susie stood before her classmates and began, "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost" (Articles of Faith 1:1). She continued, but when she got to the seventh article of faith, one classmate loudly complained, "This isn't a current event!" The teacher quickly responded, "Well, it's news to me!"

Each of us can share the good news of the gospel and give words to our convictions. If we are sensitive to the whisperings of the Spirit, we can find opportunities to humbly express our beliefs. Even a shy eight-year-old child felt the desire to share the articles of her faith.

The Spirit will bear witness as we testify

When we bear record of the good news of the gospel, our spoken testi-

mony invites the Holy Ghost to bear His witness of the truth of the message. It is not our words that carry the power but rather the Spirit of God that accompanies our words and confirms them in the hearts of the listeners. Nephi explained in the Book of Mormon, "For when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men" (2 Nephi 33:1).

When we declare where we stand and humbly give words to what we believe and feel, the Spirit also bears witness to our own souls that what we speak is true. Elder Boyd K. Packer said it simply, "A testimony is to be *found* in the bearing of it!" ("The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 54).

Bear record to children

In a society of unstable values and confusing voices, testimony can be the means by which parents give children an anchor for their faith. We do this in our families by bearing record of Jesus Christ and His gospel with our actions and our words. We do this when we pray together, study the scriptures, and hold regular family home evenings. Around the dinner table, parents and children can share what they are learning in Church meetings and activities and their everyday experiences applying gospel principles. Within this sacred family circle, children can learn to express feelings of love and gratitude for Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and for the blessings that come to us as we live together in families on this beautiful earth.

Children have their own spiritual sensitivities, and they make their own observations of Heavenly Father's creations. They are naturally interested in the worm that slithers in the rain puddle, enchanted by the sound of the ocean heard in a seashell, spellbound by the magical

pattern of clouds moving across the sky. It is a delightful privilege for any of us to take the hand of a child and accompany him as he discovers this beautiful world, but it is an even greater and more sacred privilege to help a child know the Creator of this world and to bear record of the love that He has for every one of His children.

When we share our feelings with our little ones and bear record of Him, we open the door for them to share their experiences and to give words to their own spiritual insights and feelings. And when we help children identify the divine source of those feelings, their understanding and love for the Savior will grow line upon line, precept upon precept.

Teach children the scriptures

As young children hear the words from the scriptures and later read the scriptures for themselves, they become familiar with a vocabulary that enables them to express their spiritual feelings. Even very young children, long before they are able to read, can feel the message of the scriptures and begin to understand God's love for them.

Bradley, though only two years old, loved to be a part of family scripture time. When it was his turn, he held his scriptures and carefully turned each page, saying, "Heavenly Father loves me; Heavenly Father loves me." Experiencing the unfailing love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ is the foundation of testimony.

A grandfather testifies

I know a grandfather who, at a recent family gathering in the mountains, took his grandchildren for a walk. As they came to a clearing in the trees, he invited the young children to sit down on a log while he told them about a 14-year-old

boy named Joseph Smith, who wanted to ask Heavenly Father some questions that were troubling him. The grandfather explained that the boy Joseph went to a grove of trees near his home to pray, having faith that God would answer him. The grandchildren quietly listened, but four-year-old Johnny, who often has difficulty sitting still, could not contain himself. He blurted out, "I've heard that story before."

The grandfather told of Joseph's sincere prayer and how it was answered with a glorious visitation from Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. As he finished, little Johnny grabbed his grandfather's hand and said, "That was a good testimony, Grandpa." He loved hearing the story again.

Though the grandfather had repeated this sacred account many times throughout his life, he said, "Never did the Spirit of the Lord bear stronger witness than when I bore my testimony of Joseph Smith to my own grandchildren." The grandfather and the children had felt the witness of the Holy Ghost. Like Johnny, our children may have heard the scripture stories before, but have they heard us bear our personal testimony of the truthfulness of the accounts and the principles they teach?

Who can measure the influence of simple, sacred words of testimony? Who can calculate the impact of the Spirit that confirms those words? The seeds of testimony that are planted in the hearts of children when they are young are nourished throughout their lives by hearing the testimonies of those who love them enough to bear witness of the truth.

Parents have been given a sacred responsibility. But parents need help. Uncles, aunts, friends, leaders, and teachers add their witness when they share their testimonies with children and youth. Several times the scriptures tell us that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (D&C 6:28).

Leave a legacy of testimony

It is easy for those of us whose children are grown to feel discouraged and wish we had done more to bear record when our children were young. But it is never too late. My father, who passed away last year, was a living testimony to me throughout his life. But near the end of his life he also wrote his personal history in order to bear record not only to his children and grandchildren but to all of his posterity for generations to come. Nothing he could have left his family is more precious than the record of his testimony and love.

I remember how my father taught me of his testimony with the fingers of his hand:

1. God is our loving Father in Heaven.

2. His Son, Jesus Christ, is our Savior and Redeemer.

3. Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and he was the instrument through which the gospel of Jesus Christ was

restored to the earth and the Book of Mormon was translated.

4. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord's Church on the earth today.

5. This Church is led by a living prophet who receives revelation.

My brothers and sisters, this is *my* testimony. I humbly bear record to you that these things are true. With all of God's creations, may each of us bear record of Him. In His sacred name, Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "A Child's Prayer."

President Hinckley

Sister Susan L. Warner of the Primary general presidency has spoken to us, and the choir then sang "A Child's Prayer."

We will now be pleased to hear from Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve.

Elder Richard G. Scott

Reasons to be optimistic

I speak particularly to the youth, although I hope all may benefit from this message. Some youth are pessimistic about the future. They justify that erroneous position by what they see around them and what is occurring in the world. They perceive their future threatened by worsening trends in divorce rates, escalating crime, drugs, terrorist acts, and other atrocities that cripple or destroy life. Throughout your life you have seen the terrible consequences of incorrect choices individuals make that damage their lives and often hurt others. These events are usually called mistakes, lack of judgment, or human weakness. They

are all accompanied by abundant self-justification. When viewed honestly, they are simply violations of the commandments of God that bring the tragic consequences He has warned will follow serious transgression.

Personally, I am enthusiastic about the future. You can be too. You are living in the most exciting period of time in history. Many reasons could be cited for that optimism. Yet your greatest source of hope and assurance is that you have the fulness of the teachings of the Master. They will show you how to live a good life. You can receive ordinances and covenants that, when righteously lived, ensure true happiness and significant attainment.