

dress is [www.mormon.org](http://www.mormon.org). For missionaries, the value and use of this new resource will emerge with experience. For members of the Church, it will help us answer the questions of friends directly or by referring them to the site. It will also allow us to send our friends electronic greeting cards that include gospel messages and invitations.

#### IV. Conclusion

We have been asked to redouble our efforts and our effectiveness in sharing the gospel to accomplish the Lord's purposes in this great work. Until we do so, these wonderful full-time missionaries—our sons and daughters and our noble as-

sociates in the Lord's work—will remain underused in their great assignment to teach the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

We have spoken about loving desire, heavenly guidance, and ways we can proceed with the divine command to share the gospel with our neighbors. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the brightest light and the only hope for this darkened world. "Wherefore," as Nephi teaches, we "must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men" (2 Nephi 31:20).

I testify of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and of His desire that we join wholeheartedly in this, His work, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## Elder Charles Didier

### Building a bridge of faith

Entering the offices of a large advertising company, one could read the following thought framed on one of the walls: "Men are building too many walls and not enough bridges" (from JCDecaux, a firm based in France).

Indeed, walls are usually built to separate two or more entities physically, mentally, or even spiritually and to create obstacles. They are built because they represent the idea of defense, protection, or separation. Some walls have acquired fame because of that nature: the walls of Jerusalem, the Great Wall of China, the Wall of Berlin. Walls, as a symbol, are also used in our common vocabulary to reflect this idea of separation, as in "a wall of incomprehension," "a wall of intolerance," or "it is like talking to a brick wall!"

Bridges are the opposite of walls. Bridges are built to bring together, to join two or more entities, and to create unity. They are built to overcome obstacles. Some bridges have become famous, like

the Bridge of Sighs, the Allenby Bridge, and so many others. The term is also used in our language to express the idea of reunion or unity, as in "to bridge a gap" or "to bridge differences."

As we consider our mortal existence on this earth and the purpose of life expressed by Amulek—that "this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God" (Alma 34:32)—what is the Lord's way to help us achieve this very purpose? It is simply, by using this metaphor, to help us build a bridge of faith in our life for crossing and overcoming the walls of unbelief, indifference, fear, or sin. Our mortal life is the time for men to meet God by building a bridge of faith, opening the door into immortality and eternal life.

### Building a bridge in Belgium

How do we build such a bridge of faith?

When I was a young man living in a city called Namur in Belgium, there was a large river separating it from an adjacent city on the other side of the river. At that

time, only one bridge connected the two cities. It had been built and rebuilt over the remnants of a bridge built centuries before by the Roman conquerors. It had become too narrow for the traffic, and there were too many small arches to allow the passage of large boats and barges. A new bridge was necessary, wider and with only one arch. The work to establish the foundations soon started on both sides of the river. Rapidly, two huge metallic arms began to stretch from each side with the aim to meet together in the middle of the river. I was fascinated by the engineering and rode my bicycle almost every day to watch the progress of the work.

Finally the day came when the centerpiece, a cornerstone made of steel, was going to link the two arms together. Crowds were now watching with me the delicate operation, the final step that would join the two arms together and permit crossing the bridge for the first time. When it took place, people applauded; workers embraced; the obstacle of the river had been conquered and overcome.

### **The centerpiece of the bridge of faith**

I mention this experience because of the symbolism it represents. The bridge is more than a bridge of metal. It symbolizes the bridge of faith enabling us, children of our Heavenly Father, to meet Him again. The centerpiece of the bridge, the cornerstone, represents the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the link between mortality and immortality, the connection between the natural man and the spiritual man, the change from temporal life to eternal life. It is because of Him that mankind can be reconciled with Heavenly Father and can overcome the walls of sin and mortality—these obstacles that represent spiritual and physical death. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the centerpiece of the plan of salvation, the promised reunion with our Heavenly

Father, as we read in the book of Moses: “This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time” (Moses 6:62).

The love of God, the other side of the bridge, is the reward of our faith in His Son, Jesus the Christ. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). The greatest of all the gifts of God is the supreme sacrifice of His Son, His Atonement, which brings not only immortality but also eternal life if we keep His commandments and endure to the end (see D&C 14:7).

And so as we attempt to build a bridge of faith, we need to build in our lives a firm testimony of the Father and the Son and His Atonement. This bridge of faith will make a difference between the reality of eternal reunion with our Heavenly Father or eternal separation from Him if we erect walls of sin that turn us away from His love and mercy.

### **The foundation of the bridge of faith**

The gift of the Holy Ghost is the foundation of the bridge of faith. Salvation comes only by Jesus Christ and by our divine exercise of faith in Him, allowing us to repent of our sins and to receive the ordinances of salvation, the railings of the bridge. The inner feelings and promptings to overcome the obstacles of life and to make righteous choices will come by listening to the voice of the Holy Ghost. Crossing the bridge of faith may not be as easy as we may think. A bridge will only resist the storms because of the strength of the pillars of its foundation. Storms in life, crises of faith—such as death, serious illness, loss of a job or financial security—are part of our mortal existence. Sometimes these crises may be exacerbated to the point where one may even question the very existence of a God and of a Savior. A cry for increased faith at such a time will always be answered by the Comforter,

which is the Holy Ghost, a “constant companion, . . . an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth” (D&C 121:46).

Yes, the solutions to our daily problems can always be found by daily seeking, by our faith, the influence of the Holy Ghost, who brings all things to our remembrance (see John 14:26). Let me illustrate this point by quoting from a letter written many years ago by a new convert at that time and addressed to President Harold B. Lee after he spoke at a stake conference:

“As you spoke, an idea kept repeating itself in my mind: how life as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is like crossing a swinging bridge suspended between the points of birth by baptism into the Church and death into eternal life over the turbulent stream of worldliness and sin. As one starts out onto the bridge, the nearness of his baptism lends a feeling of security and faith, but as one becomes aware of the stream below and the vast expanse to be crossed, the sense of security gives way to spasmodic twinges of doubt and fear, causing one to lose the rhythm of prayer, faith, and love, and work which makes one’s progress smooth. The mists of doubt and apathy arise and corrode one’s heart and mind, impeding one’s progress and restricting one’s response to the magnetic force of love which streams across the bridge. It is then one breaks step and falls to his knees and hangs on until the force of love restores faith and direction to the crossing” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1965, 15; or *Improvement Era*, June 1965, 497).

### Uniting families with a bridge of faith

Finally, a bridge of faith would not be complete without the linking of parents and children, uniting them to achieve an eternal family. The purpose of building this bridge of faith between generations is so they become one, as the Father and the Son are one—one in purpose in achieving

life eternal. In order to do so, commandments are given to us: first, for children to honor their father and their mother, then for parents to teach their children “to walk uprightly before the Lord” (D&C 68:28). Let me illustrate.

While I was a little boy during the Second World War, my country had been invaded; danger was all around us. My mother taught me a great lesson of trust and unity that I have never forgotten. She alerted me to the perils of war and simply said, “Trust my word and follow me; listen to my voice. If you do so, I will protect you the best I know how.” I simply listened to my mother because I loved her and trusted her.

A little later, school started, and this, for me, was a new bridge to cross. As a preparation for this new experience in my life, leaving the home, my mother told me to listen to my teacher and to be obedient. Again I trusted my mother’s advice. I decided to be obedient to my teacher and a new code of rules. School therefore became a bridge of knowledge instead of a wall of ignorance.

That lesson of trust and unity was vital to become one with my parents, family members, and teachers. It allowed me later to become one with my Savior by being baptized into His Church. It reminded me as a husband, father, and grandfather to continue to build trust and unity among our family members by keeping the temple covenants. As President Hinckley has said, “The temple is concerned with things of immortality. It is a bridge between this life and the next” (*Stand a Little Taller* [2001], 6).

### Let us build bridges, not walls

In our day it is so easy to isolate ourselves by erecting temporal, spiritual, and even family or religious walls. Let us instead build more bridges of faith, of reconciliation, and live by the peace that is given “not as the world giveth” (John 14:27), but

by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the bridge of faith unto eternity.

I testify that Jesus is the Christ; I put my trust in Him and in His gospel of salvation to be reunited someday. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir and congregation sang  
“Now Let Us Rejoice.”

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## Sister Sheri L. Dew

### “Not good that . . . man should be alone”

For nearly five years I have had the blessing of serving with Relief Society sisters and priesthood leaders from Africa to the Amazon. These experiences with you have reinforced for me the importance of a fundamental gospel principle. I wish to direct my remarks about this principle especially to the young adult men and women of the Church, who are embarking upon a most demanding phase of their lives.

This summer I injured a shoulder and lost the use of an arm for weeks. I hadn't realized how much one arm depends upon the other for balance, or how much less I could lift with one arm than two, or that there were some things I couldn't do at all. This disability not only renewed my respect for those who deal so well with a physical limitation, but helped me realize how much more two arms working together can do.

Two are usually better than one,<sup>1</sup> as our Father confirmed when He declared that “it was not good that the man should be alone”<sup>2</sup> and made a help meet for Adam—someone with distinct gifts who would give him balance, help him shoulder the burdens of mortality, and enable him to do things he couldn't do alone. For “neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

### Satan's efforts to devour marriages

Satan understands the power of men and women united in righteousness. He

is still stinging from his banishment into eternal exile after Michael led the hosts of heaven, comprised of valiant men and women united in the cause of Christ, against him. In the chilling words of Peter, “The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”<sup>4</sup> Lucifer is determined to devour marriages and families because their demise threatens the salvation of all involved and the vitality of the Lord's kingdom itself. Thus, Satan seeks to confuse us about our stewardships and distinctive natures as men and women. He bombards us with bizarre messages about gender, marriage, family, and all male-female relationships. He would have us believe men and women are so alike that our unique gifts are not necessary, or so different we can never hope to understand each other. Neither is true.

### The Lord's pattern for couples

Our Father knew exactly what He was doing when He created us. He made us enough alike to love each other but enough different that we would need to unite our strengths and stewardships to create a whole. Neither man nor woman is perfect or complete without the other. Thus, no marriage or family, no ward or stake is likely to reach its full potential until husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, men and women work together in unity of purpose, respecting and relying upon each other's strengths.

These truths about the divinely appointed stewardships of men and women