

Here to Serve a Righteous Cause

By Carol F. McConkie

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency



May we choose to serve a righteous cause as valiant emissaries of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am grateful that we may gather together with faithful women such as Lisa—the sister in the video—who are pure in heart, who love the Lord and serve Him, even amid their own trials. Lisa’s story reminds me that we must love one another and see in one another the beauty of the soul. The Savior taught, “Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God.”¹ Whether we are age 8 or 108, each of us is “precious in [His] sight.”² He loves us. We are daughters of God. We are sisters in Zion. We have a divine nature, and we each have a glorious work to do.

Over the summer I visited with a lovely young mother of daughters. She shared with me her feeling that our young women need a cause, something to help them feel valued. She knew that we may discover our individual and eternal worth by acting in accordance with our divine purpose in mortality. Tonight, this beautiful and remarkable choir sang words that teach our purpose. Through test and trial, even through fear and in the midst of despair, we have valiant hearts. We are resolved to do our part. We are here to serve a righteous cause.³ Sisters, in this cause we are all valued. We are all needed.

The righteous cause we serve is the cause of Christ. It is the work of salvation.⁴ The Lord taught, “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”⁵ We are the cause for which Jesus Christ suffered, bled from every pore, and in perfect love gave His life. His cause is the good news, “the glad tidings, ... that he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; that through him all might be saved.”⁶ Our Savior has “marked the path and led the way.”⁷ I testify that as we follow His example, love God, and serve one another with kindness and compassion, we may stand in purity, “blameless before God at the last day.”⁸ We choose to serve the Lord in His righteous cause that we may become one with the Father and with the Son.⁹

The prophet Mormon boldly declared, “For we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in

the kingdom of God.”¹⁰ The early Church leaders and pioneers of the past pressed forward with heroic courage and determined faithfulness to establish the restored gospel and build temples where ordinances of exaltation could be performed. The pioneers of the present, meaning you and me, also press forward in faith, “to labor in [the Lord’s] vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men.”¹¹ And, as President Gordon B. Hinckley taught, “How magnificent will be the future as the Almighty rolls on His glorious work ... through the selfless [service] of those whose hearts are filled with love for the Redeemer of the world.”¹² We join with faithful sisters of the past, of the present, and of the rising generation when we join together in the work of salvation!

Before we were born, we accepted our Heavenly Father’s plan “by which [we] could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize [our] divine destiny as heirs of eternal life.”¹³ Of this premortal covenant, Elder John A. Widtsoe explained: “We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but ... saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation.”¹⁴

Here in mortality we have again covenanted to serve the Savior in the work of salvation. By participating in sacred priesthood ordinances, we pledge that we will embark in the service of God with heart, might, mind, and strength.¹⁵ We receive the Holy Ghost and seek His promptings to guide our efforts. Righteousness emanates out to the world when we understand what God wants us to do and then we do it.

I know a Primary child who said to a friend while standing at the bus stop, “Hey! You ought to come to church with me and learn about Jesus!”

I saw the girls in a Young Women class link arms together and make a commitment to minister to one another and then plan an appropriate way to help a young woman who was struggling with an addiction.

I have seen young mothers give everything of their time, their talents, and their energies to teach and exemplify the principles of the gospel so that their children, like the sons of Helaman, may stand courageously and faithfully through trial, temptation, and adversity.

But perhaps most humbling to me was to hear a single adult sister declare with the fire of pure testimony that the most important work we can do is to prepare for marriage and family. Although this is not her experience, she knows that family is the very heart of the work of salvation. “The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave.”¹⁶ We honor the Father’s plan and glorify God when we strengthen and ennoble those relationships in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. We choose to live pure and virtuous lives so that when the opportunity comes, we are prepared to make that sacred covenant in the house of the Lord and keep it forever.

We all experience times and seasons in our lives. But whether we are at school, at work, in

the community, or especially in the home, we are the Lord's agents and we are on His errand.

In the work of salvation, there is no room for comparison, criticism, or condemnation. It is not about age, experience, or public acclaim. This sacred work is about developing a broken heart, a contrite spirit, and a willingness to use our divine gifts and unique talents to do the Lord's work in His way. It is having the humility to fall on our knees and say, "O my Father, ... not as I will, but as thou wilt."¹⁷

In the strength of the Lord, we "can do all things."¹⁸ We continually seek His guidance in prayer, in the scriptures, and in the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. One sister, faced with an overwhelming assignment, wrote, "Sometimes I wonder if the sisters in the early history of the Church didn't, like us, put their heads on their pillows at night and pray, 'Whatever tomorrow brings, will Thou help me through it?'" Then she wrote, "One of the blessings is [that] we have each other and we are in this together!"¹⁹ Whatever our circumstances, wherever we are along the path toward salvation, we unite as one in our commitment to the Savior. We sustain one another in His service.



Recently, you may have read about Sister Ella Hoskins, who at 100 years old was called to help the young women in her ward with Personal Progress.²⁰ About two years later, at 102, Sister Hoskins earned her Young Womanhood Recognition award. The young women, the ward and stake Young Women and Relief Society presidencies, and family members gathered together to celebrate her accomplishment. Boundaries of age, organization, and marital status faded away in faithful service. Young women expressed gratitude for Sister Hoskins, for her teaching, and for her righteous example. They want to be like her. Afterward, I asked Sister Hoskins, "How did you do it?"

She promptly responded, "I repent every day."

From a gentle lady, so full of the Spirit of the Lord that she glowed with pure light, I was reminded that to shine with the beauty of holiness, to stand with the Savior, and to bless

others, we must be clean. Purity is possible through the grace of Christ as we deny ungodliness and choose to love God with might, mind, and strength.²¹ The Apostle Paul taught, “Flee ... youthful lusts: ... follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”²² None of us is perfect. We have all made mistakes. But we repent so that we may be better and “retain the name [of Christ] written always in [our] hearts.”²³ When we serve in the name of the Lord, with purity of heart, we reflect the Savior’s love and give others a glimpse of heaven.

May we choose to serve a righteous cause as valiant emissaries of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us stand together and “with a song in [our] heart[s] move forward, living the gospel, loving the Lord, and building [His] kingdom.”²⁴ I testify that in this glorious work, we may know the pure love of God. We may receive true joy and obtain all the glories of eternity. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Doctrine and Covenants 18:10.
2. Isaiah 43:4.
3. See “As Zion’s Youth in Latter Days,” *Hymns*, no. 256.
4. “This work of salvation includes member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], introduction to chapter 5).
5. Moses 1:39.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 76:40–42.
7. “How Great the Wisdom and the Love,” *Hymns*, no. 195.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 4:2.

9. See John 17:20–23; 4 Nephi 1:15–17; Doctrine and Covenants 35:2; 38:27; Moses 6:68.

10. Moroni 9:6.

11. Doctrine and Covenants 138:56.

12. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Stay the Course—Keep the Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 72.

13. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.

14. John A. Widtsoe, “The Worth of Souls,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, 189.

15. Doctrine and Covenants 4:2.

16. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 129.

17. Matthew 26:39.

18. Alma 26:12.

19. Personal correspondence.

20. See Marianne Holman Prescott, “She Just Doesn’t Quit,” *Church News*, Sept. 6, 2015, 15.

21. See Moroni 10:32.

22. 2 Timothy 2:22.

23. Mosiah 5:12.

24. Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 72.

Official Web site of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
© 2015 Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All Rights Reserved