

One More Day

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We all have a “today” to live, and the key to making our day successful is to be willing to sacrifice.

A few years ago, my friends had a beautiful baby named Brigham. After his birth, Brigham was diagnosed with a rare condition called Hunter syndrome, which sadly meant that Brigham would have a short life. One day while Brigham and his family were visiting the temple grounds, Brigham pronounced a particular phrase; twice he said, “One more day.” The very next day, Brigham passed away.

I have visited Brigham’s grave a few times, and every time I do, I contemplate the phrase “one more day.” I wonder what it would mean, what effect it would have in my life to know that I had only one more day to live. How would I treat my wife, my children, and others? How patient and polite would I be? How would I take care of my body? How fervently would I pray and search the scriptures? I think that, in one way or another, we all at some point will have a “one more day” realization—a realization that we must use wisely the time we have.

In the Old Testament we read the story of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The prophet Isaiah announced to Hezekiah that Hezekiah’s life was about to end. When he heard the prophet’s words, Hezekiah began to pray, plead, and weep sorely. On that occasion, God added 15 years to Hezekiah’s life. (See Isaiah 38:1–5.)

If we were told we had a short time to live, we too might plead for more days of life in the name of things we should have done or done differently.

Regardless of the time the Lord, in His wisdom, determines to grant each of us, of one thing we can be sure: we all have a “today” to live, and the key to making our day successful is to be willing to sacrifice.

The Lord said, “Behold, now it is called *today* until the coming of the Son of Man, *and verily it is a day of sacrifice*” (D&C 64:23; emphasis added).

The word *sacrifice* comes from the Latin words *sacer*, which means “sacred,” and *facere*, which means “to make”—in other words, to make things sacred, to bring honor to them.

“Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven” (“Praise to the Man,” *Hymns*, no. 27).

In what ways will sacrifice make our days meaningful and blessed?

First, personal sacrifice strengthens us and gives value to the things we sacrifice for.

Some years ago on fast Sunday, an elderly sister came to the pulpit to share her testimony. She lived in the city called Iquitos, which is in the Peruvian Amazon. She told us that from the time

of her baptism, she had always had the goal of receiving the ordinances of the temple in Lima, Peru. She faithfully paid a full tithe and saved her meager income for years.

Her joy upon going to the temple and receiving the sacred ordinances therein was expressed in these words: "Today I can say that I finally feel ready to go through the veil. I am the happiest woman in the world; I have saved money, you have no idea for how long, to visit the temple, and after seven days on the river and 18 hours by bus, I was finally in the house of the Lord. When leaving that holy place, I said to myself, after all the sacrifice that has been required for me to come to the temple, I will not let anything make me take lightly every covenant I made; it would be a waste. This is a very serious commitment!"

I learned from this sweet sister that personal sacrifice is an invaluable force that drives our decisions and our determinations. Personal sacrifice drives our actions, our commitments, and our covenants and gives sacred things meaning.

Second, sacrifices we make for others, and that others make for us, result in blessings for all.

When I was a student in dental school, the financial outlook of our local economy was not very encouraging. Inflation dramatically decreased the value of currency from one day to the next.

I remember the year when I was to enroll in surgery practices; I needed to have all the necessary surgical equipment before enrolling that semester. My parents saved the needed funds. But one night something dramatic happened. We went to buy the equipment, only to discover that the amount of money we had to buy all the equipment now was sufficient to buy only a pair of surgical tweezers—and nothing else. We returned home with empty hands and with heavy hearts at the thought of my losing a semester of college. Suddenly, however, my mother said, "Taylor, come with me; let's go out."

We went downtown where there were many places that buy and sell jewelry. When we arrived at one store, my mother took out of her purse a small blue velvet bag containing a beautiful gold bracelet with an inscription that read, "To my dear daughter from your father." It was a bracelet that my grandfather had given her on one of her birthdays. Then, before my eyes, she sold it.

When she received the money, she told me, "If there is one thing I am sure of, it is that you are going to be a dentist. Go and buy all the equipment you need." Now, can you imagine what kind of student I became from that moment on? I wanted to be the best and finish my studies soon because I knew the high cost of the sacrifice she was making.

I learned that the sacrifices our loved ones make for us refresh us like cool water in the middle of the desert. Such sacrifice brings hope and motivation.

Third, any sacrifice we make is small compared to the sacrifice of the Son of God.

What is the value of even a beloved gold bracelet compared to the sacrifice of the very Son of God? How can we honor that infinite sacrifice? Each day we can remember that we have one more day to live and be faithful. Amulek taught, "Yea, I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, now is the time and the day of your salvation; and therefore, if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you" (Alma 34:31). In other words, if we will offer to the Lord

the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, immediately the blessings of the great plan of happiness are manifest in our lives.

The plan of redemption is possible thanks to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As He Himself described, the sacrifice “caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink” (D&C 19:18).

And it is because of this sacrifice, after following the process of sincere repentance, that we can feel the weight of our mistakes and sins lifted. In fact, guilt, shame, pain, sorrow, and looking down at ourselves are replaced with a clear conscience, happiness, joy, and hope.

At the same time, as we honor and are grateful for His sacrifice, we can receive in a great measure the intense desire to be better children of God, to stay away from sin, and to keep covenants like never before.

Then, like Enos after receiving the forgiveness of his sins, we will feel the desire ourselves to sacrifice and to seek the well-being of our brothers and sisters (see Enos 1:9). And we will be more willing every “one more day” to follow the invitation that President Howard W. Hunter extended to us when he said: “Mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust. ... Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Forgo a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Apologize. Try to understand. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Be kind. Be gentle. Laugh a little more. Express your gratitude. Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of a child. ... Speak your love and then speak it again” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter* [2015], 32; adapted from “What We Think Christmas Is,” *McCall's*, Dec. 1959, 82–83).

May we fill our days with that impulse and the strength that personal sacrifice and the sacrifice that we make for or receive from others give us. And in a special way, may we enjoy the peace and rejoicing that the sacrifice of the Only Begotten offers us; yes, that peace that is mentioned when we read that Adam fell that men might be, and men are—you are—that you might have joy (see 2 Nephi 2:25). That joy is real joy that only the sacrifice and the Atonement of the Savior Jesus Christ can provide.

It is my prayer that we follow Him, that we believe Him, that we love Him, and that we feel the love demonstrated by His sacrifice every time we have the opportunity to live one more day. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.