

Covenant Women in Partnership with God

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Becoming a covenant woman in partnership with God is how great and good daughters of God have always mothered, led, and ministered.

I am grateful for the blessing of addressing you, the covenant daughters of God. Tonight, my purpose is to encourage you in the great service to which you are called. Yes, every daughter of God listening to my voice has received a call from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Your call began when you were placed into mortality, in a place and time chosen for you by a God who knows you perfectly and loves you as His daughter. In the spirit world, He knew you and taught you and placed you where you would have the opportunity, rare in the history of the world, to be invited into a baptismal font. There, you would hear these words spoken by a called servant of Jesus Christ: “Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”¹

When you came out of the water, you had accepted another call to serve. As a new covenant daughter of God, you made a promise and received an assignment in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, of which you were then confirmed a member. You covenanted with God to take upon yourself the name of Jesus Christ, to keep His commandments, and to serve Him.

For each one who makes these covenants, the service that the Lord calls him or her to do will be suited perfectly to that person. The covenant daughters and sons of God, however, all share one important and joyful call. It is to serve others for Him.

Speaking to sisters, President Russell M. Nelson gave a wonderful summary of the Lord’s call to you to join Him in His work. President Nelson described your call in this way: “The Lord said, ‘My work and my glory [is] to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.’ (Moses 1:39.) So His devoted daughter-disciple may truly say, ‘My work and my glory is to help my loved ones reach that heavenly goal.’

“To help another human being reach one’s celestial potential is part of the divine mission of woman. As mother, teacher, or nurturing Saint, she molds living clay to the shape of her hopes. In partnership with God, her divine mission is to help spirits live and souls be lifted. This is the measure of her creation. It is ennobling, edifying, and exalting.”²

You cannot know when, or for what length of time, your personal mission will be focused on service in calls such as mother, leader, or ministering sister. The Lord, out of love, does not leave us the choice of the timing, duration, or sequence of our

assignments. Yet you know from scripture and living prophets that all of these assignments will come, either in this life or in the next, to every daughter of God. And all of them are preparation for eternal life in loving families—“the greatest of all the gifts of God.”³

You will be wise to bend every effort to prepare now with the end in mind. That task is made simpler because each of these assignments requires much of the same preparation.

Let’s start with the assignment to be a ministering sister. Whether you have that assignment as a 10-year-old daughter in a family where the father has died, or as a Relief Society president whose town was recently affected by fire, or when you are in a hospital recovering from surgery—you have a chance to fulfill your call from the Lord to be His ministering daughter.

Those appear to be very different ministering assignments. Yet they all require the preparation of a powerful, loving heart, a fearless faith that the Lord gives no command save He prepares a way, and a desire to go and do for Him.⁴

Because she was prepared, the 10-year-old daughter put her arms around her widowed mother and prayed to know how to help her family. And she keeps at it.

The Relief Society president had prepared to minister before the unexpected fire in her area. She had come to know and love the people. Her faith in Jesus Christ had grown over the years from having received answers to her prayers for the Lord to help her in small services for Him. Because of her long preparation, she was ready and eager to organize her sisters to minister to people and families in distress.

A sister recovering in a hospital from surgery was prepared to minister to her fellow patients. She had spent a lifetime ministering for the Lord to every stranger as if he or she was a neighbor and a friend. When she felt in her heart the call to minister in the hospital, she served others so bravely and with such love that the other patients began to hope she wouldn’t recover too soon.

In the same way that you prepare to minister, you can and must prepare for your call to be a leader for the Lord when it comes. It will require faith in Jesus Christ, rooted in your deep love of the scriptures, to lead people and to teach His word without fear. Then you will be prepared to have the Holy Ghost as your constant companion. You will be eager to say, “I will,” when your counselor in the Young Women presidency says, with panic in her voice, “Sister Alvarez is sick today. Who will teach her class?”

It takes much the same preparation for the wonderful day when the Lord calls you to an assignment as a mother. But it will also take an even more loving heart than you needed earlier. It will take faith in Jesus Christ beyond what has ever before been in your heart. And it will take a capacity to pray for the influence, direction, and comfort of the Holy Ghost beyond what you may have felt was even possible.

You might reasonably ask how a man of any age can know what mothers need. It’s a valid question. Men can’t know everything, but we can learn some lessons by

revelation from God. And we can also learn much by observation, when we take the opportunity to seek the Spirit to help us understand what we observe.

I have been observing Kathleen Johnson Eyring for the 57 years we have been married. She is the mother of four boys and two girls. To date, she has accepted the call to be a mothering influence on more than a hundred direct family members and hundreds more whom she has adopted into her mother heart.

You remember President Nelson's perfect description of a woman's divine mission—including her mission of mothering: "As mother, teacher, or nurturing Saint, she molds living clay to the shape of her hopes. In partnership with God, her divine mission is to help spirits live and souls be lifted. This is the measure of her creation."⁵

As nearly as I can discern, my wife, Kathleen, has followed that charge, given to our Father's daughters. The key appears to me to be the words "she molds living clay to the shape of her hopes ... in partnership with God." She did not force. She molded. And she had a template for her hopes, and to which she tried to mold those she loved and mothered. Her template was the gospel of Jesus Christ—as I could see through prayerful observation over the years.

Becoming a covenant woman in partnership with God is how great and good daughters of God have always mothered, led, and ministered, serving in whatever way and place He has prepared for them. I promise that you will find joy in your journey to your heavenly home as you return to Him as a covenant-keeping daughter of God.

I testify that God the Father lives and He loves you. He will answer your prayers. His Beloved Son leads, in every detail, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. President Russell M. Nelson is His living prophet. And Joseph Smith saw and spoke with God the Father and Jesus Christ in a grove of trees in Palmyra, New York. I know that is true. I also testify that Jesus Christ is your Savior; He loves you. And through His Atonement, you can be purified and lifted to the high and holy callings which will come to you. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.