

That They May See

By **Bonnie H. Cordon**
Young Women General President

Look and pray for opportunities to let your light shine that others may see the way to Jesus Christ.

Brothers and sisters, our hearts have been blessed and renewed by the Spirit we have felt at this conference.

Two hundred years ago, a pillar of light rested on a young man in a grove of trees. In that light, Joseph Smith saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Their light drove back the spiritual darkness that covered the earth and pointed the way forward for Joseph Smith—and for all of us. Because of the light revealed that day, we can receive the fulness of blessings available through the Atonement of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

By virtue of the Restoration of His gospel, we can be filled with the light of our Savior. However, that light is not meant for you and me alone. Jesus Christ has called upon us to “let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”¹ I have come to love the phrase “that they may see.” It is an earnest invitation from the Lord to be more intentional about helping others see the path and thereby come unto Christ.

When I was 10 years old, our family had the honor of hosting Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles while he was on assignment in my hometown.

At the close of the day, our family and the Perrys sat down in our living room to enjoy my mother’s delicious apple pie while Elder Perry recounted stories about Saints around the world. I was enthralled.

It was getting late when my mother called me into the kitchen and asked a simple question: “Bonnie, did you feed the chickens?”

My heart fell; I had not. Not wanting to leave the presence of an Apostle of the Lord, I suggested the chickens could fast until morning.

My mother replied with a definitive “no.” Just then, Elder Perry entered the kitchen and with his booming, enthusiastic voice asked, “Did I hear someone needs to feed the chickens? Can my son and I join you?”

Oh, what an absolute joy it now became to feed the chickens! I ran to get our large yellow flashlight. Excited, I led out, skipping over the well-worn path to the chicken coop. With flashlight swinging from my hand, we crossed the corn patch and passed through the wheat field.

Reaching the small irrigation ditch that crossed the path, I instinctively jumped over it as I had done many nights before. I was oblivious to Elder Perry's efforts to keep up on a dark, unknown path. My dancing light did not help him see the ditch. Without a steady light to see, he stepped directly in the water and let out a loud groan. Panicked, I turned to see my new friend remove his soaking wet foot from the ditch and shaking the water from his heavy leather shoe.

With a soaked and sloshing shoe, Elder Perry helped me feed the chickens. When we were through, he lovingly instructed, "Bonnie, I need to see the path. I need the light to shine where I am walking."

I was shining my light but not in a way that would help Elder Perry. Now, knowing that he needed my light to safely navigate the path, I focused the flashlight just ahead of his steps and we were able to return home with confidence.

My dear brothers and sisters, for years I've pondered the principle I learned from Elder Perry. The Lord's invitation to let our light so shine is not just about randomly waving a beam of light and making the world generally brighter. It is about focusing our light so others may see the way to Christ. It is gathering Israel *on this side of the veil*—helping others see the next step forward in making and keeping sacred covenants with God.²

The Savior testified, "Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you."³ Let's look at one of His examples.

The woman at the well was a Samaritan who did not know Jesus Christ and was viewed by many as an outcast in her own society. Jesus met her and initiated a conversation. He spoke to her of water. He then led her to increased light as He declared Himself to be the "living water."⁴

Christ was compassionately aware of her and her needs. He met the woman where she was and started by talking about something familiar and common. If He had stopped there, it would have been a positive encounter. But it would not have resulted in her going to the city to proclaim, "Come, see ... : is not this the Christ?"⁵ Gradually, through the conversation, she discovered Jesus Christ, and despite her past, she became an instrument of light, shining the way for others to see.⁶

Now let's look at two people who followed the Savior's example of shining light. Recently my friend Kevin was seated next to a business executive at dinner. He worried what to talk about for two hours. Following a prompting, Kevin asked, "Tell me about your family. Where do they come from?"

The gentleman knew little about his heritage, so Kevin pulled out his phone, saying, "I have an app that connects people to their families. Let's see what we can find."

After a lengthy discussion, Kevin's new friend asked, "Why is family so important to your church?"

Kevin answered simply, “We believe that we continue to live after we die. If we identify our ancestors and take their names to a sacred place called a temple, we can perform marriage ordinances that will keep our families together even after death.”⁷

Kevin started with something he and his new friend had in common. He then found a way to witness of the Savior’s light and love.

The second story is about Ella, a collegiate basketball player. Her example began when she received her mission call while away at school. She chose to open her call in front of her team. They knew almost nothing about the Church of Jesus Christ and didn’t understand Ella’s desire to serve. She prayed repeatedly to know how to explain her mission call in a way that her teammates might feel the Spirit. Her answer?

“I made a PowerPoint,” Ella said, “because I’m just that cool.” She told them about the potential of serving in one of 400-plus missions and possibly learning a language. She highlighted the thousands of missionaries already serving. Ella ended with a picture of the Savior and this brief testimony: “Basketball is one of the most important things in my life. I moved across the country and left my family to play for this coach and with this team. The only two things that are more important to me than basketball are my faith and my family.”⁸

Now, in case you are thinking, “These are great 1,000-watt examples, but I’m a 20-watt bulb,” remember that the Savior testified, “I am the light which ye shall hold up.”⁹ He reminds us that He will bring the light if we will just point others to Him.

You and I have enough light to share *right now*. We can light the next step to help someone draw nearer to Jesus Christ, and then the next step, and the next.

Ask yourself, “Who needs the light you have to find the path they need but cannot see?”

My dear friends, why is shining our light so important? The Lord has told us that “there are many yet on the earth ... who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it.”¹⁰ We can help. We can intentionally shine our light so others may see. We can extend an invitation.¹¹ We can walk the journey with those who are taking a step toward the Savior, no matter how halting. We can gather Israel.

I testify the Lord will magnify every small effort. The Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what to say and do. Such attempts may require us to step out of our comfort zone, but we can be assured that the Lord will help our light shine.

How grateful I am for the Savior’s light, which continues to lead this Church through revelation.

I invite all of us to follow the example of Jesus Christ and be compassionately aware of those around us. Look and pray for opportunities to let your light shine that others may see the way to Jesus Christ. His promise is great: “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”¹² I testify

that our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the way, the truth, the life, light, and love of the world. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.