

# Faith to Act and Become

By Elder **Ciro Schmeil**  
*Of the Seventy*

Through prayer, scripture study, and action, we can unlock the blessings of heaven and become better followers of the Savior Jesus Christ.

Shortly after I was called to serve as a General Authority Seventy, I had the opportunity to visit with President Russell M. Nelson for a few minutes. It was an unplanned encounter in the cafeteria, and he was so kind to invite Elder S. Mark Palmer and me to sit and enjoy lunch with him.

“What do we talk about during lunch with the prophet?” was the thought that came to my mind. So I decided to ask President Nelson if he had any counsel or guidance for me since I was just starting my calling. His answer was very simple and direct; he looked at me and said, “Elder Schmeil, you are called for what you can become.” I walked away from that experience pondering about what the Lord wants me to become. As I thought about this, I realized that He wants me to become a better husband, father, and son and a better servant. I then realized that all of this could be accomplished as I worked to become a better disciple of the Savior Jesus Christ.

Last general conference, President Nelson said: “To do anything well requires effort. Becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ is no exception.”<sup>1</sup> President Nelson is inviting us to work hard to become better disciples of Jesus Christ. He told us that to become more like the Savior, we need to strengthen our faith by asking, acting, and studying, among other things.

## 1. Ask

He said, “Ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, for help.”<sup>2</sup> Asking through prayer is one of the keys to knowing how to become a better disciple of Jesus Christ.

Toward the end of His ministry among the Nephites in the Americas, Jesus Christ

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“Now I go unto the Father. And verily I say unto you, whatsoever things ye shall ask the Father in my name shall be given unto you.

“Therefore, ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for he that asketh, receiveth; and unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”<sup>4</sup>

We need to ask in faith to know the will of the Lord and accept that the Lord knows what is better for us.

## 2. Act

Acting is another essential key to becoming a better disciple of Jesus Christ. As we act, He will guide and direct us along the way. I am sure that Nephi was seeking guidance from the Lord to know how to get the brass plates from Laban, yet he and his brothers tried twice without success. But they were acting, and the Lord was directing them along the way. Finally, Nephi was successful the third time. He recalled, “I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do.”<sup>5</sup>

This is how the Lord works as we put forth effort and act, even when we do not have a clear understanding of what needs to be done. The Lord told Nephi *what* to do: go and get the plates. But He did not tell Nephi *how* to do it. He left it to Nephi to figure out and seek the Lord’s help—and this is often how the Lord works in our lives. As we act in faith, the Lord guides and directs us.

## 3. Study

In 3 Nephi, the disciples mentioned to the Savior that there were disputations among the people regarding the name of the Church. In response, the Savior taught an important principle when He asked, “Have they not read the scriptures?”<sup>6</sup> Studying is then another essential key to becoming a better disciple of Jesus Christ. Prayer and scripture study go hand in hand. They work together for our benefit. This is the process that the Lord has established. “Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.”<sup>7</sup>

The Savior also taught that we should not only study the scriptures but also teach from them, as He demonstrated to the Nephites: “And now it came to pass that when Jesus had expounded all the scriptures in one, which they had written, he commanded them that they should teach the things which he had expounded unto

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guidance from the scriptures for our journey, and we must teach from them in our homes and Church callings.

## 4. Act to Become

Many times answers to prayer will not come right away. But we must have faith to continue, act in righteousness, and be persistent like Nephi when he was trying to get the brass plates. The Lord will show us a little bit at a time; as we study the scriptures, the Lord will give us the answers or the necessary strength for us to get through one more day, one more week, and to try one more time. Elder Richard G. Scott said: “Be thankful that sometimes God lets you struggle for a long time before that answer comes. That causes your faith to increase and your character to grow.”<sup>9</sup>

Through prayer and scripture study, the Lord has always given me the strength to act and endure one more day, one more week, and to try one more time. Many times the answers did not come right away. I have questions that have not been answered yet, but I keep asking and studying, and I am happy that the Lord continues to give me the strength to act as I wait for answers.

Elder Scott also said, “As you walk to the boundary of your understanding into the twilight of uncertainty, exercising faith, you will be led to find solutions you would not obtain otherwise.”<sup>10</sup>

To become a better follower of the Savior Jesus Christ is a lifelong journey, and we are all in different stages, moving at a different pace. We must keep in mind that this is not a competition, and we are here to love and help each other. We need to be acting in order to allow the Savior to work with us in our lives.

Speaking to Sidney Rigdon, the Lord said the following: “I have looked upon thee and thy works. I have heard thy prayers, and prepared thee for a greater work.”<sup>11</sup> I testify that the Lord hears and answers our prayers; He knows us; He has a great work for each one of us. Through prayer, scripture study, and action, we can unlock the blessings of heaven and become better followers of the Savior Jesus Christ.

President Dallin H. Oaks taught that “the Final Judgment is not just an evaluation of a sum total of good and evil acts—what we have *done*. It is an acknowledgment of the final effect of our acts and thoughts—what we have *become*.”<sup>12</sup>

I am grateful for prophets, seers, and revelators; they are the watchmen on the tower. They see things that we do not see. I testify that through their words, we can

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1. 1. Russell M. Nelson, “Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains,” *Liahona*, May 2021, 103.
2. 2. Russell M. Nelson, “Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains,” 103.
3. 3. 3 Nephi 27:1–2.
4. 4. 3 Nephi 27:28–29.
5. 5. 1 Nephi 4:6.
6. 6. 3 Nephi 27:5.
7. 7. 2 Nephi 32:3.
8. 8. 3 Nephi 23:14.
9. 9. Richard G. Scott, “The Transforming Power of Faith and Character,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 44.
10. 10. Richard G. Scott, “The Transforming Power of Faith and Character,” 44.
11. 11. Doctrine and Covenants 35:3.
12. 12. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Challenge to Become,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 32; *Liahona*, Jan. 2001, 40.

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