

Focus on Jesus Christ

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The Lord Jesus Christ is the solution to our problems, but we must lift our eyes and raise our sights to see Him.

My father used to tell me, “Don’t focus so intensely on your problems that you can’t see the solution.”

I testify that the Lord Jesus Christ is the solution to even our most difficult problems. Specifically, He has overcome four problems that every one of us faces and that not one of us can solve on our own:

1. The first problem is physical death. We can try to delay it or ignore it, but we can’t overcome it on our own. Jesus Christ, however, overcame death for us, and as a consequence, we will all be resurrected one day.¹
2. The second problem includes the tribulations, difficult experiences, sadness, pain, and unfairness of this world. Jesus Christ overcame all of this. For those who strive to follow Him, He will one day “wipe away all tears” and make things right again.² In the meantime, He can strengthen us to pass through our trials with confidence, good cheer, and peace.³
3. The third problem is spiritual death arising from sin. Jesus Christ overcame this problem by taking upon Himself “the chastisement of our peace.”⁴ Because of His atoning sacrifice, we can be freed from the consequences of our sins if we have faith in the Savior, sincerely repent, accept the covenant the Father offers us through essential ordinances such as baptism, and endure to the end.⁵
4. The fourth problem is our limited, imperfect natures. Jesus Christ has the solution to this problem too. He doesn’t just erase our errors and make us innocent again. He can work “a mighty change in ... our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.”⁶ We can be perfected by the grace of Christ and one day become like Him.⁷

Unfortunately, too often we concentrate so much on our own problems that we lose focus on the solution, our Savior, Jesus Christ. How do we

avoid that mistake? I believe the answer lies in the covenants we are invited to make with Him and our Father in Heaven.

Focusing on Jesus Christ through Covenants

Our covenants help us focus our attention, our thoughts, and our actions on Christ. As we “cleave unto the covenants [we have] made,” we can more easily identify “the things of this world” that we should “lay aside” and “the things of a better [world]” we should diligently seek.⁸

That’s what the people of Ammon did in the Book of Mormon. As they learned of Jesus Christ and began to focus their lives on Him, they recognized that they should bury their weapons of war and became perfectly honest and “distinguished for their zeal towards God.”⁹

Covenant keeping leads us to seek after whatever invites the influence of the Spirit and reject whatever drives it away—“for we know that if we can be worthy of the presence of the Holy Ghost, we can also be worthy to live in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.”¹⁰ This may mean that we have to change our vocabulary, using kinder words. It could mean replacing spiritually unhealthy habits with new habits that strengthen our relationship with the Lord, such as daily prayer and scripture study, individually and with our family.

President Russell M. Nelson said that “each person who makes covenants in baptismal fonts and in temples—and keeps them—has increased access to the power of Jesus Christ. ...

“The reward for keeping covenants with God is heavenly power—power that strengthens us to withstand our trials, temptations, and heartaches better.”¹¹

Renewing our covenants during the sacrament each Sunday is a great opportunity to examine ourselves¹² and refocus our lives on Jesus Christ. By partaking of the sacrament, we declare that we do “always remember him.”¹³ The word *always* is so significant. It extends the Savior’s influence into every part of our lives. We don’t remember Him only at church or only during our morning prayers or only when we’re in trouble and we need something.

Yes, we sometimes get distracted. We forget. We lose our focus. But renewing our covenants means that we *want* to always remember the Savior, that we will try to do so throughout the week, and that we will recommit and refocus on Him again at the sacrament table next week.

Focusing on Jesus Christ in Our Homes

Clearly, focusing on Jesus Christ must be more than a Sunday, at-church activity. When President Nelson introduced *Come, Follow Me* in 2018, he said, “It is time for a *home-centered Church*.”¹⁴ He said we should “transform [our] home into a sanctuary of faith” and “a center of gospel learning.” And he made four wonderful promises to us if we do.¹⁵

The first promise: “Your Sabbath days will truly be a delight.” It will become a day when we draw closer to our Savior. As a young woman from Peru said, “The Lord’s day is the day I get the most answers from the Lord.”

The second promise: “Your children will be excited to learn and to live the Savior’s teachings.” That is why “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, ... that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”¹⁶

We do this so that one day, when our son goes out to work or to hike in the mountains or to hunt beasts in the forests, as Enos did, he may remember what we taught him about Christ and about the joy of living the gospel. And who knows? Maybe this will be the day when he will finally feel the spiritual hunger that turns him to Jesus Christ so he can hear the voice of the Lord saying to him, “Thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed.”¹⁷

The third promise: “The influence of the adversary in *your* life and in *your* home will decrease.” Why? Because the more we focus on Jesus Christ, the more sin loses its appeal.¹⁸ As our homes are filled with the Savior’s light, there is less and less room for the darkness of the adversary.

The fourth promise: “Changes in your family will be dramatic and sustaining.” Why? Because the change that Jesus Christ brings is “a mighty change.”¹⁹ He changes our very natures; we become “new creatures.”²⁰ We gradually become more like the Savior, filled with His pure love for all of God’s children.

Who wouldn’t want these promises fulfilled in their lives and in their families? What do we need to do to obtain them? The answer is to transform our homes into a sanctuary of faith and a center of gospel learning. And how do we do that? By focusing on Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, making Them the center of our family life, the most important influence in our home.

Could I suggest that you begin by making the words of Christ, found in the scriptures, a daily part of your life? There is no prescribed formula for perfect scripture study. It could be 5 or 10 minutes each day—or more if you can. It could be a chapter or a few verses a day. Some families prefer to study in the morning before they leave for school or

work. Others prefer to read at night before bed. Some young couples have told me that they study individually on the way to work and then share insights with each other via text so their comments and discussions are recorded.

Come, Follow Me provides many suggestions of activities and resources that can help individuals and families learn gospel principles from the scriptures. The Bible videos and the Book of Mormon videos can also be valuable tools to make the scriptures more accessible to your family. Youth and children are often inspired by the memorable stories in the scriptures. These stories and the gospel principles they teach will stay with your children, like trusted friends, when they need good examples of service, virtue, obedience, patience, perseverance, personal revelation, charity, humility, and faith in Jesus Christ. Over time, your consistency in feasting on the word of God will help your children grow closer and closer to the Savior. They will come to know Him as never before.

The Lord Jesus Christ lives today. He can be an active, daily presence in our lives. He is the solution to our problems, but we must lift our eyes and raise our sights to see Him. He has said, “Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.”²¹ As we focus on Him and our Father in Heaven, make and keep covenants with Them, and make Them the most important influence in our home and family, we will become the kind of people President Nelson envisioned: “A people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ.”²² In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. See 1 Corinthians 15:21–22.
2. Revelation 21:4.
3. See Matthew 11:28–30; John 16:33.
4. Isaiah 53:5.
5. See 2 Nephi 31:10–13, 15–17.
6. Mosiah 5:2.
7. See Moroni 10:32.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 25:10, 13.
9. Alma 27:27; see also Alma 24:17–18.
10. “Conversion Is Our Goal,” *Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families: New Testament 2023*, v.

11. Russell M. Nelson, “Overcome the World and Find Rest,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 96.
12. See 1 Corinthians 11:28.
13. Moroni 4:3; 5:2.
14. Russell M. Nelson, “Opening Remarks,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 7.
15. See Russell M. Nelson, “Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 113.
16. 2 Nephi 25:26.
17. Enos 1:5.
18. See Mosiah 5:2; Alma 13:11–12.
19. See Alma 5:12–14.
20. See Mosiah 27:25–26.
21. Doctrine and Covenants 6:36.
22. Russell M. Nelson, “Overcome the World and Find Rest,” 98.