

# Humble to Accept and Follow

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Humility is a mandatory requirement for us to be ready to return to the presence of God.

In the fifth chapter of Alma, an introspective question is posed: “Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble?”<sup>1</sup> That question implies that humility is a mandatory requirement for us to be ready to return to the presence of God.

We all like to think we are sufficiently humble, but some experiences in life make us realize that the natural, prideful man or woman often is very much alive within us.

Years ago, when our two daughters were still living at home, I decided to show them and my wife the business unit of which I was in charge in the company I worked for.

My real purpose though was to show them a place where, unlike our home, everyone would do exactly what I asked them to do without questioning me. As we arrived at the front gate, which usually opened automatically when my car approached, I was surprised that it didn't open this time. Instead, a security guard I had never seen before in my life came to the car and asked me for my company ID.

I told him I never needed an ID to drive into the property with my car and then asked him the classic prideful-person question: “Do you know who you're talking to?”

To which he replied, “Well, since you don't have your company ID, I cannot know who you are, and while I am at this gate, you will not be allowed to enter the premises without proper identification.”

I thought about looking at the rearview mirror to check my daughters' reaction to all that, but I knew they were savoring every second of that moment! My wife at my side was shaking her head in disapproval of my behavior. My last resort then was to apologize to the guard and say I was very sorry for treating him so badly. “You're forgiven,” he said, “but without a company ID, you're not coming in today!”

I then drove very slowly back home to get my ID, having perhaps learned this valuable lesson: when we choose not to be humble, we end up being humiliated.

In Proverbs we find, “A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.”<sup>2</sup> In order to develop humility, we must understand what it really means in the context of the gospel.

Some people confuse being humble with other things such as, for example, being poor. But there are actually many who are poor and prideful and also many who are rich and yet humble. Others who are very shy or have low self-esteem may have an outward appearance of humility but deep inside are full of pride sometimes.

Then what is humility? According to *Preach My Gospel*, it is a “willingness to submit to the will of the Lord. ... It is being teachable. ... [It] is a vital catalyst for spiritual growth.”<sup>3</sup>

There are certainly many opportunities for us all to improve in this Christlike attribute. I would like to explore first how humble we’ve been, or should be, in following the counsel of our prophet. A pop quiz for us individually could be:

- Do we mention the full name of the Church in all our interactions? President Russell M. Nelson said, “To remove the Lord’s name from the Lord’s Church is a major victory for Satan.”<sup>4</sup>
- Are we letting God prevail in our lives by accepting our prophet’s very specific invitation? “Today I call upon our members everywhere to lead out in abandoning attitudes and actions of prejudice.”<sup>5</sup>
- Are we overcoming the world, trusting the doctrine of Christ more than the philosophies of men, as our prophet taught?<sup>6</sup>
- Have we become peacemakers, saying positive things to and about people? President Nelson taught us last general conference the following: “If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy that we can say about another person—whether to his face or behind her back—that should be *our* standard of communication.”<sup>7</sup>

These are simple but powerful instructions. Remember, all the people of Moses had to do to be healed was to look at the brass serpent which he had lifted up.<sup>8</sup> But “because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.”<sup>9</sup>

During this conference we’ve heard and will yet hear the unfailing counsel of our prophets and apostles. It’s a perfect occasion to develop humility and let our strong opinions be swallowed by an even stronger conviction that the Lord does speak through these chosen leaders.

Above all, in developing humility, we must also understand and accept that we are not able to overcome our challenges or to achieve our full potential through our own efforts only. Motivational speakers, writers, coaches, and influencers around the world, especially on digital platforms, will say that everything depends solely on us and our actions. The world believes in the arm of flesh.

But through the restored gospel, we’ve learned that we greatly depend on Heavenly Father’s benevolence and the Atonement of our Savior, Jesus Christ, “for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.”<sup>10</sup> That’s why it’s so important to make and keep covenants with God, as doing so will give us full access to the healing, enabling, and perfecting power of Jesus Christ through His Atonement.

Attending sacrament meeting weekly and worshipping in the temple regularly to participate in the ordinances and to receive and renew covenants is a sign that we recognize our dependence

on Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ. That will invite Their power into our lives to help us through all our problems and ultimately fulfill the measure of our creation.

Not long ago the level of my humility and understanding of my dependence on the Lord was once again tested. I was in a taxi going to the airport to catch a short flight to a place where there was a very difficult situation to solve. The taxi driver, who was not a member of the Church, looked at me through the mirror and said, “I can see you’re not well today!”

“Could you tell?” I asked.

“Of course,” he said. Then he said something like, “You actually have a very negative halo around you!”

I explained to him that I had quite a hard situation to deal with, and he then asked me, “Have you done everything in your power to solve this?”

I responded I had done everything I could.

He then said something I have never forgotten: “So leave this in God’s hands, and everything will work out fine.”

I confess that I was tempted to ask him, “Do you know who you’re talking to?” But I didn’t! What I did was humble myself before the Lord throughout that one-hour flight, asking for divine help. As I left the airplane, I learned that the difficult situation to be solved was already in order and that my presence wouldn’t even be necessary anymore.

Brothers and sisters, the command, invitation, and promise from the Lord is clear and comforting: “Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers.”<sup>11</sup>

May we be humble to follow the counsel of our prophets and accept that only God and Jesus Christ can transform us—through ordinances and covenants received in His Church—into the best version of ourselves in this life and, one day, make us perfect in Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### Notes

1. Alma 5:27.
2. Proverbs 29:23.
3. “Seek Christlike Attributes,” *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (2023), 131.
4. Russell M. Nelson, “The Correct Name of the Church,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 88.
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Let God Prevail,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2020, 94.
6. See Russell M. Nelson, “Overcome the World and Find Rest,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 95–98.
7. Russell M. Nelson, “Peacemakers Needed,” *Liahona*, May 2023, 100.

8. See Numbers 21:7–9; 1 Nephi 17:41.
9. 1 Nephi 17:41.
10. 2 Nephi 25:23.
11. Doctrine and Covenants 112:10.