

“Be Still, and Know That I Am God”

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We can be still and know that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior.

During a recent open house and media day for a new house of the Lord, I led a group of journalists on a tour through the sacred structure. I described the purposes of temples in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and responded to their many excellent questions.

Before entering the celestial room, I explained that this particular room in the house of the Lord symbolically represents the peace and beauty of the heavenly home to which we can return after this life. I indicated to our guests that we would not speak while in the celestial room, but I would be happy to answer any questions after we moved to the next stop on the tour.

After exiting the celestial room and as we gathered at the next location, I asked our guests if they had any observations they wanted to share. One of the journalists said with great emotion, “I have never experienced anything like that in my entire life. I did not know quiet like that existed in the world; I simply did not believe such stillness was possible.”

I was struck by both the sincerity and the starkness of this person’s statement. And the journalist’s reaction highlighted one important aspect of stillness—overcoming and tuning out the commotion of our external environment.

As I later pondered the journalist’s comment and reflected on the often hectic pace of our modern lives—the busyness, noise, diversions, distractions, and detours that so often seem to demand our attention—a scripture came to my mind: “Be still, and know that I am God.”¹

I pray the Holy Ghost will enlighten each of us as we consider a higher and holier dimension of stillness in our lives—an inner spiritual stillness of the soul that enables us to know and remember that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior. This remarkable blessing is available to all Church members who are striving faithfully to become “covenant people of the Lord.”²

Be Still

In 1833, the Saints in Missouri were the targets of intense persecution. Mobs had driven them from their homes in Jackson County, and some Church members had tried to establish themselves in other nearby counties. But the persecution continued, and the threats of death

were many. In these challenging circumstances, the Lord revealed the following instruction to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio:

"Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; *be still* and know that I am God."³

I believe the Lord's admonition to "be still" entails much more than simply not talking or not moving. Perhaps His intent is for us to remember and rely upon Him and His power "at all times and in all things, and in all places that [we] may be in."⁴ Thus, "be still" may be a way of reminding us to focus upon the Savior unfailingly as the ultimate source of the spiritual stillness of the soul that strengthens us to do and overcome hard things.

Build upon the Rock

True faith is always focused in and on the *Lord Jesus Christ*—in Him as the Divine and Only Begotten Son of the Eternal Father and on Him and the redemptive mission He fulfilled.

"For he hath answered the ends of the law, and he claimeth all those who have faith in him; and they who have faith in him will cleave unto every good thing; wherefore he advocateth the cause of the children of men."⁵

Jesus Christ is our Redeemer,⁶ our Mediator,⁷ and our Advocate⁸ with the Eternal Father and the rock upon which we should build the spiritual foundation of our lives.

Helaman explained, "Remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build *your* foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, *because of the rock upon which ye are built*, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall."⁹

The symbolism of Christ as the "rock" upon whom we should build the foundation of our lives is most instructive. Please note in this verse that the Savior is not the foundation. Rather, we are admonished to build our personal spiritual foundation upon Him.¹⁰

The foundation is the part of a building that connects it to the ground. A strong foundation provides protection from natural disasters and many other destructive forces. A proper foundation also distributes the weight of a structure over a large area to avoid overloading the underlying soil and provides a level surface for construction.

A strong and reliable connection between the ground and a foundation is essential if a structure is to remain sturdy and stable over time. And for particular types of construction, anchor pins and steel rods can be used to attach the foundation of a building to "bedrock," the hard, solid rock beneath surface materials such as soil and gravel.

In a similar way, the foundation of our lives must be connected to the rock of Christ if we are to remain firm and steadfast. The sacred covenants and ordinances of the Savior's restored gospel can be compared to the anchor pins and steel rods used to connect a building to bedrock. Every

time we faithfully receive, review, remember, and renew sacred covenants, our spiritual anchors are secured ever more firmly and steadfastly to the "rock" of Jesus Christ.

"Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh *an anchor* to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God."¹¹

Incrementally and increasingly "in process of time,"¹² "virtue [garnishes our] thoughts unceasingly," our "confidence [waxes stronger and stronger] in the presence of God," and "the Holy Ghost [is our] constant companion."¹³ We become more grounded, rooted, established, and settled.¹⁴ As the foundation of our lives is built upon the Savior, we are blessed to "be still"—to have a spiritual assurance that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior.

Sacred Times, Holy Places, and the Home

The Lord provides both sacred times and holy places to help us experience and learn about this inner stillness of our souls.

For example, the Sabbath is God's day, a *sacred time* set apart to remember and worship the Father in the name of His Son, to participate in priesthood ordinances, and to receive and renew sacred covenants. Each week we worship the Lord during our home study and also as "fellowcitizens with the saints"¹⁵ during sacrament and other meetings. On His holy day, our thoughts, actions, and demeanor are signs we give to God and an indicator of our love for Him.¹⁶ Every Sunday, if we will, we can be still and know that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior.

A central feature of our Sabbath worship is to "go to the house of prayer and offer up [our] sacraments upon [the Lord's] holy day."¹⁷ The "house[s] of prayer" in which we gather on the Sabbath are meetinghouses and other approved facilities—*holy places* of reverence, worship, and learning. Each meetinghouse and facility is dedicated by priesthood authority as a place where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell and where God's children may come "to the knowledge of their Redeemer."¹⁸ If we will, we can "be still" in our holy places of worship and know ever more surely that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior.

The temple is another *holy place* specifically set apart for worshipping and serving God and learning eternal truths. We think, act, and dress differently in the house of the Lord from any other places that we may frequent. In His holy house, if we will, we can be still and know that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior.

The principal purposes of sacred time and holy places are exactly the same: to repeatedly focus our attention upon Heavenly Father and His plan, the Lord Jesus Christ and His Atonement, the edifying power of the Holy Ghost, and the promises associated with the sacred ordinances and covenants of the Savior's restored gospel.

Today I repeat a principle I previously have emphasized. Our homes should be the ultimate combination of both *sacred time* and *holy place* wherein individuals and families can "be still" and

know that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Savior. Leaving our homes to worship on the Sabbath and in the house of the Lord certainly is essential. But only as we return to our homes with the spiritual perspective and strength obtained in those holy places and activities can we then sustain our focus upon the primary purposes of mortal life and overcome the temptations so prevalent in our fallen world.

Our ongoing Sabbath, temple, and home experiences should fortify us with the power of the Holy Ghost, with an ongoing and stronger covenant connection to the Father and the Son, and with "a perfect brightness of hope"¹⁹ in God's eternal promises.

As home and Church are gathered together in one in Christ,²⁰ we may be troubled on every side, but we will not be distressed in our minds and hearts. We may be perplexed by our circumstances and challenges, but we will not be in despair. We may be persecuted, but we will also recognize that we are never alone.²¹ We can receive spiritual strength to become and remain firm, steadfast, and true.

Promise and Testimony

I promise that as we build the foundation of our lives on the "rock" of Jesus Christ, we can be blessed by the Holy Ghost to receive an individual and spiritual stillness of the soul that enables us to know and remember that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, Jesus Christ is our Savior, and we can be blessed to do and overcome hard things.

I joyfully witness that God is our Heavenly Father, we are His children, and Jesus Christ is our Redeemer and the "rock" of our salvation. I so testify in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. Psalm 46:10; see also Doctrine and Covenants 101:16.
2. 1 Nephi 14:14.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 101:16; emphasis added.
4. Mosiah 18:9.
5. Moroni 7:28.
6. See Mosiah 15:6–9.
7. See 2 Nephi 2:27–28.
8. See Moroni 7:28.
9. Helaman 5:12; emphasis added.

10. Ephesians 2:19–20 indicates that the “household of God” (the Church of Jesus Christ) is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Thus, in the analogy used in Ephesians, Jesus Christ is the central component in the foundation upon which **His Church** is built.

In contrast, Helaman 5:12 indicates that “it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build *your* foundation” (emphasis added). Thus, the foundation upon which we should build our lives is the “rock of our Redeemer,” “a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.” Thus, in the analogy used in Helaman, Jesus Christ is the “bedrock” upon which we should build **our individual lives**.

11. Ether 12:4; emphasis added.
12. See Moses 7:18, 21.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46.
14. See Colossians 1:23; 2:7; 2 Peter 1:12; Neal A. Maxwell, “Overcome ... Even As I Also Overcame,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 70–72.
15. Ephesians 2:19.
16. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 130.
17. Doctrine and Covenants 59:9.
18. Mosiah 18:30.
19. 2 Nephi 31:20.
20. See Ephesians 1:10.
21. See 2 Corinthians 4:8–9.