



By Elder Gregorio E. Casillas
Of the Seventy

God Loves All His Children

Jesus Christ is always calling upon us, and He uses us, His ordinary servants, to help bring His children to Him.

What does our Heavenly Father desire from you? Do you understand that when you were in your premortal existence, Heavenly Father was preparing you for your life on earth? Speaking to youth, President Russell M. Nelson taught, “Our Heavenly Father has reserved many of His most noble spirits—perhaps . . . His finest team—for this final phase.”¹ Because we have been reserved for these latter days, it is crucial for us to learn to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd, and He knows His flock, and the flock knows its Shepherd because “he calleth his own sheep by name.”² He is always calling upon us, and He uses us, His ordinary servants, to help bring His children to Him.

A while ago, a stake president and I were visiting members of the Church in a local neighborhood. After we finished our scheduled visits, the stake president asked me if we could go see one more family. He felt impressed that we should talk with them.

We knocked on the door, and a sister opened it. She looked at me, but she didn’t know who I was, so she didn’t express much. I pointed my hand toward the stake president, who greeted her by name. As soon as she heard and saw him, she rejoiced. Standing there at the door, they both hugged each other and cried together. This set the tone for our visit. We didn’t know that the sister had received chemotherapy the day before. She felt too weak to care for her adult son. So I helped the stake president dress her

son, and we put him in his wheelchair. We fed him the food that another sweet sister from the ward had brought earlier, and we helped with other tasks. Before we left their home, we were able to bless them.

All that was going through my mind during this visit was a confirmation that Jesus Christ loves them deeply. He understands them and personally knows the pain of their unique situation. Almost the entire visit happened in silence. On this occasion we did not give a big sermon or share our favorite scripture, but the Lord blessed us with His Spirit abundantly.

One of the greatest reasons your Heavenly Father sent you here at this

time is so that you can realize your full potential. *Preach My Gospel* teaches us that as disciples of Christ, we should avoid comparing ourselves to one another.³ Your spiritual abilities are unique, personal, and innate, and your Heavenly Father wants to help you develop them. There will always be someone you can help feel the love of your Heavenly Father. Your potential is divine. While it’s certainly important to prepare yourself to succeed in this very competitive world, one of your crucial missions throughout your life is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ and to follow the impressions of the Spirit. As you do this, God will bless your life; He will bless your current or future family; and He will bless the lives of His children who you encounter.

We live in a time of great opportunity. Although we face many difficulties, I know they are there in part to allow us to help others feel the love of our Heavenly Father. President Nelson taught, “In coming days, we will see the *greatest* manifestations of the Savior’s power that the world has *ever* seen.”⁴ We have the privilege to watch over people who need a helping hand, an embrace, a feeling of comfort, or for us simply to be with them in silence. If we can help lighten their burdens,



even if only for a moment, then we will be able to see the great manifestations of the Savior's power in their lives.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, Latter-day Saints can make a positive difference in the world. We can provide a sense of joy that is reflected in our countenance—a joy that we share with words of love and acts of kindness. Let us be good neighbors, good employers, good workers. Let us strive to be good Christians at all times.

The Lord has restored His gospel with the necessary ordinances so that Heavenly Father's children can have all the promises that bind us to Him. By helping our sisters and brothers in their daily challenges, let us also remember to help them make and

keep these sacred promises with their Heavenly Father so that He in turn can promise them the richest blessings for this life and for eternity. These promises are only made possible through the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His priesthood keys.

In other words, we can help others stay on the covenant path. Some of us deviate from the path from time to time, and so we must remember that for our Heavenly Father we always have the possibility of returning. Even if our course is not the most perfect, the Savior always reminds us, "As oft as [we repent] and [seek] forgiveness, with real intent, [we will be] forgiven."⁵

One of the crafts of the adversary today is to make us think and believe

that there is no way for us to change or that we no longer have hope. This destructive thinking causes many of us to stop trying. And it is at this moment when our love, our words of encouragement and support, our time, and our help can give someone hope enough to try once more.

Maybe you are thinking, "OK, but who ministers to me?" By going and blessing the lives of our brothers and sisters, we will collect testimonies that will fill our lives with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These testimonies will revitalize us to try once more ourselves. The Holy Spirit will revive us and help us with renewed testimonies to continue with our own difficulties and personal trials. Whenever we



seek to bless the lives of others, the Lord takes mercy upon us even more; He strengthens us and helps us in our lives.

Please remember that the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior and understands you personally. He knows what it is to have to fulfill a calling and leave things behind to help the children of God. He has the power to bless you in everything if you believe in Him and do not doubt.⁶

My dear brothers and sisters, on that day when a priesthood leader felt impressed for us to visit a mother and a son that we did not have on our agenda, I proclaim that God knew they needed us. And at the end, I was the one who was ministered to. On that day, I received one of the greatest lessons of the Savior's love for us.

I testify that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that He lives, that He lived and died for you and me, and that He was resurrected for you and me so that we can aspire to celestial reunions full of joy with those who are already on the other side of the veil. I know that He understands you and me perfectly. He understands each of our difficult moments, and He has the power to help us in those moments when we feel most vulnerable. I know that the Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father appeared to Joseph Smith to restore the gospel in these days. I know that our dear prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, is a prophet of the Lord, and I testify of these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Hope of Israel" (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), Gospel Library.
2. See John 10:2–4.
3. "Avoid comparing yourself to other missionaries and measuring the outward results of your efforts with theirs" (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ* [2023], 13).
4. Russell M. Nelson, "Overcome the World and Find Rest," *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 95.
5. Moroni 6:8.
6. See Alma 56:47; 57:26.



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Following Christ

As followers of Christ, we teach and testify of Jesus Christ, our Perfect Role Model. So let us follow Him by forgoing contention.

This year millions have been inspired by the gospel study plan known by the Savior's invitation "Come, follow me."¹ Following Christ is not a casual or occasional practice. It is a continuous commitment and way of life that should guide us at all times and in all places. His teachings and His example define the path for every disciple of Jesus Christ. And all are invited to this path, for He invites all to come unto Him, "black and white, bond and free, male and female; . . . and all are alike unto God."²

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The first step in following Christ is to obey what He defined as "the great commandment in the law":

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."³



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