

“Sweet Above All That Is Sweet”

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Good morning, my beloved sisters. I have been thinking about you for months now, and it is pure joy to be with you today. I’m at a loss, though, to know how to do justice to our theme, so I hope you have come ready to receive revelation, because the Spirit will teach you what you are ready to learn.

Our theme is filled with hope and power: “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”¹

A dear friend who knew I felt drawn this morning to focus on the grace of Jesus Christ but was wrestling with this message, sent me an email that I’m sure she meant to be helpful. Here is what she wrote: “Here is what I hope you cover in your talk. What is grace? How do I gain access to it? What difference does grace make in my life? Can it help me with loneliness, with overeating, with bad relationships, with weaknesses and temptations, with insecurity, with heartache and stress? Can it help me with my husband? Is grace always present, or do I have to do something to get it? Is it a feeling? How can I tell when grace is helping me? Okay, those are the questions I want you to answer.”

I responded with one line: “Are you sure that’s *all* you want to know?”

Her email led me to ask another friend what she wanted to understand about grace. “To tell you the truth,” she said, “those TV evangelists have wrecked that word for me. I almost feel disloyal to the restored gospel even talking about grace. I mean, do we believe in grace?”

I then asked a dear friend who’s serving as a stake Relief Society president to ask her presidency what they wished the women in their stake understood about grace. This presidency is a spectacular quartet of women who have logged decades of service among them. And yet after a long discussion they said, “We don’t think we know enough about grace to even know what to ask.”

The disturbing irony in all of these comments is that THE CENTRAL, most compelling, most life-changing message of all time is that Jesus Christ already triumphed over sin, death, hell, and

every kind of misery. Surely there is *nothing* our Father is more eager for us to understand than the breathtaking scope of the Atonement of His Son and the power the Atonement makes available to us. Because the key to unlocking the power of His covenant daughters is learning to unlock the power of Jesus Christ.

With this truth in mind, let's consider four of my friend's questions. First, what is grace? Second, what difference can grace make in our lives? Third, how does the Savior make His power available to us? And fourth, what must we do to gain access to that power?

Question Number One: What is grace? My father had many virtues. He served faithfully in the Church his entire life. I doubt he ever missed home teaching in 60 years, though he had to drive a hundred miles a month. My earliest testimony of priesthood power came from him. After his death, we heard story after story about his quiet generosity. And my father's word was gold. But my dad had an Achilles heel—a temper he never conquered. We knew he loved us, but we often bore the brunt of his anger. Sustaining a loving relationship with him was a struggle for me.

One afternoon a few days before he died, I was sitting at his bedside as he slept. Suddenly I found myself asking the Lord to forgive him for years of angry outbursts. As I prayed, something unexplainable happened to me. In an instant, I felt decades of hurt simply fall away. The feeling was spiritual but it was also tangible. I could remember his anger, but I couldn't feel any of the pain. It was gone. It was beauty for ashes.² It was sweet.

That is grace. The amazing power of grace. No earthly remedy could have done for me what the Savior did. It was the redeeming power of Jesus Christ that prompted me to pray for my father and even gave me the words to say; and it was His healing power that healed a lifetime of wounds.

The scriptures explain what I experienced. In Lehi's vision of the tree of life, most of those he saw either never entered the "covenant path" our leaders described in the General Women's Meeting last month,³ or they got lost somewhere along the way.⁴ But one group held fast to the iron rod, pressed forward to the tree and partook of the fruit, and heeded not those who mocked them.⁵ The fruit made them happy, and it filled their souls with "exceedingly great joy."⁶ It was "sweet above all that is sweet."⁷

What is this fruit that Nephi said was "most desirable above all things"?⁸ The fruit is the Atonement, which is *the* most tangible evidence of the Lord's incomprehensible love for us. Grace is the power that flows from the Atonement and is what the Savior uses to continue to manifest His love for us. The Bible Dictionary says that grace is "divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous . . . love of Jesus Christ. . . . [G]race is an enabling power."⁹ The Savior empowers us with His grace, not because we've earned it, but because He loves us perfectly. That is why grace is sweet. It was grace that I experienced at my father's bedside.

To tell you the truth, I've never really liked the word sweet. I love things that taste sweet—let's be clear about that. But the word sweet has always seemed a little weak and insipid. When I was a student at BYU, being called a "sweet spirit" was not necessarily a compliment. But I have

come to understand that when we feel unexplainable peace or hope, love or strength, when we want to linger somewhere because the feeling is just so sweet, the Lord is manifesting His grace.

Years ago, I heard a speaker at this conference say that when she saw the word grace in the scriptures, she always substituted the word power.¹⁰ Her counsel helped me make sense of many scriptures for the first time. When we talk about the grace of Jesus Christ, we are talking about His power—power that enables us to do things we simply could not do on our own.

The Savior has “all power” in heaven and on earth.¹¹ He has power to cleanse, forgive, and redeem us; power to heal us of weakness, illness, and heartache; power to inspire us; power to conquer Satan and overcome the flesh; power to work miracles; power to deliver us from circumstances we can’t escape ourselves; power over death; and power to strengthen us. When the Apostle Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,”¹² he was describing grace.

Grace is divine power that enables us to handle things we can’t figure out, can’t do, can’t overcome, or can’t manage on our own. We have access to this power because Jesus Christ, who was already a God, condescended to endure the bitterness of a fallen world and experience all physical and spiritual pain.¹³

Last month in general conference Elder David A. Bednar taught that “the Savior has suffered not just for our sins and iniquities—but also for our physical pains and anguish, our weaknesses and shortcomings, our fears and frustrations, our disappointments and discouragement, our regrets and remorse, our despair and desperation, the injustices and the inequities that we experience, and the emotional distresses that beset us. There is no physical pain, no spiritual wound, no anguish of soul or heartache, no infirmity or weakness you or I ever confront in mortality that the Savior did not experience first.”¹⁴

Because Jesus Christ atoned, His grace is available to us every minute of every hour of every day. It is this power that ultimately enables us to do what we came to earth to do. Grace is divine enabling power.

Question Number Two: What difference can grace make in our lives?

The last few months have been a little intense for me, and somehow I managed to make more commitments than I could handle. Ever done that? One Saturday, I worked all day trying to make a dent in some looming deadlines before joining my family at the temple for a niece’s endowment. As I walked into the chapel and sat down, the tears started and they would not stop. Exhaustion and the sheer fear of letting people down had me totally undone. I opened the scriptures and through tears happened to read this verse: “The Lord God showeth us our weakness”—and boy, was He showing me mine—“that we may know that it is by his grace . . . that we have power to do these things.”¹⁵

What the Nephites in this verse had power to do was work miracles, and boy, that got my attention because I needed a miracle. Because of the Nephites’ faith, they could command in the name of Jesus and the trees and mountains and waves of the sea would obey them.¹⁶ As I

pondered these verses, my mind raced over countless times the Lord had helped me. I felt a surge of faith and knew He would help me again. Faith unlocks divine power. For the first time in weeks, I felt peace. Peace from the Prince of Peace. It was sweet.

We all know what “overwhelmed” feels like. Mortality gives us a visceral experience with the reality that without the Lord, we are nothing.¹⁷ If there are times when you think, “I can’t handle my children, or my checkbook, or my illness, or the urge to eat brownies at midnight, or the lack of a husband, or the lack of a good husband, or a family who doesn’t appreciate me, one more day,” you’re not alone. The Savior’s divine empathy is perfect, so He knows how to help us. He rarely moves the mountains in front of us, but He always helps us climb them.

Because of Him, you don’t have to confront grief or insecurity or an addiction alone. With His help, you can resist temptation. With His help, you can change, forgive those who’ve hurt you, and start over. With His help, you can become your true self. With His help, your capacity and energy can increase. With His help, you can be happy again. The Savior promised, “My grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.”¹⁸

We are among the “weak things” the Savior is talking about. His grace can change our very nature and over time transform us from who we are into who we can become.

What difference can grace make in our lives? It can make all the difference!

Question Number Three: HOW does the Savior make His power available to us? Elder Bruce R. McConkie said that “if it were not for the grace of God, there would be nothing—no creation, no fall, no mortal probation, no atonement, no redemption, no immortality, no eternal life. It is God’s grace that underlies all things, [and] . . . that makes all things possible. Without it there would be nothing; with it there is everything.”¹⁹

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland added this clarity: “Much of the miraculous help we find in the gospel is just that—a miracle from heaven, the power of divine priesthood, the attendance of angels administering to us through a very thin veil. These are gifts from God, manifestations of His grace.”²⁰

Every divine gift and every spiritual privilege that gives us access to the power of heaven comes from Christ or through Christ or because of Christ. We owe everything to Him and to our Father in Heaven, including the privileges of receiving the gift and power of the Holy Ghost; of receiving personal revelation and gifts of the Spirit; of being endowed in the temple with knowledge and priesthood power; of learning the “mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God”²¹; of having angels on our right and on our left;²² of receiving all the blessings of the Atonement; and of receiving eternal life, the “greatest of all the gifts of God.”²³ We owe every divine gift and all access to divine power to the grace of Jesus Christ.

Eliza R. Snow said that we, as Latter-day Saint women, “have greater and higher privileges than any other females upon the face of the earth.”²⁴ I stand with Eliza on this. If there were time, we

could talk about how grace is involved in giving us access to the Holy Ghost, to angels, and to countless gifts of the Spirit.²⁵

But briefly let's consider the one privilege which we are the most likely as women to overlook—and that is the privilege of having access to priesthood power.²⁶ Too many of our sisters think we don't have this privilege. But that is not true. Women who have been endowed in the temple have as much access to priesthood power for their own lives as ordained men do.

Four key points underscore this truth:

First, priesthood keys are the manner through which the Lord authorizes the use of His power, for both women and men. Second, there are distinctions between priesthood keys, priesthood authority, and priesthood power. Priesthood keys are required to authorize ordinances, priesthood authority is required to perform ordinances, and priesthood power is available to all who worthily receive ordinances and keep the associated covenants. Third, both men and women who serve under the direction of priesthood keys serve with divine authority.²⁷ Just last month in general conference, Elder Dallin H. Oaks said:

“We are not accustomed to speaking of women having the authority of the priesthood in their Church callings, but what other authority can it be? . . . Whoever functions in an office or calling from one who holds priesthood keys, exercises priesthood authority in performing her or his assigned duties.”²⁸

And finally, fourth, men and women have equal access to the Lord's highest spiritual privileges. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the house of the Lord. Elder M. Russell Ballard declared that “when men and women go to the temple, they are both endowed with the same power, which is priesthood power. . . . Access to the power and the blessings of the priesthood is available to all of God's children.”²⁹ Though we as women are not ordained to an office in the priesthood, in the temple we are endowed with priesthood power and we are also endowed with knowledge to know how to use that power.³⁰

We have other privileges as well. We aren't required to be ordained to enter the House of the Lord and officiate in priesthood ordinances there, though men are. Further, as already mentioned, when we serve in any capacity under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys, we have full access to the power that flows through those keys, just as men do. We as women never lack for divine authority. Further still, God's highest ordinances are available only to a man and woman together. In this single doctrinal provision, God indicates His respect for the distinctive but vitally interconnected roles of both men and women. And finally, women have claim to all blessings that emanate from the priesthood.

Again, from Elder McConkie: “Where spiritual things are concerned, as pertaining to all of the gifts of the Spirit, with reference to the receipt of revelation, the gaining of testimonies, and the seeing of visions, in all matters that pertain to godliness and holiness . . . in all these things men and women stand in a position of absolute equality before the Lord.”³¹

Sisters, we may not presently have the answers to all questions. But we do know, as Lehi told his son Jacob, that “all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.”³²

Most importantly for you and I to consider and try to understand the import of, we live in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when no spiritual blessings are being withheld from the earth.³³ This means that no women living anytime, anywhere have had greater access to divine power than we do. If we seek for a lifetime, we won't plumb the depth of power and breadth of spiritual privileges the Lord has given us. Through His grace, He has made His highest, holiest spiritual privileges available to us. That is our doctrine. That is the truth.

Question Number Four: What must WE do to gain access to the Savior's power? I recently visited Harvard and honestly felt just a little smarter walking across the campus. But later that day, I had an interesting experience when I went to the Boston Temple, and the contrast between that elite university and the Lord's house, which is the institution of highest learning, was striking. Everything felt different! The world's finest education simply pales when compared with the tutelage of God.³⁴

Elder Dallin H. Oaks said that “in contrast to the institutions of the world, which teach us to *know* something, the gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us to *become* something.”³⁵ Sisters, our access to divine power hinges upon who we are becoming.

I doubt we quote any scripture on grace more often than Nephi's, that “it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.”³⁶ As covenant women, I'm pretty sure we have a tendency to zoom right in on the “after all *we* can do” part of the grace-and-works equation, but then wonder how we can possibly do more than we already are—though we're pretty sure whatever we're doing isn't enough. Does that ring true to anybody?

This scripture we quote so often is not about sequence, and it is not about feverishly working our way through an exhaustive list of good works. Jesus Christ is the only one to walk this earth and actually do all that could be done.

Instead, doing all we can do is about the direction we're headed and what kind of women we are becoming. Now there is nothing simple about this, because it isn't natural for the natural woman to want to do good or be good. But the Lord's Atonement and His gospel are all about change, and particularly a change of heart. If we are willing to yield to “the enticings of the Holy Spirit,” to stay on the covenant path, to hold tightly to the iron rod, and to partake of the fruit again and again, it is possible to put “off the natural [woman] . . . through the atonement of Christ”³⁷ and be transformed from fallen women riddled with faults into true disciples. “Doing all we can do” is all about discipleship.

Discipleship requires at least three things of us: first, coming to love the Lord more than we love anything in the world; second, experiencing a change of heart so that we have no “disposition to do evil, but to do good continually”³⁸—which does not mean we no longer make mistakes, it just means we don't want to; and third, behaving like true followers. The road to discipleship leads away from all forms of ungodliness.³⁹ That means resisting the gravitational pull of the world and shedding the attitudes, appetites and behaviors of the natural woman. As Elder Neal A.

Maxwell put it, “Personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar.”⁴⁰

At the heart of becoming disciples is *doing* what we promise to do every time we partake of the sacrament—which is to “always remember” the Lord.⁴¹ This means remembering Him when we choose what media we’re willing to expose our spirits to. It means remembering Him in how we spend our time and when choosing between a steady diet of pop culture or the Word of God. It means remembering Him in the middle of conflict or when temptation looms. It means remembering Him when critics attack His Church and mock truth. It means remembering that we have taken His name upon us.⁴²

Now none of us have mastered this, but it is our quest, because conversion to the Lord requires immersion in His gospel. We baptize by immersion, not by sprinkling. A “sprinkling” of the gospel will never lead to conversion.

If we constantly immerse ourselves in a fallen world, how far can we really expect to progress in this life? Now I am not suggesting that there aren’t fun and even inspiring opportunities all around us. I love ballgames, including a whole lot of ballgames played right here, and 4-wheelers and travel and snowshoeing, and Broadway plays with the best of them. But mortality is a short-term proposition.⁴³ None of us are going to stay here very long. Doesn’t it make sense to devote as much energy as possible to things we can actually take with us into the eternities? To covenants, eternal relationships, our knowledge of truth, and to the blessings that come from devotion to the Lord? And those blessings are remarkable.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson related an experience of two sister missionaries serving in Croatia who were headed home late one evening after an appointment. He told the story this way: “Several men on the trolley made crude comments and became rather menacing. Feeling threatened, the sisters got off the trolley at the next stop just as the doors closed so no one could follow them. Having avoided that problem, they realized they were in a place unknown to either of them. As they turned to ask for help, they saw a woman. . . . She knew where they could find another trolley to take them home and invited them to follow her. On the way [to that trolley] they had to pass a bar with patrons sitting along the sidewalk. . . . These men also appeared threatening. Nevertheless, the two young women had the distinct impression that the men could not see them. They walked by, apparently invisible to [the men] When the sisters and their guide reached the stop, the trolley they needed was just arriving. They turned to thank the woman, but she was nowhere to be seen.”⁴⁴ How would we explain that sequence of events—a remarkable sequence of events for those two sister missionaries? The discipleship of two sister missionaries gave them access to the Lord’s protecting grace.

Discipleship is not easy, but it’s easier than not becoming a disciple. Paraphrasing President Howard W. Hunter, if our lives are centered on Christ, nothing can ever go permanently wrong. But if they’re not centered on Christ, nothing can ever go permanently right.⁴⁵

As disciples, we can ask for more energy, more revelation, more patience, more self-discipline, more hope, more love, more healing, more happiness. We can ask for miracles, for freedom from pain, and for the desire to forgive. We can ask for more faith and for help in becoming better

disciples.⁴⁶ We can ask for angels to walk with us, because if we live up to our privileges, angels can't be restrained from being our associates.⁴⁷

The Lord is not saving up His grace, His power, for one dramatic display at the Final Judgment, nor is grace something that kicks in at the end of an ordeal. It is there from the moment we exercise even a “particle of faith” and ask for His help.⁴⁸ Jesus Christ is Alpha and Omega, literally the beginning and the end,⁴⁹ which means He'll stick with us from start to finish.

Not long ago, I was assigned to make a sensitive presentation to a group of senior General Authorities, which is just always a little nerve-wracking—let me just be honest about it. I prepared the best I could and sought the Lord's help, and even asked if angels who cared about that presentation could accompany me to the meeting. Well, things went better that day than I expected, and that should have tipped me off. As I walked back to my office thinking, “That went pretty well,” I had a very immediate and clear impression: “You don't think you're the one who did that, do you?” I literally looked up and said, “Oh yeah, I didn't think it was me. I really didn't think it was me.” That's when I realized that the Lord had indeed sent help.

I can't think of a single thing I've ever been asked to do that I have felt or been equal to. But therein lies the beautiful intersection of grace and works. When we as disciples do our best, whatever that is at a given moment, the Lord magnifies us.

Doing all we can do is about becoming and behaving like true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is our part. That being said, make no mistake about it: notwithstanding all we can do and despite the little we actually do, it is the Savior's grace that will ultimately save us.⁵⁰ We can never earn exaltation. But we can indicate by the way we live our lives that we want to be part of the kingdom of God more than we want anything else. And that is discipleship.

Last year, Elder Holland encouraged new mission presidents to “have an eternal love affair with the life of the Son of God. I pray that you will . . . love everything He did, everywhere He went, everything He said, and everything He is. I would walk on hot lava, I would drink broken glass to find one more word, one more phrase, one more doctrine, *any* parable that *anyone* could give me of the life of Christ the living Son of the living God. The doctrine of Christ means everything to me as a result of [my feelings] for the author of the doctrine of Christ.”⁵¹

My dear sisters whom I love dearly, what one thing would you be willing to give up, starting today, to put the Savior even more at the center of your life? What one thing would you be willing to do, starting today, to unlock more of His power? His grace is what will enable us to do what the Savior is counting on us to do in the twilight of this great, culminating gospel dispensation.

Elder Holland put the task before us in perspective: “‘Something is going to be asked of this dispensation that's never been asked before.’ . . . [We] must be ready ‘to present the Church of the Lamb, to the Lamb,’ and when that happens, ‘we must be looking and acting like His Church.’”⁵²

The Lord is hastening His work, as we all know, and we are right in the middle of the hastening. I loved it when a sister opened a recent Relief Society meeting in Houston by praying, “We are grateful to live in this day when we are preparing the world for the return of Jesus Christ.”

Think of her statement! The eyes and the hopes of every previous dispensation are upon us. We’ve been chosen to help prepare the world for the Savior. We are living in a day unlike any other, which means it is simply time for us to do things we have never done before. Because we are disciples of Christ, how will we make sure that we and our loved ones are truly converted? Because we’re disciples of Christ, what will we never do or even tolerate again? Because we’re disciples of Christ, what truths are we willing to stand for, even if they aren’t all that popular? Because we’re disciples of Christ, how will we treat those who see the world, and even the Church, differently? Because we’re disciples of Christ, what are we willing to do to build up the kingdom of God?⁵³ Because we’re disciples of Christ, how hard will we work to unlock the Savior’s power?

The more we unlock the power available to us as covenant-making women, the more vibrant our impact will be in the work of salvation. We will receive more revelation more often; we will learn to unlock the power we’ve been endowed with; we will perform more temple work and worship; our families will be more centered around Christ and more eager to share the gospel; we will have more righteous influence, period.

The key to unlocking the power of covenant women is covenant women learning to unlock the power of Jesus Christ.

I know how tangible the Lord’s power is. I was in my early 30s when an opportunity to marry evaporated overnight and the heartache plunged me into depression. One day a friend called to say she’d had an impression that a verse in Mosiah was just for me, and then she read the verse over the phone: “I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs . . . and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.”⁵⁴

I’m sorry to say, and I’m kind of in shame to say, that I hung up even more discouraged. As foolish as it sounds now, I wasn’t looking for the Lord to ease my burdens. I just wanted Him to send me my husband! I felt like I could not face the burden of singleness *one more day*. I was pretty sure that if I prayed and fasted and went to the temple enough, I could convince Him to bless me with this righteous desire. I wasn’t thinking about standing as a witness. I was far too preoccupied with myself—which is exactly what happens when we try to lift our burdens alone.

Weeks stretched into a year, and with all of my praying and fasting and temple-going, I was still single and still miserable. But then one day I noticed a verse in Luke where the Savior declares that He has come to heal the brokenhearted. The *brokenhearted* word jumped out at me because my heart was broken. I was still thinking about that verse a few days later when I found myself meeting with Elder Bruce C. Hafen about a manuscript he had written on the enabling power of the Atonement. I took that manuscript home and devoured every word. It opened my eyes to scriptures and divine promises I had never seen before: that the Lord would heal our wounded

souls, that He had already taken our pains upon Him, and that He would succor us.⁵⁵ I realized then that I didn't know very much about the Savior, and it simply isn't possible to be a disciple of someone you don't know.

Fast-forward 30 years. In some respects, my life hasn't changed that much, unfortunately. But in other ways, *everything* is different. That painful episode was a vital turning point, because it launched me on a continuing quest to understand the Atonement and the power that flows from it. Life would have crushed me long ago if I hadn't learned how to access the Savior's power. He has carried me and healed my heart again and again.

Sisters, just the last few days I have had yet another experience with the power and the grace of Jesus Christ. On Saturday I became somewhat ill—I know you've been thinking that this voice was just really attractive! I became quite ill on Saturday, and by the time I could see my doctor on Monday, I was in a world of hurt. He took one look at me and took my temperature and checked some other things and told me how seriously ill I was, kind of threatened me with the hospital, and then said that it would take at least 10 days to get me back on my feet. That was Monday at about 5:00 p.m.

I said, "Well that's great, but I have just one little teeny problem with that." I said, "Regardless of what else you want to do, on Thursday morning I need to be able to stand at a pulpit for 35 minutes and talk to about 15,000 of my best friends."

He kind of looked at me like every marble had just drained out of my head and then went to work to do everything he could medically to help me—and he did everything he could, and I'm grateful for it. But that's not why I'm here today. I'm here because my family and many, many friends have been praying for me, and fasting. I'm here because general auxiliary presidencies have been praying for me, and Sandra Rogers and her committee. I'm here because priesthood power is real. I'm here because angels are real, and they really do minister through a very thin veil. All of these blessings that give us access to the power of God are manifestations of the grace of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes we think that the world around us is what is real—but this world is so fake, so much of it. What's real is our Father and His Son, the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ and all the power available to us to help us do what we came to this earth to do.

This recent experience is one of many that allow me today to tell you that I do stand as a witness that the Lord does visit His people in their afflictions. I testify to you that He is filled with healing, enabling power, and that He can ease our burdens and strengthen us when we feel weaker than weak. I testify that the covenant path, the path of discipleship, is actually the easiest path. And I testify that the Savior's love for us has no end, which is why the fruit of the tree is always sweet above all that is sweet.

This really is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Jesus Christ really is going to come again. Every knee really is going to bow and every tongue confess that He is the Christ. I know these things are true. As His covenant daughters, may we be determined to unlock His

power to help us be the disciples we want to be. In the sacred and holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

NOTES

1. Psalm 84:11.

2. See Isaiah 61:3.

3. See Linda K. Burton, “Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work”; Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Sisterhood: Oh, How We Need Each Other”; and Rosemary M. Wixom, “Keeping Covenants Protects Us, Prepares Us, and Empowers Us,” *Ensign*, May 2014.

4. See 1 Nephi 8: 18, 23, 28.

5. 1 Nephi 8:33.

6. 1 Nephi 8:12.

7. Alma 32:42.

8. 1 Nephi 11:22.

9. *Bible Dictionary*, “Grace,” p. 697.

10. More recently, Elder David A. Bednar has suggested the same approach. (David A. Bednar, “In the Strength of the Lord,” BYU Devotional Address, October 23, 2001.)

11. After His Resurrection, He declared to His remaining eleven Apostles, “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*” (Matthew 28:18.) John later bore record that the Savior “received a fulness of the glory of the Father.” (D&C 93:16.) See also Mosiah 4:9.

12. Philippians 4:13.

13. Paul taught the Hebrews, “We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15-16.)

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14. David A. Bednar, “Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign*, May 2014.
 15. Jacob 4:7.
 16. See Jacob 4:6.
 17. See Alma 26:12.
 18. Ether 12:27.
 19. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, Deseret Book, 1985, 149.
 20. Jeffrey R. Holland, *For Times of Trouble*, Deseret Book, 2013. (Psalms 18:36; 94:18-29.)
 21. D&C 84:19.
 22. D&C 84:88.
 23. D&C 14:7.
 24. *Evening News*, 14 January 1870.
 25. The Holy Ghost is one such avenue. Elder Parley P. Pratt described the breadth of the Holy Ghost’s influence upon us: “The gift of the Holy Ghost . . . quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands, and purifies all the natural passions and affections. . . . It inspires, develops, cultivates, and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings, and affections of our nature. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness, and charity. It develops beauty of person, form, and features. . . . It strengthens and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.” (Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology and a Voice of Warning*, 61.)
Gifts of the Spirit are another avenue to the Lord’s power. Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that “these gifts are infinite in number and endless in their manifestations because God himself is infinite and endless.” (*New Witness*, 270.)
 26. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said that the “doctrine of the priesthood—unknown in the world and but little known even in the Church—cannot be learned out of the scriptures alone. . . . The doctrine of the priesthood is known only by personal revelation.” (Bruce R. McConkie, “The Doctrine of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, May 1982, 32.)
 27. See Sheri Dew, *Women and the Priesthood*, Deseret Book, 2013, especially chapter 6.
 28. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, May 2014.

29. M. Russell Ballard, "Let Us Think Straight," BYU Campus Education Week devotional address, 20 August 2013; see also *New Era*, April 2014; see also D&C 109: 15.

30. In the temple, we may "grow up" in the Lord, receive a "fulness of the Holy Ghost," and be armed with God's power. (See D&C 109:15, 22.)

31. Bruce R. McConkie, "Our Sisters from the Beginning," *Ensign*, January 1979.

32. 2 Nephi 2:24.

33. See D&C 121:27–29.

34. See D&C 76:7–10.

35. Dallin H. Oaks, "The Challenge to Become," *Ensign*, Nov. 2000.

36. 2 Nephi 25:23.

37. Mosiah 3:19.

38. See Mosiah 5, especially Mosiah 5:2

39. Moroni 10:32.

40. Neal A. Maxwell, "Deny Yourselves of All Ungodliness," *Ensign*, May 1995.

41. See Moroni 4:3; 5:2.

42. Mosiah 5:7.

43. Cicero purportedly said, "I am more interested in the long hereafter than in the brief present." (Quoted by LeGrand Richards, "I Am More Interested in the Long Hereafter than in the Brief Present," BYU Devotional, February 25, 1975).

44. See D. Todd Christofferson, "When Thou Art Converted," *Ensign*, May 2004.

45. See Howard W. Hunter, "Fear Not, Little Flock," *1988-89 Devotional and Fireside Speeches*, BYU, 1989, 112.

46. Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught that there are "less-conspicuous gifts," such as the gift of being a disciple, the gift to calm, the gift of being agreeable, and so on. ("There Are Many Gifts," *Ensign*, Nov. 1987).

47. Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, April 28, 1942, 38.

48. See Alma 32:27. Elder Bruce C. Hafen wrote that “the Savior’s gift of grace to us is not necessarily limited in time to ‘after’ all we can do. We may receive his grace before, during and after the time when we expend our own efforts.” (*The Broken Heart*, Deseret Book, 1989, 155).

49. See Revelation 1:8, 11; 21:6; 22:13; 3 Nephi 9:18, D&C 35:1; 45:7.

50. See 2 Nephi 10:24.

51. Jeffrey R. Holland, 2013 New Mission Presidents’ Seminar.

52. Jeffrey R. Holland, *Church News*, Feb. 17, 2007.

53. See JST Matthew 6:38.

54. Mosiah 24:14.

55. See Luke 4:18; Alma 7:11–12; Jacob 2:8.