

Fear Not and Return with Honor

GARY B. SABIN

Wo ai ni. For those of you who don't know Mandarin, that's "I love you." President Reese served his mission in Taiwan, as did my wife, Valerie. She taught me the essential phrases in Mandarin, and that's the most important. So we do love you. Wo ai ni. Thank you, President Reese, for that warm welcome, and thank you, choir, for that beautiful number. That song, "More Holiness Give Me,"¹ is the perfect guidepost for our lives.

It's an honor, my friends, for Sister Sabin and me to be with you wonderful students and faculty. It brings back fond memories of when Sister Sabin and I were poor, starving students here at BYU, paying \$75 a month for a little attic apartment. We got such a good price because it came with a little dog named Helga that we had to take care of. When they took Helga away and raised the rent to \$100, we had to move. So we have fun memories of our time here.

Preparing for Two Graduation Days

Dear students, thank you for being here and sharing your valuable time with us. It is an exciting season of your life to be enrolled in this outstanding university as you prepare for the unfolding adventures that are part of your mortal education.

Before coming to earth, we were thrilled for the opportunity to have this mortal experience—much like the anticipation you may have felt before arriving on campus. Now that you are here, you have not only signed up for lunch and PE—as appealing as that may seem—but you are also taking calculus, chemistry, English, physics, and other classes that will stretch you.

We learn the most from the classes in which we work the hardest; there is little growth in the comfort zone. In reality, we often learn more from our failures than from our successes, so don't get

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discouraged by the struggle. Strength and struggle travel together.

Education is not only about passing tests or getting good grades. It is also about learning how to learn and how to interact with others in a variety of situations. It is more about what you understand, prioritize, and internalize—not only regarding your subject matter but also about life.

While you are here, you are actually preparing for two graduation days. For the first you will excitedly don a cap and gown as you celebrate your accomplishment of receiving a degree in your chosen major in preparation for your life’s work. The second will be your graduation from mortality.

When I think of graduations, I am always reminded of the screensaver photo on my phone. It is a graduation picture of our son Justin in his high school cap and gown not long before he passed away. He would have loved to attend BYU and to serve a mission like his friends, but he knew his time was limited. After his earthly graduation, we found a three-by-five card in his room with the words “Your whole life is your mission” and a key chain inscribed with the words “Return with Honor.”²

It would be my hope that each of you would view your entire life as a marvelous university and mission to prepare you for your second and most important graduation—that of graduating with honor from life. Doing so does not require that you master calculus, chemistry, or art—although those are worthy endeavors. Rather, the curriculum of our Master Teacher invites each of us to make and keep sacred covenants with Him. We should always remember that we are eternal beings having a mortal experience and that in reality we live to die and die to live.

The revealed truths of the gospel sustain and give meaningful direction to us as we trust in the wonderful promise “All things work together for good to them that love God.”³

The Savior taught, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”⁴ Therefore, the revealed formula for a successful life and an honorable graduation from life is to follow the Savior. We do this by choosing to be obedient to Him and by trusting in His promise that everything will eventually

work together for our best good, according to His wisdom and timing. The Savior declared, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”⁵

Helaman exhorted his sons to build their foundation upon the rock of Christ, “which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.”⁶ I love the word *cannot* here, as it does not equivocate but is sure. *Cannot* in this context is comforting certainty to covenant keepers.

When I was a young child in Primary, this essential principle was taught clearly to me as we sang about “the wise man” who “built his house upon the rock,” meaning our Savior. And when “the rains came down, and the floods came up, . . . the house on the rock stood still.” In contrast, the third verse lamented, “The foolish man built his house upon the sand,” and when “the rains came down, and the floods came up, . . . the house on the sand washed away.”⁷

The Savior affirmed, “Therefore, fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail.”⁸ We need to do our part by exercising faith and trusting God, but we also never need feel alone in the storms or battles of life. Though it is most often unrecognized, we have unseen heavenly help.

In the hymn “Let Us All Press On” by Evan Stephens, we are reminded of these salient truths:

*But an unseen pow’r will aid me and you
In the glorious cause of truth.*

*Fear not, though the enemy deride;
Courage, for the Lord is on our side.*⁹

The book of 2 Chronicles tells of a time when the enemies of the Kingdom of Judah had gathered to destroy them. Survival seemed impossible. The people fasted and prayed for deliverance. On the night before the battle was to occur, Jahaziel the priest declared to King Jehoshaphat, “Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s.”¹⁰ When the morning came, the enemies turned on each other, and Judah was not harmed.¹¹

There is great wisdom and comfort in those words: “The battle is not yours, but God’s.” In

fact, we get in trouble when we rely solely on our own strength. On one occasion, a famous athlete, not known for his humility, was asked by a flight attendant to fasten his seat belt. The athlete arrogantly replied, “Superman don’t need no seat belt,” to which the flight attendant quipped, “Superman don’t need no airplane either.” Pride is dangerous; it is good to know our limitations.

If we are humble and faithful, the Lord has assured:

*I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up.*¹²

In his general conference address in April 2011, Elder Kent F. Richards relayed the following:

Thirteen-year-old Sherrie underwent a 14-hour operation for a tumor on her spinal cord. As she regained consciousness in the intensive care unit, she said: “Daddy, Aunt Cheryl is here, . . . and . . . Grandpa Norman . . . and Grandma Brown . . . are here. And Daddy, who is that standing beside you? . . . He looks like you, only taller. . . . He says he’s your brother, Jimmy.” Her uncle Jimmy had died at age 13 of cystic fibrosis.

“For nearly an hour, Sherrie . . . described her visitors, all deceased family members. Exhausted, she then fell asleep.”

*Later she told her father, “Daddy, all of the children here in the intensive care unit have angels helping them.”*¹³

There are many heavenly hosts who are very interested in your welfare. You each have a big cheering section pulling for you, which is comforting to know because even when we are built upon the rock of Christ, there will be times when the rains of life still fall and the floods still come. As the scriptures teach us, the rain falls on both “the just and on the unjust.”¹⁴

Although that metaphor refers to water, I recall a time a number of years ago when terrible wildfires spread through the San Diego area. These fires destroyed many homes, including quite a few in the Poway stake where I was serving as a new stake president.

In the aftermath, a dear sister came to my office and asked me why the Lord would allow her home to be burned to the ground since she and her husband had been trying to be faithful. They had both served missions, had been married in the temple, and were faithfully serving in their callings. Their home was not only their residence but also a care facility for a number of elderly residents.

No one was injured, but losing their home with its treasured keepsakes and also their livelihood was almost too much to bear. My heart ached for her when I heard her earnest plea for an answer to her question of why.

I suddenly had a thought to take a blank piece of paper and put a single dot in the middle as I said to her, “Don’t be blinded by the dot.”

To her credit, this dear sister stood up and said, “I get it. Never mind, I will be fine.”

Assume the blank page goes in every direction throughout all eternity and the dot represents mortality of perhaps eighty to a hundred years. Most people only see the dot while missing the whole picture—or point, in this case. Having an eternal perspective from revealed truth makes life meaningful in spite of its challenges. When you are really worked up about something, ask yourself, “What will it matter in a hundred years?” To quote our dear prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, “Think celestial.”¹⁵

What really matters the most is that we are steadfast in keeping our covenants and in defending the essential truths of the gospel: that God is our Father; Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer; His Church has been restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith; and God continues to speak through prophets today.

Learning from Your Experiences

When we are striving to be faithful, our life can become an amazing adventure—irrespective of our challenges—if our mindset is one of learning from our experiences versus questioning why we have these challenges. President Thomas S. Monson wisely counseled, “We can’t direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.”¹⁶

I would also encourage you to not fall into the trap of postponing your happiness until some future event, because doing so can rob you of the

joys of today. You may think you will be happier once you graduate, are married, get a job, have children, buy a house, or achieve any number of other milestones, but happiness in life is a journey, not a moving target. It doesn't hinge on some future event but rather on our attitude and gratitude. If you want to be happy, be grateful for each day, and wherever you are, truly *be there*. We are all surrounded by abundant blessings, no matter our circumstances.

Helen Keller, the first deaf and blind person to receive a college degree, shared how amazing it would be to experience even the most basic aspects of life, which we take for granted. She reflected:

*There are . . . rare and beautiful moments when I see and hear in Dreamland. What if in my waking hours a sound should ring through the silent halls of hearing? What if a ray of light should flash through the darkened chambers of my soul? What would happen, I ask many and many a time. Would the bow-and-string tension of life snap? Would the heart, overweighted with sudden joy, stop beating for very excess of happiness?*¹⁷

Helen Keller has also been reported as saying, "The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision."¹⁸

The book of Proverbs states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."¹⁹ When we fail to appreciate God's guidance and the blessings of the restored gospel, we can be blind to the value of what we already have.

Such was the case of Ali Hafed, who sold his prosperous farm in ancient Persia to search for diamonds. He was not satisfied with his prosperity when compared with the fortunes of others. Sadly, he spent the rest of his life seeking in vain for greater riches.

Ironically, some years later, the new owner of Ali's farm found a strange-looking rock on his land that turned out to be a very large diamond—the first of many to be discovered on what eventually became the great diamond mine of Golconda. Unbeknownst to Ali, he had been living on acres of diamonds all along.²⁰

Ali's story reminds us that the grass is not greener on the other side of the hill; the grass is

greener where it is watered. We often forgo many spiritual blessings by failing to recognize them or their value.

A number of years ago, my brother Ron and I went scuba diving in California. After we had finished, we decided to leave our equipment on the beach and go bodysurfing. We were out quite a distance when I looked back toward the beach and saw a woman in the water in full scuba gear drowning. She had walked out into the ocean intending to scuba dive but had unexpectedly stepped off a sandy shelf into water over her head, and she then panicked.

The woman had at her fingertips everything she needed to be safe. She could have dropped her weight belt with a flick of her finger on the quick-release buckle, pressed the button on her inflatable buoyancy vest so she could float, or put her regulator in her mouth so she could breathe underwater.

We quickly swam back to her and pulled her to shore. She was embarrassed and obviously inexperienced. She had been taught the correct principles of how to scuba dive safely but hadn't applied what she had learned. She was, you could say, living well below her privileges and almost died because of it.

We may think that we would never be so foolish, but we often live below our spiritual privileges²¹—even though we have been taught by the true and living God through His prophets how to safely navigate this mortal experience. When we fail to avail ourselves of God's blessings—for example, by not paying our tithing; not living the Word of Wisdom; not keeping the law of chastity; or not properly valuing our baptismal and temple covenants, including the sanctity of the temple garment—we are spiritually drowning.

We can sometimes panic and flail about when we are immersed in the world. Our view can be distorted, and we can lose sight of the plan of happiness. It was Elder Neal A. Maxwell who wisely said:

God's plan of salvation is the wrong thing to be wrong about!

*No error could be more enormous or more everlasting in its consequences!*²²

Choosing to Believe, Become, Belong, and Return

The first chapter of the Old Testament illuminates the most fundamental and essential truth that we are created in the image of God.²³ In spite of that clear statement, most people have no idea who God really is and that we are in fact His children with divine potential. This knowledge is so important because it provides us with the lifeline of an eternal perspective, allowing us to breathe without fear, even when we are submerged in life's difficulties. We can trust that it is always in our best interest to live in accordance with eternal truths.

I am sure you have each used your cell phone to find directions to a desired destination, but I doubt that when the GPS voice has instructed you where to turn, you have ever said, "No one is telling me what to do!" That would be foolish, but we often treat God's commandments this way. His commandments are simply directions to help us return home—directions we already enthusiastically agreed to follow before coming to earth.

It is easy to be obedient when we want to, but the "what" without the "why" can be drudgery. When we really understand that the plan of our Father and the atoning mission of His Son have been prepared because of Their great love for us, a desire to be obedient naturally follows. Having faith to follow God's plan and His direction is a choice that brings light to the soul. We choose to be chosen. We choose to believe, become, belong, and return.

In spite of your best efforts and sleepless nights, you might receive less than your desired grade in some of your university classes. Not so with the plan of salvation. Because of the Savior's atoning sacrifice and our individual gift of agency, we each decide for ourselves whether we will be exalted by the choices we make. If you are trying your very best to be good, then relax; you are on the right path. If you are doing things you should not, then you have it within your power to change. The price of discipline is always less than the price of regret.

There is a famous actress who chose to have the slogan "Living without regret" tattooed on her side in Italian. Ironically, she later learned it was misspelled.

We all make mistakes, but because of the Savior our feelings of regret can be replaced with feelings of gratitude as we humbly and regularly partake of the sacrament with repentant and grateful hearts.

I have seen too many faithful members forget who they are and turn away from what they once defended. Perhaps it is because of life's challenges or because of the pointing fingers of scorn from those in the "great and spacious building"²⁴ in its many forms, including the time and brain drain of social media. Sometimes it is because they focus on the shavings and sawdust and not on the masterpiece—to the point that they are blind to the fruits of the gospel.

Those who wander most often forget the simple habits that kept them safe, lose the guidance of the Spirit, rationalize their decisions so they do not feel guilty, and trade what they wanted most for what they want at the moment. This is short-sighted, as broken covenants always result in broken hearts.

It does not matter what others think; it matters what God thinks. Ultimately, every knee will bow and every tongue confess the truthfulness of our Father's plan and the divinity of the Savior.²⁵ Our Heavenly Father and the Lord are the ones we should want to please. The saddest regret would be to ignore the still small voice and shortchange our eternal potential because of the roar of the crowd.

Satan is diabolical in his alluring deception that cloaks the falsehood that kindness supports any behavior, even if it destroys one's true identity, exaltation, and eternal joy. In reality, the kindest thing we can do is to stay firmly on the covenant path ourselves while extending our love and friendship to others who may be on a different path.

The Lord told Jeremiah:

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.²⁶

We should hold loosely all that is not eternal. It is only by knowing what to let go of that we know more clearly what to hold on to.

Job wisely said, “They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.”²⁷ There is nothing wrong with wealth, provided it is a by-product and not the primary focus of our lives. The prophet Helaman counseled, “Lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven, yea, which is eternal, and which fadeth not away; yea, that ye may have that precious gift of eternal life.”²⁸

While serving as a stake president, I visited a man in his home who had walked a difficult path back to full fellowship in the Church. He was on his deathbed and in the care of hospice. I will always remember his final words to me during that visit. As I held his hand, he looked at me with a peace that transcended the seriousness of his situation and simply said, “President Sabin, I am not afraid to die—not anymore.”

Those words “not anymore” spoke volumes; for in spite of his earlier protestations that he did not need the Church, those additional qualifying words revealed that he had indeed been afraid but now felt clean and prepared. “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”²⁹

Most everyone, at some point in their life, wants to know two things:

- How can I be clean?
- What happens when I die?

What a great blessing it is to know the answers to those two questions of the heart.

In the journey of life, it is helpful and hopeful to remember that no one has sinned tomorrow. Many years ago I read a story about an elderly man who was shocked to see his name listed in the obituary section of the morning paper. In disbelief, he called the editor to complain.

The editor was very apologetic and said, “I don’t know how that could have happened, but unfortunately the papers have been printed and delivered, so there is nothing we can do about it now.” He then brightened and said, “I’ll tell you what. Tomorrow we will put you in the new birth section and give you a fresh start.”

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of hope and fresh starts. In reality, everyone gets a fresh start every day. Repentance fills our lives with peace, joy, and light as we see each day as a new opportunity to learn from the past and try a little harder.

Maintaining an Eternal Perspective

You will soon go out into the world with a degree in hand and a fresh start. We are counting on you to bring light to a darkening world. We are counting on you to be heroes. The world is desperately in need of true heroes.

A true hero is one whose own hero is the Savior and one who stands for right even when standing alone.³⁰ Such heroes do not seek the limelight but radiate light by their unique unselfishness and goodness. These heroes are grateful, humble, pure, courageous, and helpful as they maintain an eternal perspective. Their self-esteem comes from a confidence within, knowing their hearts are pure.³¹

The world and social media often recognize the brutish, arrogant, and unholy as heroes for their accomplishments in media, athletics, business, or government when in reality true heroes do not need the public megaphone to declare their strength and value. Instead, they find strength from the still small voice and peace from “a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all men.”³² A true hero is guided by the two great commandments to love God and their fellow men.³³

One of the best examples of courageously following God in spite of pressure to live otherwise comes from the book of Daniel. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down and worship the golden image of King Nebuchadnezzar, they declared, “Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”³⁴ This made the king so angry that he commanded that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual and had the three thrown into the flames. They were miraculously delivered, and the humbled king ordered that no one speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.³⁵

Heroes' values are nonnegotiable—even when the furnace is seven times hot or, in today's vernacular, the social media is seven times loud.

A more recent example of courage and inner strength comes from a young man from Grants Pass, Oregon. Parker Jarvis was a heavyweight wrestler favored to win the Oregon state championship. He was unable to wrestle his sophomore year because of COVID-19, and then he broke his wrist his junior year. In his senior year he was undefeated in Oregon during the regular season and was the clear favorite to fulfill his dream to be a state champion.

Unfortunately, a snowstorm caused the finals of the state wrestling tournament to be delayed from Saturday to Sunday. In spite of all his hard work and dreams, Parker courageously told his coach that he would not wrestle on Sunday. The competition officials allowed him to continue to compete on Saturday to see how far he could get, and he successfully pinned every opponent he faced. In Sunday's championship match, he would have faced someone he had already beaten three times during the season.

After his final match on Saturday, knowing he was forfeiting his dream of a state championship, Parker walked over to his mom, dad, and coach and tearfully fell into their arms. He later wrote to his sister: "Wrestling is important to me, but I have to know that I have control of my life. I have to know that I *can* sacrifice things that are important to me for something of greater value."

Just a few weeks later, Parker did become a state champion in track and field when he became the Oregon state shot put champion. Shortly thereafter, he entered the mission field to serve in Romania.

Parker is a great example of one who loved God and who honored His law to keep the Sabbath day holy. He saw beyond the here and now to the hereafter—a great sign of maturity.

Replacing Your Mirror with a Window

After loving God, the second great commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves.³⁶

While Sister Sabin and I were newlywed students here at BYU, she hung a small plaque on the wall of our little apartment that said: "Rings and

other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself."³⁷

I would encourage you to share your unique gift of self symbolically by replacing your mirror with a window. See the good in others and in the world. There are those who enter a room and say, "Here I am," and still others who enter and exclaim, "Ah, there you are." If you choose to be the type of individual who recognizes other people, you will be happier and you will bring happiness to many others.

In the final analysis, we are all walking each other back home as we truly see one another and help "bear one another's burdens."³⁸ We seek to "lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees."³⁹

Our youngest son, Bryan, like two of his siblings, was born with cystic fibrosis. Despite this health challenge, he was able to serve as an online missionary for two years in the Provo MTC referral center. He was blessed to serve with a small group of highly effective missionaries who fielded thousands of calls and video chats with both friendly and unfriendly enquirers. Each of these wonderful missionaries also had a health challenge, but they served from early morning until late at night teaching people from all over the world.

One of Bryan's companions was Elder Tyson Boardman. Both Tyson and his brother Trevor struggled with muscular dystrophy, yet both served faithfully in the referral center. On one occasion a young woman contacted the referral center and was taught by Elder Trevor Boardman. She then requested that he be the one to baptize her. Given his muscular dystrophy, performing a baptism would have been very difficult and dangerous; however, a wise priesthood leader had Elder Boardman and his companion Elder Blair Ahlstrom enter the baptismal font together so Elder Ahlstrom could hold up Elder Boardman as they baptized their new friend. That is such a tender and symbolic example of how we should hold on to and lift each other up as we make and keep covenants to bear one another's burdens.

Another incredible example of loving one's neighbor comes from Coronado, California, where

Sister Sabin and I used to live. We would often see the United States Navy Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) recruits running along the beach and swimming in the ocean as part of their training to become members of this special operations force.

Michael A. Monsoor was one of those SEALs and a posthumous recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, America’s highest award for military valor in action. On September 29, 2006, when Michael was twenty-five, he and three other SEAL team members were on a rooftop in Ramadi, Iraq. This was just before Michael was supposed to return home. He had stayed to allow another SEAL to go home because his wife was expecting. The team had started to take enemy fire when a grenade was launched onto the roof. The grenade hit Michael in the chest and then fell to the ground. He was near an exit and could have saved himself, but he could see there was no way for the others to escape. Michael did not hesitate; in a split second he dove on top of the grenade in order to shield the others from the blast, and he died from his sacrifice. Since that day, many SEALs have named their sons Michael in honor of his memory.⁴⁰ Also named after him is the super-stealth, guided-missile destroyer USS *Michael Monsoor*.

I have often thought how I would feel if I had been on that rooftop with Michael—seeing him dive on that grenade, knowing he could have escaped and saved himself but instead chose to save me. It would be impossible to ever forget him. Michael’s unselfish sacrifice for others was remarkable.

All of us have, in a real sense, been in a similar situation, except we have been saved not only from physical death but also from spiritual death. The Savior’s sacrifice is the ultimate unselfish act of love. We don’t name children or ships after Him, but we take His name upon us through our baptismal covenant and repeatedly partake of the sacrament to always remember Him.⁴¹

After the Savior had washed the feet of His apostles before leaving for Gethsemane, He lovingly declared:

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*⁴²

As Nephi was concluding his record for us in our day, he declared:

*Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.*⁴³

John recorded that the last words of the Savior before His Resurrection as He hung on the cross were simply “It is finished.”⁴⁴ He must have been so relieved to be able to say those final words. He had borne the weight of all the sins, heartaches, and sicknesses of mankind yet did not have the luxury of blacking out or dying, as we would have surely done. He had to feel it all, for our sake.

No wonder this act is compared to a winepress as He bled from every pore.⁴⁵ In the Garden of Gethsemane, the excruciating pain and agony caused the Savior “to be sore amazed”—the scripture footnote says “awestruck, astonished.”⁴⁶ I know of no greater example of love and courage. Jesus Christ has defeated death, disease, and sin and has provided a way for our ultimate perfection.

I bear my witness of the reality and divinity of Jesus Christ and of His atoning sacrifice and mission. I know that God is our loving Father and the author of the plan of happiness and that because of His love for His children, He provided a Savior, His only Begotten Son. I know that if we follow Him, we need not fear and can truly enjoy “peace in this [life], and eternal life in the world to come.”⁴⁷

My dear friends, I pray that the Lord’s choicest blessings will attend each of you during this wonderful adventure of mortality as you prepare to graduate in your chosen field and, even more importantly, as you prepare for your ultimate graduation back to our heavenly home. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. See “More Holiness Give Me,” *Hymns*, 2002, no. 131.
2. See Robert D. Hales, “The Aaronic Priesthood: Return with Honor,” *Ensign*, May 1990.
3. Romans 8:28.
4. John 14:15.
5. John 16:33.
6. Helaman 5:12.
7. “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man,” *Songbook*, 281.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 6:34.
9. “Let Us All Press On,” *Hymns*, 2002, no. 243.
10. 2 Chronicles 20:15.
11. See 2 Chronicles 20:1–30.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.
13. Kent F. Richards, “The Atonement Covers All Pain,” *Ensign*, May 2011; quoting Michael R. Morris, “Sherrie’s Shield of Faith,” *Ensign*, June 1995.
14. Matthew 5:45.
15. Russell M. Nelson, “Think Celestial!” *Liahona*, November 2023.
16. Thomas S. Monson, “First Presidency Message: Living the Abundant Life,” *Ensign*, January 2012.
17. Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life* (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1903), 431.
18. Attributed to Helen Keller.
19. Proverbs 29:18.
20. See “Acres of Diamonds,” lecture by Russell H. Conwell (1843–1925) delivered more than 6,000 times. See Conwell, *Acres of Diamonds*, first published in 1890. See biography of Russell Conwell, Britannica, [britannica.com/topic/acres-of-diamonds](https://www.britannica.com/topic/acres-of-diamonds); see also Wikipedia, s.v. “Russell Conwell.”
21. Joseph Smith said, “If you live up to your privilege, the angels cannot be restrain’d from being your associates” (Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 28 April 1842, 38, Joseph Smith Papers, [josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book/61](https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/nauvoo-relief-society-minute-book/61)). Brigham Young said:

If a person lives according to the revelations given to God’s people, he may have the Spirit of the Lord to signify to him His will, and to guide and to direct him in the discharge of his duties, in his temporal as well as his spiritual exercises. I am satisfied, however, that in this respect, we live far beneath our privileges. [“Remarks,” *Deseret Evening News*, 30 November 1867, 2; *JD* 12:104 (3 November 1867)]
22. Neal A. Maxwell, “The Great Plan of the Eternal God,” *Ensign*, May 1984.
23. See Genesis 1:27.
24. 1 Nephi 8:26; 1 Nephi 11:36; see also verse 35.
25. See Romans 14:11.
26. Jeremiah 9:23–24.
27. Job 21:13.
28. Helaman 5:8.
29. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30.
30. See Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” *Ensign*, November 2011.
31. See Doctrine and Covenants 121:45.
32. Doctrine and Covenants 135:4.
33. See Matthew 22:36–40; Mark 12:28–31.
34. Daniel 3:18.
35. See Daniel 3.
36. See Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31.
37. Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Gifts,” *Essays: Second Series* (1844).
38. Mosiah 18:8; see also verse 9.
39. Doctrine and Covenants 81:5.
40. See George Monsoor and Rose M. Rea, *Defend Us in Battle: The True Story of MA2 Navy SEAL Medal of Honor Recipient Michael A. Monsoor* (Nashville, Tennessee: Harper Horizon, 2022).
41. See Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79.
42. John 15:13–14.
43. 2 Nephi 31:20.
44. John 19:30.
45. See Isaiah 63:3; Luke 22:44; Doctrine and Covenants 19:18.
46. Mark 14:33; footnote 33a.
47. Doctrine and Covenants 59:23.