

# New Testament

Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual



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# Contents

Lesson Number and Title	Page
Helps for the Teacher	v
1 “That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ” (Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11; John 1:1–14; 20:31)	1
2 “My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord” (Luke 1; Matthew 1)	5
3 “Unto You Is Born . . . a Saviour” (Luke 2; Matthew 2)	9
4 “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord” (Matthew 3–4; John 1:35–51)	13
5 “Born Again” (John 3–4)	18
6 “They Straightway Left Their Nets” (Luke 4:14–32; 5; 6:12–16; Matthew 10)	22
7 “[He] Took Our Infirmities, and Bare Our Sicknesses” (Mark 1–2; 4:35–41; 5; Luke 7:11–17)	26
8 The Sermon on the Mount: “A More Excellent Way” (Matthew 5)	30
9 “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God” (Matthew 6–7)	35
10 “Take My Yoke upon You, and Learn of Me” (Matthew 11:28–30; 12:1–13; Luke 7:36–50; 13:10–17)	40
11 “He Spake Many Things unto Them in Parables” (Matthew 13)	44
12 “I Am the Bread of Life” (John 5–6; Mark 6:30–44; Matthew 14:22–33)	48
13 “I Will Give unto Thee the Keys of the Kingdom” (Matthew 15:21–17:9)	53
14 “Who Is My Neighbour?” (Matthew 18; Luke 10)	57
15 “I Am the Light of the World” (John 7–8)	61
16 “I Was Blind, Now I See” (John 9–10)	65
17 “What Shall I Do That I May Inherit Eternal Life?” (Mark 10:17–30; 12:41–44; Luke 12:13–21; 14; 16)	69
18 “He Was Lost, and Is Found” (Luke 15; 17)	73
19 “Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee” (Luke 18:1–8, 35–43; 19:1–10; John 11)	77
20 “Woe unto You, . . . Hypocrites” (Matthew 21–23; John 12:1–18)	81
21 “What Is the Sign of Thy Coming?” (Joseph Smith—Matthew [Matthew 24])	86
22 “Inherit the Kingdom Prepared for You” (Matthew 25)	90
23 “Love One Another, As I Have Loved You” (Luke 22:1–38; John 13–15)	94
24 “This Is Life Eternal” (John 16–17)	98

25	“Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done” (Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46)	103
26	“To This End Was I Born” (Matthew 26:47–27:66; Mark 14:43–15:39; Luke 22:47–23:56; John 18–19)	107
27	“He Is Not Here, for He Is Risen” (Matthew 28; Luke 24; John 20–21)	112
28	“We Are Witnesses” (Acts 1–5)	116
29	“The Number of the Disciples Was Multiplied” (Acts 6–9)	121
30	“God Is No Respector of Persons” (Acts 10–14; 15:1–35)	125
31	“And So Were the Churches Established in the Faith” (Acts 15:36–18:22; 1 and 2 Thessalonians)	129
32	“Live in the Spirit” (Acts 18:23–20:38; Galatians)	133
33	“Ye Are the Temple of God” (1 Corinthians 1–6)	137
34	“Keep the Ordinances, As I Delivered Them” (1 Corinthians 11–16)	141
35	“Be Ye Reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians)	146
36	“Beloved of God, Called to Be Saints” (Romans)	150
37	Jesus Christ: “The Author and Finisher of Our Faith” (Hebrews)	154
38	“Thou Hast Testified of Me” (Acts 21–28)	158
39	“For the Perfecting of the Saints” (Ephesians)	162
40	“I Can Do All Things through Christ” (Philippians; Colossians; Philemon)	166
41	“I Have Finished My Course” (1 and 2 Timothy; Titus)	170
42	“Pure Religion” (James)	174
43	“A Chosen Generation” (1 and 2 Peter; Jude)	178
44	“God Is Love” (1, 2, and 3 John)	182
45	“He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things” (Revelation 1–3; 12)	186
46	“He Will Dwell with Them, and They Shall Be His People” (Revelation 5–6; 19–22)	192

# Helps for the Teacher

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After the resurrected Lord had shown himself to his Apostles, he appeared again to a group of them at the Sea of Galilee. While he was with them, he asked Peter a question three times: “Lovest thou me?” Each time Peter responded, “Thou knowest that I love thee.” To Peter’s declaration the Lord replied: “Feed my lambs. . . . Feed my sheep. . . . Feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17).

As a Gospel Doctrine teacher, you can show your love for the Lord by feeding his sheep, ensuring that each member of your class is “remembered and nourished by the good word of God” (Moroni 6:4). One important purpose of the word of God is to help us “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing [we] might have life through his name” (John 20:31). Guided by the Spirit, you will be able to help class members strengthen their testimonies of the Savior, their faith in him, and their commitment to live his gospel. You will also be able to help them receive other blessings that come from sincere study of the New Testament, as expressed by President Thomas S. Monson:

“The entire message of the New Testament breathes a spirit of awakening to the human soul. Shadows of despair are dispelled by rays of hope, sorrow yields to joy, and the feeling of being lost in the crowd of life vanishes with the certain knowledge that our Heavenly Father is mindful of each of us” (“The Spirit Giveth Life,” *Ensign*, June 1997, 2).

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## Teaching by the Spirit

When preparing for Gospel Doctrine class, it is important that you seek inspiration and guidance from the Holy Ghost. “The Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith,” said the Lord, “and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14). Remember that the Holy Ghost is the teacher in your class.

You can seek the Spirit by praying, fasting, studying the scriptures daily, and obeying the commandments. While preparing for class, pray for the Spirit to help you understand the scriptures and the needs of class members. The Spirit can also help you plan meaningful ways to discuss the scriptures and apply them to the present (see 1 Nephi 19:23). With the guidance of the Spirit, you will become an effective instrument in the hands of the Lord to teach his word to his children.

Some suggestions for how to invite the Spirit into your class are given below:

1. Invite class members to offer prayers before and after the lesson. During class, pray in your heart for the Spirit to guide you, to open the hearts of class members, and to testify and inspire.
2. Use the scriptures (see “Focusing on the Scriptures” on page vi).
3. Bear testimony whenever the Spirit prompts you, not just at the end of the lesson. Testify of Jesus Christ. Frequently invite class members to bear their testimonies.

4. Use hymns, Primary songs, and other sacred music to prepare class members' hearts to feel the Spirit.
5. Express love for class members, for others, and for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
6. Share insights, feelings, and experiences that relate to the lesson. Invite class members to do the same. Class members could also tell how they have applied principles discussed in previous lessons.

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### Focusing on the Scriptures

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught, "True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17). In your preparation and during class, focus on the saving doctrines of the gospel as presented in the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets. This requires that you study the scriptures diligently and prayerfully. The Lord commanded, "Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word." As you obtain his word through scripture study, the Lord has promised, "then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men" (D&C 11:21).

Encourage class members to bring their scriptures to class every week. Read selected scripture passages together as you discuss them. Where possible, use Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures.

Each class member should be given a copy of the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* (35682). This booklet will help class members improve their study skills and turn to the scriptures for answers to their questions. It will help them understand the scriptures, apply them, prepare to discuss them in class, and use them in family discussions.

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### Using This Manual

This manual is a tool to help you teach the doctrines of the gospel from the scriptures. It has been written for youth and adult Gospel Doctrine classes and is to be used every four years. Additional references and commentaries should not be necessary to teach the lessons.

The lessons in this manual contain more information than you will probably be able to teach in one class period. Seek the Spirit of the Lord in selecting the scripture accounts, questions, and other lesson materials that best meet the needs of class members.

Each lesson includes the following sections:

1. *Title*. The title consists of two elements: a short descriptive phrase or quotation and the scriptures you should read before preparing the lesson.
2. *Purpose*. The purpose statement suggests a main idea you can focus on as you prepare and teach the lesson.
3. *Preparation*. This section summarizes the scripture accounts in the lesson outline and provides suggestions to help you teach more effectively. It may also include additional reading and other suggestions for preparation, such as materials you may want to bring to class.

4. *Attention activity.* This section consists of a simple activity, object lesson, or question to help class members prepare to learn, participate, and feel the influence of the Spirit. Whether you use the manual's attention activity or one of your own, it is important to focus class members' attention at the beginning of the lesson. The activity should be brief.
5. *Scripture discussion and application.* This is the main part of the lesson. Prayerfully study the scripture accounts so you can teach and discuss them effectively. Use the suggestions in "Encouraging Class Discussion" and "Using Variety in Teaching the Scriptures" (pages vii–viii) to vary the way you teach and to maintain class members' interest.
6. *Conclusion.* This section helps you summarize the lesson and encourage class members to live the principles you have discussed. It also reminds you to bear testimony. Be sure to leave enough time to conclude each lesson.
7. *Additional teaching ideas.* This section is provided in most lessons in the manual. It may include additional truths from the scripture accounts, alternate teaching approaches, activities, or other suggestions that supplement the lesson outline. You may want to use some of these ideas as part of the lesson.

Review each lesson at least a week in advance. When you study the reading assignment and the lesson material early, you will receive thoughts and impressions during the week that will help you teach the lesson. As you ponder the lesson during the week, pray for the Spirit to guide you. Have faith that the Lord will bless you.

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### Encouraging Class Discussion

You normally should not give lectures. Instead, help class members participate meaningfully in discussing the scriptures. Class members' participation helps them:

1. Learn more about the scriptures.
2. Learn how to apply gospel principles.
3. Become more committed to living the gospel.
4. Invite the Spirit into the class.
5. Teach and edify each other (D&C 88:122) so they benefit from each other's gifts, knowledge, experience, and testimonies.

Class discussions should help members come to Christ and live as his disciples. Redirect discussions that do not accomplish these purposes.

Seek the Spirit's guidance as you study the questions in this manual and decide which ones to ask. The manual provides scripture references to help you and class members find answers to most of these questions. Answers to other questions will come from class members' experiences.

It is more important to help class members understand and apply the scriptures than to cover all the lesson material you have prepared. If class members are learning from a good discussion, it is often helpful to let it continue rather than try to cover all the lesson material.

Use the following guidelines to encourage class discussion:

1. Ask questions that require thought and discussion rather than “yes” or “no” answers. Questions that begin with *why*, *how*, *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where* are usually most effective for encouraging discussion.
2. Encourage class members to share experiences that show how scriptural principles and doctrines can be applied to life. Also encourage them to share their feelings about what they are learning from the scriptures. Make positive comments about their contributions.
3. Be sensitive to the needs of each class member. Although all class members should be encouraged to participate in class discussions, some may hesitate to respond. You may wish to speak privately with them to find out how they feel about reading aloud or participating in class. Be careful not to call on class members if it might embarrass them.
4. Give scripture references to help class members find the answers to some questions.
5. Encourage class members to ponder the questions in the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* as they study each week’s reading assignment. As you prepare each lesson, consider how to discuss these questions in class. Class members will be better able to participate in discussions if they have studied the reading assignment and if you ask questions that they are prepared to answer.

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### Using Variety in Teaching the Scriptures

Use the following suggestions to teach scripture accounts more effectively and with greater variety:

1. Help class members understand what the scriptures teach about Jesus Christ. Ask them to consider how certain passages increase their faith in the Savior and help them feel his love.
2. Ask class members to think of and share specific ways that a scripture passage can apply in their lives. Have them personalize the scriptures by mentally substituting their names in selected passages.
3. In addition to teaching the doctrine, emphasize faith-promoting stories in the New Testament, ensuring that class members understand them and discuss ways to apply them.
4. Have class members look for words, phrases, or ideas that are repeated often in a scripture passage or that have special meaning for them.
5. Encourage class members to use the appendix in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. The Topical Guide and Bible Dictionary are especially helpful in personal study and class discussion.
6. Write on the chalkboard phrases, key words, or questions that relate to the scripture account. Then read or summarize the account. As class members hear the phrases, key words, or answers to the questions, stop and discuss them.

7. Throughout the Book of Mormon, the phrase “thus we see” is used to introduce a summary of the principles taught (see, for example, Helaman 3:28). After discussing a scripture passage, ask class members to explain the principle in the passage using the phrase “thus we see.”
8. Look for and discuss symbols that are used in the New Testament. For example, the Bridegroom and the bride represent the Savior and his people.
9. Note how people or events in the scriptures can be contrasted with each other.
10. Have class members dramatize scriptural stories by reading aloud the words of the different people in the stories. Ensure that dramatizations show proper respect for the scriptures.
11. Divide the class into two or more small groups. After reviewing a scripture account, have each group write down the principles and doctrines taught in the account. Then have the groups take turns discussing how these teachings apply in their lives.
12. Invite class members to bring a pencil to mark significant verses as you discuss them.
13. Show segments from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914) as suggested in the “Preparation” section.

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### **Helping New Members**

As a Gospel Doctrine teacher, you may have the opportunity to teach members who are relatively new in the Church. Your teaching can help new members become firm in the faith.

The First Presidency said: “Every member of the Church needs to be loved and nourished, especially during the first few months after baptism. When new members receive sincere friendship, opportunities to serve, and the spiritual nourishment that comes from studying the word of God, they experience enduring conversion and become ‘fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God’ (Ephesians 2:19)” (First Presidency letter, 15 May 1997).

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### **Teaching the Gospel to Youth**

If you are teaching youth, remember that they often need active participation and visual representations of the doctrines being discussed. Your use of video presentations, pictures, and activities suggested in the manual can help youth stay interested in the lessons. For other ideas to help you teach the gospel to youth, refer to *Teaching—No Greater Call* (33043) and the *Teaching Guidebook* (34595).



# “That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ”

## Lesson 1

*Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11; John 1:1–14; 20:31*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ by studying the New Testament.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11. Isaiah and John the Baptist prophesy of the Savior’s mission.
    - b. John 1:1–14; 20:31. The Apostle John testifies that Jesus Christ is “the true Light.” He declares that his purpose in writing his testimony is to help others “believe that Jesus is the Christ.”
  2. Obtain a copy of the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* (35682) for each person in your class. (The ward should have ordered these study guides as part of the annual curriculum order. A member of the bishopric should give them to the Sunday School presidency.)
  3. If you use the attention activity, ask a few class members to prepare to read or summarize a favorite passage in the New Testament and to explain briefly why that passage is inspiring or helpful to them.
  4. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: Isaiah Writes of Christ’s Birth (62339; Gospel Art Picture Kit 113) and John Preaching in the Wilderness (62132; Gospel Art Picture Kit 207). If you use the attention activity, also bring several pictures that depict events from the New Testament, such as Healing the Blind (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213) and Mary and the Resurrected Lord (62186; Gospel Art Picture Kit 233).
  5. Suggestion for teaching: Encourage class members to complete the assigned reading every week and to come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. This preparation will help fulfill the Lord’s promise that “he that preacheth and he that receiveth [by the Spirit of truth] understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22).
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### Suggested Lesson Development

- Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
- Display pictures that depict events from the New Testament.
- Ask class members to think about the following question:
- What accounts or teachings in the New Testament have particularly inspired or helped you?
- Give class members a moment to think, and then invite each of the assigned class members to read or summarize a favorite New Testament passage. If other class members would like to share a favorite passage, allow a few of them to do so.

Express your feelings about being able to teach and study the New Testament this year. Explain that the purpose of this year's study of the New Testament is to help class members strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and become better acquainted with his life and mission.

Scripture Discussion  
and Application

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. Isaiah and John the Baptist prophesy of the Savior's mission.**

Read and discuss Isaiah 61:1–3 and Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11. (The Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 3:4–11 is found on pages 805–6 in the appendix of the LDS edition of the King James Bible.)

Display the picture of Isaiah writing about the birth of the Savior. Explain that we can strengthen our testimonies of Jesus Christ and our appreciation of the New Testament by studying the words of Isaiah and others who prophesied of the Savior's mission.

- What aspects of the Savior's mission are described in Isaiah 61:1–2? (List class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. "Preach good tidings unto the meek" (verse 1).
  - b. "Bind up the brokenhearted" (verse 1).
  - c. "Proclaim liberty to the captives" (verse 1).
  - d. "Comfort all that mourn" (verse 2).
- How has Jesus fulfilled these prophecies? (Encourage class members to cite examples from the scriptures and to share personal experiences.)

Point out that Jesus quoted this passage at the beginning of his ministry to declare that he was the Messiah (Luke 4:16–21; see lesson 6).

Display the picture of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. Explain that John the Baptist prophesied of the Savior's mission just before Jesus began his mortal ministry.

- How did John the Baptist describe the Savior's mission? (See Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–9. List class members' responses on the chalkboard. If the Joseph Smith Translation of these verses is not available, list the prophecies as shown below.)
  - a. "Take away the sins of the world" (verse 5).
  - b. "Bring salvation unto the heathen nations" (verse 5).
  - c. "Gather together those who are lost" (verse 5).
  - d. "Make possible the preaching of the gospel unto the Gentiles" (verse 6).
  - e. "Be a light unto all who sit in darkness" (verse 7).
  - f. "Bring to pass the resurrection from the dead" (verse 7).
  - g. "Administer justice unto all" (verse 9).
  - h. "Convince all the ungodly of their ungodly deeds" (verse 9).
- How has Jesus fulfilled these prophecies? (Encourage class members to cite examples from the scriptures and to share personal experiences.)

- How do you feel as you think about the things that Jesus has done for us? What would our lives be like if Jesus had not done these things for us?

## 2. The Apostle John testifies that Jesus Christ is “the true Light.”

Read and discuss John 1:1–14; 20:31. (Use the Joseph Smith Translation of John 1:1–14 if it is available. It is found on pages 807–8 in the appendix of the LDS edition of the King James Bible.)

- What can we learn about Jesus Christ from John 1:1–3, 14? (See the list below. Note that “the Word” in John 1:1, 14 refers to the Savior.)
  - a. He “was in the beginning” with God the Father (John 1:1–2). Note that the Savior’s mission began in the premortal world, long before he was born in Bethlehem.
  - b. He is God (John 1:1). Explain that when we speak of God, we usually refer to Heavenly Father. However, “the personage known as Jehovah in Old Testament times . . . is the Son, known as Jesus Christ, . . . who is also a God. Jesus works under the direction of the Father. . . . Many of the things that the scripture says were done by God were actually done by . . . Jesus” (Bible Dictionary, “God,” 681).
  - c. Through him the gospel was preached in the premortal world (Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1).
  - d. He made all things (John 1:3).
  - e. He is the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh (John 1:14; see also 1 Nephi 11:14–21). This doctrine is discussed in lesson 2.
- The Apostle John said that “in [Jesus] was life” (John 1:4). He also testified that Jesus is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). How has the Savior given you life and light? (As class members discuss this question, you may want to refer to John 8:12; 1 Corinthians 15:20–22; Moroni 7:15–18, 41; D&C 88:6–14; and Bible Dictionary, “Light of Christ,” 725.)
- What was John’s purpose in writing his testimony? (See John 20:31.) What does it mean to “believe that Jesus is the Christ”? (Explain that *Christ* is a Greek word meaning anointed. When we have a testimony that Jesus is the Christ, we know that he is the Son of God and was anointed and foreordained to be our Savior.) How might studying the New Testament in Sunday School this year help strengthen your testimony that Jesus is the Christ?
- What can we do individually and as a class to be guided by the Spirit as we study the New Testament? (See James 1:5–6; D&C 50:17–22; 88:118.)
- How can the words in John 1:10–14 apply to us, even though we were not on the earth during the Savior’s mortal ministry?

Elder Thomas S. Monson taught:

“We need not visit the Holy Land to feel him close to us. We need not walk by the shores of Galilee or among the Judean hills to walk where Jesus walked.

“In a very real sense, all can walk where Jesus walked when, with his words on our lips, his spirit in our hearts, and his teachings in our lives, we journey through mortality” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 70; or *Ensign*, May 1974, 48).

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## Conclusion

Testify of Jesus Christ and express your feelings about learning of him through studying the New Testament.

Assure class members that their testimonies of the Savior will increase as they seek the Spirit's guidance in their study of the New Testament and as they participate in class discussions. Encourage them to use the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* as they study the scriptures in preparation for each class.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Overview of the New Testament

Invite class members to turn to the Contents page of the Bible and review the names of the 27 books in the New Testament. Explain that the New Testament can be divided into four parts (you may want to list these on the chalkboard):

- a. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), which are a record and witness of Jesus Christ's life, mission, and teachings.
- b. The book of Acts, which is an account of the ministry of the Apostles after Jesus' death and Resurrection. This book focuses on Peter's work among the Jews and Paul's work among the Gentiles.
- c. The epistles (letters) of Paul and other Church leaders, written to instruct and edify the Saints of their time.
- d. The Lord's revelation to the Apostle John on the isle of Patmos.

### 2. Video presentations

If *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277) is available, you may want to show the five-minute segment "What Think Ye of Christ?" Use the presentation to introduce the New Testament and to emphasize the importance of having a testimony that Jesus is the Christ.

If *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914) is available, you may also want to show "The Message of the New Testament," a two-minute segment.

### 3. "He . . . was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:8)

Have a class member read John 1:6–8.

- Who is the man mentioned in these verses? (John the Baptist.) What was his mission? (See John 1:8.) How can we, like John, "bear witness of that Light"?

# “My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord”

## Lesson 2

*Luke 1; Matthew 1*

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**Purpose** To help class members develop greater faith in Jesus Christ through a study of the lives of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Luke 1:5–25, 57–80. The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias and says that, in answer to prayer, Zacharias’s wife, Elisabeth, will give birth to a son. This son, to be named John, will prepare the people for the Lord. Zacharias questions Gabriel’s words and is struck dumb. Elisabeth conceives in her old age, and John is born. Zacharias shows renewed faith as he prophesies of John’s mission.
  - b. Luke 1:26–56; Matthew 1:18–25. The angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will be the mother of the Son of God. Mary and her cousin Elisabeth rejoice in the news of the Savior’s coming. Joseph learns that Mary will give birth to the Savior.
2. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: John Preaching in the Wilderness (62132; Gospel Art Picture Kit 207) and The Annunciation: The Angel Gabriel Appears to Mary (Gospel Art Picture Kit 241).
3. Suggestion for teaching: When a person teaches by the power of the Holy Ghost, “the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men” (2 Nephi 33:1). Feeling the influence of the Spirit strengthens class members’ testimonies, their love for the Lord and for each other, and their commitment to righteous living. Prayerfully consider what you can do to invite the Spirit during each lesson. (See pages v–vi in this manual and *Teaching—No Greater Call*, pages 13, 76–77.)

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### **Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask class members the following questions:

- If you could meet anyone in the New Testament besides Jesus, whom would you want to meet? Why would you want to meet that person?

After a few class members have answered the questions, explain that we are often drawn to righteous people because they follow the Savior and testify of him. As we become better acquainted with these people, we also become better acquainted with Jesus Christ. This lesson discusses several people whose righteous examples can help us draw closer to him.

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles. Because it would be difficult to ask every question or cover every point in the lesson, prayerfully select those that will best meet class members' needs.

### 1. John the Baptist is born to Elisabeth and Zacharias.

Discuss Luke 1:5–25, 57–80. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- How are Elisabeth and Zacharias described in the scriptures? (See Luke 1:6–9.)
- What blessing had Zacharias and Elisabeth prayed for? (See Luke 1:7, 13.) How was this prayer finally answered? (See Luke 1:11–13, 24–25. Point out that Zacharias and Elisabeth had probably prayed for many years that they would be blessed with a child. However, Heavenly Father did not grant them this blessing until the time was right to accomplish his purposes.) How can we remain faithful and avoid discouragement when our sincere prayers are not immediately answered in the way we desire?
- What did Gabriel prophesy about John's mission? (See Luke 1:14–17. Display the picture of John preaching in the wilderness, and summarize Gabriel's prophecies on the chalkboard. Discuss what the prophecies mean, how John fulfilled them, and how we can follow John's example in those things.)
  - a. John would "turn [many people] to the Lord their God" (Luke 1:16).
  - b. He would "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" (Luke 1:17).
  - c. He would "turn . . . the disobedient to the wisdom of the just" (Luke 1:17).
  - d. He would "make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).

Note: John the Baptist was "the outstanding bearer of the Aaronic Priesthood in all history" (Bible Dictionary, "John the Baptist," 714). You may want to discuss how the preceding aspects of John's mission can be applied to class members who hold the Aaronic Priesthood.

- What happened to Zacharias when he doubted the words of the angel? (See Luke 1:18–20.) How did Zacharias's actions after John's birth show his renewed faith? (See Luke 1:59–63. He and Elisabeth named their son John, thus obeying God's command rather than following local traditions.)
- As Zacharias prophesied about the mission of his son, he also spoke of redemption, salvation, remission of sins, tender mercy, and light (Luke 1:68–79). To whom did he refer when he spoke of these things? (Jesus Christ.) Invite a class member to read John 1:6–9. Testify that like John the Baptist, we should focus our service on helping others come to Christ.
- After John was born, he grew and "waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 1:80; note that in this verse the word *wax* means to grow or develop). Why do you think John needed to wax strong in spirit to be able to fulfill his mission? What can we do to wax strong in spirit?

### 2. Mary and Joseph learn that Mary will be the mother of the Son of God.

Read and discuss selected verses from Luke 1:26–56 and Matthew 1:18–25. Display the picture of the Annunciation.

- What did Mary learn from the angel Gabriel? (See Luke 1:26–33.) Why did the Savior need to be the son of a mortal mother and an immortal Father?

Speaking of Jesus Christ, Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught:

“God was his Father, from which Immortal Personage . . . he inherited the power of immortality, which is the power to live forever; or, having chosen to die, it is the power to rise again in immortality, thereafter to live forever without again seeing corruption. . . .

“ . . . Mary was his mother, from which mortal woman . . . he inherited the power of mortality, which is the power to die. . . .

“It was because of this . . . intermixture of the divine and the mortal in one person, that our Lord was able to work out the infinite and eternal atonement. Because God was his Father and Mary was his mother, he had power to live or to die, as he chose, and having laid down his life, he had power to take it again, and then, in a way incomprehensible to us, to pass on the effects of that resurrection to all men so that all shall rise from the tomb” (*The Promised Messiah* [1978], 470–71).

- What can we learn about Mary from her conversations with the angel and with Elisabeth? (See Luke 1:26–38, 45–49; see also Alma 7:10. Summarize class members’ answers on the chalkboard. If you are teaching youth, you may want to suggest that they look to Mary as an example of a righteous young woman.)
  - a. Mary had found favor with God (Luke 1:28, 30). What does it mean to find favor with God? To what other sources do some people look for favor? How might looking for favor from these other sources make it difficult to find favor with God?
  - b. Mary was worthy to have the Lord with her (Luke 1:28). What can we do to be worthy of this blessing?
  - c. Mary was humble and submissive to the will of the Lord (Luke 1:38, 48). Why is it important for us to submit to the Lord’s will? How can we become more humble and submissive?
  - d. Mary rejoiced in her Savior (Luke 1:47). How can we rejoice in the Savior?
- Why did Elisabeth and her unborn son rejoice when Mary came to visit? (See Luke 1:39–44; see also Luke 1:15. Point out that one of the Holy Ghost’s principal roles is to testify of Jesus Christ.) As appropriate, tell about how the Holy Ghost has helped you gain a testimony of Jesus Christ, and invite others to do the same.
- How was Joseph’s love for Mary tested? (See Matthew 1:18.) How did Joseph react when he learned that Mary was with child? (See Matthew 1:19. Point out that according to the law, Joseph could have accused Mary of violating the marriage covenant and brought her to a public trial. Such a trial could have resulted in a death sentence. Rather than do this, he decided to release her privately from the marriage contract.)
- How did Heavenly Father help Joseph accept Mary’s condition and prepare for his own responsibilities? (See Matthew 1:20–23.) What did Joseph do in response to this dream? (See Matthew 1:24–25.) What does this response reveal about his character?

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## Conclusion

Invite a class member to read Luke 1:46. Explain that in this verse, the word *magnify* refers to Mary's efforts to praise the Lord and help others see his greatness.

- How do the examples of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph help you see the Savior's greatness and increase your faith in him? How can we help others increase their faith in Jesus Christ?

Express your gratitude for the righteous examples of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph. Testify of the truths you have discussed.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. "That thou mightest know the certainty of those things" (Luke 1:4)

- Luke addressed his testimony to a person named Theophilus (Luke 1:3). What was Luke's purpose in writing his testimony? (See Luke 1:3–4. To help Theophilus know the certainty of things that had already been taught.) How have you been strengthened as you have heard others testify of familiar doctrines and well-known scripture accounts?

### 2. Video presentation

If the videocassette *The Savior: Early Years* (53163) is available, you may want to show a brief excerpt from part 1, "The Annunciations."

# “Unto You Is Born . . . a Saviour”

## Lesson 3

*Luke 2; Matthew 2*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ and follow the example he set in his youth, “[increasing] in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Luke 2:1–7. Jesus Christ is born.
  - b. Luke 2:8–39. Angels and many others rejoice at Jesus’ birth.
  - c. Matthew 2. Wise men from the east visit Jesus and give him gifts. Herod, feeling threatened by the birth of the King of the Jews, orders the death of all children two years old and younger who reside in Bethlehem and its surrounding areas. An angel of the Lord directs Joseph to flee to Egypt with Mary and Jesus and later to return to Israel with them.
  - d. Luke 2:40–52. Guided by the Father, Jesus grows and prepares in his youth for his ministry.
2. Additional reading: Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 3:24–26; 1 Nephi 11:1–23; Helaman 14:1–8; 3 Nephi 1:4–21; 27:13–16; Doctrine and Covenants 93:11–20.
3. If the following materials are available, use some of them during the lesson:
  - a. “Luke II,” a six-minute segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  - b. The pictures No Room at the Inn (62115); The Birth of Jesus (62116; Gospel Art Picture Kit 200); The Nativity (62495; Gospel Art Picture Kit 201); The Announcement of Christ’s Birth to the Shepherds (62117; Gospel Art Picture Kit 202); The Wise Men (62120; Gospel Art Picture Kit 203); Flight into Egypt (62119; Gospel Art Picture Kit 204); Boy Jesus in the Temple (62500; Gospel Art Picture Kit 205); Childhood of Jesus Christ (62124; Gospel Art Picture Kit 206); and Jesus and His Mother (Gospel Art Picture Kit 242).
4. Suggestion for teaching: Use appropriate pictures and video presentations to invite the Spirit, add variety to lessons, and help class members remember the scriptural accounts they discuss (see *Teaching—No Greater Call*, unit G).

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

List the following people on the chalkboard: *a shepherd, Simeon, a wise man from the east, Herod, a person at an inn, Anna, an angel, Mary.*

Read the following responses to the birth of Jesus Christ. Ask class members to match each response with the appropriate person:

1. I traveled a great distance to find him, gave him gifts, and worshiped him. (A wise man from the east; Matthew 2:1–2, 9–11.)
2. I made no room for him. (A person at an inn; Luke 2:7.)
3. Having received a witness from the Holy Ghost, I took the child up in my arms and knew that I could die in peace. (Simeon; Luke 2:25–32.)
4. I said, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (An angel; Luke 2:13–14.)
5. I went quickly to see him. (A shepherd; Luke 2:15–16.)
6. I was troubled and tried to kill him. (Herod; Matthew 2:3–4, 16.)
7. After coming out of the temple, I expressed gratitude and spread the news of his birth. (Anna; Luke 2:36–38.)
8. I pondered the event in my heart. (Mary; Luke 2:19.)

Ask class members to ponder the following questions during the lesson:

- How do you respond to the account of the Savior’s birth? How do you respond to his life, death, atonement, and resurrection?

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, help class members understand why we should rejoice in the Savior’s birth. Discuss ways to follow the example he set in his youth.

### 1. Jesus Christ is born.

Read and discuss Luke 2:1–7. Display some of the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section.

- Jesus had glory with Heavenly Father “before the world was” (John 17:5). He created the heavens and the earth (Mosiah 3:8). As Jehovah, he revealed commandments and gospel truths to the prophets of the Old Testament (3 Nephi 15:2–5). Why did Jesus come to earth? (See 3 Nephi 27:13–16.)
- What were the circumstances of Jesus’ birth? (See Luke 2:7.) How did these circumstances foreshadow his mortal ministry and his atoning sacrifice? In what ways do people today refuse to make room for the Savior in their lives? What can we do to make room for him in our lives?

### 2. Angels and many others rejoice at Jesus’ birth.

Discuss Luke 2:8–39. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Display some of the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section.

If you are using the video presentation “Luke II,” show it now.

- What did the angels say as they announced Jesus’ birth? (See Luke 2:13–14.) How has Jesus glorified the Father? How has he brought peace and goodwill to all people and to you personally? How can we show our gratitude to God for the gift of his Son?
- What did the shepherds do after they saw the newborn Savior? (See Luke 2:17–18.) What can we do to follow their example? Invite class members to think of someone with whom they can share their testimony of the Savior.

- What did Mary do after Jesus' birth and the visit of the shepherds? (See Luke 2:19.) What does this reveal about Mary? Why is it important to take time to cherish and ponder sacred experiences?
- How had Simeon and Anna been prepared to see the child Jesus? (See Luke 2:25–26, 37.) How did they respond when they saw him? (See Luke 2:27–35, 38.) What can we learn about the Savior from their prophecies?

### 3. Wise men come to worship the child Jesus. Herod seeks to kill him.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 2. Display some of the pictures listed in the "Preparation" section.

- Why did the "wise men from the east" seek Jesus? (See Matthew 2:1–2.) What did they do when they found him? (See Matthew 2:11. Note that when they finally reached Jesus, he was a "young child," not a newborn baby.) What gifts can we offer to the Lord?
- Why did Herod want to find Jesus? (See Matthew 2:3–6, 13. He was troubled, and he wanted to kill Jesus.) Why did Jesus Christ's birth trouble the king? (See Matthew 2:2, 6. According to prophecy, Jesus would rule Israel.)
- How was Jesus protected from Herod? (See Matthew 2:13–15.) How did Joseph know when to return from Egypt? (See Matthew 2:19–23.) Why do you think Joseph was able to receive this guidance from God? What can today's fathers and mothers do to be able to receive revelation concerning their families? How has God helped you as you have sought his guidance for your family?

### 4. Guided by the Father, Jesus prepares in his youth for his ministry.

Read and discuss Luke 2:40–52. Display some of the pictures listed in the "Preparation" section. Explain that every year Joseph and Mary and other faithful Jews celebrated the Feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. As was customary, Jesus accompanied them when he reached the age of 12 (Luke 2:41–42).

- After celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph had begun their journey back to Nazareth when they realized that 12-year-old Jesus was not with them (Luke 2:43–45). Where did they finally find him? (See Luke 2:46.) If your parents or other loved ones did not know where you were, could they be confident that you were doing things that would please your Heavenly Father?
- The Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 2:46 says that the men in the temple "were hearing [Jesus], and asking him questions." What does this reveal about Jesus' youth and training?
- When Mary and Joseph found Jesus, Mary said to him, "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48). To whom did she refer when she said "thy father"? (Joseph.) How did Jesus respond to Mary's concern? (See Luke 2:49.) To whom did Jesus refer when he said "my Father's business"? (Heavenly Father.) What does this tell us about young Jesus' understanding of his foreordained mission?
- As a youth, how did Jesus treat Mary and Joseph? (See Luke 2:51. Even though he was the Son of God, he was subject to his mother and to Joseph.) What can we learn from this example?

- As a youth, Jesus “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52). In other words, he developed intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially. What are some specific things we can do to grow intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially?
- What can we learn from Doctrine and Covenants 93:11–17 about the Savior’s development as a youth? (In his preparation to be our Redeemer, Jesus did not receive all the necessary intelligence, power, wisdom, and glory at once. He received these things “grace for grace,” a little at a time.) How does this truth apply to us? (See D&C 93:18–20.)

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## Conclusion

Testify of the truths you have discussed in this lesson. Encourage class members to rejoice in the birth of the Savior and follow the example he set in his youth.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19)

As you discuss Mary’s reverent response to Jesus’ birth, invite a mother to tell about her feelings after one of her children was born.

### 2. Youth activity

Select five important scripture passages from the lesson, and familiarize class members with the contents of each passage. Then have class members close their Bibles. Give clues that will lead class members to the scripture passages you have reviewed, wording each clue so there can be no doubt which passage you are referring to. (For example, you could say, “This verse contains the angels’ words of praise to God when Jesus was born.” The only possible answer is Luke 2:14.) After you read a clue, have class members open their Bibles and search for the correct passage. Use this activity as a way to become more familiar with scripture passages rather than as a competition. Do not spend more than a few minutes on it.

# “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord”

Lesson

# 4

*Matthew 3–4; John 1:35–51*

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**Purpose** To inspire class members to draw near to the Savior by repenting of their sins, keeping their baptismal covenants, and withstanding temptation.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Matthew 3:1–12. John the Baptist preaches repentance and baptizes, preparing the way of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - b. Matthew 3:13–17. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist.
    - c. Matthew 4:1–11. Jesus withstands Satan’s temptations in the wilderness.
    - d. John 1:35–51. Some of John the Baptist’s disciples decide to follow Jesus.
  2. Additional reading: Mark 1:1–13; Luke 3:1–22; 4:1–14; John 1:19–34; 2:1–25; 2 Nephi 31; Bible Dictionary, “Baptism,” 618–19; “John the Baptist,” 714–15; “Repentance,” 760–61.
  3. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: John Preaching in the Wilderness (62132; Gospel Art Picture Kit 207) and John the Baptist Baptizing Jesus (62133; Gospel Art Picture Kit 208).
  4. Suggestion for teaching: Use class time wisely. Plan what you will discuss and how much time you want to spend on each part of the lesson, but then let the Spirit guide you. Do not end a meaningful discussion just so you can cover the entire lesson. It is more important for class members to learn and feel the Spirit than for every point in the lesson to be discussed.
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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Write the following on the chalkboard, and ask class members if they know what it says:



Explain that this is the Hebrew word *Messiah*, which means anointed. The Jews had waited centuries for the coming of the Messiah, who, according to prophecy, would be their anointed King and Deliverer. The Greek word for *Messiah* is *Christ*. Jesus Christ was the long-awaited Messiah, and John the Baptist was the prophet sent to prepare the way for him.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

Discuss how the teachings in the following scripture passages can help us draw nearer to the Savior. Because it would be difficult to ask every question or cover every point in the lesson, prayerfully select those that will best meet class members' needs.

### 1. John the Baptist prepares the way of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss Matthew 3:1–12. Display the picture of John preaching, and share the following background information in your own words:

Centuries before John's birth, many prophets foresaw his ministry and testified of his greatness as the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3; 1 Nephi 10:7–10). In preparation for John's ministry, the angel Gabriel announced John's forthcoming birth (Luke 1:13–19), Zacharias prophesied on the day of John's naming and circumcision (Luke 1:67–79), and an angel ordained eight-day-old John to his mission (D&C 84:27–28). The crowning statement of John's greatness came from the Savior himself, who said, "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist" (Luke 7:28).

John was born about six months before Jesus. Shortly after Jesus' birth, Herod, feeling threatened by the announcement that a new king of the Jews had been born, "slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under" (Matthew 2:16). To protect Jesus, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and directed him to take Jesus and Mary to Egypt (Matthew 2:13–15). To protect John, "Zacharias caused [Elisabeth] to take him into the mountains, where he was raised on locusts and wild honey" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 261). John began his public ministry many years later, first preaching in the wilderness and then in Jerusalem and "all the region round about Jordan" (Matthew 3:5).

- What was John the Baptist's mission? (See Luke 1:76–79; 3:3–4.) Why do you think it was important that someone prepare the way of the Lord?
- What message did John preach to prepare the people for the coming of the Savior? (See Matthew 3:1–2.) What does it mean to repent? (As class members discuss answers to this question, list on the chalkboard some aspects of repentance as shown below. You may want to invite class members to read the accompanying scriptures.)
  - a. Feeling godly sorrow for sin (2 Corinthians 7:9–10).
  - b. Confessing and forsaking sins (D&C 58:42–43).
  - c. Making amends, where possible, for wrongs done (Luke 19:8).
  - d. Obeying the commandments (D&C 1:31–32).
  - e. Turning to the Lord and serving him (Mosiah 7:33).
- How does repentance help us prepare to dwell with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ? (See 3 Nephi 27:19.) How does repentance help us draw nearer to them each day?

- The Pharisees and Sadducees witnessed baptisms performed by John but chose not to be baptized (Matthew 3:7; Luke 7:29–30). John rebuked them, urging them to “repent . . . and bring forth fruits meet for repentance” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 3:35; note that the word *fruits* refers to results and that the word *meet* means worthy or appropriate). What are the fruits of repentance? (See Moroni 8:25–26.)
- John baptized “with water unto repentance” and promised that Jesus would baptize “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). What does it mean to be baptized “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire”?

We are baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands (D&C 20:41). “The gift of the Holy Ghost is the right to have, whenever one is worthy, the companionship of the Holy Ghost. . . . It acts as a cleansing agent to purify a person and sanctify him from all sin. Thus it is often spoken of as ‘fire’” (Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost,” 704).

## 2. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist.

Read and discuss Matthew 3:13–17. Display the picture of John baptizing Jesus.

- Why was John hesitant to baptize Jesus? (See Matthew 3:14.) Why did Jesus need to be baptized? (See Matthew 3:15; 2 Nephi 31:6–7, 9–11.) Why do we need to be baptized? (See 2 Nephi 31:5, 12–13, 17–18; D&C 20:71; 49:13–14.)
- What covenants do we make when we are baptized? (See D&C 20:37.) How should these covenants affect our daily actions? (See Mosiah 18:8–10.)

## 3. Jesus withstands Satan’s temptations in the wilderness.

Read and discuss Matthew 4:1–11 (see also the footnotes to Matthew 4:1–2, 5–6, 8–9, and 11, which contain the Joseph Smith Translation of these verses).

- Soon after Jesus was baptized, the Spirit led him into the wilderness to be with God (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:1). How do you think this experience prepared Jesus to withstand Satan’s temptations? How do fasting, prayer, and being “led . . . of the Spirit” fortify us against temptation?
- To what desire did Satan try to appeal when he tempted Jesus, who had been fasting, to turn the stones into bread? (See Matthew 4:2–3. He tried to appeal to the desire to satisfy physical appetite.) How does Satan tempt us to give in to physical appetites? How can we recognize and resist these temptations?
- Satan tried to appeal to pride when he tempted Jesus to cast himself down from the pinnacle and prove that he had the power to be saved by angels (Matthew 4:5–6). How does Satan try to appeal to our pride? How can we recognize and withstand temptations to gratify prideful desires?
- What did Satan offer if Jesus would worship him? (See Matthew 4:8–9.) How does Satan tempt us with worldly riches and power? How can we recognize and resist these temptations? (See Matthew 4:10.)
- What was false about Satan’s offer to give Jesus the kingdoms of the world? (See D&C 104:14.) What are some false offers Satan makes today to entice us to sin?

- Jesus responded to each of Satan’s temptations by quoting from the scriptures (Matthew 4:3–4, 6–7, 8–10). How do the scriptures give us strength to withstand temptation? (See Helaman 3:29–30.)
- Satan twice questioned whether Jesus was the Son of God (Matthew 4:3, 6). Why do you think Satan raised this question? How does he raise this question in the world today? When we face temptation, how does it help to know that we are children of God? (See Moses 1:12–22.)
- How can it help us to know that Jesus, the Son of God, faced temptations similar to those we face? (As class members discuss this question, you may want to have them read Hebrews 4:14–15.)

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin said: “The Lord is well aware of our mortality. He knows our weaknesses. He understands the challenges of our everyday lives. He has great empathy for the temptations of earthly appetites and passions” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 46; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 34).

#### 4. Some of John the Baptist’s disciples decide to follow Jesus.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 1:35–51.

- When Jesus began his mortal ministry, what did John the Baptist encourage his own disciples to do? (See John 1:35–37.) When Jesus saw two of John the Baptist’s disciples following Him, what did He do? (See John 1:38–39.)
- When Andrew heard and recognized the Savior, what did he do? (See John 1:40–42.) After receiving a witness that Jesus was the Messiah, how did Philip answer Nathanael’s doubts? (See John 1:43–46.) What can we do to invite others to “come and see” the Savior?

#### Conclusion

Testify that the invitation to “come and see” the Savior is extended to each of us. Explain that we can accept that invitation by repenting, being baptized, keeping our baptismal covenants, and withstanding temptation.

#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Insights from the Savior’s baptism

Review Matthew 3:16–17.

- How does the account of the Savior’s baptism show that baptism should be performed by immersion? (See Matthew 3:16; see also John 3:23; Romans 6:3–6; 3 Nephi 11:23–26; Bible Dictionary, “Baptism,” 618, which explains that the word *baptism* is “from a Greek word meaning to *dip* or *immerse*.”)
- What did John see after he baptized Jesus? (See Matthew 3:16.) Whose voice did he hear? (See Matthew 3:17.) What does the account of the Savior’s baptism teach about the nature of the Godhead? (Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are separate beings.)

## 2. Video presentation

If the videocassette *The Savior: Early Years* (53163) is available, you may want to show a brief excerpt from part 3, “Baptism, Temptation, and Rejection.”

## 3. Jesus shows respect and love for his mother

Explain that after Jesus was baptized, he and his disciples attended a wedding feast in Cana (John 2:1–11). When his mother told him that there was no wine for the feast, he replied, “What wilt thou have me do for thee? that will I do” (Joseph Smith Translation, John 2:4; see John 2:4, footnote 4a).

- What did Jesus’ words to his mother reveal about his feelings toward her? What did he do to help her? (See John 2:6–11. Point out that this is Jesus’ first miracle recorded in the New Testament.)

## 4. Jesus shows reverence as he cleanses the temple

Have class members read John 2:13–17, which contains an account of Jesus finding merchants and money changers desecrating the temple. If the picture *Jesus Cleansing the Temple* (62163; Gospel Art Picture Kit 224) is available, display it. Point out that Jesus showed respect and reverence when he “drove them all out of the temple, . . . and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables” (John 2:15). Explain that reverence for our Heavenly Father includes more than merely sitting quietly in Church. It includes demonstrating by our actions that we love him and that we acknowledge his power.

**Purpose**

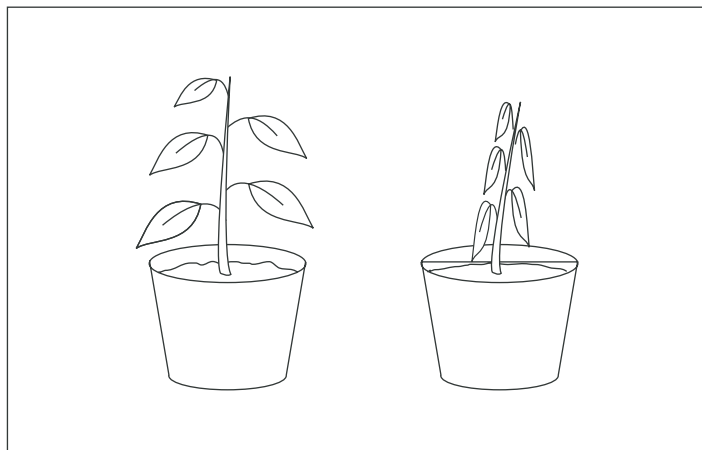
To help class members understand that to receive everlasting life, we must be “born again” and continue to follow Jesus Christ.

**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 3:1–22. Jesus teaches Nicodemus that all must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches that he is the Only Begotten Son of God, sent to save mankind.
  - b. John 4:1–42. Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well. Many Samaritans are converted.
2. Additional reading: Topical Guide, “Living Water,” 294.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class:
  - a. A healthy, well-watered plant and a plant that is wilted from lack of water (or draw on the chalkboard a healthy plant and a wilted plant, as shown in the attention activity).
  - b. A pitcher of water.
4. If the following materials are available, use some of them during the lesson:
  - a. The picture *Woman at the Well* (62169; Gospel Art Picture Kit 217).
  - b. “The Woman at the Well,” an eight-minute segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  - c. A map of Palestine in New Testament times (map 14 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible).
5. Suggestion for teaching: “The basic goal of teaching in the Church is to help bring about worthwhile changes in the lives of people. The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about gospel truths and principles” (Rex A. Skidmore, quoted in *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 83; see also 84).

**Suggested Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Display the healthy plant and the wilted plant (see the “Preparation” section), or draw them on the chalkboard as shown on the next page. Also display the pitcher of water.



- What happens to a plant if it does not receive water? What happens to us if we do not receive water?

Explain that just as we will die physically if we do not receive physical water, we will die spiritually if we do not receive spiritual water. This lesson tells of Jesus' teachings about being born of the water and the Spirit and about the living water he offers.

#### Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

#### 1. Jesus teaches Nicodemus that all must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God.

Discuss John 3:1–22. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Nicodemus was a leader in the Jewish community. He came to Jesus knowing that Jesus was “a teacher come from God” (John 3:2).

- What did Jesus teach Nicodemus that he must do to enter the kingdom of God? (See John 3:5.) What does it mean to be “born of water”? (John 3:5; to be baptized). How is baptism a symbol of rebirth? (Being immersed in water symbolizes the death or burial of our past sins; when we rise out of the water, we start a new life.) What does it mean to be “born . . . of the Spirit”? (John 3:5; to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost).
- Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught that “Church members are not born again by the mere fact of baptism alone” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 1:142). Besides being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, what else is necessary in becoming born again? (See John 3:16, 18; Mosiah 5:1–7; 27:25–26; Alma 5:14–35; 22:15–18. You may want to have class members mark phrases in these verses that relate to being born again. A sample list is provided below. Point out that the verses from the Book of Mormon clarify what it means to be born again.)
  - a. Believing in Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 18).
  - b. Experiencing “a mighty change in . . . our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually” (Mosiah 5:2; see also Alma 5:12–14, 26).

- c. Being “changed from [a] carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness” (Mosiah 27:25).
  - d. Becoming “[God’s] sons and daughters” (Mosiah 5:7; 27:25).
  - e. Becoming “new creatures” (Mosiah 27:26).
  - f. Having “the image of God engraven upon [our] countenances” (Alma 5:19; see also verse 14).
  - g. Repenting so our “garments [are] purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of [Christ]” (Alma 5:21; see also Alma 5:19, 33–34; 22:18).
- Elder McConkie also taught that being born again “doesn’t happen in an instant. [It] is a process” (“Jesus Christ and Him Crucified,” in *1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year*, 399). What can we do to continue this process throughout our lives? (See 2 Nephi 31:19–20.) How can we overcome discouragement or setbacks in our spiritual progress? What changes have you observed in yourself or someone else during the process of becoming born again?
  - Invite a class member to read John 3:14–18 aloud. How are these truths about the Savior’s mission related to his commandment that we be born again?
  - Jesus used the concepts of light and darkness to teach Nicodemus (John 3:19–21). Why do some choose darkness over light? How can we maintain the ability to love the light and shun darkness? What promises has the Lord made to those who come to the light? (See D&C 50:24; 88:67.)

## 2. Jesus teaches a Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 4:1–42. Display the map of Palestine. Explain that while Jesus and his disciples were traveling from Judea to Galilee (you may want to point out these places on the map), they stopped to rest at Jacob’s Well in Samaria. While Jesus sat by the well, a Samaritan woman came to draw water.

Display the picture of the woman at the well. If you are using the video presentation “The Woman at the Well,” show it now.

- The Jews had “no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9) and usually avoided Samaria when traveling. Yet Jesus deliberately went through Samaria. What does this reveal about him? Who are some “Samaritans” in today’s world? (Answers may include any person or group considered inferior.) How should we treat them?
- How did the Samaritan woman make it easier for Jesus to teach her? (See John 4:9, 11–12, 15, 19, 25. Answers may include that she was humble, she desired to know more, and she believed his words.) What can we do to become more receptive to the Savior’s teachings?
- How did the Samaritan woman change as Jesus spoke to her? How did Jesus help bring about this change? (Answers may include that he taught her at her level of understanding, he testified of himself, he used the symbol of water powerfully, and he showed compassion.) How can we follow his example as we teach others?
- Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he could give her “living water” (John 4:10). What do you think “living water” means? (See 1 Nephi 11:25;

D&C 63:23. Answers may include the doctrines of the gospel, the love of God, and the Atonement.) How can we obtain living water? How has this living water blessed you?

- The Samaritan woman had come to the well for water (John 4:7). However, after she spoke with Jesus, she left her pitcher at the well and went to tell others about the experience (John 4:28–29). What can we learn from her example?
- How were other people blessed because of the faith of the Samaritan woman? (See John 4:39–42.) How have you been blessed or seen others blessed for believing in the Lord? How can our faith affect those around us?

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## Conclusion

If you used the attention activity, display the plants and the water pitcher again. Explain that just as plants need water to live, we need to follow the Savior and his teachings to be born again and have everlasting life.

Testify of the truths you have discussed during the lesson. Challenge class members to seek Jesus Christ, follow him, and continue in the process of being born again.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “I am not the Christ, but . . . I am sent before him” (John 3:28)

- In John 3:25–36, what is John’s attitude about his role in relationship to the Savior’s? How does John’s attitude exemplify true discipleship? How can we apply this attitude to our service in the Church?

### 2. “The fields . . . are white already to harvest” (John 4:35)

- What did Jesus teach his disciples about missionary work in John 4:35–38? What did he mean when he said the field was white and ready to harvest? How did the Savior apply this same symbol in Doctrine and Covenants 4:1–4 and 75:3–5? Ask class members to share experiences they have had when sharing the gospel with others.

### 3. Jesus heals a nobleman’s son

Read and discuss John 4:46–54.

- What did the nobleman want of Jesus? (See John 4:46–47.) What was Jesus’ first reply to him? (See John 4:48.) How did the nobleman respond? (See John 4:49.)
- What was Jesus’ second response to the nobleman? (See John 4:50.) What was the nobleman’s reaction? (See John 4:50.) What was the result of the nobleman’s faith? (See John 4:51–54.) What can we learn from this account about the power of faith?

# “They Straightway Left Their Nets”

*Luke 4:14–32; 5; 6:12–16; Matthew 10*

## Purpose

To help class members understand that Apostles are called to be special witnesses of Jesus Christ and that we are blessed when we sustain and follow them.

## Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Luke 4:14–32. Jesus teaches in a synagogue in Nazareth and testifies that he is the Messiah of whom Isaiah prophesied. The people angrily reject him.
  - b. Luke 5:1–11, 27–28; 6:12–16. Jesus calls his Twelve Apostles.
  - c. Matthew 10. Jesus ordains and instructs the Twelve Apostles and sends them forth to preach the gospel.
2. Additional reading: Isaiah 61:1–2; Matthew 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; 3:13–19; 6:7–13; Luke 9:1–6; 12:1–12; Doctrine and Covenants 107:23–24, 33–35, 39, 58; Bible Dictionary, “Apostle,” 612.
3. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: Calling of the Fishermen (62496; Gospel Art Picture Kit 209) or Jesus and the Fishermen (62138; Gospel Art Picture Kit 210); Christ Ordaining the Apostles (62557; Gospel Art Picture Kit 211); and a picture of the current Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (from the most recent conference issue of the *Ensign* or the *International Magazines*).
4. Suggestion for teaching: Learn and use class members’ names. When you do so, class members see that you care about them as individuals. Knowing class members’ names can also help you encourage participation by enabling you to direct questions to specific people. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 105–6.)

## Suggested Lesson Development

### Attention Activity

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Have a class member read the first part of Mosiah 27:31 (through “confess that he is God”). Explain that at Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, everyone will recognize him as the Savior. This was not true at his first coming. The Jews had studied prophecies about the Savior’s coming for centuries, but many of those who heard Jesus failed to recognize him as the Savior. Because Jesus did not free the Jews from Roman control, as they expected the Messiah to do, many of them rejected him and his message.

Point out that the first part of this lesson will discuss what happened when Jesus first announced that he was the long-awaited Messiah. Other parts of the lesson will discuss Jesus’ calling of Apostles to help spread his message.

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss the blessings that come from knowing that Jesus Christ is the Savior and from following the Apostles.

### 1. Jesus announces that he is the Messiah.

Discuss Luke 4:14–32. Invite class members to read selected verses. Explain that Jesus was invited to read a passage of scripture and comment on it during the service in the synagogue in Nazareth.

- Have a class member read Luke 4:16–19. (Point out that verses 18–19 are a quotation of Isaiah 61:1–2. Isaiah is called “Esaias” in Luke 4:17.) What are these verses about? (They are a prophetic description of things the Messiah would do; see lesson 1.)
- When Jesus finished reading the passage from Isaiah, what testimony did he bear? (See Luke 4:21. He declared that he was the Messiah of whom Isaiah prophesied and for whom the Jews had been waiting for centuries.) How did the people in the synagogue respond to Jesus’ declaration? (See Luke 4:22–29.)
- Why do you think the people in the synagogue had difficulty accepting Jesus as the Messiah? (See Luke 4:22. Answers may include that they knew him and had watched him grow up, so they could not see how he could be the great Messiah they were expecting.) Why do you think some people today have difficulty accepting Jesus Christ? How can we strengthen our testimonies that Jesus is the Savior?

### 2. Jesus calls his Twelve Apostles.

Read and discuss selected verses from Luke 5:1–11, 27–28; 6:12–16. Display the picture of Jesus and the fishermen and the picture of the current Twelve Apostles. As you discuss the scripture passages, help class members understand that Apostles are called to do what Jesus himself did in the synagogue in Nazareth—declare that he is the Messiah, the Savior.

- What were Simon Peter, James, and John doing when Jesus came to them? (See Luke 5:1–2.) What did Jesus tell them about how their lives would change if they followed him? (See Luke 5:10.) How has your life been affected because of your decision to follow Jesus Christ?
- How did the miracle with the fishing nets foreshadow the experiences that Peter, James, and John would have as “fishers of men”? (Mark 1:17). Have class members consider the following phrases:
  - a. Luke 5:5: “At thy word I will let down the net.” (They would work where Jesus directed them.)
  - b. Luke 5:6: “They inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.” (They would find many people who would accept the gospel.)
  - c. Luke 5:7: “They beckoned unto their partners . . . that they should come and help them.” (They would call others to assist in the work.)
- Point out that in Luke 5:1–11, Jesus called Peter, James, and John to be his disciples. Later he would call them to be Apostles. Write *Disciple* and *Apostle* on the chalkboard. What is the difference between a disciple and an Apostle?

Explain that a disciple is any follower of Jesus Christ (Bible Dictionary, “Disciple,” 657). An Apostle is a disciple who has been called to be a special

witness of Christ (D&C 107:23). The word *Apostle* means “one [who is] sent forth” (Bible Dictionary, “Apostle,” 612). The members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are sent forth to testify to the world that Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer of mankind.

- Why was it important that Jesus call Apostles? (See Matthew 9:36–38; 16:19; Mark 3:14–15; John 20:19–21, 23; Ephesians 4:11–15. They would help Jesus preach the gospel and would lead the Church and carry on priesthood authority after Jesus was gone.) Why is it important that the Lord has called Apostles today?
- How did Jesus choose the original Twelve Apostles? (See Luke 6:12–13.) How did Jesus prepare himself to call them? How does this compare to the way people are chosen today to be Apostles and to serve in other Church callings? (Church leaders pray and seek inspiration to know whom the Lord would have serve in each calling.)
- What do the scriptures tell us about the background and character of the men whom Jesus called as Apostles? (See Luke 5:5, 8, 11, 27–28. Answers may include that they had no formal training for the ministry, but they were humble, obedient, hardworking men who were willing to sacrifice everything to follow the Lord.) What does this suggest about how a person becomes qualified to serve the Lord? (See also D&C 4:3, 5–6; Articles of Faith 1:5.)

### 3. Jesus ordains and instructs the Twelve Apostles.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 10. Display the picture of Christ ordaining the Apostles.

- After Jesus called the Twelve Apostles, he gave them priesthood power and instructed them in their responsibilities. What do we learn about the powers and responsibilities of Apostles from Jesus’ counsel in Matthew 10? (List class members’ responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. They have power to heal the spiritually and physically sick (verse 1).
  - b. They are sent to the lost sheep of Israel to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (verses 6–7).
  - c. They are to use their priesthood power to bless and heal people (verse 8).
  - d. They are to seek out those who are prepared to hear the gospel (verses 11–14).
  - e. They are to teach as guided by the Spirit (verses 19–20).
  - f. They are to give their lives entirely to the Savior’s work (verse 39).
- How do the powers and responsibilities given to the original Apostles compare to those given to latter-day Apostles? (See D&C 107:23, 33, 35; 112:14, 19–22, 30–31.) How have you seen latter-day Apostles fulfill these responsibilities?
- What blessings are promised to those who follow the Apostles? (See Matthew 10:40–42; see also D&C 124:45–46.)

Elder Spencer W. Kimball said: “No one in this Church will ever go far astray who ties himself securely to the Church Authorities whom the Lord has placed in his Church. This Church will never go astray; the Quorum of the Twelve will never lead you into bypaths; it never has and never will” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1951, 104).

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**Conclusion**

Testify that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah and that the Twelve Apostles are special witnesses of him. You may want to share an experience in which following the counsel of an Apostle blessed your life.

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**Additional Teaching Ideas**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

**1. The current Twelve Apostles**

Display pictures of the current Twelve Apostles and help class members learn their names. You may want to use the following quiz:

Give each class member a pencil and a piece of paper, and ask them to number their papers from 1 to 12. Display a picture of each Apostle without revealing his name, and ask class members to write the name on their papers next to the appropriate number. When you have shown all the pictures, review the correct answers.

**2. The original Twelve Apostles**

Help class members learn the names of the original Twelve Apostles (Matthew 10:2–4). Present the following information in your own words to help class members understand how various Apostles are referred to in the scriptures:

Two Apostles were named James: James the son of Zebedee and James the son of Alphaeus. Two were named Simon: Simon Peter and Simon the Canaanite, also called Simon Zelotes (“the zealot”). Two were named Judas: Judas (also called Lebbaeus Thaddaeus) and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Christ. Matthew is called Levi in Luke 5:27–28. Thomas was also known as Didymus, which means “twin.” The Apostle referred to as Bartholomew in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke is presumed to be the same person referred to as Nathanael in the gospel of John.

**3. “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me”  
(Matthew 10:37)**

Have class members read Matthew 10:35–38.

- How are verses 35 and 36 sometimes fulfilled when a person joins the Church? Knowing that the Lord wants our families to be peaceful and united, why do you think he made these statements? To whom should our first and strongest loyalty go? (See verses 37–38; see also Luke 14:33.)

**4. Video presentation**

The first segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), may be useful in this lesson. This segment includes information on what it meant for Jesus to declare himself the anointed one, or Messiah (Luke 4:18); on worship in the synagogue; and on what it means to preach the gospel without purse or scrip, as Jesus instructed his Apostles to do (Matthew 10:9–10).

Lesson  
**7**

# “[He] Took Our Infirmities, and Bare Our Sicknesses”

*Mark 1–2; 4:35–41; 5; Luke 7:11–17*

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**Purpose** To help class members understand some of the reasons the Savior performed miracles.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Mark 1:14–15, 21–45. Jesus travels throughout Galilee teaching the gospel, casting out devils, and healing the sick. He casts an unclean spirit out of a man, heals Simon Peter’s mother-in-law, and cleanses a leper.
  - b. Mark 2:1–12. Jesus forgives a man’s sins and heals the man of palsy.
  - c. Mark 4:35–41; 5:1–20; Luke 7:11–17. Jesus calms the stormy sea, casts out a legion of devils, and raises the son of the widow of Nain from the dead.
  - d. Mark 5:21–43. Jesus heals a woman who has an issue of blood and raises Jairus’s daughter from the dead.
2. Additional reading: Matthew 8–9; Luke 4:33–44; 5:12–32; 8:22–56; Alma 7:11–12; Mormon 9:7–20; Moroni 7:27–29, 33–37; Bible Dictionary, “Miracles,” 732–33.
3. If the pictures *Stilling the Storm* (62139; Gospel Art Picture Kit 214) and *Jesus Blessing Jairus’s Daughter* (62231; Gospel Art Picture Kit 215) are available, use them during the lesson.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Class members need to know why the teachings in the scriptures are important today. As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully consider what you can do to encourage class members to apply gospel principles in their lives. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 111, 116–17.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

- What is a miracle? (An extraordinary event caused by divine or spiritual power; see Bible Dictionary, “Miracles,” 732–33.)
- What is one of the Savior’s miracles that you would like to have witnessed? Why? (You may want to list some of Christ’s miracles on the chalkboard to help class members answer this question.)

Explain that this lesson will discuss some of the Savior’s miracles and his reasons for performing them.

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**Scripture Discussion** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Emphasize that Jesus continues to perform miracles in our lives. Encourage class members to share, as appropriate, miracles they have experienced. (You

may want to remind class members that some experiences are too sacred to share. The Holy Ghost can help them know when it is appropriate to share an experience.)

### **1. Jesus travels through Galilee teaching the gospel and performing miracles.**

Discuss Mark 1:14–15, 21–45. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- As Jesus traveled throughout Galilee teaching the gospel, he performed many miracles, including healing the sick and casting out devils (Mark 1:34, 39). Why did Jesus perform these and other miracles during his ministry? (Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. To show love and compassion (see Mark 5:19; see also 3 Nephi 17:6–7).
  - b. To build and confirm faith (see Matthew 9:27–30).
  - c. To prove his divinity and power (see Mark 1:27; 2:10–11).

List class members' responses on the chalkboard, and leave this list on the chalkboard throughout the lesson. As you discuss the miracles that Jesus performed, discuss some of the purposes that were fulfilled by each miracle. Add to the list any additional purposes mentioned during the lesson.

- Why were the people in the synagogue in Capernaum amazed at Jesus' teachings and his ability to cast out unclean spirits? (See Mark 1:22, 27.) By what authority did Jesus teach and perform miracles? (By the power of the priesthood, which the scribes did not have.) How do we have access to this power and authority today?
- According to Mark 1:41, what was one reason Jesus healed the leper? Point out that Jesus performed many miracles that directly blessed just one person. What do these incidents demonstrate about how Jesus feels about us individually? How has he shown love and compassion for you?
- How can we show Christlike love and compassion for those around us? How have other people shown Christlike love and compassion for you?

### **2. Jesus forgives a man's sins and heals the man of palsy.**

Read and discuss Mark 2:1–12.

- Whose faith contributed to the healing of the man who was sick with palsy? (See Mark 2:3, 5.) How did these people demonstrate their faith? (See Mark 2:1–4.) How can we exercise faith in behalf of others? How has the faith of others helped you or someone you know?
- What did some of the scribes think when Jesus told the man with palsy that his sins were forgiven? (See Mark 2:5–7.) How did Jesus respond to these scribes? (See Mark 2:8–11.) Point out that just as it was a miracle for the man to be healed of palsy, it was also a miracle for him to be forgiven of his sins. Emphasize that this miracle is available to each of us as we repent.
- What greater healing power might be symbolized by the Savior's physical healings? (See Isaiah 53:5; 2 Nephi 25:13; 3 Nephi 9:13.) How has Jesus' healing power blessed you spiritually? How can we seek spiritual healing?

### 3. Jesus calms the sea, casts out devils, and raises the son of the widow of Nain from the dead.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mark 4:35–41; 5:1–20 and Luke 7:11–17. Display the picture of Jesus calming the storm.

- The physical aspects of the Savior’s miracles often symbolized spiritual truths. What spiritual truths can we learn from the following miracles? (Possible answers are given in parentheses.)
  - a. Mark 4:35–41. Jesus calmed the sea. (He can bring us peace.)
  - b. Mark 5:1–20. Jesus cast out a legion of devils. (He can cast Satan and his influence out of our lives.)
  - c. Luke 7:11–17. Jesus raised a young man from the dead. (Because of his Atonement, we will rise from the dead in the Resurrection.)

Invite class members to mention other miracles the Savior performed and the spiritual truths that we can learn from those miracles.

- What other insights have you gained from studying these three miracles?

### 4. Jesus heals a woman with an issue of blood and raises Jairus’s daughter from the dead.

Read and discuss selected verses from Mark 5:21–43.

- How did the woman with an issue of blood show her faith? (See Mark 5:25–29.) What was the cause of her healing? (See Mark 5:34. Emphasize that it was her faith in Jesus’ power, not the act of touching his garment, that caused her to be healed.)
- Display the picture of Jesus blessing Jairus’s daughter. How did Jairus show his faith in the Savior? (See Mark 5:22–23.) What did Jesus say to strengthen Jairus’s faith when Jairus heard that his daughter was dead? (See Mark 5:36.) How can you apply these words in your life?
- Why do you think faith must precede miracles? (See Ether 12:12, 18; Moroni 7:37; and the following quotation.) Why don’t miracles alone provide a firm foundation for faith?

Brigham Young said: “Miracles, or these extraordinary manifestations of the power of God, are not for the unbeliever; they are to console the Saints, and to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who love, fear, and serve God” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1941], 341).

- Why are the miracles that Jesus performed during his mortal life important to you? Why is it important to know that he continues to perform miracles today? What are some examples of modern miracles?

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## Conclusion

Testify that the Savior can heal both spiritual and physical infirmities. Express your gratitude for all that he has done for us. If appropriate, you may want to tell about a miracle that has blessed your life.

Ask class members to silently ponder the miracles they have experienced. Encourage them to recognize and give thanks for miracles in their lives.

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**Additional  
Teaching Ideas**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

**1. Old Testament miracles**

Explain that miracles were not new to the Jews. Miracles had been performed previously by Old Testament prophets whom the Jews honored. Briefly review the following examples:

- a. The prophet Elijah raises a boy from the dead (1 Kings 17:17–24).
- b. The prophet Elisha feeds a multitude with a small amount of food (2 Kings 4:42–44).
- c. The prophet Elisha heals Naaman, a leper (2 Kings 5:1–19).

- By what power did these prophets perform miracles? (The priesthood, the divine power given to them by Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.)

**2. “They that are whole have no need of the physician” (Mark 2:17)**

- How did the scribes and Pharisees react when they saw Jesus eating with people they considered sinners? (See Mark 2:15–16.) What did Jesus tell them? (See Mark 2:17.) What does this mean? In what ways do we all “have . . . need of the physician”?

Lesson  
8

# The Sermon on the Mount: “A More Excellent Way”

Matthew 5

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to come unto Christ by applying the principles he taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 5:1–12. On a mount in Galilee, Jesus teaches the Beatitudes to his disciples.
  - b. Matthew 5:13–16. Jesus declares that his disciples are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.”
  - c. Matthew 5:17–48. Jesus declares that he has come to fulfill the law of Moses, and he teaches a higher law.
2. Additional reading: Luke 6:17–36; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 14:35–37; Mosiah 13:28–35; Alma 34:13–16; 3 Nephi 12; Ether 12:11; Bible Dictionary, “Beatitudes,” 620; and “Sermon on the Mount,” 771–72.
3. If you use the attention activity, provide each class member with a pen or pencil and a piece of paper.
4. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
  - a. The picture Sermon on the Mount (62166; Gospel Art Picture Kit 212).
  - b. A container of salt and a lamp.
5. Suggestion for teaching: Jesus Christ is the Master Teacher. As you study the Sermon on the Mount, notice his teaching methods and look for ways you can emulate him as a teacher. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, page 14, for other suggestions on how to follow the Savior’s example as a teacher.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Explain that the scriptures include many invitations from the Savior. You may want to have class members read the Savior’s invitations in Matthew 11:28–29 and 3 Nephi 27:27. Ask class members to write *The Savior invites me to:* at the top of the piece of paper. Then explain that this lesson focuses on the Sermon on the Mount, which contains many invitations from the Savior. Encourage class members to look for invitations during the lesson and to write them on the piece of paper.

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**Scripture Discussion** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles. Because it would be difficult to ask every question or cover every point in the lesson, prayerfully select those that will best meet class members’ needs.

## 1. Jesus teaches the Beatitudes to his disciples.

Explain that many centuries after the premortal Christ gave the law of Moses on Mount Sinai, the mortal Messiah ascended another mount to proclaim a higher law in a discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. Display the picture of the Sermon on the Mount.

The first teachings in this sermon are known as the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12). The word *beatitude* comes from the Latin *beatus*, which means fortunate, happy, or blessed (Matthew 5:3, footnote 3a). Read the Beatitudes and discuss them as outlined below.

- *Matthew 5:3*. What does it mean to be “poor in spirit”? (To be humble; see footnote 3b. See also 3 Nephi 12:3.) Why is it important that we be humble? How can we become more humble?
- *Matthew 5:4*. What are some ways the Lord provides for us to be comforted? (See John 14:26–27 and Mosiah 18:8–9 for some examples.) How have you been comforted in times of mourning?
- *Matthew 5:5*. What does it mean to be meek? (To be gentle, forgiving, or benevolent; see footnote 5a.) How can we develop meekness? (See Mosiah 3:19; Alma 7:23; 13:28.)
- *Matthew 5:6*. What did Jesus promise those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness”? (See Matthew 5:6; 3 Nephi 12:6.) What can we do to lift our appetites from the things of the world to things of righteousness?
- *Matthew 5:7*. How can we show mercy to others? Why do we need mercy from the Lord? (See Alma 42:13–15.)
- *Matthew 5:8*. What do you think it means to have a pure heart? How can we purify our hearts? (See Helaman 3:35.) Why must we have pure hearts if we are to see God and dwell with him? (See Moses 6:57.)
- *Matthew 5:9*. How can we be peacemakers in our homes and communities?
- *Matthew 5:10–12*. Why are righteous people sometimes persecuted? How should we respond to persecution? (See Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:35.)

If you used the attention activity, ask class members to list invitations in the Beatitudes that they feel are especially helpful for them.

## 2. Jesus declares that his disciples are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.”

Read and discuss Matthew 5:13–16. As you discuss these verses, you may want to display a container of salt and a lamp.

- Jesus said that his disciples are “the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13; D&C 101:39). What are some uses for salt? (Answers may include that salt is a seasoning and a preservative.) How can Latter-day Saints be “the salt of the earth”?
- Invite a class member to read Doctrine and Covenants 103:9–10. What insights do these verses add about what it means to be “the salt of the earth”? How can we be “the saviors of men”? (Answers may include sharing the gospel and doing temple work.)

- How can Latter-day Saints be “the light of the world”? (Matthew 5:14; see also verse 16). What happens when a candle is placed “under a bushel”? (Matthew 5:15; note that a bushel is a large basket). How do we as Church members sometimes put our light under a bushel? How can we let our light shine in a way that will lead others to “glorify [our] Father . . . in heaven”? (See Matthew 5:16; 3 Nephi 18:24.)

### 3. Jesus teaches a higher law than the law of Moses.

Discuss Matthew 5:17–48. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Jesus said that he came to fulfill the law of Moses, not to destroy it (Matthew 5:17–18). How did he fulfill the law of Moses?

Explain that the law of Moses had been “given to the children of Israel, . . . for they were a stiffnecked people, quick to do iniquity, and slow to remember the Lord their God.” It was “a law of performances and of ordinances, . . . which [the Israelites] were to observe strictly from day to day, to keep them in remembrance of God and their duty towards him” (Mosiah 13:29–30). Those who understood the law “[looked] forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law [was] fulfilled. For, for this end was the law given” (2 Nephi 25:24–25).

The Savior fulfilled the law of Moses when he atoned for our sins (Alma 34:13–16). After the Atonement, the people were no longer commanded to make animal sacrifices, which had been required as part of the law of Moses to point to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Instead, the people were commanded to “offer for a sacrifice . . . a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:20; see also verse 19).

- Jesus said that his disciples’ righteousness should “exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees” (Matthew 5:20). What was lacking from the “righteousness” of the scribes and Pharisees? (They focused only on outward appearances of the law and ignored the importance of inner faithfulness. If they had observed the law as it was given, they would have recognized Jesus as the Messiah.)

In the upper left corner of the chalkboard, write *Ye have heard that it was said*. Explain that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used these words when he referred to commandments that were part of the law of Moses. In the upper right corner of the chalkboard, write *But I say unto you*. Point out that Jesus used these words when he taught his disciples his higher law.

- In Matthew 5:21, what ancient law did Jesus refer to? (Write *Thou shalt not kill* below *Ye have heard that it was said*.) What higher law did Jesus give concerning this commandment? (See Matthew 5:22. Write *Do not get angry* below *But I say unto you*. Note that the phrase “without a cause” does not appear in the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 5:22 or in 3 Nephi 12:22.) How is the commandment to avoid anger a higher law than the commandment against murder? How do feelings of anger affect our relationship with God? What can we do to control feelings of anger and seek to eliminate them from our lives?
- The Savior spoke of bringing a “gift to the altar,” referring to the ancient practice of bringing sacrificial offerings to the altar (Matthew 5:23). What did Jesus say his disciples should do if they had angry feelings as they prepared to bring a gift to the altar? (See Matthew 5:23–24.) How might this apply to us?

- What should we do when someone has offended us? (See Matthew 5:24; 18:15; D&C 64:8–11.) What are the dangers of waiting for a person who has offended us to ask for our forgiveness?
- In Matthew 5:27, what ancient law did Jesus refer to? (Write *Thou shalt not commit adultery* below *Ye have heard that it was said.*) What law did Jesus give to supersede this commandment? (See Matthew 5:28. Write *Avoid lustful thoughts* below *But I say unto you.*) What are some results of unclean thoughts? (See Mosiah 4:30; Alma 12:14; D&C 63:16.) What can we do to keep our thoughts pure?
- The Joseph Smith Translation says that the eye and hand mentioned in Matthew 5:29–30 represent sins (Matthew 5:30, footnote 30*a*). What do these verses teach us about how we should deal with our sins?
- As recorded in Matthew 5:33, how did people in Old Testament times signify that they were telling the truth? (Write *Perform oaths to the Lord* below *Ye have heard that it was said.*) What law did Jesus give to supersede this practice? (See Matthew 5:34–37. Read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie. Then write *Keep your word* below *But I say unto you.*)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “Under the Mosaic law the taking of oaths was so common and covered such a variety of circumstances that, in practice, little verity attended statements that were not made with an oath. . . . Under the perfect law of Christ every man’s word is his bond, and all spoken statements are as true as though an oath attended each spoken word” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:140).

- In Matthew 5:38, what ancient law did Jesus refer to? (Write *An eye for an eye* below *Ye have heard that it was said.* Explain that “an eye for an eye” meant that a person who injured another could receive the same injury as punishment; see Leviticus 24:17–21.) What commandment superseded this law? (See Matthew 5:39–40. Write *Turn the other cheek* below *But I say unto you.*) What principles did Jesus teach when he spoke of turning the other cheek to someone who hits us and giving our cloak to someone who takes our coat?
- In Matthew 5:43, what ancient practice did Jesus refer to? (Write *Love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy* below *Ye have heard that it was said.*) What commandment superseded this practice? (See Matthew 5:44–47. Write *Love your enemies* below *But I say unto you.*) How can we develop love for our enemies? (See Moroni 7:47–48 for one example.) How will our lives change when we love our enemies? How might their lives change?

If you used the attention activity, ask class members to look at the chalkboard and list the invitations in Matthew 5:17–47 that are especially helpful to them.

- How are we to understand the Savior’s command that we become perfect? (See Matthew 5:48, footnote 48*b*, which says that an alternate Greek translation of the word *perfect* is “complete, finished, fully developed.”) How can the command to be perfect motivate us rather than frustrate us?

President Joseph Fielding Smith said:

“I believe the Lord meant just what he said: that we should be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect. That will not come all at once, but line upon line, and precept upon precept, example upon example, and even then not as long

as we live in this mortal life, for we will have to go even beyond the grave before we reach that perfection and shall be like God.

“But here we lay the foundation. Here is where we are taught these simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in this probationary state, to prepare us for that perfection. It is our duty to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today. . . . If we are keeping the commandments of the Lord, we are on that road to perfection” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:18–19; see also D&C 93:11–14, 19–20).

- How does the Savior’s Atonement help us reach perfection? (See Moroni 10:32–33; D&C 76:68–70.) How do the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount help us “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him”?

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## Conclusion

Testify that the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount help us “come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32). Encourage class members to apply those teachings in their lives. If you used the attention activity, ask class members to look at the invitations they have listed and to choose one or two that they will focus on during the coming week.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “A more excellent way” (Ether 12:11)

Invite a few class members to come to class prepared to share ideas about how the teachings in Matthew 5 can help them at home, at school, or at work.

### 2. The Savior’s teaching about divorce

If you or class members have questions about Matthew 5:31–32, see the fifth additional teaching idea in lesson 14 (see page 60).

### 3. Video presentation

The second segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), explains the term *schoolmaster*, which is used in Galatians 3:24–25 to describe the law of Moses. If you show this segment, discuss how the law of Moses was a schoolmaster to bring the people to Christ.

# “Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”

## Lesson 9

Matthew 6–7

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to become more dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures, which are a continuation of the Sermon on the Mount:
    - a. Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21. Jesus teaches his disciples to do alms, pray, and fast in secret and to lay up treasures in heaven instead of on earth.
    - b. Matthew 6:7–13; 7:7–11. He shows his disciples how to pray and teaches that Heavenly Father will bless those who ask him for what they need.
    - c. Matthew 6:14–15; 7:1–6, 12. Jesus teaches his disciples to forgive others, to judge righteously, and to treat others as they would like to be treated.
    - d. Matthew 6:22–34; 7:13–29. He teaches his disciples that they will be blessed for serving Heavenly Father and doing his will.
  2. Additional reading: Luke 6:37–49; 11:1–13, 34–36; 12:22–34; 16:13; 3 Nephi 13–14.
  3. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
    - a. The picture Sermon on the Mount (62166; Gospel Art Picture Kit 212).
    - b. A brief portion (no more than six or seven minutes) of “The Sermon on the Plain,” part 4 of the videocassette *The Savior: Early Years* (53163). Select the portion that will best illustrate the principles you are teaching.
  4. You may want to prepare to sing “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man” (*Children’s Songbook*, 281) with class members.
  5. Suggestion for teaching: Stories can illustrate gospel principles and keep class members’ attention as few other teaching methods can. Jesus often used stories to teach important lessons or clarify abstract ideas. As you prepare your lessons, consider how you could use stories to help class members understand gospel principles. When you tell a story, be sure class members understand whether it is a true account or a fictional story you have created to make a point. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 98–100, 127.)
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### Suggested Lesson Development

- Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
- Tell the following story in your own words:
- Elder William R. Bradford of the Seventy once spoke with the bishop of a ward whose youth had worked to earn money for an activity. The bishop asked Elder Bradford if he would help the youth get some recognition for what they had done. To the bishop’s surprise, Elder Bradford said he would not. He said that he was

glad that the young people had worked hard, but that it was not important that they receive public recognition for that work.

When the youth decided to donate their money to the Church's general missionary fund instead of using it for the activity, they wanted to have their picture taken with Elder Bradford as they made the donation, and they wanted to have the picture and an article put into the newspaper. Again Elder Bradford surprised them by saying "no." He told the bishop: "You might consider helping your young people learn a higher law of recognition. Recognition from on high is silent. It is carefully and quietly recorded there. Let them feel the joy and gain the treasure in their heart and soul that come from silent, selfless service" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 90–91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 75).

- What lessons can we learn from Elder Bradford's response to the youth?

Point out that one lesson we can learn is that we should do good things because we love God and want to please him, not because we want to receive recognition from other people. This is one of the characteristics of a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Write *True Disciples* on the chalkboard. As you discuss the Sermon on the Mount, list the qualities of true discipleship taught by the Savior in this sermon.

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## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, encourage each class member to consider what he or she needs to do to become a more dedicated and sincere disciple of Christ. Encourage class members to share personal experiences that relate to the principles of true discipleship.

### 1. True disciples do right things for right reasons.

Read and discuss Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21.

- Why did Jesus condemn some people for doing good things such as giving alms (giving to the poor), praying, and fasting? (See Matthew 6:1–2, 5, 16. They were doing these things for the wrong reason.) Jesus referred to these people as hypocrites. What is a hypocrite? (A person who pretends to have certain qualities but does not have them; a person who tries to appear righteous but is not. Footnote 2a indicates that the Greek word for hypocrite can also be translated "pretender." See Matthew 15:8; Luke 11:39.)
- What will be the reward for people who do good things to be seen by others? (See Matthew 6:2, 5, 16.) What things might we do to be seen by others instead of to please God? How can we purify our motives for serving and performing other good works?
- In this sermon, what did Jesus teach about what we should value most? (See Matthew 6:19–21.) What does it mean to "lay up . . . treasures in heaven"? What are some heavenly treasures we can seek? (See D&C 18:14–16 and 130:18–19 for two examples.)
- What does it mean that "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"? How can we determine what we treasure? (One way is to evaluate the amount of time, money, and thought we devote to something.) What do people today treasure? Ask class members to think about the things they treasure and silently consider what these treasures say about where their heart is.

## 2. True disciples follow the Savior's example of prayer.

Read and discuss Matthew 6:7–13; 7:7–11. Point out that Matthew 6:9–13 is known as the Lord's Prayer.

- What does the Lord's Prayer teach us about how we should pray? (See Matthew 6:9–13.)
- How does the Lord's Prayer show Jesus' reverence and respect for Heavenly Father? How can we show reverence and respect for Heavenly Father when we pray?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks commented on the kind of language we should use when we pray: "The special language of prayer follows different forms in different languages, but the principle is always the same. We should address prayers to our Heavenly Father in words which speakers of that language associate with love and respect and reverence and closeness. . . . Men and women who wish to show respect will take the time to learn the special language of prayer" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 17, 20; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 16, 18).

- How can we avoid using "vain repetitions" when we pray? (See Matthew 6:7.)
- Since Heavenly Father knows what we need before we pray (Matthew 6:8), why do we need to pray? Why are asking, seeking, and knocking (Matthew 7:7) necessary for our spiritual progress? How can we seek more diligently for Heavenly Father's help?
- How are we to understand the Savior's promise that "every one that asketh receiveth"? (Matthew 7:8). Why do we sometimes not receive what we ask for at the time we ask for it or in the way we would like it? (See 3 Nephi 18:20.) How have you learned that God knows what is best for you?

## 3. True disciples treat others kindly and fairly.

Read and discuss Matthew 6:14–15; 7:1–6, 12.

- Why do you think the Savior commands us to forgive others? How can we become more forgiving?
- The Joseph Smith Translation amends Matthew 7:1 to read, "Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment" (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:2). What is righteous judgment? What harm can come to us and to those we judge if we judge unrighteously? How can we ensure that we judge righteously? (See Matthew 7:3–5; Moroni 7:14–18.)
- Jesus said a person who unrighteously tries to correct others is a hypocrite (Matthew 7:4–5). How is judging unrighteously a sign of hypocrisy?
- The teaching in Matthew 7:12 is often called the Golden Rule. What experiences have shown you the value of this principle? How does following the Golden Rule make us better disciples of Jesus Christ?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton described a meeting in which a group of Church members considered the question "How can you tell if someone is converted to Jesus Christ?":

"For forty-five minutes those in attendance made numerous suggestions in response to this question, and the leader carefully wrote down each answer

on a large chalkboard. All of the comments were thoughtful and appropriate. But after a time, this great teacher erased everything he had written. Then, acknowledging that all of the comments had been worthwhile and appreciated, he taught a vital principle: “The best and most clear indicator that we are progressing spiritually and coming unto Christ is the way we treat other people.”

Elder Ashton added: “The way we treat the members of our families, our friends, those with whom we work each day is as important as are some of the more noticeable gospel principles we sometimes emphasize” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 25; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 20).

#### 4. True disciples serve God and do his will.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 6:22–34; 7:13–29.

- Why is it impossible to serve both God and mammon, or worldliness? (See Matthew 6:24.) What blessings does God promise to those who serve him? (See Matthew 6:25–33; D&C 11:7.)
- Jesus promised that if we “seek . . . first the kingdom of God,” we will be given all other things that we need (Matthew 6:33). What experiences have helped you gain a testimony of this promise?
- How does worldliness turn our loyalty and service away from God? What are some ways we might be tempted to seek the things of the world before the things of God? (Answers may include waiting to pay tithing until after we buy the things we need or want or deciding not to serve a mission because of a desire for worldly things.)
- As Jesus neared the end of his sermon, what did he teach about entering the kingdom of heaven? (See Matthew 7:13–14, 21–23.) Why is it significant that the way to eternal life is narrow, while the way to destruction is broad?
- At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told the parable of the wise man and the foolish man (Matthew 7:24–27). How does this parable apply to us? What is the “rock” on which we should build? (See Helaman 5:12.) What do some people build their lives on that might be comparable to sand?

You may want to have class members sing “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man” (*Children’s Songbook*, 281).

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the importance of following Jesus Christ. Encourage class members to consider what they need to do to become better disciples of Christ.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. “By their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20)

- Jesus cautioned his followers about false prophets—people who teach false doctrine or try to lead people away from Christ (Matthew 7:15). How can we discern between false and true prophets? (See Matthew 7:16–20; see also Moroni 7:5, 10–11.) How can Matthew 7:20 apply to us as well as to prophets?

## 2. Video presentation

The second segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), explains the Jews’ use of phylacteries and fringes. If you show this segment, discuss how these items, once used to show obedience to God, became symbols of the Pharisees’ desires to “be seen of men” as they worshiped (Matthew 6:5).

## 3. Finding the beam in our own eye

Share the following story about how the Prophet Joseph Smith taught one sister to look for the beam in her own eye when dealing with a personal offense:

A woman went to the Prophet Joseph Smith upset about some things another member of the Church had said about her. The Prophet told her that if what the man had said was untrue, she should ignore the matter, because truth would survive but untruths would not. The woman felt the comments were untrue, but she was not satisfied with ignoring the matter. The Prophet then told his way of handling such comments:

“When an enemy had told a scandalous story about him, which had often been done, before he rendered judgment he paused and let his mind run back to the time and place and setting of the story to see if he had not by some unguarded word or act laid the block on which the story was built. If he found that he had done so, he said that in his heart he then forgave his enemy, and felt thankful that he had received warning of a weakness that he had not known he possessed.”

The Prophet told the sister that she should think carefully about whether she had unconsciously given the man any reason to say the things he did. After much thought, she decided she had, and she thanked the Prophet and left. (See Jesse W. Crosby, quoted in Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., *They Knew the Prophet* [1974], 144.)

## 4. Youth activity

Write each of the following phrases from Matthew 6 and 7 on a separate card:

Let not thy left hand know (6:3)	What thy right hand doeth (6:3)
Thy Father which seeth in secret (6:6)	Shall reward thee openly (6:6)
Use not (6:7)	Vain repetitions (6:7)
Forgive men (6:14)	Their trespasses (6:14)
Lay up for yourselves (6:20)	Treasures in heaven (6:20)
Ye cannot serve (6:24)	God and mammon (6:24)
Seek ye first (6:33)	The kingdom of God (6:33)
Cast out the beam (7:5)	Out of thine own eye (7:5)
Ask (7:7)	And it shall be given you (7:7)
Seek (7:7)	And ye shall find (7:7)
Beware of (7:15)	False prophets (7:15)
By their fruits (7:20)	Ye shall know them (7:20)

Lay the cards facedown on the table or floor. Divide class members into two teams, and have the teams take turns choosing two cards. If the cards match, the team removes them from the table or floor and takes another turn. If the cards do not match, the team replaces them in their original positions, and the other team takes a turn. Continue until all the matches have been made.

Lesson  
**10**

# “Take My Yoke upon You, and Learn of Me”

*Matthew 11:28–30; 12:1–13; Luke 7:36–50; 13:10–17*

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand that as we take the Savior’s yoke upon us and do his will, we will find the peace and joy that he has promised.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 11:28–30. Jesus invites all who labor and are heavy laden to come unto him, take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.
  - b. Matthew 12:1–13; Luke 13:10–17. Jesus declares that he is Lord of the Sabbath. He heals on the Sabbath and is criticized for it.
  - c. Luke 7:36–50. A woman seeking forgiveness washes the Lord’s feet with her tears; Simon the Pharisee criticizes Jesus for letting the sinful woman touch Him. Jesus teaches Simon the parable of the two debtors and forgives the woman.
2. Additional reading: Isaiah 58:13–14; Matthew 11:16–19; 12:14–50; 26:6–13; Mark 2:23–3:12; 14:3–9; Luke 6:1–11; Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–19.
3. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
  - a. “Come unto Me,” a seven-minute segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  - b. The picture Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith Crossing the Plains (62608; Gospel Art Picture Kit 412), which shows a pair of yoked oxen.
4. Suggestion for teaching: As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully consider how to encourage each class member to participate. Demonstrations, small group discussions, role playing, and other appropriate activities can help class members be more actively involved. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 133, 135, 141–42, 143–44.)

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask a class member to come to the front of the class and hold out his or her hands. Place some books or other heavy items in this person’s hands. Continue loading the member’s hands with objects until he or she becomes somewhat burdened. Then ask:

- How far could you carry this burden before stopping to rest? What arrangements would you have to make to carry the burden a great distance?

Explain that there are many kinds of loads, or burdens. Some are physical, while others are spiritual or emotional and not as easy to see. Many unseen burdens can exceed our strength to bear them alone, and we become weary. This lesson discusses how the Lord can lighten our burdens and bring us rest.

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### **1. Jesus invites us to take his yoke upon us and learn of him.**

Read and discuss Matthew 11:28–30.

- What does it mean to “labour and [be] heavy laden”? (Matthew 11:28). What are some examples of burdens we bear in this life? How can the Lord “give [us] rest” from these burdens?
- What is a yoke? (Display the picture of Mary Fielding and Joseph F. Smith and point out the yoked oxen in the picture. Explain that a yoke is a frame or bar that can be placed on one or two people or animals pulling or carrying a heavy load. The yoke balances the burden and makes it easier to manage. In addition to its literal meaning, the concept of a yoke also appears in many scriptures as a metaphor for bondage or servitude; see Jeremiah 28:2; Alma 44:2.) What does it mean to take Christ’s yoke upon us? (To humbly do his will and allow him to guide and direct our lives.)

If you are using the video presentation “Come unto Me,” show the first part of it now. Stop the video when President Howard W. Hunter has finished speaking.

- The Lord states, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). In what sense is the Savior’s yoke easy? Why do some people think that the Lord’s teachings are too restrictive? How does obeying and serving the Lord make our burdens light?

### **2. Jesus declares that he is Lord of the Sabbath.**

Discuss Matthew 12:1–13 and Luke 13:10–17. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- What did the Pharisees do when they saw Jesus’ disciples pick corn on the Sabbath? (See Matthew 12:1–2. Explain that the Pharisees’ interpretation of the Mosaic law ignored the true spirit and purpose of the Sabbath and instead focused on traditions that greatly restricted Sabbath activities.) What did the Lord teach as he responded to their accusation? (See Matthew 12:3–8.)
- What did Jesus mean when he said, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice”? (Matthew 12:7. He wanted the people to focus on loving others, not merely on performing public religious ceremonies.) How can we use this principle to guide our Sabbath activities?
- What did Jesus teach about the purpose of the Sabbath when he healed the man with the withered hand and the woman bound by an infirmity? (See Matthew 12:10–13; Luke 13:10–17.) What did he teach about the Sabbath in Mark 2:27–28? (Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Mark 2:26 explains that the Sabbath was given as a “day of rest” and a day to “glorify God.”) What can we do on the Sabbath day to glorify God? How can keeping the Sabbath day holy make our burdens light and bring us rest?

### 3. Jesus forgives a woman in the house of Simon the Pharisee.

If you are using the video presentation “Come unto Me,” show the remainder of it now. Then read and discuss selected verses from Luke 7:36–50.

- The woman who entered the house of Simon the Pharisee carried the burden of sin (Luke 7:37). What did the woman do that allowed Jesus to take away her burden? (See Luke 7:38, 44–50.) What can we do so the Savior will remove the burden of sin from our lives?
- How did the sinful woman and Simon the Pharisee differ in their attitudes toward Jesus? (Contrast the woman’s repentance, respect, humility, and love with Simon’s pride, lack of courtesy, and judgmental attitude. See also the quotation below.) Why are the qualities that the woman possessed important as we repent and seek forgiveness? How do the qualities that Simon possessed keep us from repenting?

Elder James E. Talmage taught: “It was a custom of the times to treat a distinguished guest with marked attention; to receive him with a kiss of welcome, to provide water for washing the dust from his feet, and oil for anointing the hair of the head and the beard. All these courteous attentions were omitted by Simon” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 261).

- How would Simon’s attitude toward the woman have made her burden seem heavier? How might we sometimes make another person’s burden of sin seem heavier? What can we learn from the Savior’s response to the woman?
- Even though she had not been invited and would risk being treated unkindly by Simon and his household, the woman came directly to Christ as soon as she knew where to find him (Luke 7:37). What can we learn from her example? What obstacles might keep us from repenting and coming unto Christ? How can we overcome these obstacles?
- What can we learn from the parable of the two debtors? (See Luke 7:41–50.) How is sin comparable to debt? (See Luke 7:44–50.) How can having Christ as our “creditor” make our burdens light?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that we can choose to take upon ourselves the burdens of the world or the yoke of Jesus. Testify that Christ’s teachings are true and that we will find rest when we follow him. Encourage class members to learn of Christ and obey his teachings so they can find rest and peace.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. The importance of unity

Read and discuss Matthew 12:22–30.

- How are we sometimes divided against ourselves in our families, homes, or wards? What can we do to become more united?
- Jesus told the Pharisees, “He that is not with me is against me” (Matthew 12:30). Why is this so?

## 2. “Every idle word” (Matthew 12:36)

Read and discuss Matthew 12:33–37.

- What do the words we speak reveal about us? Why did Jesus place such importance on the words we speak? What are some examples of “idle words”? (Answers may include sarcasm, gossip, lies, profanity, rudeness.) How can we strengthen our commitment to speak only in good ways?

## 3. Youth activity

Prepare for each class member a piece of paper with the following puzzle on it. After you have read and discussed the assigned reading, distribute copies of the puzzle. Ask class members to look for words related to the lesson that are hidden in the puzzle. Words may appear vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. If class members need help after a few minutes, have them reread the verses that contain the hidden words (Matthew 11:28–30: burden, heavy laden, yoke; Matthew 12:1–13: Sabbath, heal; Luke 7:36–50: parable, debtor, forgiven).

P	H	K	N	J	R	I	H
H	A	A	R	A	B	L	E
S	E	R	M	D	A	O	A
A	B	N	A	E	E	F	V
B	U	E	H	B	D	R	Y
B	R	V	A	T	L	T	L
A	D	I	B	O	B	E	A
T	E	G	B	R	K	I	D
H	N	R	F	O	O	K	E
O	D	O	Y	O	R	M	N
J	F	F	R	G	I	V	R

# “He Spake Many Things unto Them in Parables”

Matthew 13

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<b>Purpose</b>	To help class members develop “ears to hear” so they can understand how Jesus’ parables apply to them (Matthew 13:9).
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<b>Preparation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Matthew 13:1–17. Jesus presents the parable of the sower and explains his use of parables.</li> <li>b. Matthew 13:18–23. Jesus explains the parable of the sower.</li> <li>c. Matthew 13:24–53. Jesus teaches about the kingdom of heaven on earth (the Church of Jesus Christ) through the parables of the wheat and the tares, the grain of mustard seed, the leaven, the treasure hid in the field, the pearl of great price, and the net cast into the sea.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Additional reading: Mark 4:1–34; Luke 8:4–18; 13:18–21; Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7; Bible Dictionary, “Gospels, Harmony of,” 689; “Parables,” 740–41; and “Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God,” 721.</li> <li>3. Suggestion for teaching: Elder Boyd K. Packer said: “No teaching aid surpasses, and few equal, the chalkboard. . . . You can use it to focus the eyes of your students while the main lesson is presented audibly. As you talk, you can put just enough on the board to focus their attention and give them the idea, but never so much that the visual aid itself distracts them and becomes more interesting than your lesson” (<i>Teach Ye Diligently</i> [1975], 224–25; see also <i>Teaching—No Greater Call</i>, 151–53).</li> </ol>
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<b>Suggested Lesson Development</b>	
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Attention Activity	<p>As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.</p> <p>Invite class members to imagine they are riding in a bus. As the journey progresses, they look through the windows of the bus and observe the scenery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After traveling together in the same bus, will you have observed the same things as the other passengers? Why or why not?</li> </ul> <p>Point out that people in the same situation do not always observe the same things. Likewise, not all the people who heard Jesus teach in parables understood how the parables applied to them. This lesson will discuss how we can understand and apply Jesus’ parables.</p>
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Scripture Discussion	As you discuss the following parables, ensure that class members know what the different persons, objects, and actions represent. This will help them understand the parables and apply them in their lives.
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## 1. Jesus presents the parable of the sower and explains his use of parables.

Read and discuss Matthew 13:1–17.

- When the multitudes gathered on the seashore, Jesus “spake many things unto them in parables” (Matthew 13:3). What is a parable? (A symbolic story that teaches gospel truths by comparing them to earthly things.) What did Jesus say was his purpose in teaching with parables? (To simultaneously teach his message to his disciples and conceal it from unbelievers. See Matthew 13:10–13; note the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 13:12 in footnote 12a.)

Ask a class member to read aloud the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:3–8).

Invite the other class members to read along, remembering that the objects and actions in the parable represent gospel truths.

- What keeps the seeds that fall on the wayside from sprouting? (See Matthew 13:4. Write on the chalkboard *Seeds on wayside—eaten by birds.*)
- Why do the seeds in the stony soil wither away? (See Matthew 13:5–6; Luke 8:6. Write on the chalkboard *Seeds in stony places—have no root.*)
- What happens when some seeds fall among thorns? (See Matthew 13:7. Write on the chalkboard *Seeds among thorns—choked by thorns.*)
- What happens to the seeds that fall in the good soil? (See Matthew 13:8. Write on the chalkboard *Seeds in good soil—bring forth fruit.*)

Leave the words you have written on the chalkboard, and explain that in a few minutes you will discuss the truths they represent.

- How might people react when they hear this parable without any explanation of its meaning? (Some people might become frustrated because they do not understand it. Others might understand it but think it does not apply to them. Others might ponder it and ask questions until they understand it and know how to apply it in their lives.)
- What invitation did Jesus extend after he presented the parable of the sower? (See Matthew 13:9.) What do you think the word *hear* means in this invitation? What does it mean to see but see not and to hear but hear not? (See Matthew 13:13–15.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “The multitude . . . received not His saying . . . because they were not willing to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears; not because they could not, and were not privileged to see and hear, but because their hearts were full of iniquity and abominations. . . .The very reason why the multitude . . . did not receive an explanation upon His parables, was because of unbelief” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 96–97).

## 2. Jesus explains the parable of the sower.

Read Matthew 13:18–23, and discuss the meaning of the objects and actions in the parable of the sower.

*Seed*

- In the parable of the sower, what does the seed represent? (See Matthew 13:19; Luke 8:11. Write on the chalkboard *Seed = word of God.*)

### *Wayside*

- What does the wayside represent? (See Matthew 13:19.) Write on the chalkboard *Wayside = people who hear the word of God but do not understand it* (abbreviate the statement if desired).
- What are some things we might do that prevent us from understanding God's word? (See Mosiah 26:1–3 for one possible answer.) What must we do to be able to understand the word of God? (See Alma 32:27.) How does lack of understanding make it easier for Satan to take away the word from our hearts? (See Matthew 13:19.)

### *Stony Places*

- What do the stony places represent? (See Matthew 13:20–21.) Write on the chalkboard *Stony places = people who hear and receive the word of God but do not allow it to take root in them* (abbreviate the statement if desired).
- Why do some people not allow the word of God to take root in them? (See Matthew 13:21; Mark 4:5.) How can we allow the word to establish deep roots in us? (See Alma 32:41–43.) How will this help us endure the heat of tribulation, persecution, and offense?

### *Thorny Places*

- What do the thorny places represent? (See Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14.) Write on the chalkboard *Thorny places = people who hear the word of God but are distracted by the cares of the world* (abbreviate the statement if desired).
- What does it mean for a person to be unfruitful? What “thorns” cause people to be unfruitful? (See Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14.) How are these thorns evident in the world today? What can we do to prevent these thorns from choking the word of God in us?

### *Good Ground*

- What does the good ground represent? (See Matthew 13:23.) Write on the chalkboard *Good ground = people who hear the word of God, understand it, and do works of righteousness* (abbreviate the statement if desired).
- What could be done to help the unproductive areas produce fruit? (The wayside could be plowed and fertilized, the stones could be removed, and the thorns could be uprooted.) How can this apply to our efforts to be more receptive to God's word?
- Why do you think the parable of the sower focuses more on the ground than on the sower or the seed?

### **3. Jesus uses parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven on earth (the Church of Jesus Christ).**

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 13:24–53. Explain that in these verses the term “kingdom of heaven” refers to the Church of Jesus Christ, which is the kingdom of heaven on earth (Bible Dictionary, “Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God,” 721).

- What is the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares? (See Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43; D&C 86:1–7. You may want to make a list on the chalkboard as you did with the parable of the sower. List who or what is represented by the sower, the field, the good seed, the tares, the enemy, the harvest, and the reapers.)
- In the parable of the wheat and the tares, why does the sower refuse to let his servants immediately gather the tares, or weeds? (See Matthew 13:27–30; see also D&C 86:5–7, which clarifies Matthew 13:30.)
- The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven are about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 98–100). What can we learn about the restored Church from the Savior’s comparing it to a mustard seed? (See Matthew 13:31–32.) To leaven? (See Matthew 13:33. Explain that *leaven* is an ingredient, such as yeast or baking powder, that causes bread to rise.) How have you seen the work of God increase as illustrated by these parables?
- What can we learn from the parables of the treasure and the pearl of great price? (See Matthew 13:44–46.) What sacrifices should we be willing to make to obtain the treasure of the gospel? What sacrifices have you or those you know made for the gospel? What blessings have resulted from those sacrifices?
- What does the net represent in the parable of the net cast into the sea? (See Matthew 13:47.) What does it mean to be gathered into the net? What is represented by the action of gathering the good into vessels and casting the bad away? (See Matthew 13:48–50. You may want to use Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4 to explain that “the end of the world” in verse 49 refers to the destruction of the wicked.) What can we do to help us stay faithful in the Church and to help others do the same?

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## Conclusion

Point out that Jesus explained his parables to those who sought understanding. Testify that as we study Jesus’ parables with a sincere desire to understand, we will see how they apply in our day.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Video presentation

If the videocassette *The Savior: His Ministry* (53164) is available, you may want to show an excerpt from part 3, “The Mustard Seed.”

### 2. Object lessons

To help class members understand and remember the parables in the lesson, display some of the objects described in them. For example, you could show how yeast reacts when combined with water and sugar. You could bake one loaf of bread with yeast and one without yeast, and allow class members to see and taste the difference. You could also show some mustard seed (or ground pepper, which looks like black mustard seed). See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, pages 94–95, for suggestions on teaching with objects.

Lesson  
**12**

# “I Am the Bread of Life”

*John 5–6; Mark 6:30–44; Matthew 14:22–33*

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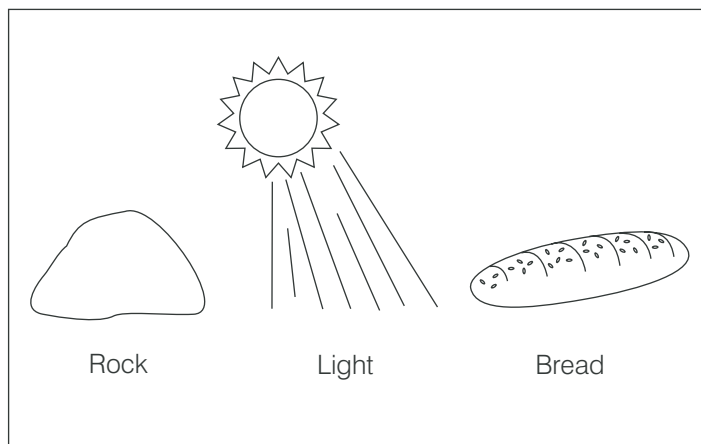
**Purpose** To help class members look to Jesus Christ as “the bread of life,” the source of everlasting life (John 6:47–48).

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. John 5. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders seek to kill Jesus because of his declaration that he is the Son of God.
    - b. John 6:1–14; Mark 6:30–44. Jesus miraculously feeds more than 5,000 people.
    - c. John 6:15–21; Matthew 14:22–33. Jesus walks on the sea, invites Peter to come to him, and calms the winds.
    - d. John 6:22–71. Jesus declares that he is “the bread of life” and that those who believe in him will have everlasting life. Many reject this teaching, but Peter and the other Apostles remain with Jesus.
  2. Additional reading: Matthew 14:1–21; Mark 6:1–29, 45–52; Luke 9:10–17.
  3. Ask a class member to come to class prepared to share a brief summary of the account of Jesus healing a man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–9).
  4. If the pictures Feeding the Five Thousand (62143) and Christ Walking on the Water (Gospel Art Picture Kit 243) are available, use them during the lesson.
  5. Suggestion for teaching: The Savior often used everyday objects, such as bread or seeds, to teach gospel principles. As you prepare each lesson, consider how you might use objects to gain class members’ attention or illustrate an important point. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 94–95.)
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**Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Draw the following illustrations on the chalkboard:



- What do these things have in common?

Allow class members to briefly discuss possible answers to the question. Then have them read Helaman 5:12, in which Helaman refers to Jesus Christ as “the rock,” and John 8:12, in which Jesus declares that he is “the light of the world.” Explain that later in the lesson you will discuss how Jesus is “the bread of life” (John 6:35).

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach this lesson, help class members “search the scriptures” (John 5:39). Encourage them to share experiences that relate to the principles they discuss.

### 1. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath and declares himself the Son of God.

Discuss John 5. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Invite the assigned class member to summarize the account of Jesus healing a man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–9). What instructions did Jesus give the man when he saw him in the temple later that day? (See John 5:14.) Why are the effects of sin “a worse thing” than physical infirmities?
- Why did the Jewish leaders seek to kill Jesus? (See John 5:16–18.) As Jesus responded to the angry Jews, what did he reveal about his relationship to the Father? (See John 5:19–23, 30.)
- Jesus told the people that he would soon do even “greater works” than healing the sick (John 5:20). What did he say these greater works would be? (See John 5:21–29. He would bring to pass the Resurrection, judge all people, and give everlasting life to the faithful.)
- What witnesses did the Savior say testified of him? (See John 5:32–39, 45–47.) Why is it important to have these witnesses? (See Jacob 4:6.) How can we be witnesses of the Savior?
- Jesus challenged the Jewish leaders to “search the scriptures” (John 5:39). What is the difference between searching the scriptures and reading them? (You may want to use the first additional teaching idea at the end of the lesson as you discuss this question.) How have you made your personal and family scripture study more meaningful? How have you been blessed as you have searched the scriptures?
- According to John 5:39, what would the Jewish leaders have known if they had searched and believed the scriptures? (They would have known that the scriptures testify of Jesus Christ. See also John 5:40, 46–47.) How have the scriptures strengthened your faith in Christ?

### 2. Jesus miraculously feeds more than 5,000 people.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 6:1–14 and Mark 6:30–44. Display the picture of Jesus feeding the multitude.

- Why did Jesus and his disciples go up into a mountain? (See John 6:1–3; note the Joseph Smith Translation of Mark 6:31 in footnote 31*a*, which says that Jesus and his disciples went to a solitary place.) How did Jesus respond when the multitude came to him? (See Mark 6:33–34; Matthew 14:14.) How can we follow his example of compassion?

- How did Jesus feed the multitude? (See John 6:5–13; see also Matthew 14:21.) How can we follow the example of the boy who gave his loaves and fishes to Jesus? How does the Lord bless us when we, like the boy, give whatever we have in His service?

Elder James E. Faust said:

“Many nameless people with gifts equal only to five loaves and two small fishes magnify their callings and serve without attention or recognition, feeding literally thousands. . . . These are the hundreds of thousands of leaders and teachers in all of the auxiliaries and priesthood quorums, the home teachers, the Relief Society visiting teachers. These are the many humble bishops in the Church, some without formal training but greatly magnified, always learning, with a humble desire to serve the Lord and the people of their wards. . . .

“A major reason this church has grown from its humble beginnings to its current strength is the faithfulness and devotion of millions of humble and devoted people who have only five loaves and two small fishes to offer in the service of the Master. They have largely surrendered their own interests and in so doing have found ‘the peace of God, which passeth all understanding’ (Philippians 4:7)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 4–5; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 5–6).

- What are some examples you have seen of people being magnified by the Lord as they have served him?
- How is the miraculous feast from five loaves and two fishes symbolic of the spiritual feast the Savior offers us?

### **3. Jesus walks on the sea, invites Peter to come to him, and calms the winds.**

Read and discuss John 6:15–21 and Matthew 14:22–33. Explain that after Jesus fed the multitudes, he instructed his disciples to get into a ship and go to the other side of the sea. He then sent the multitudes away and went up a mountain to pray. As the disciples were crossing the sea, they were caught in strong winds.

- How did the disciples react when they saw Jesus walking toward them on the water? (See Matthew 14:26; John 6:19.) How did Jesus respond to their fears? (See Matthew 14:27; John 6:20.)

Display the picture of Christ walking on the water.

- What did Peter request when he heard the Savior’s voice? (See Matthew 14:28–29.) Why did Peter’s faith falter as he walked on the water? (See Matthew 14:30.) How do we sometimes make similar errors when difficulties arise?
- What did Peter do when he began to sink? (See Matthew 14:30.) What did Jesus do? (See Matthew 14:31–32.) What does this reveal about our relationship with the Lord? How have you felt the Savior strengthen you and calm your fears?

### **4. Jesus declares that he is “the bread of life.”**

Read and discuss selected verses from John 6:22–71.

- The day after Jesus’ miracle with the loaves and fishes, the people followed him to Capernaum. Why did they follow him? (See John 6:26.) How did Jesus use

the people's excitement about the previous day's miracle to testify of his mission? (See John 6:27–35. Note that the word *meat* in verse 27 means food.)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland observed: “During the Savior’s Galilean ministry, He chided those who had heard of Him feeding the 5,000 with only five barley loaves and two fishes, and now flocked to Him expecting a free lunch. That food, important as it was, was incidental to the real nourishment He was trying to give them” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 87; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65).

- How is “bread of life” an appropriate description of the Savior and the blessings he offers us? (See John 6:35, 47–51.) What does it mean to “never hunger” and “never thirst”? How can we partake of the “bread of life”? (See John 6:47, 51–54; Matthew 26:26–28; Alma 5:33–35; D&C 20:77.)

President Howard W. Hunter counseled: “We must know Christ better than we know him; we must remember him more often than we remember him; we must serve him more valiantly than we serve him. Then we will drink water springing up unto eternal life and will eat the bread of life” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 84; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 64).

Point out that some people did not believe Jesus because they saw him only as “the son of Joseph” (John 6:42). Some who had claimed to be Jesus’ disciples murmured and turned away from him, saying that they did not understand the spiritual meanings of his declaration that he was the bread of life and his teaching about the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood (John 6:51–66).

- When some people rejected Jesus’ sermon, what did Jesus ask the Twelve Apostles? (See John 6:67.) What was Peter’s response? (See John 6:68.) What did Peter and the other Apostles understand about Jesus that those who left did not understand? (See John 6:69.)

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## Conclusion

Testify that Jesus Christ is “the bread of life” and that he has “the words of eternal life” (John 6:35, 68). Encourage class members to apply his promises from the Sermon on the Bread of Life: “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. . . . He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 6:35, 47).

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “Search the scriptures” (John 5:39)

Invite class members to read John 5:20–30 silently while you read it aloud. Read it quickly, without pausing to explain or discuss any of the verses.

Explain that you have just *read* John 5:20–30 but that you will now *search* the passage together. Divide class members into groups of three or four. Assign each group at least one of the following sections from John 5:20–30: verses 20–22, 23–24, 25–27, and 28–30. Give the groups a few minutes to work together. Have them read the assigned verses, choose three of the most important words in the verses, and prepare to talk about why those words are important.

- What did you see when you searched the scriptures that you did not see when we read them quickly? What can we do to search the scriptures on our own?

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith received the vision of the kingdoms of glory after pondering John 5:29. Invite a class member to read Doctrine and Covenants 76:15–20.

- What knowledge have we been blessed with because Joseph Smith searched John 5:29?

## **2. “Look after those who wait by the pool of Bethesda”**

Elder Boyd K. Packer used the account in John 5:1–9 to emphasize that we should help people who have disabilities. He said bodies and minds with disabilities “will be made perfect. In the meantime, we must look after those who wait by the pool of Bethesda” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 9).

- What can we do to help people who have physical or mental disabilities?

# “I Will Give unto Thee the Keys of the Kingdom”

## Lesson 13

Matthew 15:21–17:9

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**Purpose** To strengthen class members’ testimonies that Jesus is the Christ and that the priesthood keys bestowed on the Mount of Transfiguration have been restored.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 15:21–39. Jesus heals the daughter of a Gentile woman and miraculously feeds more than 4,000 people, many of them Gentiles.
  - b. Matthew 16:13–19. Peter testifies that Jesus is the Christ. Jesus teaches that his Church is built upon the rock of revelation and promises to give Peter the keys of the kingdom.
  - c. Matthew 17:1–9. Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James, and John.
2. Additional reading: Mark 7:24–9:10; Luke 9:18–36; 12:54–57; Bible Dictionary, “Revelation,” 762; “Transfiguration, Mount of,” 786.
3. If a map of Palestine in New Testament times is available (map 14 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible), use it during the lesson. You may want to make an enlarged copy so class members can see it better.
4. Suggestion for teaching: The LDS edition of the King James Bible contains many scripture study aids, including footnotes, chapter headings, maps, the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, and excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. Use these resources in preparing and teaching your lessons, and help class members learn to use them in their personal scripture study.

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Share the following story:

Many years ago President Spencer W. Kimball and several other Church leaders visited the small cathedral in Copenhagen, Denmark, that houses Bertel Thorvaldsen’s famous statues of Jesus Christ and the Twelve Apostles. Speaking of this experience, Elder Rex D. Pinegar said: “As we looked at those beautiful works of art we noted that Peter was sculptured with large keys in his hands. . . . As we were ready to leave the cathedral, the Danish caretaker . . . was standing near the door awaiting our departure. President Kimball shook his hand [and] thanked him for his kindness in letting us visit the cathedral. Then the president began an explanation of the church established by Jesus Christ and of its importance to us. . . . Gathering President Tanner, Elder Monson, and Elder Packer closer to him, the president continued, ‘We are *living* apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are Twelve Apostles and three others who are the presidency of the Church. We hold the real keys, as Peter did, and we use them every day. They are in use constantly’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1976, 104; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 69).

Explain that this lesson will discuss priesthood keys and how Peter received them on the Mount of Transfiguration.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

Have class members turn in their scriptures to the map of Palestine, or display the enlarged copy you have made (see the “Preparation” section). Point out that the events discussed in this lesson occurred in Tyre, Sidon, Decapolis, and Caesarea Philippi. Help class members find these places on the map. Explain that Jesus’ travels in this area brought him into contact with many Gentiles (non-Israelites).

### 1. Jesus heals the daughter of a Gentile and feeds more than 4,000 people.

Discuss Matthew 15:21–39. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- What did the woman from Canaan ask Jesus to do? (See Matthew 15:22.) Why didn’t Jesus grant her request immediately? (See Matthew 15:24. She was not a Jew, and the blessings of the gospel were to be offered to the Jews before the Gentiles.) Why did Jesus finally heal the woman’s daughter? (See Matthew 15:28.) What can we learn from this woman? (Answers may include that those who do not have the gospel fulness may nevertheless have great faith, and that we should not lose faith when blessings are not granted as quickly as we wish.)
- The Savior departed for the Sea of Galilee, traveling through Decapolis (Mark 7:31). Decapolis was an area east of the Sea of Galilee where many Gentiles lived. How did the Lord show compassion for the people there? (See Matthew 15:29–31.) How did the multitude react? (See Matthew 15:31.) What miracles in our day have caused you to glorify God?
- The multitude stayed with Jesus for three days, and when it was time for them to leave, Jesus did not want to send them away hungry. What miracle did he perform for them? (See Matthew 15:32–38.)

Explain that this miracle was different from the earlier feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14:15–21) in that many of these people were Gentiles. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that with the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus “was laying the foundation for his incomparable sermon on the Bread of Life” (John 6:22–69; see lesson 12). With the later feeding of the 4,000, Jesus was symbolically teaching that in the future, living bread would be offered to the Gentile nations. (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 1:375.)

### 2. Peter is promised the keys of the kingdom.

Read and discuss Matthew 16:13–19.

- Jesus left Decapolis and went to the area of Caesarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, “Whom say ye that I am?” (Matthew 16:15). What was Peter’s response? (See Matthew 16:16.) What was the source of Peter’s testimony? (See Matthew 16:17.) What can we learn from this account about our testimonies?
- Jesus said to Peter, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the rock Jesus referred to is revelation (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 274). In what way is revelation the foundation of the Lord’s Church?
- The Savior promised to give Peter the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19). What are these keys? Why are they necessary? (See D&C 128:9–10; 132:46.) Who holds them today?

President Joseph F. Smith taught:

“The Priesthood in general is the authority given to man to act for God. Every man ordained to any degree of the Priesthood, has this authority delegated to him.

“But it is necessary that every act performed under this authority shall be done at the proper time and place, in the proper way, and after the proper order. The power of directing these labors constitutes the *keys* of the Priesthood. In their fulness, the keys are held by only one person at a time, the prophet and president of the Church. He may delegate any portion of this power to another, in which case that person holds the keys of that particular labor” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 136).

- Why is a conviction that the prophet holds these keys an essential part of our testimonies?

### 3. Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James, and John.

Read and discuss Matthew 17:1–9. Explain that about a week after Peter was promised the keys of the kingdom, he, James, and John witnessed the Transfiguration of the Savior and received important knowledge and keys. This was one of the most significant events in the New Testament. It helped prepare Jesus for his Atonement and fortified the three Apostles for the additional responsibilities they would soon have as leaders of the Church.

- What does *transfiguration* mean? (A temporary change in a person’s appearance and nature; a transformation to a more glorified state. It is brought about by the power of God. See D&C 67:11; Moses 1:11.)
- According to Matthew 17:1–5, what happened when Jesus, Peter, James, and John were on the Mount of Transfiguration? (You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)
  - a. Jesus’ face shone like the sun, and his clothing became brilliantly white.
  - b. Moses and Elias (Elijah; see footnote 3*b*) appeared.
  - c. “A bright cloud overshadowed them,” and they heard the voice of the Father bearing witness of his Son.

You may want to explain that the name *Elias* is used several ways in the scriptures. In Matthew 17:3–4 it is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name *Elijah*. In other places (such as Matthew 17:10–13), it is a title describing someone as a forerunner, or preparer.

Explain that latter-day prophets have taught more about what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. Review the following teachings with class members and, if desired, summarize them on the chalkboard:

- a. Peter, James, and John saw a vision of the transfiguration of the earth at the Savior’s Second Coming (D&C 63:20–21).
- b. They were “transfigured before [Christ]” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 158).
- c. They were taught about the Savior’s death and resurrection (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 9:31).
- d. They received from Jesus, Moses, and Elijah the priesthood keys they would need to govern the Church after the Savior’s death (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 158; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:110).

- In 1836 Moses and Elijah returned again to the earth. They laid their hands on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to restore the same keys given to Peter, James, and John. Which keys did Moses restore? (See D&C 110:11. The keys of the gathering of Israel.) Which keys did Elijah restore? (See D&C 110:13–16. The keys of the sealing power.) How are these keys used today? (In missionary work and temple work, which are conducted under the direction of the President of the Church.)
- Elder David B. Haight taught that Jesus’ Transfiguration “was meant for our spiritual enlightenment as well as for those who were personal witnesses” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 7). What can we learn from the Transfiguration to help us when we need spiritual strength? You may want to review the following ideas presented by Elder Haight (in Conference Report, Apr. 1977, 9–10; or *Ensign*, May 1977, 7–9):
  - a. We should follow the Savior’s example by praying fervently when we need spiritual strength (Luke 9:28). Speaking of the Transfiguration, Elder Haight said: “Perhaps Jesus felt not only a sense of the heavenly calm which that solitary opportunity for communion with His Father would bring, but even more, a sense that He would be supported in the coming hour by ministrations not of this earth. . . . As He prayed to His Father, He was elevated far above the doubt and wickedness of the world which had rejected Him.”
  - b. We can have the assurance that Jesus will strengthen us as he did Peter, James, and John. Elder Haight said, “He took His three apostles with Him in the belief that they, after having seen His glory . . . might be fortified, that their faith might be strengthened to prepare them for the insults and humiliating events which were to follow.”
  - c. We can be strengthened by testimony of the Savior (Matthew 17:5) and by the doctrines of the gospel. Elder Haight said, “The three chosen apostles were taught of [the Savior’s] coming death and also His resurrection, teachings that would strengthen each of them in the eventful days ahead.”

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Conclusion

Emphasize that as Latter-day Saints we have information to help us understand what took place on the Mount of Transfiguration. Testify of the importance of revelation in the Church today and the necessity of priesthood keys. Assure class members that we, like Peter, can know through the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

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**Additional Teaching Idea**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

**Instances when the Father testified of the Son**

There are four instances recorded in the scriptures when the Father introduced and testified of his Son. One of them is discussed in this lesson. Invite class members to recall the other three.

1. Jesus’ baptism (Matthew 3:13–17)
2. The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–9)
3. Jesus’ appearance to the Nephites (3 Nephi 11:1–7)
4. Joseph Smith’s First Vision (Joseph Smith—History 1:13–17)

# “Who Is My Neighbour?”

## Lesson 14

*Matthew 18; Luke 10*

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**Purpose** To help class members humble themselves, forgive others, and show charity for one another.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 18:1–6, 10–11, 14. Jesus teaches that we must be converted and become as little children to enter into the kingdom of heaven.
  - b. Matthew 18:15, 21–35. Through the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus teaches about forgiveness.
  - c. Luke 10:25–37. Through the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus teaches about charity.
2. Additional reading: Mark 9:33–50; Mosiah 3:17–21; 4:16–19, 26.
3. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
  - a. The pictures Christ and the Children (62467; Gospel Art Picture Kit 216) and The Good Samaritan (62156; Gospel Art Picture Kit 218).
  - b. A brief portion of “The Lord’s Prayer,” part 2 of the videocassette *The Savior: His Ministry* (53164). This segment includes the parable of the good Samaritan.
4. If you use the attention activity, invite a parent to talk to the class as outlined in the activity.
5. Suggestion for teaching: Occasionally invite class members (or other ward members) to help with the lesson by giving a report, sharing a story, bearing testimony, or helping in some other way. When making assignments, be clear about what you want the person to do and how long you would like him or her to take. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 136, 139.)

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Invite a parent with a young child (three to five years old) to bring the child to class, introduce him or her, and briefly describe some of the child’s admirable qualities. After the parent is finished, ask class members to think of childlike qualities that Jesus would want us to have. List responses on the chalkboard.

Explain that this lesson discusses the importance of developing childlike qualities and treating all people with humility and kindness.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how we can follow the Savior’s teachings about humility, forgiveness, and charity.

## 1. Jesus teaches that we must become as little children.

Read and discuss Matthew 18:1–6, 10–11, 14. Display the picture of Christ and the children.

- Why do you think the disciples were concerned about who would be the greatest in the Lord’s kingdom? (Matthew 18:1; Mark 9:33–34). How might we sometimes make similar errors? How can we set aside such concerns?
- Display the picture of Christ and the children. What is Jesus’ counsel to those who desire to achieve true greatness in his kingdom? (See Matthew 18:2–4; Mark 9:35.) Why is it sometimes difficult to follow this counsel? How does this counsel compare with what the world teaches about how to achieve greatness?
- What does it mean to become as little children? (See Mosiah 3:19. Explain that although children are not perfect, they have many qualities that we must develop to inherit the kingdom of heaven. These qualities include humility, meekness, and a willingness to believe.) What have you learned from children? How can we become more childlike and more submissive to the will of our Father in Heaven?
- What does it mean to “offend one of these little ones”? (See Matthew 18:6, footnote 6a; in this context, *offend* means to cause to stumble.) What are some of the ways people cause children to stumble? (Answers may include being a poor example to them, criticizing them unkindly, failing to teach them, and abusing them.) How does the Lord regard these offenses? (See Matthew 18:6.)

Elder M. Russell Ballard stated: “We hear disturbing reports of parents or guardians who are so far removed from the Spirit of Christ that they abuse children. Whether this abuse is physical, verbal, or the less evident but equally severe emotional abuse, it is an abomination and a serious offense to God” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 107; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 80).

- How can being childlike ourselves help us care for children? What can we do to carry out God’s will that “[not] one of these little ones should perish”? (Matthew 18:14).

## 2. Through the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus teaches about forgiveness.

Read and discuss Matthew 18:15, 21–35.

- In Matthew 18:15, what did the Lord say we should do if we have been offended? Why is this the best way to resolve disputes?
- How did Jesus respond when Peter asked how often he should forgive? (See Matthew 18:22. Explain that Jesus used this high number to teach that we should always forgive others.) Why is it sometimes difficult to forgive? How have you been blessed as you have forgiven others or been forgiven by them?
- To further emphasize the importance of forgiving others, Jesus gave the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:23–35). Whom do the king and servants represent? (See Matthew 18:35. The king represents Heavenly Father, and the servants represent us.) How are we like the king’s servant in our debt to the Lord? (See Matthew 18:24–27.) What must we do to be forgiven of our “debt”?

- What can we learn from the king's example in forgiving others? (See Matthew 18:33.) What are some of the dangers of not forgiving others? (See Matthew 18:34–35.)

### 3. Through the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus teaches about charity.

Read and discuss Luke 10:25–37. Display the picture of the good Samaritan.

- How did Jesus respond to the lawyer who asked what he should do to inherit eternal life? (See Luke 10:25–28.) How do the commandments to love God and our neighbors encompass all of the gospel? How can we obey these two commandments more fully?
- How did Jesus respond when the lawyer asked, “Who is my neighbor?” (See Luke 10:29–37.) What does this parable teach about who our neighbors are? President Howard W. Hunter said: “We need to remember that though we make our friends, God has made our neighbors—everywhere. Love should have no boundary; we should have no narrow loyalties” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 44; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 35).
- What did the priest and Levite do when they saw the man who had been robbed and wounded? (See Luke 10:31–32.) What are some ways that people need help today? What are some reasons we do not help others in need? (See Mosiah 4:16–19 for one example.)
- How did the good Samaritan help the man who had been robbed and wounded? (See Luke 10:33–35.) What characteristics of a good neighbor did the Samaritan have? How have you been blessed by “good Samaritans”? How can we be “good Samaritans”? (See Mosiah 4:26.)

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the importance of following the Savior's example by humbling ourselves, forgiving others, and showing charity for one another. Challenge class members to live these teachings.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Mary and Martha

Have a class member read Luke 10:38–42.

- How was Martha serving the Lord? What was the “good part” that Mary had chosen? How do we sometimes become so “cumbered about much serving” that we don't receive Jesus as we should? What can we learn from these verses?

##### 2. “Suffer the little children to come unto me” (Mark 10:14)

As you discuss the Savior's teaching that we should become as little children, you may also want to discuss the account of his blessing the children in Mark 10:13–16.

- How did Jesus' disciples respond when the little children were brought to him? (See Mark 10:13.) What did Jesus tell his disciples? (See Mark 10:14–15.) What did Jesus do for the children? (See Mark 10:16.) What can we learn about Jesus from this account? How can we better follow the example he set in this account?

### 3. Additional discussion of Matthew 18

- Discuss Matthew 18:8–9 and Mark 9:43–48 (see also Matthew 5:29–30). What do these verses mean? (See Matthew 18:9, footnote 9a, which indicates that the Joseph Smith Translation identifies these offending elements as people who lead us astray. It is better to end our association with people than to allow them to lead us into sin. See also Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:40–48.)
- The Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 18:11 records Jesus as saying that little children do not need repentance (footnote 11c). Why is this so? (See Moroni 8:11–12.) How are little children “alive in Christ”? (See Moroni 8:12; D&C 29:46–47.) What must we do to become “alive in Christ”? (See Matthew 18:4; Mosiah 3:19; Moroni 8:10.)
- Read Matthew 18:11–14. How can we apply the parable of the lost sheep in our lives? How have you or someone you know been blessed by someone else who followed the principle of this parable?

### 4. “The Lord appointed other seventy also” (Luke 10:1)

- Discuss Luke 10:1–24. How do the Lord’s instructions to the Seventy compare with the instructions he gave the Twelve in Matthew 10? What are the responsibilities of the Seventy today? (See D&C 107:25, 34, 38, 93–97.)

### 5. The sanctity of the marriage relationship

Explain that Matthew 19:1–12 describes a situation in which the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus by asking him about the lawfulness of divorce (see also Mark 10:1–12). Divorce was a much-discussed issue among Jewish scholars and leaders, and the Pharisees hoped that Jesus’ answer to their question would allow them to stir up anger among the Jews. Have a class member read Matthew 19:3–9 aloud.

- What was Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ question in verse 3? (See Matthew 19:4–6. He told them that divorce was not ordained of God.) Why did Moses allow divorce among the Israelites? (See Matthew 19:7–8.)

Explain that in ancient Israel, a man could put away, or divorce, his wife for insignificant reasons. Jesus taught that in a perfect world, such as the celestial kingdom, divorce does not exist. Because the earth is not yet perfect, divorce is allowed but should not happen except for the most serious reasons. Matthew 19:9 indicates that a man who put away his wife for a frivolous reason was still married to her in the eyes of God, and he thus committed adultery if he married another woman. (See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 473–75, 484; see also Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:138–39.)

- What roles do humility, forgiveness, and charity play in a successful marriage? How can striving to be Christlike help us in marriage and other relationships?
- How can we help persons who have suffered the trauma of divorce?

### 6. Youth activity

Write (or have class members write) questions about the lesson on small pieces of paper. (As a review activity, you could choose actual questions from each section of the lesson.) Put the pieces of paper in a sack or box. Have class members arrange their chairs in a circle, and place the sack or box on a chair in the center of the circle. Have class members take turns drawing questions out of the sack or box and answering them. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 124–25.)

# “I Am the Light of the World”

Lesson  
**15**

*John 7–8*

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**Purpose** To strengthen class members’ testimonies that Jesus Christ is our Savior and that by following him we can gain true freedom.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 7. Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches in the temple. Some people believe he is the Christ, while others think he is a deceiver.
  - b. John 8:1–11. A woman taken in adultery is brought to Jesus. He treats her with compassion.
  - c. John 8:12–36. Jesus declares, “I am the light of the world.” He teaches the believing Jews that following him will free them from spiritual bondage.
2. Suggestion for teaching: Always review your lesson at least a week in advance. When you read the selected scriptures early, you will receive thoughts and impressions during the week that will help you teach the lesson. As you ponder the lesson during the week, pray for the Spirit to guide you and have faith that the Lord will bless you. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 45–46.)

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## **Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Make the room as dark as possible by turning off the lights and closing any curtains or blinds. Ask a class member to read aloud Doctrine and Covenants 93:1–2. When the class member has read (or attempted to read) these verses, ask him or her:

- Was it difficult to read these verses? What would make it easier? (More light.)

Turn on the lights and open the curtains or blinds. Ask the class member to again read Doctrine and Covenants 93:1–2. Explain that light is used throughout the scriptures as a symbol for Jesus Christ. Jesus himself used this symbol while teaching in the temple. This lesson will discuss the ways in which Jesus Christ is a light for us.

If you are unable to make the room very dark, instead draw a lighthouse on the chalkboard (or show a picture of a lighthouse). Explain that the purpose of a lighthouse is to warn ships of danger and guide them to safety. Then explain that light was one of the symbols Jesus used in teaching about his mission and his relationship to us. This lesson will discuss how Jesus is a light that shows us the way to spiritual safety.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you teach the following scripture accounts, bear testimony of Jesus Christ when you feel it is appropriate. Encourage class members also to bear testimony of Jesus Christ when they feel impressed to do so.

## 1. Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches in the temple.

Discuss John 7. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that the Feast of Tabernacles was an annual Jewish feast held six months after the Feast of the Passover. It lasted eight days and commemorated the Lord's blessings to the children of Israel during their travels in the wilderness. It also celebrated the year's harvest and marked the end of the harvest season. The Jews considered this feast the greatest and most joyful of all their feasts. (See Bible Dictionary, "Feasts," 673; see also Leviticus 23:34–43.)

Point out that Jesus traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem to attend this feast at the temple (John 7:1–10).

- What did the people at the feast say about Jesus as they waited for him to arrive? (See John 7:12.) Why were the people amazed when Jesus began to teach? (See John 7:14–15.)
- What did Jesus tell the people in the temple about his teachings? (See John 7:16.) What did he instruct the people to do to gain a testimony of his teachings? (See John 7:17.) How can we apply this instruction in our lives?

Elder John K. Carmack of the Seventy said: "Jesus explained, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself' (John 7:17). In other words, as you try it you can know it is true. This requires the faith to try, but it yields spiritual evidence. To the disciple who tries the experiment will come conviction, knowledge, and light" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 32; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 26).

Invite class members to tell how their testimony of a gospel principle was strengthened as they lived it (you may want to share an experience of your own). Point out that the opposite of the promise in John 7:17 is also true: if we do not live the principles of the gospel, our testimonies will weaken.

- As Jesus taught, the people continued to be divided in their opinion of him. What were some of the reasons people believed he was the Christ? (See John 7:31, 37–41.) What were some of the reasons people did not believe he was the Christ? (See John 7:27, 41–42, 52.) In what sense did the people know where Jesus was from? (They knew his family and his hometown.) In what sense did they not know where he was from? (See John 7:28–29; 8:14, 19, 23–29. They did not understand that he was sent by Heavenly Father.)
- How can we strengthen our testimonies of Jesus Christ's mission?

## 2. A woman taken in adultery is brought to Jesus.

Read and discuss John 8:1–11.

- Why did the scribes and Pharisees bring the adulterous woman to Jesus? (See John 8:4–6. They wanted to trap Jesus into condemning the woman to death or contradicting the law of Moses.) What did Jesus say to the scribes and Pharisees? (See John 8:7.) Why didn't they stone the woman? (See John 8:9.)
- While Jesus did not approve of the woman's sin, he did not condemn her for it (John 8:10–11). What can we learn from the Savior's example about how we should respond to people who have sinned seriously?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton explained: “The scribes and Pharisees brought before the Savior a woman taken in adultery. Their purpose was not to show love for either the woman or the Savior, but to embarrass and trick Jesus. . . . Jesus did not condone adultery; there is no doubt about His attitude toward proper moral conduct. [But] He chose to teach with love—to show the scribes and Pharisees the need of serving the individual for her best good and to show the destructive forces of trickery and embarrassment” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, 31–32; or *Ensign*, May 1981, 24).

### 3. Jesus declares, “I am the light of the world.”

Read and discuss John 8:12–36.

- During the Feast of Tabernacles, the temple in Jerusalem was illuminated by the flames from four enormous candelabra. These flames could be seen throughout the city. (See Bible Dictionary, “Feasts,” 673.) Why was this an appropriate setting for Jesus to announce, “I am the light of the world”? (John 8:12). What does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world? (See John 8:12; Alma 38:9; 3 Nephi 15:9; D&C 88:6–13.)
- As people strive to be like Jesus, they too become the light of the world, reflecting his light (Matthew 5:14; 3 Nephi 18:24). How can we help others see the light that Christ offers? (See Matthew 5:16; 28:18–20; Philippians 2:14–15.)
- Jesus told the people in the temple that he always did the things that pleased his Father (John 8:29). How can we become more committed to doing things that please Heavenly Father?
- As Jesus testified of his Father in Heaven, “many believed on him” (John 8:30). What did Jesus promise to these people if they would continue to follow him? (See John 8:31–32.) What does truth free us from? (See John 8:33–34.) How does committing sin place us in bondage? (See Alma 12:11; 34:35.) How has knowing the truth made you free?
- Jesus later called himself “the truth” (John 14:6). How does this affect your understanding of the promise in John 8:32? How does knowing the Savior make us free? How can we come to know him?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that Jesus Christ is our Savior and that only he can free us from the bondage of sin. Encourage class members to follow Christ, “the light of the world,” so he may guide them to spiritual safety.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Living water

In one of the ceremonies conducted during the Feast of Tabernacles, a priest put water from the pool of Siloam on the altar. This offering was made to request rain and the success of the next year’s crops. As Jesus taught in the temple on the last day of the feast, he invited the people to partake of living water (John 7:37–38).

- In what other setting did Jesus mention living water? (See John 4:5–15.) What is “living water”? How can we drink of it?

## 2. Jesus Christ is Jehovah

Read and discuss John 8:37–59.

- Why did Jesus tell the unbelieving Jews that they were not children of Abraham? (See John 8:39–40. Although they were literal descendants of Abraham, they did not do righteous works as Abraham did.) Why did Jesus tell them they were not children of God? (See John 8:41–44.) How can we show by our actions that we are Heavenly Father’s children?
- Why were the Jews upset by the Lord’s comments about Abraham? (See John 8:51–53, 56–57. They did not realize that Jesus was referring to his ability to overcome spiritual death [verse 51] and to his premortal life [verses 56–57].) What does Jesus’ statement, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58) help us understand about him? (See footnote 58*b*; see also Exodus 3:13–14. Jesus is Jehovah, the Great “I Am,” the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.) Why is it important to know that Jesus was Jehovah before his mortal life?

# “I Was Blind, Now I See”

## Lesson 16

*John 9–10*

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**Purpose** To help class members have a greater understanding and appreciation of Jesus Christ as the Light of the World and the Good Shepherd.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 9. Jesus affirms that he is the Light of the World and heals a man who was born blind. The healed man testifies to the Pharisees and worships Jesus.
  - b. John 10:1–15, 25–28. Jesus teaches that he is the Good Shepherd and that he will lay down his life for his sheep. The Lord’s sheep are those who hear his voice and follow him.
2. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
  - a. The picture *Healing the Blind* (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213).
  - b. Segment 3 of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
3. Suggestion for teaching: “Humility before God is one key to success. A teacher who is humble before the Lord taps the source of all knowledge and power and draws from it unceasingly. A teacher who feels self-sufficient will lose the Spirit. Without God, [we] can do nothing. With him, all things are possible” (*Teaching—No Greater Call*, 5).

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Ask class members to think of several physical infirmities that Jesus healed during his mortal ministry. List their responses on the chalkboard. Then point out that part of this lesson is about Jesus healing a blind man—a miracle he performed often.

- Why do you think healing the blind was such a significant miracle in the Savior’s ministry? What might healing the blind symbolize spiritually? (The Savior’s power to help us overcome spiritual blindness and “see” or understand spiritual truths.)

Explain that the scriptures studied in this lesson focus on seeing and hearing the Savior and on our responsibility to help others do the same.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. Jesus gives sight to a man who was born blind.

Discuss John 9. Invite class members to read selected verses. Display the picture of Jesus healing the blind man.

- Before healing the man who was born blind, Jesus proclaimed, “I am the light of the world” (John 9:5). In what ways did Jesus bring light to the blind man? (See John 9:6–7, 35–38.)
- The man who had been blind testified several times that Jesus had healed him (John 9:10–11, 15, 17, 24–25, 27, 30–33. You may want to encourage class members to mark these passages in their scriptures). What can we learn from this man’s example? (Answers could include that we have a responsibility to share our testimonies. Point out that the man courageously testified to many people, even those who rejected his testimony and threatened him.)
- How did this man’s testimony grow as he continued to share it? (Compare verses 11, 17, 33, and 38.) How has your testimony grown as you have shared it?
- How did the Pharisees react when they heard about the miracle? (See John 9:16.) Why do you think they refused to acknowledge that Jesus had performed this miracle by the power of God? (Answers may include pride, anger about Jesus healing on the Sabbath, fear that they would lose power or popularity, and so on.) How did the Pharisees try to discredit Jesus? (See John 9:16, 18–20, 24, 28–29, 34.) How do some people today deny the power of God?
- How did the parents of the man who had been blind respond when the Pharisees asked them about the miracle? (See John 9:18–23.) Why did the parents respond this way? (See John 9:22.) How are we sometimes like this man’s parents? How can we be more valiant in our testimonies?
- How did the Pharisees punish the man when he continued to testify that Jesus had healed him? (See John 9:34. Explain that being cast out meant being excommunicated.) What did Jesus do when he heard that the man had been cast out because of his testimony? (See John 9:35–37.) How has the Lord blessed you for remaining faithful during adversity?

If you are using the video presentation, show “The Synagogue” now.

- In what way could the Pharisees see, and in what way were they blind? (See John 9:39–41. They knew the law very well, but they were blind to its true purpose. They refused to see that Jesus came in fulfillment of the law.) What is the difference between seeing with our eyes and “seeing” or understanding spiritually? What are some causes of spiritual blindness? What can we learn from this account about how to overcome spiritual blindness?

## 2. Jesus teaches that he is the Good Shepherd.

Read and discuss John 10:1–15, 25–28. In these verses, Jesus described how a shepherd would protect and care for his sheep. Explain that in Jesus’ time, sheep were led into an enclosure called a sheepfold for the night. One of the shepherds would guard the door while the others went home to rest. If a wild animal got into the sheepfold, the shepherd would give his life if necessary to protect the sheep. In the morning, each shepherd would return and call his sheep. They would recognize his voice and follow him to pasture.

- In Jesus' discussion of the shepherd and his sheep, whom do the sheep represent? (See John 10:4, 27.) Who is the shepherd? (See John 10:11.) What are some qualities of a good shepherd? (You may want to list these qualities on the chalkboard as shown below.)
  - a. He knows his sheep, calls them by name, and leads them (John 10:3–4, 14).
  - b. He is the door of the sheep, allowing them to enter the fold to be saved and find pasture (John 10:7, 9).
  - c. He gives the sheep "life . . . more abundantly" (John 10:10).
  - d. He gives his life for the sheep (John 10:11, 15).
- What is the difference between a shepherd and a hireling? (See John 10:11–14.) How is Jesus the perfect example of a shepherd? (Using the list you have written on the chalkboard, discuss how Jesus exemplifies each of these qualities. See 2 Nephi 9:41–42 as you discuss how Jesus is the door of the sheep. As you discuss Jesus' willingness to give his life for us, see John 10:17–18.)
- How do sheep recognize their shepherd? (See John 10:3–4.) How can we hear the Lord's voice? (See D&C 1:37–38; 18:33–36; 97:1.) How are we protected when we know and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd?

If you are using the video presentation, show "The Shepherd" and "The Sheepfold" now.

- Who are the thieves and robbers who try to enter the sheepfold? (See John 10:1.) They are people who try to harm the Lord's followers or lead them astray.) How can we discern between true shepherds and those who try to lead us astray? (See John 10:10.)
- How are the sheep rewarded for following the Good Shepherd? (See John 10:9–10, 28.) How have you been blessed for following the Savior?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that Jesus is the Light of the World and the Good Shepherd. As appropriate, share with class members how the Lord has helped you to see spiritually and to follow him.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Our responsibilities as shepherds

- How are we also shepherds for the Lord's sheep? What can we do to help others hear and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Anyone serving in any capacity in the Church in which he [or she] is responsible for the spiritual or temporal well-being of any of the Lord's children is a shepherd to those sheep. The Lord holds his shepherds accountable for the safety (salvation) of his sheep" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 710).

## 2. “Other sheep I have” (John 10:16)

- To whom did Jesus refer in John 10:16? (See 3 Nephi 15:21–24.) When did these “other sheep” hear the Savior’s voice? How could this verse help someone who is investigating the Church to have a better understanding of the Book of Mormon?

Elder Howard W. Hunter taught: “Those who are familiar with the life and teachings of the Master from their knowledge of the books of the Bible will be interested to know there is also a record of his appearance to the people of the Western Hemisphere—the other sheep to whom he made reference. It is titled the Book of Mormon after the prophet who compiled and abridged the records of the peoples of the American continents. The Book of Mormon is another witness for Christ and records his teachings to the other flock in the New World” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 19; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 16).

## 3. Different ways of seeing

To help class members more fully appreciate the ways the Savior helps us see, make a wordstrip for several different meanings of the word *see* (suggested definitions appear below). Place the wordstrips in a hat or box, and have class members take turns choosing a wordstrip and explaining how the Savior helps us see in the way it describes. This idea could be especially effective for youth classes.

to perceive by the eye

to understand

to be aware of

to imagine as a possibility

to discover

to direct attention to

to look at from a particular point of view

# “What Shall I Do That I May Inherit Eternal Life?”

## Lesson 17

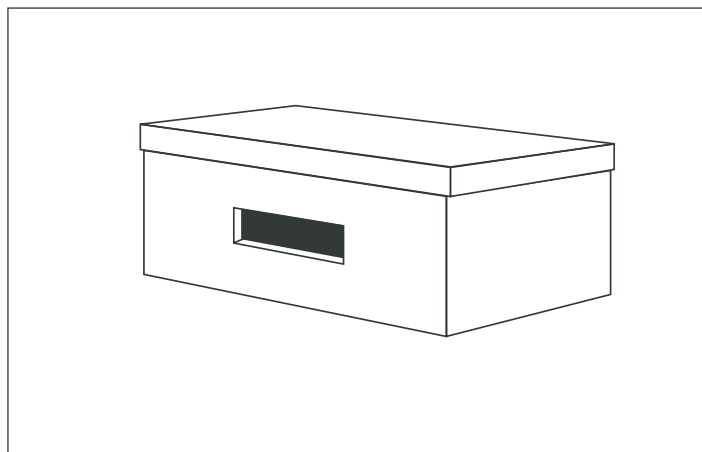
*Mark 10:17–30; 12:41–44; Luke 12:13–21; 14; 16*

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**Purpose** To help class members understand that we must be willing to sacrifice the things of this world to obtain a place in the kingdom of heaven.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Mark 10:17–30; 12:41–44. A rich young man asks what he must do to gain eternal life, and Jesus teaches that trusting in riches can keep a person out of the kingdom of God. Jesus praises a poor widow for casting two mites into the treasury.
    - b. Luke 12:13–21. Through the parable of the rich fool, Jesus teaches the dangers of covetousness. He exhorts his followers to seek heavenly, rather than earthly, treasures.
    - c. Luke 14:15–33. Through the parable of the great supper, Jesus teaches that those who follow him must be willing to forsake all else.
    - d. Luke 16:1–12. Through the parable of the unjust steward, Jesus teaches his followers to seek spiritual wealth with the same enthusiasm as those who seek worldly wealth.
  2. Additional reading: Matthew 19:16–30; Luke 18:18–30; 21:1–4; Jacob 2:18–19.
  3. If the picture Christ and the Rich Young Ruler (Gospel Art Picture Kit 245) is available, use it during the lesson.
  4. If you use the attention activity, make a monkey trap or draw one on the chalkboard (see the illustration below). To make a monkey trap, obtain a box with a lid. Secure the lid to the box, and cut in one side of the box an opening large enough for you to insert an open hand but not a fist. Put a piece of fruit or some nuts inside the box.



5. Suggestion for teaching: Nephi said, “I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23). Study *Teaching—No Greater Call*, pages 85–86 and 116–17, to see how you can help class members liken, or apply, the scriptures to their lives.

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the trap you have made or drawn (see the “Preparation” section). Explain that a trap like this can be used to catch a monkey. A container is secured to the ground, and a treat (such as nuts or fruit) is placed inside. The hole in the container is large enough for a monkey’s empty hand to enter easily but too small for the monkey’s hand and the treat to come out together (you may want to demonstrate this). A monkey sees the treat and reaches in to get it. Once the monkey grabs the treat, it will allow itself to be caught rather than let go of the treat. It will not sacrifice this prize for a greater one—its freedom.

Point out that sometimes we make mistakes similar to the monkey’s. When we obtain something appealing, we may be unwilling to let it go even if keeping it might cause us to lose something better. This lesson is about some things we may have to sacrifice in order to receive the greatest blessing: eternal life with our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you teach the following scripture passages, help class members understand that each of us may be asked to sacrifice different things for the kingdom of God. We should be willing to sacrifice whatever God asks of us.

### 1. Trusting in riches can keep a person out of the kingdom of God.

Read and discuss Mark 10:17–30; 12:41–44. Display the picture of Christ and the rich young ruler.

- What did Jesus say to the rich young man who asked how to receive eternal life? (See Mark 10:17–21.) Why did these instructions sadden the young man? (See Mark 10:22.) Why do you think the Lord asked him to give up all his possessions? How does the Savior’s instruction to the rich young man apply to us?

President Joseph F. Smith said: “The difficulty with the young man [was that] he had great possessions, and he preferred to rely upon his wealth rather than forsake all and follow Christ. . . . No man can obtain the gift of eternal life unless he is willing to sacrifice all earthly things in order to obtain it” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 261).

- What did Jesus teach about the relationship between having riches and entering the kingdom of God? (See Mark 10:23–25.) What is the difference between possessing riches and trusting in them? How can we maintain a proper attitude toward earthly possessions? (See Mosiah 4:19, 21.)

President Smith also taught: “God is not a respecter of persons. The rich man may enter into the kingdom of heaven as freely as the poor, if he will bring his heart and affections into subjection to the law of God and to the principle of truth; if he will place his affections upon God, his heart upon the truth, and his soul upon the accomplishment of God’s purposes, and not fix his affections and his hopes upon the things of the world” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 260–61).

- Contrast the rich young man with the poor widow in Mark 12:41–44. What was the widow willing to do that the rich young man was not? (See Mark 12:44. She was willing to give all she had for the kingdom of God.) How can we develop an attitude like the poor widow’s?

## 2. Seek heavenly, rather than earthly, treasures.

Read and discuss Luke 12:13–21.

- What did Jesus tell the man who was concerned about his inheritance? (See Luke 12:13–15.) What is covetousness? (A strong desire for wealth or for another person’s possessions.) What things do people covet today? Why is it dangerous to covet?
- In a world that often places great value on material possessions, how can we remember that our worth as individuals is not determined by how much we own? (See Luke 12:15.) What blessings are more important than material possessions? (See Luke 12:31–34; D&C 6:7 for some examples.)
- How had the man in the parable of the rich fool been blessed? (See Luke 12:16.) What did he decide to do with his excess? (See Luke 12:18.) What did his actions demonstrate? (See Luke 12:19–21. His heart was set on his riches.) What might he have done with his abundance if he had been seeking heavenly, rather than earthly, treasures? (See Mosiah 4:26; D&C 52:40.)
- Why do many people set their hearts on worldly wealth even though they know it is only temporary? How can we determine whether we are too concerned with material possessions? How can we be more generous with our material wealth and other blessings, such as time and talents? (You may want to encourage class members to give more thought to these questions outside of class, by themselves or with family members.)

## 3. Followers of Christ must be willing to forsake all to be true disciples.

Read and discuss selected verses from Luke 14:15–33.

- Interpreting the parable of the great supper, Elder James E. Talmage taught that the invited guests represented the covenant people, or house of Israel. When the servant (Jesus) asked them to come to the feast (accept the gospel), they made excuses and refused to come (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 452). Why didn’t the Israelites come to the feast? Who are “the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind” who did come to the feast? (Luke 14:21).
- How does the parable of the great supper apply to us? What excuses do we make for not feasting at the Lord’s table—for example, not reading the scriptures or going to the temple? How can we demonstrate our acceptance of the Lord’s invitation to the feast?
- Jesus taught that his disciples must be willing to sacrifice anything that he asks of them (Luke 14:26–33). What are some things early disciples were asked to sacrifice? What are some things disciples today are asked to sacrifice? What has the Lord asked you to sacrifice? How have you been blessed for making these sacrifices?

## 4. Seek spiritual wealth with enthusiasm and energy.

Read and discuss selected verses from Luke 16:1–12. To help class members understand the parable of the unjust steward, share the following information:

Elder James E. Talmage explained that the Lord used this parable “to show the contrast between the care, thoughtfulness, and devotion of men engaged in the money-making affairs of earth, and the half hearted ways of many who are

professedly striving after spiritual riches.” The Lord was not suggesting that we should emulate the evil practices of the unjust servant, but that we should seek spiritual wealth with the same eagerness and effort that the servant displayed in seeking material wealth.

Elder Talmage continued, “Worldly-minded men do not neglect provision for their future years, and often are sinfully eager to amass plenty; while the ‘children of light,’ or those who believe spiritual wealth to be above all earthly possessions, are less energetic, prudent, or wise” (*Jesus the Christ*, 463).

- Ask class members to silently compare the amount of time, thought, and energy they devote to accumulating money and possessions with the amount of time, thought, and energy they devote to seeking spiritual treasures. How can we become more dedicated and enthusiastic in seeking spiritual treasures?

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## Conclusion

Testify that to receive eternal life, we must be willing to put away the things of the world and serve the Lord with all our heart, might, mind, and strength. Encourage class members to be grateful for earthly blessings but strive to view them in the proper perspective.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Humility

Read and discuss Luke 14:7–11.

- How have you seen the truth of Jesus’ statement in Luke 14:11?

### 2. True charity

- What can we learn from Luke 14:12–14 about how to serve? (Answers may include that we should not serve with the goal of getting something in return, and we should not limit our service to those who will repay or even thank us.) What should be our motives for serving?

- How does true charity help us grow closer to the Lord?

### 3. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus

Have class members read and discuss the parable in Luke 16:19–31.

- After the rich man died, what did he ask Father Abraham to do for his brethren? (See Luke 16:27–28.) How did Abraham respond? (See Luke 16:29–31.) What does this teach us about listening to the prophet?
- What does this parable teach us about the importance of caring for the poor? (See D&C 104:18.)

Youth may enjoy dramatizing this parable. Place two class members (Abraham and Lazarus) on one side of a barrier such as a row of chairs (the great gulf), and another class member (the rich man) on the other side. Have a fourth class member be the narrator. Have the class members read their lines directly out of Luke 16:19–31, with the narrator reading everything that is not directly spoken by one of the other characters. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 141–42.)

# “He Was Lost, and Is Found”

## Lesson 18

Luke 15; 17

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**Purpose** To help class members understand the joy that comes when we repent and when we help others repent.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Luke 15:1–10. Through the parable of the lost sheep and the parable of the piece of silver, Jesus teaches the worth of souls.
  - b. Luke 15:11–32. Through the parable of the prodigal son, Jesus teaches that Heavenly Father finds great joy in forgiving the repentant. The Savior also teaches his followers to be forgiving.
  - c. Luke 17:11–19. A man whom Jesus has healed of leprosy returns to thank him.
2. Additional reading: Matthew 18:11–14.
3. If the pictures *The Prodigal Son* (62155; Gospel Art Picture Kit 220) and *Ten Lepers* (62150; Gospel Art Picture Kit 221) are available, use them during the lesson.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Jesus often asked questions to encourage his listeners to apply the principles he taught (see Matthew 16:13–16; Luke 7:41–42). Prayerfully prepare questions that will encourage class members to participate in discussions and will help them understand and apply the principles being taught. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 105–6, 130–31.)

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Invite class members to tell about a time when they lost something important to them or when a family member became lost. Then ask the following questions:

- How did you feel when the object or person was lost? How did you feel when the object or person was found?

You may also want to ask class members to tell about experiences they have had with being lost and later found.

Explain that Jesus often taught spiritual lessons by relating them to common experiences of the people. This lesson discusses some parables that teach the importance of searching for and finding those who are lost.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you discuss the following scripture passages, help class members understand that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love each of us and want us to return and live with them again.

## 1. The Savior teaches the worth of souls.

Read and discuss Luke 15:1–10. Explain that Jesus presented the parable of the lost sheep and the parable of the piece of silver after the Pharisees and scribes murmured, “This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them” (Luke 15:2).

- In the parable of the lost sheep, the shepherd left ninety-nine sheep to find one that was lost (Luke 15:4). In the parable of the piece of silver, the woman sought diligently for one lost coin (Luke 15:8). What can we learn from the actions of the shepherd and the woman? (See D&C 18:10–13.)
- In what ways might a person be “lost”? What is our responsibility toward those who are lost? (See Luke 15:4–5, 8; Alma 31:34–35.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“Some of our own . . . cry out in pain and suffering and loneliness and fear. Ours is a great and solemn duty to reach out and help them, to lift them, to feed them if they are hungry, to nurture their spirits if they thirst for truth and righteousness. . . .

“ . . . There are those who were once warm in the faith, but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast again at the table of the Lord.

“My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 86).

- How should we respond at the return of a person who has been lost? (Have class members look for an idea that is repeated in Luke 15:5, 6, and 9. See also verses 7 and 10 and D&C 18:15–16.)

## 2. Jesus teaches that Heavenly Father rejoices in forgiving the repentant.

Read and discuss Luke 15:11–32. Display the picture of the prodigal son.

- In the parable of the prodigal son, what did the younger son do with his inheritance? (See Luke 15:13. Note that *prodigal* means wasteful.) What are some ways that people today make errors similar to those of the prodigal son?
- What happened to the prodigal son after he had wasted all his inheritance? (See Luke 15:14–16.) What application does this have in our day?
- When the prodigal son was in want, who in the far country cared for him? (See Luke 15:16.) What can we learn from this?
- Whom did the son think of when he saw that no one in the far country cared for him? (See Luke 15:17.) What can we learn about repentance from the son’s attitude? (See Luke 15:18–19.)
- What did the father do when he saw his son returning? (See Luke 15:20.) How did the father respond to his son’s confession? (See Luke 15:21–24.) How is the father’s response like the Lord’s response when we repent? (See Luke 15:7; Mosiah 26:30; D&C 58:42.)

- In what ways are we like the prodigal son? (See the quotation below.) What hope does the parable of the prodigal son offer us?

Referring to the parable of the prodigal son, President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “I ask you to read that story. Every parent ought to read it again and again. It is large enough to encompass every household, and enough larger than that to encompass all mankind, for are we not all prodigal sons and daughters who need to repent and partake of the forgiving mercy of our Heavenly Father and then follow His example?” (“Of You It Is Required to Forgive,” *Ensign*, June 1991, 5).

- Why was the elder son angry with the way his father received the younger son? (See Luke 15:25–30.) How did the father respond to the elder son’s complaint? (See Luke 15:31–32.) Why is it sometimes difficult to welcome back a “prodigal son” who has repented? What can we learn from this man’s response to his returning son? (See Luke 15:32.)

### 3. A man whom Jesus has healed of leprosy returns to thank him.

Read and discuss Luke 17:11–19. Display the picture of the ten lepers.

- As the Savior went to Jerusalem, he healed ten lepers (Luke 17:11–14). Of those ten lepers, how many returned to express gratitude? (See Luke 17:15–16.) What are some reasons that we, like the nine ungrateful lepers, do not always express our gratitude for the blessings we receive? Why is it important that we express gratitude to the Lord?
- Although all ten lepers were cleansed, only the man who returned was made whole (Luke 17:14, 19). What is the difference between being healed and being made whole? (See the quotation below.) How do our gratitude and faith help us become whole?

Bishop Merrill J. Bateman taught: “In becoming a whole person, the grateful leper was healed inside as well as on the outside. That day nine lepers were healed skin deep, but only one had the faith to be made whole” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 16; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 14).

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#### Conclusion

Testify that we feel great joy when we repent and return to the Lord and when we help others return. You may want to express appreciation for Jesus’ parables and other teachings that show God’s love for his children and his desire that we love one another.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. The parable of the unprofitable servant

Read and discuss the parable of the unprofitable servant (Luke 17:5–10).

- Jesus presented this parable after the Apostles requested of him, “Lord, Increase our faith” (Luke 17:5). What can we learn from this parable about how we can increase our faith? (Answers could include that we grow in faith by diligently serving the Lord.)

- Why are we unprofitable servants even when we do everything the Lord commands us to do? (See Mosiah 2:20–25.) What does this reveal about the Lord’s love for us?

## **2. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard**

Read and discuss the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1–16).

- In this parable, what did every laborer in the vineyard receive?

Emphasize that those who worked one hour received the same pay as those who worked the entire day. We should not be concerned about who receives the most or who does the most in the service of the Lord. The perfect Judge of all, who knows our hearts, will judge us with mercy and grant us “whatsoever is right” (Matthew 20:4, 7).

## **3. Video presentations**

The fourth segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), may be useful in explaining how lepers were regarded in New Testament times and what a great, life-changing blessing it was for the ten lepers to be healed by Christ.

This segment also contains information about how the Jews of the New Testament measured time. You may want to show this portion if you discuss the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (see the second additional teaching idea), to help class members better understand the householder who “went out about the third hour” and also the sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours (Matthew 20:3, 5–6).

# “Thy Faith Hath Saved Thee”

## Lesson 19

*Luke 18:1–8, 35–43; 19:1–10; John 11*

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**Purpose** To help class members develop greater faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Luke 18:1–8. Through the parable of the unjust judge and the widow, Jesus teaches the importance of persevering in prayer.
    - b. Luke 18:35–43. A blind man demonstrates his faith and is healed by Jesus.
    - c. Luke 19:1–10. Jesus is received in Zacchaeus’s home.
    - d. John 11:1–54. Jesus testifies of his divinity by raising Lazarus from the dead.
  2. Additional reading: Mark 10:46–52; Luke 11:5–13; Bible Dictionary, “Faith,” 669–70.
  3. If the pictures Healing the Blind (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213) and Jesus Raising Lazarus from the Dead (62148; Gospel Art Picture Kit 222) are available, use them during the lesson.
  4. Suggestion for teaching: President David O. McKay said, “You can teach effectively only that which you yourselves feel” (*Gospel Ideals* [1953], 190). Seek through study, prayer, and obedience to strengthen your testimony of the principles you are teaching. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 11–12.)
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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Before Elder Hugh B. Brown left on a mission, his mother told him:

“Hugh, you remember when you were a little boy and you would have a bad dream or wake up in the night frightened? You would call from your room, ‘Mother, are you there?’ and I would answer and try to comfort you and remove your fears. Now as you go on a mission and out into the world, there will be times when you will be frightened, when you feel weak, inadequate, alone, and have problems. I want you to know that you can call to your Heavenly Father as you used to call to me and say, ‘Father, are you there? I need your help.’ Do this with the knowledge that He is there and that He will be ready to help you if you will do your part and live worthy of your blessings. I want to reassure you that He is there and will answer your prayers and needs for your best good” (told by Marvin J. Ashton, “Know He Is There,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1994, 50).

Explain that in this lesson we will study scriptural accounts that can help us develop greater faith that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know and love each of us.

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Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members' needs. Discuss how the selected scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Jesus presents the parable of the unjust judge and the widow.

Read and discuss Luke 18:1–8. Explain that Jesus presented this parable to a group of Pharisees.

- According to Luke 18:1, why did Jesus give the parable of the unjust judge and the widow? How does this parable teach that we “ought always to pray”? (See Luke 18:1–8.)

Elder James E. Talmage taught, “Jesus did not indicate that as the wicked judge finally yielded to supplication so would God do; but He pointed out that if even such a being as this judge, who ‘feared not God, neither regarded man,’ would at last hear and grant the widow’s plea, no one should doubt that God, the Just and Merciful, will hear and answer” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 436).

- What does it mean to pray always? (See Luke 18:7; Alma 34:27.) What blessings can come to us when we pray always? (See Luke 18:7–8; 2 Nephi 32:9; D&C 90:24.)
- How is persevering in prayer an act of faith? What should we do when we have persevered in prayer and feel that we have not received an answer?

Elder Richard G. Scott said:

“It is a mistake to assume that every prayer we offer will be answered immediately. Some prayers require considerable effort on our part. . . .

“When we explain a problem and a proposed solution [to our Heavenly Father], sometimes He answers yes, sometimes no. Often He withholds an answer, not for lack of concern, but because He loves us—perfectly. He wants us to apply truths He has given us. For us to grow, we need to trust our ability to make correct decisions. We need to do what we *feel* is right. In time, He will answer. He will not fail us” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 38; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 30–31).

- What have you learned as you have persevered in prayer?

### 2. A blind man demonstrates his faith and is healed by Jesus.

Read and discuss Luke 18:35–43. Display the picture of Jesus healing the blind.

- How did the blind man near Jericho show that he had faith in the Lord? (See Luke 18:38–42.) How have you been blessed as you have exercised faith in Jesus Christ?
- How did the man show gratitude when he received his sight? (See Luke 18:43; see also Mark 10:52.) How can we show our gratitude to the Lord?

### 3. Jesus is received in Zacchaeus’s home.

Read and discuss Luke 19:1–10.

- Who was Zacchaeus? (See Luke 19:2. Explain that publicans were Jews who worked as tax collectors for the Roman government. The Jews generally disliked the publicans and considered them to be traitors and sinners.)
- How did Zacchaeus show his great desire to see Jesus? (See Luke 19:3–4.) What did Jesus tell Zacchaeus after seeing him in the tree? (See Luke 19:5.) How did Zacchaeus respond to Jesus' words? (See Luke 19:6.) What can we do to receive the Savior joyfully into our homes?
- How did the people react when Jesus went to stay with Zacchaeus? (See Luke 19:7.) How did Jesus' response to Zacchaeus differ from the response of the others? (See Luke 19:5.) What can we learn from Jesus' example in this account?
- Many people shunned Zacchaeus because of his profession as a publican (Luke 19:2, 7; Bible Dictionary, "Publicans," 755). In what ways do we sometimes make similar judgments against others? Why is it important for us not to exclude others or think we are better than they are? (See Alma 5:54–56; 38:13–14.) How can we overcome unkind feelings against others?

Elder Joe J. Christensen said: "There are those who wake up every morning dreading to go to school, or even to a Church activity, because they worry about how they will be treated. You have the power to change their lives for the better. . . . The Lord is counting on you to be a builder and give them a lift. Think less of yourself and more about the power you have to assist others, even those within your own family" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 54; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 39).

#### 4. Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 11:1–54. Explain that soon after Jesus went to Zacchaeus's home, he received a message from his friends Mary and Martha that their brother Lazarus, who was also Jesus' dear friend, was sick (John 11:1–5). Two days later, Jesus directed his disciples to go with him to Bethany, the city in Judea where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived (John 11:6–7).

- When Jesus returned to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days (John 11:17). What did Martha do when she heard that Jesus was coming? (See John 11:20.) What impresses you about Martha's testimony of the Savior's divine mission? (See John 11:21–27.)
- What did Jesus do when he saw Mary and many others weeping? (See John 11:33–35.) How does this account influence your feelings about Jesus?
- Despite her strong testimony, Martha's faith seemed weak when Jesus asked that the stone be removed from Lazarus's tomb (John 11:39). How did Jesus help her? (See John 11:40.) What can we learn from this about what the Lord expects of us?
- What can Jesus' prayer before he raised Lazarus teach us about his relationship with his Father? (See John 11:41–42.) How can we follow Jesus' example in our personal and family prayers?

Display the picture of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, and invite a class member to read John 11:43–44.

- Jesus had already raised two people from the dead (Mark 5:22–24, 35–43; Luke 7:11–17). How was raising Lazarus from the dead different from the two previous instances? (The daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain were raised from the dead soon after their body and spirit had separated. They had not been placed in tombs. Lazarus had been dead for four days, and his body was already in a sepulchre.)
- How was the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead a witness of the Savior’s divine mission? What effect did this miracle have on the people who witnessed it? (See John 11:45–46.) How does this miracle strengthen your faith in the Savior?

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## Conclusion

Explain that the principles taught in the accounts you have discussed can strengthen our faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. After briefly reviewing the accounts, read the following statement by Elder Thomas S. Monson:

“The passage of time has not altered the capacity of the Redeemer to change men’s lives. As he said to the dead Lazarus, so he says to you and me: ‘. . . come forth.’ (John 11:43.) Come forth from the despair of doubt. Come forth from the sorrow of sin. Come forth from the death of disbelief. Come forth to a newness of life. Come forth” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 72; or *Ensign*, May 1974, 50).

Encourage class members to look for ways in which they can strengthen their faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

### **The parable of the Pharisee and the publican**

Read and discuss the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9–14).

- How would you describe the Pharisee’s prayer in this parable? How would you describe the publican’s prayer?
- What does it mean that “every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”? (See Luke 18:14; Ether 12:27.)

# “Woe unto You, . . . Hypocrites”

## Lesson 20

*Matthew 21–23; John 12:1–8*

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**Purpose** To help class members recognize and avoid hypocrisy and thus strengthen their commitment to Jesus Christ.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 12:1–8. Jesus travels to Bethany, where Mary anoints his feet. Judas criticizes Mary’s use of expensive oil.
  - b. Matthew 21:1–11. Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. He makes a triumphal entry into the city, riding on a colt, the foal of an ass.
  - c. Matthew 21:23–46. The chief priests and elders come to Jesus in the temple and challenge his authority. Instead of answering their questions, Jesus tells them the parable of the two sons and the parable of the householder.
  - d. Matthew 22:15–46. The scribes and Pharisees try to trap Jesus into saying something that will allow them to discredit and condemn him.
  - e. Matthew 23. Jesus condemns the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy.
2. Additional reading: Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 11–12; 14:3–9; Luke 11:37–51; 19:29–48; 20; John 12:12–18; Bible Dictionary, “Pharisees,” 750; “Sadducees,” 767; “Spikenard,” 776.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring one cup that is clean outside and inside and a similar cup that is clean outside but dirty inside.
4. If the picture *Triumphal Entry* (62173; Gospel Art Picture Kit 223) is available, use it during the lesson.
5. Suggestion for teaching: As you prepare to teach, you should do more than merely read the assigned scriptures. Study each scripture block at least three times. The first time, read it to comprehend what the passages contain. Then study it more carefully, looking for principles, doctrines, and significant events. Then read it again, determining which passages will best meet class members’ needs and planning ways to discuss those passages.

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display the two cups (see the “Preparation” section). Make sure class members see only the outside of each cup.

- Which of these two cups would you rather drink from?

Show class members the inside of each cup.

- Now which cup would you rather drink from? Why?

Explain that Jesus compared the Pharisees to a cup that is clean outside but dirty inside (Matthew 23:25–26). The Pharisees paid a great deal of attention to outward ordinances and actions that would make them appear righteous, but they were not as concerned with actually being righteous in their hearts. For this Jesus referred to them as hypocrites. This lesson will discuss the Savior’s condemnation of hypocrites—people who try to appear righteous but who do not try to live righteously.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss what they teach about avoiding hypocrisy. Encourage class members to focus on identifying and correcting hypocrisy in their own lives, rather than on identifying it in others.

### 1. Mary anoints Jesus’ feet.

Read and discuss John 12:1–8. Explain that five days before his Crucifixion, Jesus spent an evening with his friends at Bethany. There Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, anointed the Savior’s feet with spikenard, a costly ointment (John 12:1–3). Elder James E. Talmage explained why she did this:

“To anoint the head of a guest with ordinary oil was to do him honor; to anoint his feet also was to show unusual and signal regard; but the anointing of head and feet with spikenard, and in such abundance, was an act of reverential homage rarely rendered even to kings. Mary’s act was an expression of adoration; it was the fragrant outwelling of a heart overflowing with worship and affection” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 512).

- Mary anointed the Lord’s feet to show her love for him. How do we show our love for the Lord?
- Mary’s actions were criticized by Judas. What did he say should have been done with the ointment? (See John 12:4–5.) How was Judas a hypocrite? (See John 12:6. If you did not use the attention activity, use the information in the activity to explain what a hypocrite is. Point out that a later part of the lesson will discuss how the Savior feels about hypocrites.)

### 2. Jesus makes a triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Read and discuss Matthew 21:1–11. Display the picture of Jesus’ triumphal entry. Explain that when Jesus returned to Jerusalem for the Passover, many people came to see him because they heard that he had raised Lazarus from the dead (John 12:17–18). As Jesus approached the city, he was greeted by a great multitude of people who spread their garments in his path and hailed him with palm branches, an honor usually reserved for kings and conquerors. This fulfilled a prophecy by Zechariah (Zechariah 9:9) and was a further witness that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

- What impresses you about the account of Jesus riding humbly yet triumphantly into Jerusalem? How do you think you would have felt if you had been there that day?
- The people who hailed Jesus with palm branches recognized him as a prophet and king (Matthew 21:9, 11; Luke 19:38), but others misunderstood his mission or rejected him. In what ways do people misunderstand or reject the Savior today? How can we more fully accept and welcome him into our lives?

### 3. Jesus gives the parable of the two sons and the parable of the householder.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 21:23–46.

- In the parable of the two sons, how did the first son prove to be more obedient than the second son? (See Matthew 21:28–30.) How did Jesus apply this parable to his listeners? (See Matthew 21:31–32; see also the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 21:32 in footnote 32*d*.) How were the publicans and harlots like the first son? (Initially they rejected the commandments of God, but when John preached to them, they accepted Christ and repented of their sins.) How were the chief priests and elders like the second son? (They claimed to follow God, but they rejected John’s teachings and rejected Jesus even after they saw him in person.) How was the second son a hypocrite?
- What promises have we made to the Lord? (You may want to discuss promises such as those we make at baptism, when taking the sacrament, and when receiving the priesthood.) How are we sometimes like the second son? How can we strengthen our commitment to the Lord? How can we help each other keep the promises we have made to the Lord?
- In the parable of the householder (Matthew 21:33–41), who is represented by the householder, or lord of the vineyard? (Our Father in Heaven.) By the husbandmen? (The Jewish religious leaders of Jesus’ day.) By the servants? (The prophets.) By the son killed by the husbandmen? (Jesus Christ.)
- How were the Jewish religious leaders like the husbandmen? What did the chief priests and elders acknowledge would happen to the husbandmen when the lord of the vineyard came? (See Matthew 21:41.)
- Who was “the stone which the builders rejected”? (See Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:10–12.) Who were the builders? What did Jesus say would happen to the builders who rejected the cornerstone? (See Matthew 21:43–44.) How might Jesus’ words in verse 43 apply to us?
- How did the chief priests and Pharisees respond when they realized that Jesus was speaking about them in these parables? (See Matthew 21:45–46.) How can we overcome any pride or indignation we may feel when we are called to repent?

### 4. The scribes and Pharisees try to trap Jesus.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 22:15–46. Explain that these verses record three times when the Pharisees and Sadducees tried to trap Jesus into saying something that would allow them to discredit and condemn him.

- How did the Pharisees first try to trap Jesus? (See Matthew 22:15–17. Explain that if Jesus said yes to the question, they could accuse him of supporting the hated Roman government. If he said no, they could accuse him of rebellion against the government.) What did Jesus perceive about his questioners? (See Matthew 22:18. Point out that the Lord knows our hearts and thoughts. We cannot hide anything from him.) How did Jesus answer the question? (See Matthew 22:19–21.) How can this answer guide us in giving allegiance to God and to earthly governments? (See also Articles of Faith 1:12.)

- How did the Sadducees try to trap Jesus? (See Matthew 22:23–28.) How were the Sadducees hypocritical in their question? (See Matthew 22:23. They pretended to be concerned about marriage in the resurrection, but they did not believe in resurrection.) How did Jesus answer their question? (See Matthew 22:29–30. Explain that Doctrine and Covenants 132:15–16, 19 clarifies Jesus’ teaching. Those who do not make and keep the covenants of temple marriage will be single in heaven. For those who do make and keep these covenants, marriage will last for eternity.)
- What was the third attempt to trap Jesus? (See Matthew 22:34–36.) How did Jesus’ response resolve this question? (See Matthew 22:37–40.) Why do you think these two great commandments are so important? What can we do to more fully live these commandments?

Elder Howard W. Hunter said: “He loves the Lord with all his heart who . . . is ready to give up, do, or suffer anything in order to please and glorify him. He loves God with all his soul . . . who is ready to give up life for his sake and to be deprived of the comforts of the world to glorify him. He loves God with all his strength who exerts all the powers of his body and soul in the service of God. He loves God with all his mind who applies himself only to know God and his will, who sees God in all things and acknowledges him in all ways” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1965, 58; or *Improvement Era*, June 1965, 512).

### 5. Jesus condemns the sin of hypocrisy.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 23.

- The scribes and Pharisees paid tithing, gave to the poor, attended worship services, and went regularly to the temple. What caused the Lord to condemn them? (See Matthew 23:5, 14, 23–28. They did these things not out of faith, but out of a desire to be seen as righteous by others.) What “weightier matters” did the Lord say they had omitted? (See Matthew 23:23.) How can we ensure that we do not omit these “weightier matters” in our own lives?
- How might we as Church members sometimes be hypocrites? (For example, when we attend Church meetings we may be more concerned with being seen by others than with worshiping God. We may complain about Church assignments where we do not receive much attention for our service. We may sustain our Church leaders and then criticize their decisions.)
- What can we do to avoid hypocrisy? Ask class members to silently consider these questions: Am I paying tithing, giving to the poor, attending my meetings, and serving others for my own glory or for the glory of God? In all my actions, do I seek to draw closer to my Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ?

### Conclusion

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Encourage class members to examine their lives for hypocrisy and seek to eliminate it. Testify that a sincere desire to serve and obey Jesus Christ, motivated by love for and faith in him, will bring us closer to him and increase our love and faith.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Jesus curses a barren fig tree, a symbol of hypocrisy

Read and discuss Matthew 21:17–22. Explain that another symbol of hypocrisy was the fig tree Jesus saw on his way into Jerusalem.

- What did Jesus do when he found that the tree had many leaves but no fruit? (See Matthew 21:19.) How was the fig tree like a hypocrite?

Elder James E. Talmage explained: “[The tree] was made the object of the curse and the subject of the Lord’s instructive discourse, because, having leaves, it was deceptively barren. Were it reasonable to regard the tree as possessed of moral agency, we would have to pronounce it a hypocrite; its utter barrenness coupled with its abundance of foliage made of it a type of human hypocrisy” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 526).

### 2. Video presentation

The second segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), explains the Jews’ use of phylacteries and fringes. If you did not show this segment in lesson 9, you could show it now to help class members understand Matthew 23:5 (“they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments”). Discuss how these items were symbolic of the scribes’ and Pharisees’ hypocrisy.

### 3. “They loved the praise of men” (John 12:43)

- John recorded that many people who believed in Jesus would not admit to their belief because “they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42–43). How do we sometimes become too concerned with receiving “the praise of men”? What are the consequences of seeking “the praise of men”? How can we overcome the desire to seek praise and recognition from others? (See D&C 82:19; 88:67.)

Lesson  
**21**

# “What Is the Sign of Thy Coming?”

*Joseph Smith—Matthew (Matthew 24)*

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**Purpose**

To help class members recognize the signs that will precede the Savior’s Second Coming and to encourage members to prepare themselves for this great event.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1–20 (Matthew 24:1–5, 9–13, 15–22). Jesus foretells the impending destruction of Jerusalem.
  - b. Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:21–55 (Matthew 24:6–8, 14, 23–51). Jesus describes the signs that will precede his Second Coming and teaches how his elect can prepare for his coming.
2. Additional reading: Mark 13; Luke 21:5–38; Doctrine and Covenants 45:15–55.
3. If the picture *The Second Coming* (62562; Gospel Art Picture Kit 238) is available, use it during the lesson.
4. Suggestion for teaching: A call to teach does not require that you know everything about the gospel, so you should not feel embarrassed if a class member asks a question that you cannot answer. Instead of making up an answer, admit that you do not know and offer to try to find an answer.

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**Suggested Lesson Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson:

Have class members look out a window and observe the sky. If there is not a window in the classroom, ask class members what the weather was like when they arrived at church. Then make an improbable prediction about the weather. For example, if the sky is clear and it is hot outside, predict that it will snow in a few hours. If it is cold and rainy outside and it appears that the rain will continue for a while, predict that it will be hot and dry outside within five minutes.

Ask class members what they think about your prediction. After they have commented, ask the following questions:

- What is your prediction about the weather in the next few hours? What helps you make that prediction?
- How might the signs of upcoming weather conditions influence the things we do? (Answers may include that we often make preparations based on these signs. For example, we may make plans for outdoor activities when it appears that the weather will be pleasant, or we may make special preparations to withstand a severe storm.)

Point out that predicting the weather is one situation in which we rely on signs to help us prepare for upcoming events. If we watch the signs, we reduce our chances of being caught unprepared. Similarly, watching for the signs of the

Second Coming of Jesus Christ can help us prepare for that great event. This lesson discusses some of the signs that Jesus prophesied would precede his Second Coming. (You may want to point out that a prediction specifies something that *may* happen, while a prophecy specifies something that *will* happen. A prediction about the weather may turn out to be wrong, but the prophecies about the Second Coming will all be fulfilled.)

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Scripture Discussion  
and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, help class members understand that the Lord has revealed information to help us prepare for his Second Coming. In spite of the tribulations of the last days, we can look forward with joy to this great event.

Explain that Matthew 24 contains the Savior's prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem and about his Second Coming. Over time, the verses in this chapter have been changed and rearranged, making it sometimes difficult to understand which event a particular verse describes. Fortunately, as part of his inspired translation of the Bible, Joseph Smith clarified the two prophecies and restored additional information. His inspired translation of Matthew 24 is found in Joseph Smith—Matthew in the Pearl of Great Price.

Use the Joseph Smith—Matthew account as you discuss the doctrines and principles in this lesson. Display the picture of the Second Coming throughout the lesson.

### 1. Jesus foretells the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

Discuss Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1–20 (see also Matthew 24:1–5, 9–13, 15–22). Invite class members to read selected verses.

- A few days before Jesus was crucified, some of his disciples accompanied him to the Mount of Olives. What two questions did the disciples ask Jesus? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4. Explain that Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5–20 is the Savior's answer to their first question, which was about the destruction of Jerusalem. Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:21–55 is the Savior's answer to their second question, which was about his Second Coming.)
- What did Jesus prophesy about the temple in Jerusalem and the city itself? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:2–3, 12.) What signs did the Savior prophesy would precede the destruction of Jerusalem? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5–10.)
- What did Jesus tell his followers to do to avoid destruction? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:11–15.) Why was it important that they not return to their homes once they had fled? (See Luke 9:62; D&C 133:14–15.)

Explain that although many Jews did not believe their great city and temple could be destroyed, the Lord's prophecies were fulfilled in A.D. 70. Believing that the Messiah would come and help them in battle, the Jews revolted against the Romans in A.D. 66. Four years later the Romans had destroyed the entire city. Those who listened to the Savior and fled into the mountains were spared. Those who did not heed this counsel were scattered and destroyed.

### 2. Jesus describes the signs that will precede his Second Coming.

Read and discuss selected verses from Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:21–55 (see also Matthew 24:6–8, 14, 23–51). Remind class members that the second

question asked by the disciples concerned the Savior's Second Coming and the accompanying destruction of the wicked (which is sometimes called "the end of the world"). As you discuss the signs and tribulations that will precede the Second Coming, list them on the chalkboard.

- What sign of the Savior's Second Coming is described in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22? What evidence do you see that this prophecy is being fulfilled? How can we avoid being deceived by false prophets? (See Matthew 7:15–20; D&C 45:57; 46:7–8.)
- What sign of the Second Coming is mentioned in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:23 and 28? What evidence do you see that this prophecy is being fulfilled? The Lord taught that we should "be not troubled" by wars and rumors of war. How can we find peace during such troubled times? (See 1 John 4:16–18; D&C 6:34–36; 45:34–35; 59:23.)

Elder M. Russell Ballard gave the following counsel of hope and encouragement:

"Although the prophecies tell us that these things are to take place, more and more people are expressing great alarm at what appears to be an acceleration of worldwide calamity. . . . Admittedly we have ample reason to be deeply concerned because we see no immediate answers to the seemingly unsolvable problems confronting the human family. But regardless of this dark picture, which will ultimately get worse, we must never allow ourselves to give up hope! . . .

". . . The Lord is in control. He knows the end from the beginning. He has given us adequate instruction that, if followed, will see us safely through any crisis. His purposes will be fulfilled, and someday we will understand the eternal reasons for all of these events. Therefore, today we must be careful not to overreact, nor should we be caught up in extreme preparations; but what we must do is keep the commandments of God and never lose hope!

"But where do we find hope in the midst of such turmoil and catastrophe? Quite simply, our one hope for spiritual safety during these turbulent times is to turn our minds and our hearts to Jesus Christ. . . . Armed with the shield of faith, we can overcome many of our daily challenges and overpower our greatest weaknesses and fears, knowing that if we do our best to keep the commandments of God, come what may, we will be all right" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 41–43; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 31–32).

- What signs of the Second Coming are described in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27 and 31? How are these prophecies being fulfilled today? (Missionary work is increasing, and the gospel is being taught and accepted in more and more places around the world.) What can each of us do to help fulfill these prophecies?
- What signs of the Second Coming are described in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:29–30? What evidence do you see that these prophecies are being fulfilled? What have latter-day prophets counseled us to do to prepare for the natural disasters that will precede the Second Coming?
- What signs of the Second Coming are mentioned in Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:32–33?

- The Lord told his followers in Jerusalem to “stand in the holy place” (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:12), and he has given similar counsel in our day (D&C 87:8; 101:22). What are some holy places in which we should stand? How will these places help protect us during the difficulties of the last days?

President Ezra Taft Benson said, “Holy men and holy women stand in holy places, and these holy places include our temples, our chapels, our homes, and the stakes of Zion, which are, as the Lord declares, ‘for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth’ (D&C 115:6)” (“Prepare Yourselves for the Great Day of the Lord,” *Brigham Young University 1981 Fireside and Devotional Speeches* [1981], 68).

- What guidance did Jesus give to help us not be deceived in the last days before his Second Coming? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37.) How can we treasure up the Lord’s word? How has treasuring up the Lord’s word helped you avoid being deceived?
- What did Jesus teach in the following passages to help us prepare for his Second Coming?
  - a. The parable of the fig tree (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:38–40).
  - b. The comparison of the Second Coming to the days of Noah (verses 41–43).
  - c. The prophecy of two people working in the field and two people grinding at the mill (verses 44–46).
  - d. The parable of the good man and the thief (verses 47–48).
  - e. The parable of the lord and his servants (verses 49–54).
- Why is it important that we continuously watch and prepare for the Lord’s coming? How can we watch and prepare to meet the Lord?
- What will happen to the righteous when the Savior comes again? (See Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37, 44–45, 50; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18; D&C 88:96–98.)

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## Conclusion

Testify that the scriptural prophecies about Jesus Christ’s Second Coming will all be fulfilled. Emphasize that by studying the teachings of the Savior and following the counsel of the living prophets, we can prepare ourselves to meet Christ. If we are prepared, the Second Coming will be a wonderful day for us.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

### Signs of the Second Coming revealed in latter days

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation that repeated and clarified the prophecies given to Jesus’ ancient disciples. This revelation is found in Doctrine and Covenants 45. Have class members compare Doctrine and Covenants 45:15–55 to Joseph Smith—Matthew.

You may want to point out that in Doctrine and Covenants 45:60–61, the Lord told Joseph Smith to begin translating the New Testament. Joseph Smith—Matthew is part of this inspired translation.

Lesson  
**22**

# “Inherit the Kingdom Prepared for You”

*Matthew 25*

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**Purpose** To help class members prepare themselves for the Second Coming through living righteously, developing their talents, and serving others.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 25:1–13. Through the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus teaches that we must prepare for his Second Coming.
  - b. Matthew 25:14–30. Through the parable of the talents, Jesus teaches that we should develop the gifts we receive from God.
  - c. Matthew 25:31–46. Through the parable of the sheep and the goats, Jesus teaches that we should willingly serve one another.
2. If you use the attention activity, bring a small glass jar, a container of oil or colored water, and, if it is available, the picture *The Second Coming* (62562; Gospel Art Picture Kit 238).
3. Obtain a piece of paper and a pen or pencil for each class member.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Occasionally use statements by latter-day prophets, which can be found in this manual and in Church magazines, to help direct and clarify class discussions and to emphasize that the Lord continues to reveal his will today. Use these quotations to support, not replace, scripture reading and class discussion.

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display a small glass jar, a container of oil or colored water, and the picture of the Second Coming.

Explain that this lesson focuses on three parables the Savior taught in response to his Apostles’ questions about his Second Coming. Tell class members that you will use the jar and the oil or colored water to represent our preparation for the Second Coming.

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**Scripture Discussion  
and Application** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. Jesus presents the parable of the ten virgins.**

Read and discuss Matthew 25:1–13. Explain that the parable of the ten virgins is based on Jewish wedding customs. In Jesus’ time, the bridegroom and his friends would escort the bride from her home to the home of the bridegroom. Along the

way, the friends of the bride waited to join them. When they arrived at the bridegroom's home, they all went inside for the wedding. These weddings usually took place in the evening, so those waiting for the bride and bridegroom carried small lamps fueled by oil.

- In the parable of the ten virgins, whom does the bridegroom represent? (The Savior.) Whom do the virgins represent? (Members of the Church.) What does the wedding represent? (The Savior's Second Coming.) What does the oil in the lamps represent? (Preparation for the Second Coming.)
- What did five of the virgins do that was foolish? (See Matthew 25:3.) What were the consequences of their lack of preparation? (See Matthew 25:8–12.) How do we sometimes make the same error as the foolish virgins?
- What did five of the virgins do that was wise? (Matthew 25:4.) What were the consequences of their preparation? (See Matthew 25:10.) What can we learn from the actions of the five wise virgins? (See D&C 45:56–57. We must prepare ourselves for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.)
- Keeping in mind that the oil in the parable represents preparation for the Second Coming, what are some ways we can add "oil" to our "lamps"? (Answers may include specific elements of righteous living, such as exercising faith, receiving ordinances, keeping covenants, or giving service.)

If you are using the jar and the oil or colored water (see the attention activity), explain that the jar represents the lamps in the parable. Put a drop of oil or water into the jar each time a class member suggests what we can do to prepare. You may want to share the following insights from President Spencer W. Kimball:

"In the parable, oil can be purchased at the market. In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. Attendance at sacrament meetings adds oil to our lamps, drop by drop over the years. Fasting, family prayer, home teaching, control of bodily appetites, preaching the gospel, studying the scriptures—each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store. Deeds of kindness, payment of offerings and tithes, chaste thoughts and actions, marriage in the covenant for eternity—these, too, contribute importantly to the oil with which we can at midnight refuel our exhausted lamps" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 256).

Ask class members to silently consider the following questions:

- What did you do this past week to add oil to your lamp? What are some things you will do this coming week to add oil to your lamp?

## 2. Jesus presents the parable of the talents.

Read and discuss Matthew 25:14–30. Explain that in New Testament times, a talent was a sum of money (Bible Dictionary, "Money," 733–34).

- In the parable of the talents, whom does the man traveling to a far country represent? (The Lord.) Whom do the servants represent? (Each of us.) What do the talents represent? (Gifts from God.)
- What did the servants who were given five talents and two talents do with the money? (See Matthew 25:16–17.) What reward did they both receive? (See Matthew 25:21, 23.) What does this parable teach about the eternal reward our Heavenly Father will bless us with? (Answers may include that

people who seem to have fewer gifts from God will receive every blessing if they use their gifts to the fullest.)

Elder James E. Faust said of those who seem to have received fewer talents: “If their talents are used to build the kingdom of God and serve others, they will fully enjoy the promises of the Savior. The great promise of the Savior is that they ‘shall receive [their] reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come’ (D&C 59:23)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 5; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 6).

- What did the servant who was given one talent do with the money? (See Matthew 25:24–25.) What did the master say to him? (See Matthew 25:26–30.) Why do we sometimes fail to develop the talents and gifts God has given us? How can we overcome obstacles to developing these gifts?
- Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught that “it is our right and responsibility to accept our gifts and to share them” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 23; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 20). How can we recognize and accept the talents or gifts the Lord has entrusted to us? Why do you think it is important to share our talents or gifts? What blessings have come into your life because you have developed and shared your talents or gifts? How have you been blessed because others have shared their talents or gifts?
- Every person has been given at least one gift from God (D&C 46:11–12), but some gifts are easier to recognize than others. What are some gifts that might be difficult to recognize but that can be used to serve others and glorify God?

Elder Marvin J. Ashton said:

“Let me mention a few gifts that are not always evident or noteworthy but that are very important. Among these may be your gifts—gifts not so evident but nevertheless real and valuable.

“Let us review some of these less-conspicuous gifts: the gift of asking; the gift of listening; the gift of hearing and using a still, small voice; the gift of being able to weep; the gift of avoiding contention; the gift of being agreeable; the gift of avoiding vain repetition; the gift of seeking that which is righteous; the gift of not passing judgment; the gift of looking to God for guidance; the gift of being a disciple; the gift of caring for others; the gift of being able to ponder; the gift of offering prayer; the gift of bearing a mighty testimony; and the gift of receiving the Holy Ghost” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 23; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 20).

Give each class member a pen or pencil and a piece of paper. Ask them to write down one or two of their talents or gifts along with at least one specific thing they will do in the next few weeks to use them in the service of others.

If you are using the jar and the oil or colored water, add a few more drops to the jar. Explain that as we develop the talents or gifts God has given us, we add oil to our lamps.

### **3. Jesus presents the parable of the sheep and the goats.**

Read and discuss Matthew 25:31–46.

- Jesus taught that at his Second Coming he will separate us as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31–32). In the parable of the

sheep and the goats, whom do the sheep represent? (See Matthew 25:33–34.) Whom do the goats represent? (See Matthew 25:33, 41.)

- What does this parable teach that we must do to prepare for the Second Coming and the day of judgment? (See Matthew 25:35–46.)

Elder Marion D. Hanks said:

“Jesus taught his followers the parable of the sheep and the goats, representing the judgment to come, in which he clearly identified those who will inherit ‘life eternal’ and those who will ‘go away into everlasting punishment’ (Matthew 25:46). The key difference was that those who should inherit the kingdom with him had developed the habit of helping, had experienced the joy of giving and the satisfaction of serving. They had responded to the needs of the hungry, thirsty, homeless, the naked, the sick, and those in prison. . . .

“Nothing would seem more clear than the high premium the Savior put upon selfless service to others as an indispensable element of Christian conduct and of salvation. Helping, giving, and sacrificing are, or should be, as natural as growing and breathing” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 10; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 9).

If you are using the jar and the oil or colored water, add a few more drops to the jar. Explain that as we serve others, we add oil to our lamps. We also may help others add oil to their own lamps. Share examples of service you have observed, and invite class members to share examples they have seen.

- How can we bless others by our service? How has serving another person blessed you? How do you feel about those you serve? How do you feel about those who serve you? How can we become more aware of others’ needs? How can we become more diligent in serving others?
- What do you think the Savior meant when he said, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”? (Matthew 25:40; see also Mosiah 2:17).

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## Conclusion

Testify that we should prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. We should develop the gifts God has given us and follow the Savior’s example in devoting our lives to the service of others. Emphasize that we can all do these things, regardless of our circumstances.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief”

With class members, sing or read the words to the hymn “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief” (*Hymns*, no. 29). Then read Matthew 25:40. Invite class members to share their feelings about the message of the hymn and the scriptural passage.

### 2. Video presentation

You may want to use the fifth segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), to explain some customs of the marriage feast in New Testament times.

Lesson  
**23**

# “Love One Another, As I Have Loved You”

*Luke 22:1–38; John 13–15*

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**Purpose** To inspire class members to follow Jesus’ example by loving and serving others.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Luke 22:7–30. Jesus meets with his Twelve Apostles for the Feast of Passover. He institutes the sacrament and teaches the Apostles that they should serve others.
    - b. John 13. Jesus washes the feet of the Apostles and commands them to love one another.
    - c. John 14:1–15; 15. Jesus teaches, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” He compares himself to a vine and his disciples to the vine’s branches. (Note: the verses from chapters 14 and 15 that are about the Comforter will be discussed in lesson 24.)
  2. Additional reading: Matthew 26:1–5, 14–35; Mark 14:1–2, 10–31.
  3. If you use the attention activity, arrange to have a soloist or a small group of adults or children sing “Love One Another” (*Hymns*, no. 308) at the beginning of class. If this is not feasible, bring a recording of the song or prepare to have class members sing it together.
  4. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
    - a. The pictures *The Last Supper* (62174; Gospel Art Picture Kit 225) and *Jesus Washing the Apostles’ Feet* (62550; Gospel Art Picture Kit 226).
    - b. A small plant to illustrate your discussion of John 15:1–8.
  5. Suggestion for teaching: Singing or playing a hymn or Primary song related to the topic of the lesson is a good way to invite the Spirit during the lesson. The Lord said, “My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads” (D&C 25:12; see also Colossians 3:16). Hymns and Primary songs can also help class members learn the doctrines of the gospel. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 137–38.)
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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

- Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Have the soloist or small group sing “Love One Another,” or play a recording or have class members sing the hymn together (see the “Preparation” section).
- Explain that the text of this hymn comes from John 13:34–35. Have class members turn to this scripture, and ask someone to read it aloud. Point out that Jesus spoke these words at the Last Supper. This lesson will discuss this commandment and other things Jesus said and did during this meeting with his Apostles.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how the Savior's words and actions during the Last Supper showed his love for his Apostles and for us. Help class members understand that Jesus wants us to follow his example in loving and serving others.

### 1. Jesus institutes the sacrament.

Discuss Luke 22:7–30. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Point out that this Passover meal, shared by Jesus and his Apostles the day before Jesus was crucified, is often called the Last Supper. Display the picture of the Last Supper.

- When Jesus and his Apostles met to eat the Passover meal, Jesus introduced the ordinance of the sacrament. What did he tell the Apostles about the purpose of the sacrament? (See Luke 22:19–20. It was to help them remember him and his atoning sacrifice.) How does partaking of the sacrament help you remember the Savior?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said: “Since that upper room experience on the eve of Gethsemane and Golgotha, children of the promise have been under covenant to remember Christ’s sacrifice in this newer, higher, more holy and personal way. . . . If remembering is the principal task before us, what might come to our memory when those plain and precious emblems are offered to us?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 88, 90; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 67, 68).

Discuss answers to Elder Holland’s question, including some of the following things that Elder Holland suggested we should remember about the Savior (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 90–91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 68–69):

- a. His love and strength in the Grand Council of Heaven.
  - b. That he is the Creator of heaven and earth.
  - c. All that he did in his premortal life as Jehovah.
  - d. The simple grandeur of his birth.
  - e. His teachings.
  - f. His miracles and healings.
  - g. That “all things which are good cometh of Christ” (Moroni 7:24).
  - h. The unkind treatment, rejection, and injustice he endured.
  - i. That he descended below all things in order to rise above them.
  - j. That he made his sacrifices and endured his sorrows for each of us.
- Why is it important that we take the sacrament each week? How can we prepare ourselves spiritually before partaking of the sacrament?
  - At the Last Supper the Apostles again contended about “which of them should be accounted the greatest” (Luke 22:24; see also Matthew 18:1; Luke 9:46). In what ways do we sometimes wish to be considered greater than someone else? How can we overcome these feelings?
  - What did the Lord teach about true greatness? (See Luke 22:25–27; see also Matthew 20:25–28.) How does he himself exemplify this teaching? How can we follow his example?

### 2. After washing their feet, Jesus commands the Apostles to love one another.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 13. Display the picture of Jesus washing the Apostles’ feet. Explain that when Jesus and his Apostles had eaten the Last

Supper, Jesus washed each of the Apostles' feet (John 13:4–5). This task was usually performed by a servant when a guest arrived. One reason Jesus did this was to teach his Apostles about humility and service.

- Why do you think Simon Peter objected when Jesus began to wash his feet? (See John 13:6, 8. He felt it was not right for the Lord to act as a servant.) How did Jesus respond? (See John 13:8.)
- What did Jesus tell the Apostles about why he had washed their feet? (See John 13:12–17. He told them that they should follow his example of service.) How has service to others brought you happiness?
- What can we learn from Jesus' words and actions about the qualities of good leaders? How can we follow his example when we are in positions of leadership?
- During the Last Supper, Jesus repeatedly told his disciples to love one another (John 13:34–35; 15:12, 17). What are some specific things we can do to follow Christ's example of love?

### 3. Jesus teaches “I am the way, the truth, and the life” and “I am the true vine.”

Discuss John 14:1–15; 15. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Why was Thomas concerned when Jesus told the Apostles, “Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know”? (See John 14:4–5.) What did Jesus tell Thomas? (See John 14:6.) Why is Jesus the only way by which we can come unto Heavenly Father?
- Jesus taught his disciples to show their love for others through service. What did he tell them to do to show their love for him? (See John 14:15.) How does our obedience demonstrate our love for the Lord?
- As he taught his Apostles, Jesus used the symbol of a vine (John 15:1–8). Who is symbolized by the vine? by the husbandman (gardener)? by the branches? (See John 15:1, 5.)

If you brought a plant to class, display it now.

- What happens to a leaf or branch that is cut off from the rest of the plant? How is your relationship to the Savior like the relationship of a leaf or branch to the main body of the plant?
- In the Savior's comparison, what does the gardener do to the branches of the vine that do not bear fruit? (See John 15:2.) What does he do to the branches that do bear fruit? (Note that *purgeth* means purifies; see John 15:2, footnote 2c.) What application might this have for us?
- Jesus taught, “He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). How have you found this to be true?
- According to John 15:13, what is one of the greatest demonstrations of love? What does this tell us about the Savior's love for us?

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Testify that Jesus Christ loves us and wants us to love and serve one another. Challenge class members to remember Christ's Atonement and his love for us during the sacrament each week.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Taking upon us the name of Christ

During your discussion of the sacrament, you may want to discuss the following questions about taking upon ourselves the name of Christ. Some of the suggested answers are adapted from a talk given by Elder Dallin H. Oaks in the April 1985 general conference (see Conference Report, Apr. 1985, 101–5; or *Ensign*, May 1985, 80–83).

- When do we take upon ourselves the name of Christ?
  - a. When we are baptized into his Church (2 Nephi 31:13; Mosiah 25:23; Moroni 6:3; D&C 18:22–25; 20:37).
  - b. When we renew our baptismal covenants by partaking of the sacrament (Moroni 4:3; 5:2; D&C 20:77, 79).
  - c. When we proclaim our belief in him.
  - d. When we take upon ourselves the authority to act in his name and exercise that authority.
  - e. When we participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple.
- What do we promise when we take upon ourselves the name of Christ?
  - a. We signify our willingness to do the work of his kingdom and our determination to serve him to the end (D&C 20:37; Moroni 6:3).
  - b. We promise to follow him with real intent, obeying him and repenting of our sins (2 Nephi 31:13; Mosiah 5:8).
- What does Jesus Christ promise us when we take upon us his name? (We become his sons and daughters, bearing his name. Those who are called by his name at the last day will be exalted; see Mosiah 5:7–9; 15:12; Alma 5:14; 3 Nephi 27:5–6; D&C 76:55, 58, 62).

### 2. Video presentation

The fifth segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), includes information on feasts in New Testament times. This segment could help class members visualize the setting of the Last Supper and understand the reference to the disciple “leaning on Jesus’ bosom” (John 13:23).

### 3. Class member presentation

Comparisons such as “I am the true vine” may be difficult for some people, especially youth, to understand. For a more personal illustration of Jesus Christ’s love for us, invite one or two class members to share an experience where they felt the Savior’s love giving them strength, as a vine gives strength to its leaves or branches. Make the invitation at least a week in advance, and encourage the class members to seek the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in choosing an experience that is appropriate to share.

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to be receptive to the influence of the Holy Ghost and to draw nearer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. John 16:1–15. Jesus prepares his Apostles for the difficult times that will follow his crucifixion. He teaches them about the mission of the Holy Ghost and promises that they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
  - b. John 16:16–33. Jesus foretells his death and resurrection and counsels the Apostles to “be of good cheer.”
  - c. John 17. Jesus offers the great intercessory prayer for his Apostles and all others who believe in him.
2. Additional reading: John 14:16–31; 15:18–27; 3 Nephi 19:19–36; Doctrine and Covenants 132:21–24; Bible Dictionary, “Comforter,” 648; “Holy Ghost,” 704.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class two gift boxes (or draw on the chalkboard a picture of two gift boxes). Prepare two wordstrips to place on the boxes during the lesson: one that says *Gift of the Holy Ghost* and one that says *Eternal Life*.
4. Suggestion for teaching: In addition to praying that you may teach with the Spirit, pray that class members may learn by the Spirit and receive his confirmation of the truths that are being taught (see *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 13–14).

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display two gift boxes (or draw on the chalkboard a picture of two gift boxes). Invite class members to talk briefly about gifts they would like to receive.

Explain that one of the gift boxes you have displayed represents one of the greatest gifts we can receive in this life. The other box represents what the Lord called “the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7).

Explain that in this lesson class members will discover what these two gifts are and will learn how to receive them.

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**Scripture Discussion** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how the Savior’s words to his Apostles apply to all of us. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the lesson.

## 1. Jesus promises his Apostles that they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Discuss John 16:1–15. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- In the final hours of his mortal ministry, Jesus taught and strengthened his Apostles. Why did the Apostles need to be strengthened at this time? (See John 16:1–6; see also John 15:18–20.)
- The Savior told the Apostles that he would send the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) to them (John 16:7). What is the mission of the Holy Ghost? (See John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7–14. List answers on the chalkboard as shown below.)

The Holy Ghost:

- a. Comforts (John 14:26).
  - b. Teaches (John 14:26).
  - c. Brings truths to our remembrance (John 14:26).
  - d. Testifies of the Savior (John 15:26).
  - e. Reproves the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8–11).
  - f. Guides us into all truth (John 16:13).
  - g. Shows us things to come (John 16:13).
  - h. Glorifies the Savior (John 16:14).
- The Twelve Apostles experienced manifestations of the Holy Ghost during Jesus' mortal ministry, but they did not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after his death and resurrection (John 20:22). What is the difference between a manifestation of the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See the quotation below.) How has receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost helped you?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught:

“Manifestations of the Holy Ghost are given to lead sincere seekers to gospel truths that will persuade them to repentance and baptism. The gift of the Holy Ghost is more comprehensive. . . . [It] includes the right to constant companionship, that we may ‘always have his Spirit to be with [us]’ (D&C 20:77).

“A newly baptized member told me what she felt when she received that gift. This was a faithful Christian woman who had spent her life in service to others. She knew and loved the Lord, and she had felt the manifestations of His Spirit. When she received the added light of the restored gospel, she was baptized and the elders placed their hands upon her head and gave her the gift of the Holy Ghost. She recalled, ‘I felt the influence of the Holy Ghost settle upon me with greater intensity than I had ever felt before. He was like an old friend who had guided me in the past but now had come to stay’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 80; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 60).

If you used the attention activity, place on one of the gift boxes the wordstrip that says *Gift of the Holy Ghost*.

- After we have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, how can we be worthy of the Holy Ghost's constant companionship? (See Acts 5:32; D&C 6:14; 20:77, 79; 76:116; 121:45–46.) How can we recognize the influence of the Holy Ghost? (See Galatians 5:22–23; D&C 6:15, 23; 11:13.)

President Boyd K. Packer taught: “The Holy Ghost speaks with a voice that you *feel* more than you *hear*. It is described as a ‘still small voice.’ And while

we speak of ‘listening’ to the whisperings of the Spirit, most often one describes a spiritual prompting by saying, ‘I had a *feeling* . . .’ . . . Revelation comes as words we *feel* more than *hear*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).

In a dream given to President Brigham Young, the Prophet Joseph Smith instructed him to teach the Saints that “the Spirit of the Lord . . . will whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God” (*Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1846–1847*, comp. Elden J. Watson [1971], 529).

## 2. Jesus foretells his death and resurrection.

Read and discuss selected verses from John 16:16–33.

- After Jesus taught the Apostles about the Holy Ghost, he told them that he would soon die and be resurrected (John 16:16–20). Then he said, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace” (John 16:33). What do you think it means to have peace in him? What can we learn from Jesus’ teachings in John 16 that can help us have peace in him? (See also Philippians 4:7–9; D&C 59:23.)
- Jesus said to his Apostles, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). How can the knowledge that Jesus has overcome the world help us be of good cheer when we are faced with tribulation? Why is it important to be of good cheer?

## 3. Jesus offers the great intercessory prayer.

Read and discuss John 17, which contains a prayer that Jesus offered just before his suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. This prayer is often called the great intercessory prayer because as Jesus prayed, he interceded, or stood between us and Heavenly Father, to plead for our salvation. Seek the Spirit’s guidance in selecting verses to read and discuss.

- As Jesus began his prayer, how did he describe his mission on earth? (See John 17:1–2; see also Moses 1:39.) How did he accomplish this mission?
- In his prayer, the Savior said, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). How is knowing Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ different from merely knowing *about* them? How can we come to know them? (See 1 John 4:7–8; Mosiah 5:10–13; Alma 22:18; D&C 18:33–36; 132:21–24.)

If you used the attention activity, place the wordstrip that says *Eternal Life* on the second gift box. Invite a class member to read Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

- In the first part of his prayer, Jesus described the things he had done toward fulfilling his mission (John 17:4–8). How do we report our efforts to Heavenly Father? How might it affect our actions if each night we included in our prayers a report of our efforts to serve him during that day?
- Even though Jesus knew that he was about to suffer intensely, for whom did he pray? (See John 17:6–9, 20.) What can we learn from this?

- How can we, like Jesus and his Apostles, live in the world and be “not of the world”? (John 17:14; see also verses 15–16).

Elder M. Russell Ballard said:

“In the Church, we often state the couplet, ‘Be in the world but not of the world.’ As we observe television shows that make profanity, violence, and infidelity commonplace and even glamorous, we often wish we could lock out the world in some way and isolate our families from it all. . . .

“Perhaps we should state the couplet previously mentioned as two separate admonitions. First, ‘*Be in the world.*’ Be involved; be informed. Try to be understanding and tolerant and to appreciate diversity. Make meaningful contributions to society through service and involvement. Second, ‘*Be not of the world.*’ Do not follow wrong paths or bend to accommodate or accept what is not right.

“We should strive to change the corrupt and immoral tendencies in television and in society by keeping things that offend and debase out of our homes. In spite of all of the wickedness in the world, and in spite of all the opposition to good that we find on every hand, we should not try to take ourselves or our children *out* of the world. Jesus said, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven,’ or yeast (Matthew 13:33). We are to lift the world and help all to rise above the wickedness that surrounds us. The Savior prayed to the Father:

“ ‘I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil’ (John 17:15)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 101; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 80).

- How are Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ “one,” as stated in John 17:21–22?

Speaking of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “They are distinct beings, but they are one in purpose and effort. They are united as one in bringing to pass the grand, divine plan for the salvation and exaltation of the children of God. . . . It is that perfect unity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost that binds these three into the oneness of the divine Godhead” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 69; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 51).

- Why was it important for the Apostles to be one? (See John 17:22–23.) Why do we need unity with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ? with other Church members? within our families? How can we help increase unity in these relationships? (See John 17:26; Mosiah 18:21; D&C 35:2.)

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## Conclusion

Ask class members to think about how they feel when they know someone is praying for them. Invite them to ponder how they might have felt if they had been with Jesus when he offered the intercessory prayer. Explain that the intercessory prayer can help us appreciate the precious gift of eternal life that the Savior offers us. Testify that we will be blessed as we strive to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost and become one with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

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**Additional  
Teaching Idea**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea during the lesson.

**Inviting the Spirit**

To help class members feel and recognize the influence of the Holy Ghost, speak with a few of them in advance, inviting each of them to choose one of the following presentations to do as part of the lesson:

- a. Read a favorite scripture passage.
- b. Bear testimony.
- c. Sing a hymn or Primary song about the Savior.
- d. Express love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
- e. Share a spiritual experience (as appropriate).

In class, invite class members to describe how they felt during the presentations. Read the statement by President Boyd K. Packer on pages 99–100, and help class members recognize feelings that come from the Holy Ghost. Talk about how you feel when you receive guidance from the Holy Ghost.

# “Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done”

## Lesson 25

*Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46*

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**Purpose** To strengthen class members’ testimonies that they can receive forgiveness, peace, and eternal life because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures, which give an account of the Savior’s experience in the Garden of Gethsemane: Matthew 26:36–46, Mark 14:32–42, and Luke 22:39–46.
  2. Additional reading: 2 Nephi 2:5–8; Alma 7:11–14; 34:8–16; 42:1–31; Doctrine and Covenants 19:15–24; Bible Dictionary, “Atonement,” 617; “Gethsemane,” 680.
  3. If the picture *Jesus Praying in Gethsemane* (62175; Gospel Art Picture Kit 227) is available, use it during the lesson.
  4. Invite a few class members to come to class prepared to briefly express their feelings about the Atonement of Jesus Christ by reading a favorite scripture passage about the Atonement or reciting a few lines from a favorite sacrament hymn.
  5. Suggestion for teaching: The Lord said, “Seek not to declare my word, but seek first to obtain my word” (D&C 11:21). To effectively teach from the scriptures, you should study and ponder them daily. Constantly nourish your testimony of their power and truthfulness. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 10, 85.)
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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Several years before Elder Orson F. Whitney was ordained an Apostle, he received a vision of the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane. Read the following quotation, which is Elder Whitney’s description of his vision:

“I seemed to be in the Garden of Gethsemane, a witness of the Savior’s agony. I saw Him as plainly as ever I have seen anyone. Standing behind a tree in the foreground, I beheld Jesus, with Peter, James and John, as they came through a little . . . gate at my right. Leaving the three Apostles there, after telling them to kneel and pray, the Son of God passed over to the other side, where He also knelt and prayed. It was the same prayer with which all Bible readers are familiar: ‘Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.’

“As He prayed the tears streamed down his face, which was toward me. I was so moved at the sight that I also wept, out of pure sympathy. My whole heart went out to him; I loved him with all my soul, and longed to be with him as I longed for nothing else.

“Presently He arose and walked to where those Apostles were kneeling—fast asleep! He shook them gently, awoke them, and in a tone of tender reproach, untinged by the least show of anger or impatience, asked them plaintively if they could not watch with him one hour. There He was, with the awful weight of the world’s sin upon his shoulders, with the pangs of every man, woman and child shooting through his sensitive soul—and they could not watch with him one poor hour!

“Returning to his place, He offered up the same prayer as before; then went back and again found them sleeping. Again he awoke them, readmonished them, and once more returned and prayed. Three times this occurred” (*Through Memory’s Halls* [1930], 82).

Display the picture of Jesus praying in Gethsemane. Ask class members to think about their love for the Savior and how they would feel if they saw him praying in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his Crucifixion. Invite a few class members to share their thoughts.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

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This lesson and lesson 26 are about the Atonement—Jesus Christ’s voluntary act of taking upon himself death and the sins and infirmities of all mankind. This lesson focuses on the Savior’s experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, while lesson 26 discusses his Crucifixion. It is important to remember that the Atonement included the Savior’s suffering both in the garden and on the cross.

President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “In Gethsemane and on Calvary, He worked out the infinite and eternal atonement. It was the greatest single act of love in recorded history. Thus He became our Redeemer—redeeming all of us from physical death, and redeeming those of us from spiritual death who will obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel” (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 14).

### 1. The Savior takes upon himself our sins and infirmities.

Discuss Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; and Luke 22:39–46. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- What did Jesus ask his Apostles to do in the Garden of Gethsemane? (See Luke 22:39–40.) Why did Jesus ask the Apostles to pray? (See Luke 22:40.) How does prayer strengthen us against temptation?
- What did Jesus ask Peter, James, and John to do in the Garden of Gethsemane? (See Matthew 26:38, 41. Point out that this use of the word *watch* means to stay awake; see footnote 38*b*.) How might the command to watch, or stay awake, apply to us as we strive to live the gospel? (See 2 Nephi 4:28; Alma 7:22; 32:26–27.)
- Why was Jesus willing to submit to the great suffering he knew he would experience in the Garden of Gethsemane? (See Matthew 26:39, 42, 44.) What can we learn from the Savior’s prayer in Gethsemane? How have you been blessed as you have submitted to Heavenly Father’s will?
- After Jesus said that he would do Heavenly Father’s will, “there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him” (Luke 22:43). What can this teach us about our Heavenly Father? (Answers could include that he will strengthen us as we humbly do his will.)

- What did the Savior experience in Gethsemane? (See D&C 19:16–19; Luke 22:44; Mosiah 3:7; Alma 7:11–13.)

Elder James E. Talmage taught: “Christ’s agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. . . . He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. . . . In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, ‘the prince of this world,’ could inflict. . . . In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 613).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: “As part of His infinite atonement, Jesus knows ‘according to the flesh’ all that through which we pass. (Alma 7:11–12). He has borne the sins, griefs, sorrows, and . . . pains of every man, woman, and child (see 2 Nephi 9:21)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 89; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 72).

## 2. We need the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- Why do we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See Alma 34:9.)
  - a. Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, we are subject to physical death, which is the separation of the body and the spirit (Moses 6:48).
  - b. When we sin, we bring spiritual death upon ourselves because we separate ourselves from God. Our sins make us unclean and unable to dwell with God (1 Nephi 10:21).
  - c. Because we cannot overcome physical or spiritual death by ourselves, Heavenly Father sent his Only Begotten Son to offer the Atonement (John 3:16; 2 Nephi 2:5–9).
- What blessings are available to us because of the Savior’s atoning sacrifice? How can we receive these blessings?
  - a. Because the Savior submitted to death and was resurrected, we will all be resurrected, overcoming physical death (Mosiah 16:7–8).
  - b. Because he took upon himself our sins, we can repent of our sins and be forgiven, making us clean and worthy to dwell with God (Alma 7:13–14; Articles of Faith 1:3).
  - c. Because he took upon himself our infirmities, he understands our difficulties and knows how to help us (Alma 7:11–12). We receive peace in him as we humbly follow him (D&C 19:23).

Elder Marion G. Romney explained that through the Atonement, all people are saved from physical death and the repentant and obedient are also saved from sin:

“It took the atonement of Jesus Christ to reunite the bodies and spirits of men in the resurrection. And so all the world, believers and non-believers, are indebted to the Redeemer for their certain resurrection, because the resurrection will be as wide as was the fall, which brought death to every man.

“There is another phase of the atonement which makes me love the Savior even more, and fills my soul with gratitude beyond expression. It is that in addition to atoning for Adam’s transgression, thereby bringing about the resurrection, the Savior by his suffering paid the debt for my personal sins. He paid the debt for your personal sins and for the personal sins of every living soul that ever dwelt upon the earth or that ever will dwell in mortality upon the earth. But this he did conditionally. The benefits of this suffering for our individual transgressions will not come to us unconditionally in the same sense that the resurrection will come regardless of what we do. If we partake of the blessings of the atonement as far as our individual transgressions are concerned, we must obey the law.

“ . . . When we commit sin, we are estranged from God and rendered unfit to enter into his presence. No unclean thing can enter into his presence. We cannot of ourselves, no matter how we may try, rid ourselves of the stain which is upon us as a result of our own transgressions. That stain must be washed away by the blood of the Redeemer, and he has set up the way by which that stain may be removed. That way is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel requires us to believe in the Redeemer, accept his atonement, repent of our sins, be baptized by immersion for the remission of our sins, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and continue faithfully to observe, or do the best we can to observe, the principles of the gospel all the days of our lives” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1953, 35–36).

Invite the previously assigned class members to share the presentations they have prepared (see the “Preparation” section).

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Conclusion

Testify of Jesus Christ and express your gratitude for his Atonement. As appropriate, ask class members to do the same.

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**Additional  
Teaching Ideas**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

**1. Video presentation**

The fifth segment of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914), explains that *Gethsemane* means “olive press.” If you show this segment, discuss how *Gethsemane* is an appropriate name for the garden where the Savior bore our sins.

**2. “The Mediator”**

Elder Boyd K. Packer used a parable to teach about how the Atonement of Jesus Christ frees us from sin as we repent and obey the commandments. You may want to share this parable to help class members understand the need for the Atonement. The parable can be found in the following sources:

- a. *Gospel Principles* [1997], pages 75–77.
- b. “The Mediator,” a segment of *Book of Mormon Video Presentations* (53911).
- c. Conference Report, Apr. 1977, pages 79–80; or *Ensign*, May 1977, pages 54–55.

# “To This End Was I Born”

## Lesson 26

*Matthew 26:47–27:66; Mark 14:43–15:39; Luke 22:47–23:56; John 18–19*

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**Purpose** To help class members feel the Savior’s love for them and increase their love for him and their gratitude for his atoning sacrifice.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Matthew 26:47–75; Mark 14:43–72; Luke 22:47–71; John 18:1–27. Shortly after his agony in Gethsemane, Jesus is betrayed by Judas, who appears with chief priests, Pharisees, and soldiers. Jesus submits himself to his captors, who take him from the garden and subject him to a Jewish trial. He is questioned first by Annas, a former high priest, and then by Caiaphas, Annas’s successor and son-in-law. The chief priests and elders who are present spit on Jesus, mock him, bind him, and accuse him of blasphemy, an offense punishable by death. Outside Caiaphas’s palace, Peter denies that he knows Jesus.
    - b. Matthew 27:1–26; Mark 15:1–15; Luke 23:1–25; John 18:28–19:16. Because the chief priests and elders do not have power to sentence Jesus to death, they send him to be tried by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor in Judea (Bible Dictionary, “Pilate,” 751). Before Pilate, Jesus is accused of being an enemy to Caesar. Learning that Jesus is from Galilee, Pilate sends him to Herod, a governor over Galilee. Herod refuses to judge Jesus and sends him back to Pilate, who yields to the crowd’s demands that Jesus be crucified.
    - c. Matthew 27:27–66; Mark 15:16–39; Luke 23:26–56; John 19:17–42. Jesus is scourged and crucified. On the cross he experiences great agony while offering himself as a sacrifice for mankind.
  2. Additional reading: Isaiah 53; Mark 15:39–47; John 3:16; 15:13; 1 Nephi 11:32–33; 19:7–9; 2 Nephi 9:21–22; Bible Dictionary, “Crucifixion,” 651.
  3. Prepare the seven wordstrips described on page 110 (or prepare to write the statements on the chalkboard).
  4. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
    - a. The pictures The Betrayal of Jesus (62468; Gospel Art Picture Kit 228); Peter’s Denial (62177; Gospel Art Picture Kit 229); and The Crucifixion (62505; Gospel Art Picture Kit 230).
    - b. “To This End Was I Born,” a sixteen-minute segment of *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  5. Suggestion for teaching: When teachers and class members are reverent, they invite the Spirit to be present. Class members should be “free to discuss, free to speak, free to participate in classwork, but no member of the class has the right to distract another student by jostling or making light and frivolous remarks” (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* [1954], 224). Set an example of reverence toward God and respect for each class member.

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## Suggested Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Have class members turn to the map “Jerusalem in Jesus’ Time” (map 17 in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible).

Explain that this lesson focuses on the Savior’s Crucifixion and the events in the hours that preceded it. These events occurred at places found on the map. Help class members locate the following sites: (1) the Garden of Gethsemane, (2) the house of Caiaphas, (3) the court of the Gentiles, (4) Fortress Antonia (the house of Pilate), and (5) the Hill of Golgotha (Calvary).

When class members have located the Hill of Golgotha, explain that Jesus was crucified there. Display the picture of the Crucifixion. Ask class members to imagine a small child looking at the picture and asking, “Why did Jesus need to die?” Invite class members to take time during the lesson to ponder what they would say to the child. Tell them that you will discuss the question toward the end of this lesson.

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Scripture Discussion and Application As you teach the following scripture passages, help class members understand the love the Savior showed for them when he allowed himself to be persecuted and crucified.

### **1. Jesus is betrayed, arrested, and accused of blasphemy; Peter denies Jesus three times.**

Discuss Matthew 26:47–75; Mark 14:43–72; Luke 22:47–71; and John 18:1–27. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. You may want to summarize this account as outlined in item 1a of the “Preparation” section. Display the picture of Jesus being betrayed in Gethsemane.

- How did Peter respond to the men who came to the Garden of Gethsemane to take Jesus away? (See John 18:10.) How did Jesus respond to these men? (See Luke 22:51–53; John 18:11–12.) Why did Jesus allow himself to be taken? (See Matthew 26:53–54; John 10:17–18. Explain that it was Heavenly Father’s will that Jesus lay down his life for us.)
- The chief priests and elders of the Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy, a crime punishable by death (Mark 14:64). What is blasphemy? (Being irreverent toward God or claiming to be equal to God.) What did Jesus say that the chief priests and elders thought was blasphemous? (See Mark 14:60–63.)
- As Jesus was led from the garden, most of his disciples “forsook him, and fled” (Matthew 26:56). However, Peter and John continued to follow him (Matthew 26:58; John 18:15; it is assumed that the unnamed disciple in John 18:15 is John). What did Peter do when people outside Caiaphas’s palace said that he knew Jesus? (See Matthew 26:69–74.) What did Peter do when he recognized that he had denied Jesus three times? (See Matthew 26:75; see also verses 33–35.)

Display the picture of Peter denying Jesus.

- How do some of us, like Peter, sometimes deny our faith? What can we learn from Peter’s life after he denied the Lord?

President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“My heart goes out to Peter. So many of us are so much like him. We pledge our loyalty; we affirm our determination to be of good courage; we declare, sometimes even publicly, that come what may we will do the right thing, that we will stand for the right cause, that we will be true to ourselves and to others.

“Then the pressures begin to build. Sometimes these are social pressures. Sometimes they are personal appetites. Sometimes they are false ambitions. There is a weakening of the will. There is a softening of discipline. There is capitulation. And then there is remorse, followed by self-accusation and bitter tears of regret. . . .

“ . . . If there be those throughout the Church who by word or act have denied the faith, I pray that you may draw comfort and resolution from the example of Peter, who, though he had walked daily with Jesus, in an hour of extremity momentarily denied the Lord and also the testimony which he carried in his own heart. But he rose above this and became a mighty defender and a powerful advocate. So, too, there is a way for any person to turn about and add his or her strength and faith to the strength and faith of others in building the kingdom of God” (“And Peter Went Out and Wept Bitterly,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1995, 2–4, 6).

## 2. Jesus is sentenced to be crucified.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 27:1–26; Mark 15:1–15; Luke 23:1–25; and John 18:28–19:16. You may want to summarize this account as outlined in item 1*b* of the “Preparation” section.

- When Pilate learned that Jesus was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod, who was a governor over Galilee (Luke 23:6–7). Why was Herod “exceeding glad” to see Jesus? (See Luke 23:8.) How did the Savior respond to Herod’s questions? (See Luke 23:9; compare this verse with the prophecy in Isaiah 53:7.)
- After Herod and his men accused and mocked Jesus, they sent him back to Pilate (Luke 23:11). What was Pilate’s judgment of Jesus? (See Luke 23:13–17; see also Luke 23:4.) Why did Pilate sentence Jesus to be crucified? (See Matthew 27:15–24; Mark 15:6–15; Luke 23:18–25; John 19:1–16.) How might we, like Pilate, sometimes try to avoid responsibility for difficult decisions?
- To one of Pilate’s questions about whether Jesus was a king, Jesus replied, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (John 18:37). In what ways is Jesus a King? (See Psalm 24:10; Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 11:15; 15:3; 2 Nephi 10:14.) What does it mean that his “kingdom is not of this world”? (John 18:36).

## 3. Jesus is scourged and crucified.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 27:27–66; Mark 15:16–39; Luke 23:26–56; and John 19:17–42. Display the picture of the Crucifixion.

- What did the people do to Jesus after he was sentenced to be crucified? (See Matthew 27:27–44; Luke 23:34–39.) Why did Jesus allow the people to persecute him? (See 1 Nephi 19:9.)

The scriptures record seven statements that Jesus made while on the cross. Read and discuss the verses listed below. As you discuss them, display wordstrips of the statements or write the statements on the chalkboard.

1. *Luke 23:34. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."*

- From the Joseph Smith Translation we learn that when Jesus said this, he was praying for the Roman soldiers who had crucified him (Luke 23:34, footnote 34c). What does this reveal about him? What is the worldly way to respond to people who hurt or offend us? How are we blessed when we follow Jesus' example?

2. *Luke 23:43. To the repentant thief: "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."*

3. *John 19:26–27. To his mother, Mary: "Woman, behold thy son!" To John: "Behold thy mother!"*

- Whose needs did Jesus think of during his painful ordeal? (See Luke 23:43; John 19:26–27.) What can we learn from this? (If questions arise about Jesus' statement in Luke 23:43, see the third additional teaching idea.)

4. *Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*

- What did Jesus experience on the cross that enabled him to understand and help us when we feel alone? Why is it important to know that the Savior can bear not only our sins but also our loneliness, grief, and fear?

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said: "Because he must ultimately tread this winepress of redemption unaided, can he endure the darkest moment of them all, the shock of the greatest pain? This comes not with thorns and with nails, but with the terror of feeling utterly alone: . . . 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Mark 15:34). Can he bear all of our sins *and* our fear and loneliness too? He did and he does and he will" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 32; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 26).

5. *John 19:28. "I thirst."*

- Despite all that Jesus suffered, this was his only mention of physical discomfort. What was he given when he said that he was thirsty? (See John 19:29.)

6. *John 19:30. "It is finished."*

- According to the Joseph Smith Translation, Jesus said, "Father, it is finished, thy will is done" (Matthew 27:50, footnote 50a). Why did the Savior have to die in order to accomplish Heavenly Father's will? (See 2 Nephi 9:5; 3 Nephi 27:13–16. If you used the attention activity, invite class members to share their ideas on how to answer the child's question.)

President Spencer W. Kimball said: "He needed to die, that he might open the graves of all men as his own tomb was opened. Without the deep darkness of the crucifixion hour, there could have been no spring of coming from the grave" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 4; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 4).

7. *Luke 23:46. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."*

If you are using the video presentation "To This End Was I Born," show it now.

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**Conclusion**

Explain that the Savior's first recorded premortal words were "Here am I, send me" (Abraham 3:27). Among his first recorded mortal words were "I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49). Among the last words he spoke in mortality were "Father, it is finished, thy will is done" (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 27:54; see Matthew 27:50, footnote 50*a*). Jesus never lost sight of his Father's will or his own mission. He could have called upon legions of angels to rescue him, but he did not (Matthew 26:53–54). Despite the agony, he never faltered in his humility and his willingness to accomplish the infinite Atonement.

Testify of the truths discussed in the lesson. As appropriate, invite class members to share their testimonies.

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**Additional Teaching Ideas**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

**1. Following the Savior's example during times of difficulty**

The Savior's actions during the last day of his mortal life show the great magnitude of his character. Review some of the trials Jesus endured on that day. Then ask the following questions:

- What qualities of character were evident in Jesus during this difficult time? (Answers may include that he was more concerned for others than for himself, that he was forgiving, that he was submissive to Heavenly Father's will, that he did not condemn others for their weaknesses, and that he did not complain. List class members' responses on the chalkboard. Ask class members to give specific instances when the qualities were evident.)
- What qualities are often evident in us during our most difficult times? How can we follow the Savior's example during times of difficulty?

**2. "I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4)**

- What did Judas do in an attempt to repent for betraying the Savior? (See Matthew 27:3–5.) What can we learn from his experience about the "payment" the world gives us in exchange for our sins?

**3. "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43)**

Refer to the following information if you need to explain the Savior's words in Luke 23:43.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said that Jesus told the thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in the world of spirits" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 309).

From Doctrine and Covenants 138:36–37 we learn that Jesus went to the world of spirits during the time between his death and Resurrection and that there he prepared the faithful spirits to preach his gospel to the spirits who had not received it on the earth.

Lesson  
**27**

# “He Is Not Here, for He Is Risen”

*Matthew 28; Luke 24; John 20–21*

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**Purpose**

To help class members feel gratitude for the Savior’s Resurrection and the blessings it brings us.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Matthew 28:1–15; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–10. Mary Magdalene and other women come to Jesus’ tomb and find it empty. Angels announce that Jesus has been resurrected. Peter and John come to see the empty tomb. The risen Lord appears to the women.
  - b. Luke 24:13–35. Jesus walks and talks with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They do not recognize him until he breaks bread for them.
  - c. Matthew 28:16–20; Luke 24:33–53; John 20:19–31. Jesus appears to his Apostles, shows them that he has been resurrected, and commands them to teach the gospel to all nations. Thomas feels the wounds in Jesus’ hands, feet, and side.
  - d. John 21. Jesus appears again to some of the Apostles at the Sea of Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee). He commands Peter, “Feed my sheep.”
2. Additional reading: Mark 16; Bible Dictionary, “Resurrection,” 761.
3. Ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–32).
4. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: Burial of Jesus (62180; Gospel Art Picture Kit 231); Jesus’ Tomb (62111; Gospel Art Picture Kit 232) or The Empty Tomb (Gospel Art Picture Kit 244); Mary and the Resurrected Lord (62186; Gospel Art Picture Kit 233); Jesus Shows His Wounds (62503; Gospel Art Picture Kit 234); and The Resurrected Jesus Christ (62187; Gospel Art Picture Kit 239).
5. Suggestion for teaching: The Lord’s commandment to Peter, “Feed my sheep” (John 21:16–17), applies to all teachers. Prayerfully seek ways to make the spiritual food of the scriptures appealing to class members so they will want to feast on it. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 3.)

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development****Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Relate the following story told by Elder James M. Paramore:

“Many years ago . . . a writer for a newspaper was asked an important question, ‘What would be the most important news the world could receive?’”

- How would you answer this question?

Elder Paramore continued: “[The writer] thought and thought about the question, he talked to many people, and read all he could in an effort to find an answer for himself. And finally, he printed his answer, ‘To know that Jesus Christ lives today would be the most important news the world could receive. In fact, if He lives today, then we too will live eternally as He said’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 80; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 64).

Display the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section. Explain that the disciples’ sorrow at Christ’s death was replaced with unspeakable joy at his Resurrection. We too can rejoice in the knowledge that Christ was resurrected.

Leave the pictures on display. Refer to them at appropriate points in the lesson.

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### Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss with class members how their knowledge of the Resurrection affects their daily lives. Rather than trying to determine the exact order of events surrounding the Resurrection (each Gospel writer gives a slightly different order), focus on the testimonies of the Resurrection given in each Gospel account.

#### **1. Mary Magdalene and other women are witnesses of the resurrected Lord.**

Discuss Matthew 28:1–15; Luke 24:1–12; and John 20:1–10. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that after Jesus was crucified, his body was wrapped in clean linen cloths and placed in a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, one of Jesus’ disciples (Matthew 27:57–60; Luke 23:50–53; John 19:38–42). This was done quickly because the Sabbath was about to begin. The morning after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and other women returned to the tomb with spices and ointments to more thoroughly anoint and embalm Jesus’ body.

- What did Mary Magdalene and the other women find when they came to Jesus’ tomb? (See Matthew 28:1–4; Luke 24:1–4. Note that the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 28 states, as Luke does, that there were two angels. See Matthew 28:2, footnote 2*a*.) What did the angels tell the women? (See Matthew 28:5–7; Luke 24:5–8.)
- What did the angels mean when they said, “He is risen”? (Jesus had been resurrected.) What does it mean to be resurrected? (See Alma 11:42–45; see also Bible Dictionary, “Resurrection,” 761.) What blessings will we receive because of Jesus’ Resurrection? (See 1 Corinthians 15:22, 50–58; Alma 11:42–45. We will all be resurrected and be given immortal bodies.)
- President Howard W. Hunter said that the words “He is not here, but is risen” (Luke 24:6) “contain all the hope, assurance, and belief necessary to sustain us in our challenging and sometimes grief-filled lives” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 18; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 15–16). How has your testimony of the Atonement and the Resurrection helped you through difficult times?
- What did the women do after the angels finished speaking? (See Matthew 28:8; Luke 24:8–9.) What can we learn from their example?
- Mary and the other women were the first of many people who saw Jesus Christ after he was resurrected (see also the second and third additional teaching ideas). Why do you think it was important that the resurrected Lord appear to earthly witnesses? (See 2 Corinthians 13:1.)

## 2. Two disciples on the road to Emmaus are witnesses of the resurrected Lord.

Discuss Luke 24:13–35. Have the assigned class member summarize the scripture passage.

- Why were Cleopas and his companion sad as they walked along the road to Emmaus? (See Luke 24:13–24.) What did the resurrected Lord teach them as they walked? (See Luke 24:25–27.)
- How did the two disciples feel as Jesus taught them? (See Luke 24:32.) What gave them this feeling? (The influence of the Holy Ghost.) Invite class members to tell of experiences when they have received a witness from the Spirit while studying the gospel or hearing someone teach it.

## 3. The Apostles are witnesses of the resurrected Lord.

Read and discuss selected verses from Matthew 28:16–20; Luke 24:33–53; and John 20:19–31.

- What did the Apostles think they were seeing when the Savior appeared to them on the evening of the day he was resurrected? (See Luke 24:36–37.) How did Jesus reassure them that he was a resurrected being, not a spirit? (See Luke 24:38–43.)
- How did Thomas respond to the other Apostles' testimonies that the Lord had been resurrected? (See John 20:24–25.) How did he come to believe that the Lord had been resurrected? (See John 20:26–29.) How do we sometimes show the same weakness as Thomas?

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“Have you not heard others speak as Thomas spoke? ‘Give us,’ they say, ‘the empirical evidence. Prove before our very eyes, and our ears, and our hands, else we will not believe.’ This is the language of the time in which we live. Thomas the Doubter has become the example of men in all ages who refuse to accept other than that which they can physically prove and explain—as if they could prove love, or faith, or even such physical phenomena as electricity. . . .

“To all within the sound of my voice who may have doubts, I repeat the words given Thomas as he felt the wounded hands of the Lord: ‘Be not faithless, but believing’” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 90; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 59).

- How can we more fully follow the Lord's admonition to “be not faithless, but believing”? (John 20:27).

## 4. Some of the Apostles see Jesus again at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee).

Read and discuss selected verses from John 21.

- The resurrected Lord showed himself again to seven of his Apostles as they were fishing. How did they come to realize it was Jesus on the shore? (See John 21:4–7.) After they had eaten, what did Jesus ask Peter and the other Apostles to do? (See John 21:15–17.) How can we feed the Lord's sheep?
- What was John's reason for writing down some of the things that the resurrected Jesus said and did? (See John 20:30–31.) How have you benefited from studying the scriptural accounts of Jesus' Resurrection?

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Conclusion	Testify that Jesus Christ was resurrected and that because of him we will also be resurrected. Bear testimony of the strength and comfort that your knowledge of the Resurrection has brought you.
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### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

#### 1. “He is risen” (Matthew 28:6)

Arrange for a small group to sing “He Is Risen” (*Hymns*, no. 199) or “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” (*Hymns*, no. 200) at the end of the lesson. Or have a group of children sing “Did Jesus Really Live Again?” (*Children’s Songbook*, 64).

#### 2. “Woman, why weepest thou?” (John 20:15)

Point out that the Gospel of John is the only Gospel that contains an account of the Lord’s appearance to Mary Magdalene just after his Resurrection. Have a class member read aloud this account in John 20:11–18. Invite class members to share their thoughts and feelings about this event.

#### 3. Other witnesses of the resurrected Lord

- In addition to the many witnesses mentioned in the Gospels, who else has seen the resurrected Lord? (Some answers are listed below.)

Stephen (Acts 7:55)

More than 500 brethren (1 Corinthians 15:6)

The Apostle James (1 Corinthians 15:7)

The Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 15:8)

2,500 Saints in the ancient Americas (3 Nephi 11:8–15; 17:25)

The Prophet Joseph Smith (Joseph Smith—History 1:17; D&C 76:22–24)

Sidney Rigdon (D&C 76:22–24)

#### 4. Scriptures about the Resurrection

Several scripture passages from the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants increase our understanding of the Resurrection. Discuss as many of the following points as time allows:

- a. Jesus was the first to be resurrected (2 Nephi 2:8), and because of his Resurrection, all people will be resurrected (2 Nephi 9:22; Alma 11:42, 44).
- b. After Jesus Christ, those who receive a celestial glory will be resurrected first, followed by those who receive a terrestrial glory, those who receive a telestial glory, and finally the sons of perdition (D&C 88:96–102).
- c. When we are resurrected, our spirits are reunited with our perfected bodies, never to be separated again (Alma 11:43, 45).
- d. The knowledge and intelligence we gain on earth “will rise with us in the resurrection” (D&C 130:18–19).
- e. The spirits of the dead look upon the separation from the body as bondage; resurrection enables us to experience a fulness of joy (D&C 138:12–17, 50).

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**Purpose** To remind class members of their responsibility to be witnesses of Jesus Christ and to help them see how the gift of the Holy Ghost helps them do so.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Acts 1. After ministering among his disciples for 40 days, the resurrected Lord ascends into heaven. Matthias is chosen to fill the vacancy left by Judas in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.
  - b. Acts 2. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles are filled with the Holy Ghost and speak in many languages. Many who hear them are converted.
  - c. Acts 3–4. Peter and John heal a lame man and testify that the man was healed by the power of Jesus Christ. The Apostles pray for and receive great power through the Holy Ghost.
  - d. Acts 5:12–42. The Apostles continue to preach and heal with great power. They are arrested and jailed but are released from prison by an angel. They declare to the chief priests that they obey God rather than men. Gamaliel counsels the Pharisees not to kill the Apostles.
2. Additional reading: Mark 16:19–20; Luke 24:49–53; Joseph Smith—History 1:21–25.
3. If the picture *The Ascension of Jesus* (62497; Gospel Art Picture Kit 236) is available, use it during the lesson.
4. If you use the attention activity, arrange to have two people come into the classroom before class starts, while class members are settling down. (If possible, these should be people who do not normally attend your class.) Have them enter the room, do something briefly (for example, speak with you or carry something into the room), and then leave. They should not speak to class members or call attention to themselves.
5. Suggestion for teaching: Teachers must testify that what they teach is true. Testify of Jesus Christ and his gospel whenever the Spirit prompts you, not just at the end of the lesson. Bearing testimony brings power to your teaching. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 11–12, 111–12.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask class members if they noticed the two people who entered the room and then left before class began (see the “Preparation” section). If any class members noticed, have them tell what they observed about the people, such as who they were, what they were wearing, and what they did. Point out that the class members who saw these visitors are witnesses. (If no one noticed the visitors, tell what they

did and explain that you are a witness.) A person who sees or experiences an event and tells others about it is a witness.

Ask any class members who did not see the visitors:

- Do you believe what these witnesses have told you? Why or why not?

Explain that today's lesson is about the early Apostles, who were witnesses of the resurrected Jesus Christ. When they testified of him, many people believed them and were baptized into the Church.

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## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, emphasize the faith and power with which the Apostles testified of the resurrected Lord. Discuss with class members how they too can be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Explain that the book of Acts is Luke's account of important events in the Church during the 30 years or so following Jesus Christ's mortal life. Luke tells of the resurrected Lord's 40-day ministry and his Ascension. He then describes the great spiritual outpouring on the day of Pentecost, Peter's leadership of the Church, the Apostles' early missionary efforts, and Paul's dramatic conversion. The second half of the book focuses on Paul's missionary labors among the Gentiles.

### 1. The Lord ascends into heaven. Matthias is called to be an Apostle.

Discuss Acts 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Display the picture of the Ascension.

- After Jesus was resurrected, he stayed with his disciples for 40 days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). Just before he returned to his Father in Heaven, what did he promise his Apostles they would soon receive? (See Acts 1:4–5; see also Luke 24:49. Point out that although the Apostles had experienced *manifestations* of the Holy Ghost, they had not yet received the *gift* of the Holy Ghost.)
- What did Jesus tell the Apostles they were to do after they received the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See Acts 1:8.) How does this instruction compare with the responsibility given to Apostles today? (See D&C 107:23, 35.) How did the Apostles fulfill this responsibility in the time just after Jesus' Resurrection? (Note, for example, some of the powerful testifying recorded in Acts 2–5.) How are the Apostles fulfilling this responsibility today?
- How did the gift of the Holy Ghost help the Apostles in their responsibility to be witnesses of Jesus Christ? (See John 15:26–27; 1 Corinthians 12:3.) What is the role of the Holy Ghost in our efforts to teach the gospel? (See 2 Nephi 33:1; D&C 42:14.)
- As the Apostles watched Jesus ascend into heaven, two men in white stood nearby. What did these men tell the Apostles? (See Acts 1:10–11.) Testify that the Second Coming of Christ will be a literal event. Christ will return to the earth to usher in the Millennium and rule over the earth.
- After the Lord's Ascension, a new Apostle was chosen to fill the vacancy in the Quorum left by Judas. How was Matthias chosen as the new Apostle? (See Acts 1:21–26.) How are Apostles and other Church leaders chosen today? (See Articles of Faith 1:5.)

## **2. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostles are filled with the Holy Ghost.**

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 2. Explain that the Feast of Pentecost was a harvest celebration held 50 days after the Feast of the Passover. Jews from many nations came to Jerusalem for this feast. (See Bible Dictionary, "Feasts," 673.)

- What significant event occurred on the day of Pentecost, one week after the Savior's Ascension? (See Acts 2:1–4. Point out how this fulfilled the Lord's promises in John 14:26, 15:26, and 16:7–14 and in Acts 1:5.)
- What did the Apostles do when they received the Holy Ghost? (See Acts 2:4.) How did the people react when they heard the Apostles speaking in various languages? (See Acts 2:5–13.) How is the preaching of the gospel today similar to the preaching on the day of Pentecost? (See D&C 90:11; 100:5–8.)
- How did Peter respond to those who mocked the Apostles for speaking in tongues? (See Acts 2:14–24, 36.) What impresses you about Peter's response? Why is it important to have a testimony of Jesus Christ and his divine mission? Why is it important for us to share our testimonies with others? How can the Holy Ghost help us share our testimonies?
- How did Peter's testimony affect those who heard it? (See Acts 2:37.) What did Peter teach the people who believed his testimony? (See Acts 2:38.) Have class members compare Acts 2:38 to the fourth article of faith and 3 Nephi 27:19–20. Point out that the basic principles and ordinances of the gospel are the same in all dispensations.
- About 3,000 people believed Peter's words and were baptized. How did these people demonstrate that they had been converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ? (See Acts 2:41–47. List class members' responses on the chalkboard.) What can we learn from their example?

## **3. Peter and John heal a lame man by the power of Jesus Christ.**

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 3–4. You may want to have a class member read Acts 3:1–11 aloud.

- Even though Peter and John had no money to give to the lame man at the gate of the temple, what did they have to offer him? By what power was the man made whole? (See Acts 3:6, 12–13, 16; 4:10.) How have you felt the healing power of Jesus Christ in your life?
- Peter used this miracle as an opportunity to testify of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:12–26; 4:5–12). What opportunities do we have to testify of Christ? How have you been blessed as you have been a witness (or have heard others be witnesses) of Jesus Christ?
- How did the priests and Sadducees respond to Peter's sermon? (See Acts 4:1–3. They had Peter and John arrested.) How did the multitude respond to the sermon? (See Acts 4:4.) Why do you think these two groups responded so differently to the same sermon? What does our response to the words of Church leaders reveal about the condition of our hearts?
- With the healed man standing by, the priests and Sadducees could not deny that a miracle had occurred (Acts 4:13–14, 16). Since they had no reason to imprison Peter and John, what did they do instead? (See Acts 4:15–18. Point out that the Jewish religious leaders had hoped that Jesus and his teachings

would be forgotten after the Crucifixion. When the Apostles continued to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Jewish leaders tried to stop them.)

- How did Peter and John respond to the priests' and Sadducees' demand that they stop teaching the gospel? (See Acts 4:19–20.) What are some circumstances in your life that might require similar courage in being a witness for Jesus Christ?
- After Peter and John were released, they returned to the members of the Church and prayed with them (Acts 4:23–30). What did they ask for in the prayer? (See Acts 4:29–30.) What happened as a result of this prayer and the Apostles' subsequent actions? (See Acts 4:31–35; 5:12–16.)

#### 4. The Apostles continue to preach and heal with great power.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 5:12–42.

- When the Apostles continued to preach and work miracles, the priests and Sadducees cast them into prison (Acts 5:17–18). How were they released from prison? (See Acts 5:19–20.) What did they do after they were released? (See Acts 5:21, 25.) Why did the Apostles continue to preach the gospel even after being imprisoned? (See Acts 5:29–32.)
- What counsel did Gamaliel give to the Jewish leaders who wanted to kill the Apostles? (See Acts 5:33–39.) What experiences have shown you the truth of Gamaliel's words?
- What change did the gift of the Holy Ghost bring about in the Apostles? (Compare Matthew 26:47–56, 69–75 with Acts 4:5–21; 5:17–18, 26–42.) How can the Apostles' examples inspire us to be witnesses of the truth?

#### Conclusion

Explain that after the Apostles received the gift of the Holy Ghost, they became powerful witnesses of Jesus Christ. While Apostles have a special calling to be witnesses of Christ, each member of the Church also has the responsibility to bear witness of him. Bear testimony that the Holy Ghost can help us know when and how to testify of Christ. As we follow the Spirit's promptings, our faith will increase, our sensitivity to the Spirit will grow, and we will become more effective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Manifestation of the Holy Ghost at the Kirtland Temple dedication

Explain that an outpouring of the Spirit similar to the one in Acts 2:1–4 occurred at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on 27 March 1836. Have a class member read aloud Doctrine and Covenants 109:36–37, the part of the dedicatory prayer in which the Prophet Joseph Smith requested such an outpouring. Then have another class member read the following statement, which describes how that request was granted:

The Prophet Joseph Smith said that at an evening meeting on the day the Kirtland Temple was dedicated, "Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon

by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place” (*History of the Church*, 2:428).

## 2. “The times of restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21)

Have a class member read Acts 3:20–21.

- What did Peter foresee when he prophesied of a “restitution of all things”? (He foresaw the latter-day restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph Smith.)

## 3. “They had all things in common” (Acts 4:32)

Discuss Acts 4:32–5:11. Explain that members of the early Church “had all things common” (Acts 2:44; see also Acts 4:32, 34–37). They consecrated all they had so that everyone’s needs were met. (You may want to compare this with the city of Enoch [Moses 7:18], the descendants of Lehi [4 Nephi 1:1–3], and the early members of the Church in this dispensation [D&C 42:30–34].)

- How did Barnabas respond to this system of consecrating possessions? (See Acts 4:36–37.) How did Ananias and Sapphira violate this system? (See Acts 5:1–2.) What did Peter tell Ananias and Sapphira about their actions? (See Acts 5:3–4, 8–9.) How can we ensure that we are honest with God?
- Although we do not live under a formal system of consecration, what are we asked to give to God or share with other people? (See Omni 1:26; Mosiah 4:16; D&C 4:2; 119:4 for some examples.) How might we sometimes “keep back part”?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell commented:

“Ananias and Sapphira . . . ‘kept back’ a portion instead of consecrating their all (see Acts 5:1–11). Some would never *sell* Jesus for thirty pieces, but they would not *give* Him their all either!

“ . . . We tend to think of consecration only in terms of property and money. But there are so many ways of keeping back part. One might be giving of money and time and yet hold back a significant portion of himself. One might share talents publicly yet privately retain a particular pride. One might hold back from kneeling before God’s throne and yet bow to a particular gallery of peers. One might accept a Church calling but have his heart more set on maintaining a certain role in the world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 90; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 66).

- How can we overcome the tendency to “keep back part”? What blessings can come from giving our all to the Lord?

## 4. Youth activity

Teachers of youth may want to use the process of “inquiry training” in parts of the lesson (this process is described in *Teaching—No Greater Call*, pages 147–48). For example, you could have class members try to determine the topic of the lesson by asking questions that you can answer “yes” or “no.”

# “The Number of the Disciples Was Multiplied”

Lesson  
**29**

Acts 6–9

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**Purpose** To help class members recognize that the work of the Church is done by many people, all of whom contribute their talents and testimonies to strengthen the Church.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Acts 6:1–7. The Twelve Apostles ordain seven men to supervise the temporal work of the Church.
  - b. Acts 6:8–7:60. Stephen, one of the seven, testifies before the Sanhedrin. His words anger the people who are listening, and they take him out of the city and stone him to death.
  - c. Acts 8:4–40. Philip, another of the seven, preaches and performs miracles in Samaria. He teaches and baptizes an Ethiopian eunuch.
  - d. Acts 8:1–3; 9:1–31. Saul persecutes the Church until he receives a vision of Jesus Christ. Saul is converted and baptized and begins to preach the gospel.
2. Additional reading: Acts 22:1–16; 26:1–5, 9–18.
3. Suggestion for teaching: Remember that you are teaching a class of individuals. They may differ widely in life experiences, length of membership in the Church, understanding of gospel doctrine and principles, talents and abilities, and opportunities for education. Seek to understand class members' differences and help each person understand the truths being taught. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 25–31; see also 39–42.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask class members:

- Which part of your body do you think is most important? Why?

After several class members respond, ask:

- Which member of the Church do you think is the most important? Why?

Again allow several class members to respond. Then have a class member read 1 Corinthians 12:14–21, and have another class member read 1 Corinthians 12:12–13. Explain that in these verses the Apostle Paul compares the members of the Church to the parts of the body. Just as the foot, the hand, the ear, and the eye are important in their different functions, so are all members of the Church important with their different skills and talents.

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**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. Seven men are ordained to supervise the temporal work of the Church.

Read and discuss Acts 6:1–7. Explain that under the Apostles' direction the Church grew rapidly, making converts in many nations. This was cause for great rejoicing, but it also created some challenges. As the Church grew, the Apostles needed other members to help direct the Church and build up the kingdom of God.

- As the Church grew, groups within it sometimes had disagreements with each other. Why did some of the Greek members murmur against the Hebrew members? (See Acts 6:1.) How can we as Church members overcome disagreements and divisions among us, whether they are based on ethnic, economic, cultural, or other differences? Why is it important that we overcome such divisions? (See 2 Nephi 26:33; D&C 38:26–27.)

President Howard W. Hunter said: “It is in understanding and accepting [the] universal fatherhood of God that all human beings can best appreciate God’s concern for them and their relationship to each other. This is a message of life and love that strikes squarely against all stifling traditions based on race, language, economic or political standing, educational rank, or cultural background, for we are all of the same spiritual descent. We have a divine pedigree; every person is a spiritual child of God” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 22; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 18).

- How does diversity among members enrich and strengthen the Church? How can we differ from each other and still be unified?
- The Apostles felt they should not take time from teaching the gospel to settle disputes and take care of other temporal business (Acts 6:2). How did they resolve this problem? (See Acts 6:3–6.) Why is it important for the work of the Church to be shared among many people? How have you been blessed by opportunities to serve in the Church?
- What organizational changes has the Lord inspired latter-day Church leaders to make as the Church has grown? (Answers might include the addition of Quorums of the Seventy or the organization of the Church into areas presided over by Area Presidencies.) How have these changes helped meet the needs of Church members throughout the world?

## 2. Stephen testifies before the Sanhedrin and is stoned to death.

Discuss Acts 6:8–7:60. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Stephen, one of the seven men called to help the Twelve Apostles, was arrested on false charges of blasphemy and brought before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council (Acts 6:11–15; if necessary, explain that blasphemy is being irreverent toward God or sacred things). What did Stephen do as he faced the Sanhedrin? (See Acts 7:1–53. He recited part of the history of the Israelites.)
- Why do you think Stephen emphasized the mighty deeds of the Lord in Israel’s history? How can we make sure we do not forget the Lord’s workings in our lives? How does remembering past blessings from the Lord help us remain faithful in the present?
- Why do you think Stephen also emphasized Israel’s frequent forgetfulness and disobedience to God? What comparison did Stephen make between his listeners

and the earlier disobedient Israelites? (See Acts 7:51–53.) How did the people react to this comparison? (See Acts 7:54.)

- What vision did Stephen receive after he finished speaking? (See Acts 7:55–56.) What did the people do when he told them of his vision? (See Acts 7:57–58.) What do Stephen’s last words reveal about his discipleship? (See Acts 7:59–60.)

### 3. Philip preaches and performs miracles in Samaria.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 8:4–40.

- Philip, another of the seven men chosen to help the Apostles, preached and performed miracles in Samaria. How did the people of Samaria respond to Philip’s message? (See Acts 8:6–8, 12.) How did these people receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See Acts 8:14–17.)
- One of the Samaritan converts was a sorcerer named Simon. To whom did Simon give credit for the acts he performed through sorcery? (See Acts 8:9–11.) To whom did the Apostles give credit for the miracles they performed? (See Acts 4:7–10.) Why is this difference significant? (Point out that many people who compete for our attention and loyalty do so to glorify themselves. By contrast, God’s servants give him the glory. Understanding this difference may help us evaluate the many influences in our lives.)
- What did Simon do when he saw the Apostles bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See Acts 8:18–19.) How did Peter answer Simon’s request? (See Acts 8:20–23.) How does a person become qualified to receive priesthood power? (See Hebrews 5:4; D&C 121:36.)

President James E. Faust said: “This greatest of all powers, the priesthood power, is not accessed the way power is used in the world. It cannot be bought or sold. . . . Worldly power often is employed ruthlessly. However, priesthood power is invoked only through those principles of righteousness by which the priesthood is governed” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 59–60; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 43).

- How did Philip meet the Ethiopian eunuch? (See Acts 8:25–29.) What blessings came to Philip and to the Ethiopian because Philip followed the Spirit? (See Acts 8:30–38.) What blessings have come to you (or to someone you know) because you have followed the Spirit?
- How did the Ethiopian demonstrate humility? (See Acts 8:30–39.) How does humility help us understand and accept the word of God?

### 4. Saul is converted and baptized and begins to preach the gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 8:1–3 and 9:1–31. Explain that Saul was a Pharisee who actively persecuted the early Saints. He was present at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58) and had been responsible for the imprisonment and death of many members of the Church (Acts 8:3; 22:4). However, he experienced a miraculous conversion and became a great missionary.

- What caused Saul to change from a persecutor of the Saints to a great servant of the Lord? (See Acts 9:1–9, 17.) Point out that Saul became converted when he heard the voice of the Lord. How can we hear the voice of the Lord? (See D&C 1:38; 6:23; 8:2; 18:34–36.) How can hearing his voice help us become converted?

Remind class members that conversion is often a quiet, gradual experience, not a sudden, miraculous experience like Saul's. Elder Robert D. Hales said, "On occasion individuals can have [experiences like Saul's], but for the most part, conversion happens over a period of time as study, prayer, experience, and faith help us to grow in our testimony and conversion" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 111; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 80).

- Elder Ezra Taft Benson said that Paul's question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" is the most important question we can ask in this life (in Conference Report, Oct. 1972, 53; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 57). Why is it so important that we ask this question? How have you been blessed as you have submitted to God's will for you?
- Why was Ananias hesitant to go meet Saul? (See Acts 9:10–14.) Why did Ananias go despite his reservations? (See Acts 9:15–16.) What can we learn from Ananias's actions? (Answers may include that God can give us courage to do whatever he asks of us and that we should never give up on a person, even if he or she appears to be beyond spiritual help.)
- What did Ananias do for Saul? (See Acts 9:17–18.) What did Saul do after he was baptized? (See Acts 9:19–22, 26–29.) What are our responsibilities once we have been converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ? (See Luke 22:32; John 8:31; Mosiah 18:8–10; D&C 88:81.)

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## Conclusion

Point out that we, like Stephen, Philip, and Saul, are living in a time when the Church is growing rapidly. Testify that the Lord wants each of us to serve in his kingdom as it grows. Encourage class members to recognize and appreciate the different qualities, talents, and experiences that each ward or branch member brings to the Lord's service.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5)

- Have a class member read Acts 9:5. What does it mean to "kick against the pricks"? (To resist instruction or direction. A sharp stick is sometimes used to prick animals to make them move faster or in a certain direction. If an animal kicks against this stick while being pricked, it will hurt the animal more.) How were Saul's actions before his vision harmful to him? How do we hurt ourselves when we fight against the truth?

### 2. Youth activity

Write the following words on wordstrips or on the chalkboard: *Ananias, authority, evil, eyes, Holy Ghost, light, preach, scales, speechless, trembling, vessel, voice.*

Have class members study Acts 9:1–22 and determine the significance and order of these words in the story of Saul's conversion. Then have them tell the story, using all the words.

# “God Is No Respecter of Persons”

Lesson  
**30**

*Acts 10–14; 15:1–35*

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**Purpose** To help class members recognize that the gospel is for all people and that the Church is guided by continuing revelation.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Acts 10:1–11:18. An angel appears to Cornelius in a vision and tells him to send for the Apostle Peter. Peter learns in a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles (people who were not Jews). He goes to Caesarea to teach Cornelius and his family and friends. The Holy Ghost falls upon Cornelius and others, and they are baptized. Some members of the Church criticize Peter for teaching Gentiles, but when he tells of his vision, they accept it as revelation for the Church.
  - b. Acts 12. King Herod kills James and imprisons Peter. The Saints pray for Peter’s release, and an angel of the Lord frees him. Herod is smitten by an angel of the Lord and dies.
  - c. Acts 13–14. Saul (now known as Paul) and Barnabas make their first missionary journey, establishing the Church among the Gentiles in several cities.
  - d. Acts 15:1–35. Some Jewish Saints teach that Gentiles who join the Church must keep the law of Moses, including circumcision for men. The Apostles determine that this is not required by the Lord.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Circumcision,” 646; “Cornelius,” 650.
3. If a map of Paul’s first missionary journey is available (map 19 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible), you may want to use it during the lesson.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Your students deserve more than your knowledge. They deserve and hunger for your inspiration. They want the warm glow of personal relationships. This always has been the hallmark of a great teacher” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1965, 52; or *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1965, 1124). Prayerfully consider how you can develop and show love for each class member. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 6–7, 29, 167.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Give the following clues, one at a time, and ask class members to determine what significant event in Church history they refer to:

1. Revelation
2. 8 June 1978
3. President Spencer W. Kimball
4. Priesthood
5. Official Declaration 2

Have class members turn to Official Declaration 2 (located at the end of the Doctrine and Covenants) and read the second paragraph to themselves (beginning with “In early June”). Point out that Official Declaration 2 records the revelation that made the priesthood available to all worthy male members of the Church.

If any class members remember the day the revelation was announced, invite them to describe how they felt when they learned of it.

- Who made the priesthood available to all worthy male members of the Church? (The Lord.) How did the Lord make his will known to the Church? (He revealed it to the prophet, who then announced it to the Church members.) How did this revelation affect the Church?

Explain that this revelation is an example of how the Lord continues to direct his Church through revelation. This lesson discusses a similar revelation that was given to the members of the Church shortly after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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### Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, emphasize the importance of continuing revelation from the Lord to his Church. Encourage class members to share their testimonies of continuing revelation.

#### **1. Peter learns in a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles.**

Discuss Acts 10:1–11:18. Invite class members to read selected verses.

- What kind of man was Cornelius? (See Acts 10:1–2, 30–31. He was a righteous man who believed in God, but he was a Gentile, or non-Jew.) What was the angel’s message to Cornelius? (See Acts 10:3–6.) How did Cornelius react to this message? (See Acts 10:7–8, 33.) Why is it important to act immediately on instructions or promptings from God?
- While Cornelius’s men were traveling to Joppa, Peter had a vision (Acts 10:9–16). What did Peter see in this vision? (See Acts 10:11–12.) What was Peter told to do? (See Acts 10:13.) Why did Peter resist? (See Acts 10:14. He did not want to eat animals that were considered unclean under the law of Moses.) How did the Lord respond to Peter’s concern? (See Acts 10:15–16.)
- As he met with Cornelius, Peter understood his dream. What did it mean? (See Acts 10:28, 34–35. The gospel was for all people, not just the Jews. Explain that “God is no respecter of persons” means that God will provide every person with the opportunity to receive the blessings available through the plan of salvation.) Why were the Gentiles represented in the dream by unclean animals? (The Jews thought the Gentiles were spiritually unworthy or unclean, like the animals that the law of Moses forbade Jews to eat. By saying that the animals in the dream were now “cleansed,” the Lord was telling Peter that the gospel should now be preached to all people.)
- After Peter explained his dream, he began teaching Cornelius and his friends. What did he teach in his first sermon to them? (See Acts 10:36–43.) What happened as Peter was preaching? (See Acts 10:44, 46.) Why did this convince Peter that Cornelius and his friends should be baptized? (See Acts 10:47–48; see also Acts 11:15–17.)
- How did some Church members react when they heard that Peter had been teaching the gospel to Gentiles? (See Acts 11:1–3.) Why were these members upset? (They did not consider the Gentiles to be part of God’s chosen people.)

- How did the Church members' opinions change after Peter told them about his vision and his experience with Cornelius? (See Acts 11:4–18.) What should we do when we receive new instructions from our Church leaders, even if we initially dislike the instructions or find them difficult to understand? (See John 7:17; 2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 6:11, 14–15.)
- Why was Peter the one who received the revelation to teach the gospel to the Gentiles? (He was the leader of the Church at that time.) Who receives revelation today for the entire Church? Why is it important to have only one person who receives revelation for the entire Church? (See D&C 43:2–6.)

## 2. Peter is miraculously freed from prison.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 12.

- King Herod killed the Apostle James, then cast Peter into prison and placed him under heavy guard (Acts 12:1–4). How did members of the Church respond to Peter's imprisonment? (See Acts 12:5.) How can our prayers help the prophet and other Church leaders today? (See D&C 43:12; 93:51; 107:22.)

President Joseph F. Smith stated, "There never should be a day pass but all of the people composing the Church should lift up their voices in prayer to the Lord to sustain his servants" (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 223).

- How did Peter escape from prison? (See Acts 12:6–10.) At what other times has the Lord miraculously preserved someone's life until that person completed his or her earthly mission? (Examples from the scriptures include Daniel; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; Abinadi; Alma and Amulek; and Joseph Smith.)
- What happened to King Herod after Peter's escape? (See Acts 12:21–23.) Compare what happened to Herod with what happened to the Church, as described in the next verse (Acts 12:24). How have you seen the Church flourish despite the efforts of some people to destroy it?

## 3. Saul (now known as Paul) and Barnabas preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 13–14. If you are using the map, point out the places Paul and Barnabas visited as you discuss them.

- What does the calling of Saul and Barnabas show about how Church members are called to God's service? (See Acts 13:1–3. Discuss the need for prayer and fasting, revelation, and priesthood authority in calling members to serve in the Church.) What experiences have helped you know that Church callings are inspired by the Spirit?
- The rulers of the synagogue in Antioch invited Paul to speak in the Sabbath service (Acts 13:14–15). What was Paul's main message? (See Acts 13:23–31, 38–41.) How did the Gentiles in Antioch respond to the missionaries and their message? (See Acts 13:42–44, 48.) Why did some of the Jews persecute Paul and Barnabas? (See Acts 13:45–47.)
- How did the people in Lystra react when Paul healed the crippled man? (See Acts 14:8–13. Explain that Jupiter and Mercurius were false gods the people worshiped.) How did Paul and Barnabas respond to this praise and attention? (See Acts 14:14–18.) Point out that true teachers of the word of God always seek to give God the glory and turn attention away from themselves. How have you seen this attitude demonstrated by today's Church leaders?

- In each city Paul and Barnabas visited, they found people eager to accept the gospel, but they also found people who persecuted them and stirred up others against the Church (Acts 13:43–45, 50; 14:1–6, 19). Why did Paul and Barnabas return to each of the cities even though they had been persecuted there? (See Acts 14:21–23. They had established branches of the Church in the cities, and they returned to encourage and instruct the new members of these branches.) What can we do to support new members of our ward or branch?

President Gordon B. Hinckley remarked: “With the ever increasing number of converts, we must make an increasingly substantial effort to assist them as they find their way. Every one of them needs three things: a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God’ (Moroni 6:4). It is our duty and opportunity to provide these things” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 66; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 47).

#### 4. The Apostles determine that Gentiles do not need to keep the law of Moses.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 15:1–35.

- What dispute did Paul and Barnabas go to Jerusalem to resolve? (See Acts 15:1–2; see also Bible Dictionary, “Circumcision,” 646. Explain that circumcision was symbolic of the entire law of Moses. A circumcised man was one who kept the law. Although Jesus Christ had fulfilled the law of Moses, some Jewish Christians still practiced it and wanted Gentile converts to practice it as well.) How was the dispute resolved? (After a thorough discussion, the Apostles decided through inspiration not to require circumcision.)
- How do the events described in Acts 15:6–31 demonstrate the pattern by which decisions about Church policy and practices are made?
  - a. Church leaders meet to consider the matter (verse 6).
  - b. They discuss the matter thoroughly (verses 7–21).
  - c. They make a decision in accordance with the Lord’s will (verses 19–21).
  - d. The Holy Ghost confirms that the decision is correct (verse 28).
  - e. The decision is announced to the Saints for sustaining (verses 22–31).

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#### Conclusion

Testify that the Church has always been guided by divine revelation and that revelation continues today. Encourage class members to follow the counsel of the living prophet and other Church leaders.

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#### Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

##### **The worldwide Church**

To show class members how the Church has grown, display a map of the world. Point out areas where members of the Church lived in the time of Cornelius (modern-day Israel, Turkey, Greece, and the surrounding areas). Then have class members point out areas where Church members live today. Explain that at the beginning of 1998, the Church had over ten million members living in 162 countries and territories. There were more than 57,000 missionaries working in 116 countries, speaking 45 major languages and many additional dialects. (You may be able to find more current statistics in recent Church magazines.)

# “And So Were the Churches Established in the Faith”

## Lesson 31

*Acts 15:36–18:22; 1 and 2 Thessalonians*

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**Purpose** To help class members learn from Paul’s teachings about how to share the gospel and how to live as Saints.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Acts 15:36–41; 16; 17:1–15; 18:1–22. After the dispute over Gentile converts and the law of Moses is resolved, Paul and Barnabas prepare for their second missionary journey. They disagree over a missionary companion and decide to separate. Paul takes Silas and Timothy and begins missionary labors in Macedonia and Greece. They are frequently persecuted but convert many people.
    - b. Acts 17:16–34. Paul visits Athens and sees the whole city taken in idolatry. He testifies to the Athenian philosophers and preaches on Mars’ Hill about the nature of God, the unity of people as offspring of God, and the Resurrection.
    - c. 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Paul writes two letters to the Saints in Thessalonica, a city in Macedonia. He counsels them about sharing the gospel, preparing for the Second Coming, and living as Saints.
  2. Additional reading: 1 Corinthians 2:4–5, 10–13; Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: Epistles to the Thessalonians,” 743.
  3. If the following materials are available, you may want to use them during the lesson:
    - a. A map of Paul’s second missionary journey (map 20 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible).
    - b. “The Second Coming,” a three-minute segment of *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
  4. Suggestion for teaching: Class members have a responsibility to come to class prepared to ask questions, contribute insights, share experiences, and bear testimony. Encourage class members to prepare for class by studying the scriptures and praying daily. Express interest in and appreciation for class members’ contributions to the class.
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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Tell the following story:

While living with the Heywood family in Salt Lake City during the late 1800s, John Morgan dreamed one night that he was traveling down a road in Georgia. He recognized the road because he had used it often as a soldier in the United States Civil War. He came to a fork in the road and saw Brigham Young standing there. Although the right fork led to the next town, President Young told him to take the left fork.

Mr. Morgan, who was not a member of the Church at the time, told Sister Heywood about his dream and asked what she thought of it. She told him she believed he would join the Church and serve a mission in the southern states, and that one day he would find himself on the road he had seen in his dream. When that happened, he should remember Brigham Young’s counsel and take the left fork.

Many years later, after John Morgan had been baptized and called as a missionary to the southern states, he came to the fork in the road that he had seen in his dream. He remembered the counsel to take the left fork, so he did. An hour later, he found himself at the edge of Heywood Valley—a beautiful place with the same name as the family with whom he had been staying when he had the dream years earlier.

As he traveled throughout the valley preaching, he found that the people were well prepared to hear the gospel. After hearing him teach, several families mentioned that a stranger had come through the valley ten days before, asking permission to mark their Bibles. The stranger had told them that another messenger would come and explain the marked passages to them. John Morgan had explained these marked passages as he taught the gospel. During the following weeks, Elder Morgan taught and baptized all but three of the twenty-three families in the valley. (Bryant S. Hinckley, *The Faith of Our Pioneer Fathers* [1956], 242–44.)

- What contributed to John Morgan’s success as a missionary? (Answers may include that he was willing to work hard, he listened to the Spirit, and the people’s hearts had been prepared to accept the gospel.)

Explain that this lesson is about the Apostle Paul, who, like John Morgan, listened to the Spirit and was a successful missionary. On his second missionary journey, Paul suffered many persecutions but also found many people who were prepared to receive the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach about Paul’s second missionary journey, discuss what we can learn from Paul about teaching the gospel, preparing ourselves to learn the gospel, and strengthening our testimonies.

### **1. Paul, Silas, and Timothy preach throughout Macedonia and Greece.**

Discuss Acts 15:36–41; 16; 17:1–15; 18:1–22. Invite class members to read selected verses. You may want to remind class members that the book of Acts was written by Luke. He apparently traveled with Paul on some of Paul’s missionary journeys, because he often uses the word *we* when referring to the actions of Paul and his missionary companions (Acts 16:10).

- During his second missionary journey, Paul preached in many Macedonian and Greek cities, including Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, and Athens. (Point out these cities on the map.) How did the Spirit direct Paul and his companions during the journey? (See Acts 16:6–10; 18:9–11.) How has the Spirit directed your efforts to serve the Lord?
- The scriptures record that Lydia heard and believed Paul’s words because the Lord had opened her heart (Acts 16:14–15). Why is an “open heart” necessary for conversion to the gospel? (See Mosiah 2:9; D&C 64:34.) Invite class members to tell about experiences when the Lord has opened their heart (or the heart of someone they know) to the gospel.

- Why were Paul and his companions imprisoned in Thyatira? (See Acts 16:16–24.) How were they freed? (See Acts 16:25–26.) How did they use this experience as a missionary opportunity? (See Acts 16:27–34.) What are some other examples, from Church history or your own life, where good has come out of persecution?
- What did Paul teach the people in Thessalonica when he spent three Sabbaths in the synagogue with them? (See Acts 17:1–3.) What were the results of Paul’s teachings in Thessalonica? (See Acts 17:4–10.)
- How did the people in the synagogue in Berea receive Paul’s teachings? (See Acts 17:10–12.) How can we develop a “readiness of mind” for learning the gospel?

## 2. Paul preaches on Mars’ Hill to the Athenian philosophers.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 17:16–34. Explain that after Paul left Berea, he came to Athens, which was then a center of world culture. Philosophers there viewed God as an abstract being or power, rather than as the literal Father of our spirits. They worshiped God’s creations rather than God himself. They replaced revelation with reason and debate, valuing the wisdom of men more than the truths of God.

- The philosophers in Athens “spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:21). How is this tendency evident today? What dangers could there be in always seeking “some new thing”?
- What did Paul teach the Athenians about God? (See Acts 17:22–31; see also the Joseph Smith Translation of Acts 17:27 in footnote 27*b*.) Why is it important to know that “we are [God’s] offspring”? (Acts 17:28). How does an understanding of God’s true nature and his role as our Father help us love and worship him?
- Paul countered the philosophers’ reason and logic with a sincere witness of God, our Father. In teaching the gospel, why is a sincere testimony more convincing than logic and reason? (See 1 Corinthians 2:4–5, 10–13.)
- Why did the philosophers listen to Paul? (See Acts 17:18–21.) How do you think this motive affected their response to Paul’s message? (See Acts 17:32–33.) How can we prepare ourselves to hear and understand the words of Church leaders?

## 3. Paul writes letters of counsel to the Saints in Thessalonica.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

- Paul was concerned about the Saints in Thessalonica but was unable to return to visit them, so he sent Timothy (1 Thessalonians 2:17–18; 3:1–2, 5–7). After Timothy’s return, Paul wrote two letters giving counsel and encouragement to the Thessalonian Saints. What can we learn from Paul’s efforts in behalf of new members of the Church?
- What does Paul teach in 1 Thessalonians 1:5 and 2:2–12 about how to teach the gospel to others? (List class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) How has following these principles helped you teach the gospel?
- What concerns of the Thessalonian Saints are reflected in Paul’s explanations of the Second Coming? (See 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 5:1–3.) What did Paul tell the Thessalonians would happen before the Second Coming? (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1–4.) How was this prophecy fulfilled? (See D&C 1:15–16; 112:23; Joseph Smith—History 1:19.)

- What did Paul tell the Thessalonian Saints they should do to prepare for the Second Coming? (See 1 Thessalonians 5:4–8.) What should we do to prepare for the Second Coming?

If you are using the video presentation “The Second Coming,” show it now. Briefly discuss Elder Packer’s and Elder Maxwell’s counsel about preparing for the Second Coming but not worrying about when it will happen.

- What counsel did Paul give the Thessalonians about living as Saints? (See 1 Thessalonians 4:9–12; 5:11–22.) List class members’ responses on the chalkboard. As the Spirit directs, discuss some of the points of counsel you have listed. The discussion could include how we can more fully follow the counsel and how we are blessed as we do so.

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## Conclusion

Bear testimony of the truths Paul taught about the qualities that successful missionaries and compassionate Latter-day Saints should possess. Encourage class members to seek to develop these qualities so they can help prepare themselves and others for the Lord’s Second Coming.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

### Teaching the gospel with the right attitude

Have class members read 1 Thessalonians 2:2–3. Point out that Paul said the gospel should be taught with boldness and without deceit or trickery. Elder James E. Talmage added that we should boldly teach the truth without criticizing or attacking other people’s beliefs. Share the following story to illustrate this:

When he was a student, Elder Talmage was once approached by a man offering to sell him an excellent oil lamp. Elder Talmage already had a lamp he felt was satisfactory, but he allowed the lamp seller to come up to his room to demonstrate.

“We entered my room, and I put a match to my well-trimmed lamp. My visitor was high in his praise. It was the best lamp of its kind, he said, and he had never seen a lamp in better trim. He turned the wick up and down, and pronounced the judgment perfect.

“‘Now,’ he said, ‘with your permission I’ll light my lamp,’ taking it from his satchel. . . . Its light made bright the remotest corner of my room. Its brilliant blaze made the flame in my lamp weak and pale. Until that moment of convincing demonstration I had never known the dim obscurity in which I had lived and labored, studied and struggled.”

Elder Talmage bought the new lamp, and he later suggested what we can learn from the lamp seller as we teach the gospel: “The man who would sell a lamp did not disparage mine. He placed his greater light alongside my feebler flame, and I hastened to obtain it.

“The missionary servants of the Church of Jesus Christ today are sent forth, not to assail nor ridicule the beliefs of men, but to set before the world a superior light, by which the smoky dimness of the flickering flames of man-made creeds shall be apparent. The work of the Church is constructive, not destructive” (in Albert L. Zobell Jr., *Story Gems* [1953], 45–48; see also *The Parables of James E. Talmage*, comp. Albert L. Zobell Jr. [1973], 1–6).

# “Live in the Spirit”

## Lesson 32

*Acts 18:23–20:38; Galatians*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to seek promptings from the Holy Ghost and to avoid attitudes and actions that will keep them from receiving these promptings.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Acts 18:23–19:41. Paul begins his third missionary journey. Aquila and Priscilla teach the gospel to Apollos. Paul teaches, baptizes, and confers the gift of the Holy Ghost on believers in Ephesus. Demetrius and the other silversmiths stir up the people of Ephesus against Paul.
    - b. Acts 20. Paul leaves Ephesus and preaches in Macedonia and Greece. On his way back to Jerusalem, he gives a farewell address to the Church leaders from Ephesus, warning against apostasy.
    - c. Galatians. Paul writes a letter chastising the Galatians for returning to the law of Moses. He reminds them of the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ and encourages them to seek the fruits of the Spirit.
  2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost,” 704; “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Galatians,” 744–45.
  3. If a map of Paul’s third missionary journey is available (map 21 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible), you may want to use it during the lesson.
  4. Suggestion for teaching: Some of the best stories and examples are those that come out of your own life. Rely on the Spirit to help you know which of your experiences would be appropriate and useful to share with class members. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 87, 127.)
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### Suggested Lesson Development

- Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
- Ask class members to think of a talent or skill (such as playing an instrument, sewing, writing, or playing a sport) they once developed but have not used for a long time. Ask:
- Would you feel comfortable using this talent or skill today? How successful would you be? What would you need to do to use this talent or skill as well as you did in the past? (If no class member can think of such a talent or skill, discuss an example from your own life.)
- Point out that recognizing the promptings of the Holy Ghost can be thought of as a spiritual talent or ability. The more we use this talent, the better we become at it.
- How can we develop the ability to recognize the promptings of the Holy Ghost? (Answers may include by living righteously, by seeking inspiration through the Holy Ghost, and by obeying promptings when we receive them.) What will happen if we develop this ability and then neglect it?

Explain that today's discussion of Paul's third missionary journey and his letter to the Galatians will include discussion of situations in which we need to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost and how we can be blessed by doing so.

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## Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages and questions that will best meet class members' needs. Discuss how these scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Paul teaches, baptizes, and confers the Holy Ghost on believers in Ephesus.

Discuss Acts 18:23–19:41. Invite class members to read selected verses. Explain that after Paul returned from his second mission, he spent some time in Antioch and then departed on a third mission (Acts 18:22–23). During this third mission he spent most of his time—nearly three years—preaching in Ephesus. (If you are using the map, point out Paul's location at appropriate times as you discuss his third missionary journey.)

- Apollos was a Jew who knew about baptism as taught by John the Baptist but did not know about the gift of the Holy Ghost. When Aquila and Priscilla, two members of the Church who were in Ephesus, heard Apollos preaching, they taught him “the way of God more perfectly” (Acts 18:26). What qualities made Apollos teachable? (See Acts 18:24–28.) How did these qualities also make him an effective teacher? How can we develop these qualities?
- What spiritual manifestation occurred when some of the Ephesians received the gift of the Holy Ghost? (See Acts 19:6.) At what other times had this kind of manifestation occurred? (See Acts 2:1–4; 10:44–46. The Apostles spoke in tongues when they received the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Several Gentiles in Caesarea also spoke in tongues after Peter received a vision that the gospel should be taught to the Gentiles.) What manifestations of the Holy Ghost are frequently experienced today? (See D&C 6:15, 23; 8:2 for some examples; see also 1 Kings 19:12.)
- Why did Paul leave the synagogue in Ephesus and begin teaching in the school of Tyrannus? (See Acts 19:8–9. Note that *disputing* in these verses means preaching or reasoning.) How should we respond to people who criticize or oppose the gospel? (See 3 Nephi 11:29–30.)

Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught: “When others disagree with our stand we should not argue, retaliate in kind, or contend with them. . . . Ours is to explain our position through reason, friendly persuasion, and accurate facts. Ours is to stand firm and unyielding on the moral issues of the day and the eternal principles of the gospel, but to contend with no man or organization. Contention builds walls and puts up barriers. Love opens doors. . . . Contention never was and never will be an ally of progress” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, 10; or *Ensign*, May 1978, 7–8).

- Why were Demetrius and the other silversmiths upset with Paul's preaching? (See Acts 19:23–28. They were creating and selling shrines for Diana, a false goddess, and were worried about losing customers as Paul helped people become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ.) How can concerns about material wealth or other worldly interests affect our loyalty to God? How can such concerns affect our ability to hear the promptings of the Spirit?

- Compare the attitudes of Demetrius and the silversmiths to the attitude of the Ephesians who destroyed their sorcery books when they began following Jesus Christ (Acts 19:18–19). How can we keep the proper perspective regarding earthly possessions?

## 2. Paul gives a farewell address to Church leaders from Ephesus.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 20. Explain that Paul left Ephesus and traveled throughout Macedonia and Greece, preaching the gospel. He planned to return to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost. On his way back to Jerusalem, he sent a messenger to ask Church leaders in Ephesus to meet with him in Miletus. He delivered a stirring farewell address and then resumed his journey.

- Believing that this would be the last time he would speak to the Ephesian elders, what did Paul emphasize in his farewell address? (See Acts 20:28–35.) Who were the “grievous wolves” Paul warned about? (See Acts 20:29. Enemies of the Church.) Who else did Paul warn about? (See Acts 20:30. Members of the Church who would apostatize and try to lead other members away.) How can we guard against apostasy in our lives?
- What did Paul tell the Ephesian elders they should do to help protect Church members from those who would try to lead them away from the Church? (See Acts 20:28; see also John 21:15–17.) How can we help protect God’s flock from “grievous wolves”?
- Paul concluded his address to the Ephesian brethren by reminding them of the Lord’s teaching that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). How have you found this to be true in your life?

## 3. Paul chastises and counsels the Galatian Saints.

Read and discuss selected verses from Paul’s epistle to the Galatians. Explain that while Paul was on his third missionary journey, he wrote a letter to the Saints in Galatia, many of whom had returned to keeping the law of Moses. He chastised those who believed that salvation could come through the works required by the law of Moses rather than through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- What was the purpose of the law of Moses? (See Galatians 3:23–26; Jacob 4:4–5; Mosiah 13:29–30. The Lord gave the Israelites this law to help them remember him and to prepare them to receive salvation through his Atonement.) How was the law of Moses fulfilled? (See 3 Nephi 15:2–5; Alma 34:10; 3 Nephi 9:19. Jesus fulfilled the law of Moses through his Atonement, which was symbolized by many of the law’s ordinances.)
- Paul was amazed that the Galatian Saints had returned to the law of Moses so soon after having learned the gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:6; 4:9). Why did this return to the law of Moses show a lack of faith in the Lord? (See Galatians 2:16; 3:1–5; 5:1–6.)
- In Paul’s day, some people sought to pervert, or change, the gospel of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:7–8). What are some modern-day evidences of this? How should we respond to efforts to pervert the gospel?
- What can we learn from Galatians 1:11–12 about how we receive a testimony of the gospel? Why is it important that our testimonies are based on revelation from Jesus Christ? (You may want to discuss how testimonies that are built on

other foundations, such as social relationships or intellectual analysis, often do not withstand trials of faith.)

- Paul warned the Galatians against doing “the works of the flesh” (Galatians 5:19). What are the works of the flesh? (See Galatians 5:19–21.) What are the consequences of doing these works? (See Galatians 5:21.) Despite the prevalence of the works of the flesh in the world today, what can you do this week to improve the spiritual environment you live in?
- Paul encouraged the Galatians to seek the fruits, or results, of living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25). What are some of these fruits? (See Galatians 5:22–23.) How have these fruits been manifest in your life? What should we do if we feel an absence of these fruits in our lives?
- What did Paul teach the Galatian Saints about how to treat their neighbors? (See Galatians 5:14; 6:2; see also Mosiah 18:8–10.) How can we “bear . . . one another’s burdens”? How does doing so bring us closer to Jesus Christ?
- What did Paul mean when he said that “God is not mocked”? (See Galatians 6:7; see also D&C 63:58. One meaning is that those who disobey God and do not repent are mocking him and will be punished.) How do people mock God today?
- What does it mean that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”? (See Galatians 6:7–9.) How does this principle apply to our ability to hear and follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost? How does it apply to our relationships with other people? How does it apply to other situations in our lives?

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## Conclusion

Testify that unrighteous attitudes and actions, such as contention, worldliness, and apostasy, will prevent us from receiving promptings from the Holy Ghost. But if we strive to live righteously and follow the promptings we do receive, our ability to recognize and follow promptings will increase. Encourage class members to seek and follow promptings from the Holy Ghost.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

### Teaching the gospel as Paul did

- What can we learn from Paul about teaching the gospel? (See Acts 19:8–10, 21; 20:7–12, 18–24, 27, 31, 35–36. See also the discussion of 1 Thessalonians 1:5 and 2:2–12 in lesson 31.)

List class members’ responses on the chalkboard, and discuss how we can follow Paul’s example in our teaching.

# “Ye Are the Temple of God”

## Lesson 33

### 1 Corinthians 1–6

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**Purpose** To inspire class members to seek the blessings that come from being unified in Christ, following the Spirit, and being morally clean.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - 1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 3:1–11. Paul exhorts the Saints to avoid contention and be one in mind and judgment.
  - 1 Corinthians 1:17–31; 2:1–16. Paul counsels the Saints to rely on the Spirit rather than the wisdom and philosophies of the world.
  - 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 5; 6:9–20. Paul exhorts the Saints to be morally clean.
2. Additional reading: 1 Corinthians 7–10; Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: Epistles to the Corinthians,” 743–44.
3. Suggestion for teaching: Elder Boyd K. Packer counseled: “It is essential for a teacher to understand that people are basically good. It is essential to know that their tendency is to do the thing that is right. Such an exalted thought is productive of faith. It makes all the difference when we stand before our own children or go before a class of young people to teach them” (*Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 73).

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Draw a road on the chalkboard, and draw a car or another vehicle on the road. Then share the following experience related by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin:

“While traveling along a mountainous road one evening through a driving rainstorm punctuated with frequent claps of thunder and flashes of lightning, Sister Wirthlin and I could barely see the road, either in front of us or to the right and the left. I watched the white lines on that road more intently than ever before. Staying within the lines kept us from going onto the shoulder and into the deep canyon on the one side and helped us avoid a head-on collision on the other. To wander over either line could have been very dangerous. Then I thought, ‘Would a right-thinking person deviate to the left or the right of a traffic lane if he knew the result would be fatal? If he valued his mortal life, certainly he would stay between these lines.’

“That experience traveling on this mountain road is so like life. If we stay within the lines that God has marked, he will protect us, and we can arrive safely at our destination” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 80; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 64).

Explain that at the time Paul wrote his first epistle to the Saints in Corinth, some of them had begun to stray outside the lines of the gospel. This lesson will discuss Paul’s exhortations for the Saints to repent of three of the ways they had

begun to stray. Draw three lines on the chalkboard that show the vehicle going off the road. At the end of the first line write *Contention and disunity*. At the end of the second line write *Relying on the wisdom of the world*. At the end of the third line write *Immorality*.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how Paul's counsel applies to our day and how we can apply his teachings in our own lives.

### 1. Avoid contention and be unified.

Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 3:1–11.

- What problem did Paul address in 1 Corinthians 1:10–13? What did it mean that some of the Saints claimed to be “of Paul,” some “of Apollos,” some “of Cephas [Peter],” and some “of Christ”? (Instead of being unified as followers of Jesus Christ, some of the Saints divided themselves into groups or factions within the Church.) How do we sometimes make this same error? What are some consequences of these types of division? How do divisions and contention affect our fellowship as disciples of Christ? (See Mosiah 18:21–22; 3 Nephi 11:29–30; D&C 38:27.)
- What did Paul counsel the Saints to do to be more unified? (See 1 Corinthians 1:10. As a class member reads this verse, list each part of Paul's counsel on the chalkboard as shown below.) How can we apply this counsel at home and in the Church?
  - a. “Speak the same thing.”
  - b. Have “no divisions among you.”
  - c. “Be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
- Why had the Corinthian Saints received only the “milk” of the gospel? (See 1 Corinthians 3:1–4.) Why does contention prevent us from receiving the “meat” of the gospel? How can we prepare ourselves to be fed the “meat” of the gospel?
- Paul taught that there are many ministers (servants) of the gospel but that Jesus Christ is the only sure foundation (1 Corinthians 3:5–11). Why is it important that we have the Savior as the foundation for our faith? (See Helaman 5:12.)

### 2. Rely on the Spirit rather than the wisdom of the world.

Discuss 1 Corinthians 1:17–31; 2:1–16. Invite class members to read selected verses.

- Paul taught that God's wisdom will “make foolish” the wisdom of the world (1 Corinthians 1:18–21). How is God's wisdom different from the world's wisdom? (See Isaiah 55:8–9; D&C 38:1–2.) What are some examples of God's wisdom making foolish the wisdom of the world?
- In what ways can secular learning be a blessing to us? (If necessary, explain that *secular* means nonreligious.) In what ways can it be a stumbling block to us? How can we balance secular and spiritual learning? (See 2 Nephi 9:28–29.)

President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “There is opportunity to get both [secular and spiritual learning] simultaneously. . . . If we spend our mortal days in accumulating secular knowledge to the exclusion of the spiritual then we are in a dead-end street, for this is the time for man to prepare to meet God; this is the time for faith to be built, for baptism to be effected, for the Holy Ghost to

be received, for the ordinances to be performed. Contemporary with this program can come the secular knowledge, for even in the spirit world after death our spirits can go on learning” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 390).

- What did Paul mean when he said that God had chosen “the foolish things of the world to confound the wise” and “the weak things of the world to confound the . . . mighty”? (1 Corinthians 1:27). Why does God often choose the “weak things of the world” to fulfill his purposes?
- What weaknesses did Paul face as he taught the gospel? (See 1 Corinthians 2:1–3.) How were his weaknesses made into strengths? (See 1 Corinthians 2:2, 4–5.) How has the Lord helped you when you have felt inadequate or afraid to do his work?
- According to Paul, how can we know the “things of God”? (See 1 Corinthians 2:10–13.) Why do we sometimes rely more on our own wisdom and intellect than on revelation through the Spirit? What differences have you observed between the learning that comes by the Spirit and the learning that comes through the intellect only?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Pure religion is a thing of the Spirit and not of the intellect alone, and its truths must be carried into the hearts of hearers by the power of the Spirit, otherwise the human soul is not changed . . . and the seeker after salvation does not become alive in Christ” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 2:318).

- Paul taught that it is impossible for the “natural man” to receive the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). Why is this so? What must we do to overcome the natural man? (See Mosiah 3:19.)

### 3. Be morally clean.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 5; 6:9–20.

- What did Paul compare our bodies to? (See 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19–20.) Why do you think this is an appropriate comparison? What things can defile our bodies? What should we do to treat our bodies as temples?
- In his warning against many serious sins of his day, Paul included several sexual sins (1 Corinthians 6:9). What is God’s law of sexual morality? (See D&C 42:23; 59:6.)

Elder Richard G. Scott said: “Any sexual intimacy outside of the bonds of marriage—I mean any intentional contact with the sacred, private parts of another’s body, with or without clothing—is a sin and is forbidden by God. It is also a transgression to intentionally stimulate these emotions within your own body” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 38).

- Why are sexual sins so serious? (See the following quotations.) What are the blessings of being morally clean?

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught: “One of the most pervasive deceptions in recent years is the notion that immorality is normal and acceptable and has no negative consequences. In truth, immorality is the underlying cause of much suffering and many other problems that are prevalent today, including rampant disease, abortion, broken families, families without fathers, and mothers who themselves are children” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 100–101; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 76).

Elder Boyd K. Packer taught: “[Satan] knows that this power of creation is not just an incident to the plan, but the key to it. He knows that if he can entice you to use this power prematurely, to use it too soon, or to misuse it in any way, you may well lose your opportunities for eternal progression” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1972, 137; or *Ensign*, July 1972, 112).

- Paul counseled the Saints “not to company [associate] with fornicators” (1 Corinthians 5:9). How might this counsel apply to us? (Discuss how the friends and forms of entertainment we choose can affect our desire and ability to be morally clean.) How can we avoid immoral influences?
- What methods does Satan use in trying to persuade us that there are exceptions to God’s laws of morality? (See the quotation below.) How can we withstand these temptations? What assurance does 1 Corinthians 10:13 give us as we strive to resist temptation to commit sexual sin? How have you been blessed as you have sought the Lord’s help to resist temptation?

Elder Richard G. Scott said: “Satan tempts one to believe that there are allowable levels of physical contact between consenting individuals who seek the powerful stimulation of emotions they produce, and if kept within bounds, no harm will result. As a witness of Jesus Christ, I testify that is absolutely false. . . . Decide what you will and will not do. When temptation comes, do not change your standards” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 38).

- What promise does the Atonement of Jesus Christ offer those who repent of sexual sin? (See 1 Corinthians 6:11; Isaiah 1:18; D&C 58:42.)

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## Conclusion

Testify that, like Paul, the apostles and prophets of our day continue to teach us what we should do to stay within the boundaries the Lord has set. You may want to briefly discuss a recent conference address in which the prophet or one of the apostles spoke on a topic Paul dealt with in his letter to the Corinthians, such as avoiding contention, relying on the Spirit, or staying morally clean. As appropriate, share how you have been blessed as you have applied counsel from Paul or one of the latter-day apostles or prophets.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “The things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9)

- What is the most wonderful or beautiful thing you have ever seen or experienced?

Have a class member read 1 Corinthians 2:9. Testify that the blessings that God has prepared for us if we love him and keep his commandments are more wonderful than anything we can imagine.

### 2. “Brother goeth to law with brother” (1 Corinthians 6:6)

Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 6:1–8.

- How did many of the Saints in Corinth resolve their disputes? (See 1 Corinthians 6:1–8.) How did this cause greater disunity? How is this problem evident today? What can we learn from Paul’s counsel?

# “Keep the Ordinances, As I Delivered Them”

## Lesson 34

1 Corinthians 11–16

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**Purpose** To help class members recognize the importance of living according to the doctrines of the gospel and receiving priesthood ordinances.

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**Preparation**

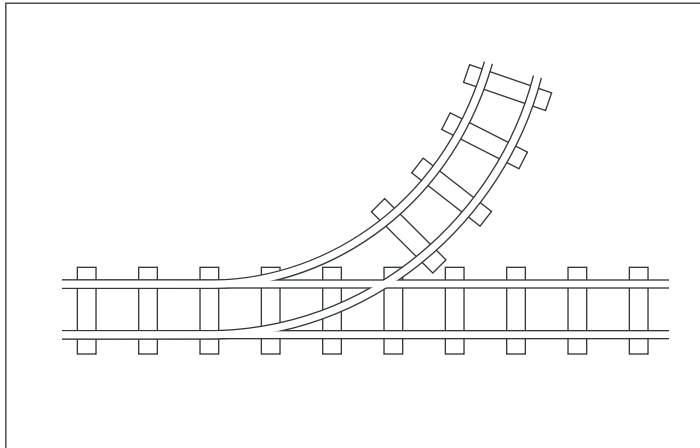
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - 1 Corinthians 11:1–3, 11–12. Paul teaches of husbands’ and wives’ relationships with each other and with the Lord.
  - 1 Corinthians 11:17–29. Paul teaches that the sacrament is an emblem of the Savior’s sacrifice and should be partaken of in remembrance of Him.
  - 1 Corinthians 12–14. Paul teaches that there are many spiritual gifts and that they are all important to the Church. He teaches that charity is more important than any other gift or quality. He teaches that spiritual gifts should be used for the benefit of all.
  - 1 Corinthians 15. Paul teaches that because of Jesus Christ, we will be resurrected. He also speaks of baptism for the dead and of the three degrees of glory.
2. Additional reading: 3 Nephi 18:1–14; Moroni 7:44–48; 10:8–18; Doctrine and Covenants 46:1–26; 76:50–119; 88:27–32, 95–102.
3. If the following pictures are available, use some of them during the lesson to illustrate charity: Waiting Our Turn (62316), Sharing the Tricycle (62317), Family Fun (62384), Administering to the Sick (62342; Gospel Art Picture Kit 614), Home Teaching (Gospel Art Picture Kit 615), Serving One Another (Gospel Art Picture Kit 616).
4. Suggestion for teaching: To teach the gospel effectively, teachers need the gift of an understanding heart. To better understand class members’ needs, teachers should have charity and be guided by the Holy Spirit. Teachers should prayerfully consider the needs of each class member and how to help meet those needs. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 25–26.)

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### Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask class members if they know what a railroad switch point is. Draw one on the chalkboard (as shown on the next page), and explain that a switch point is a location on a railroad track where a train can be switched from one track to another.



Share the following experience related by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Many years ago I worked in the head office of one of our railroads. One day I received a telephone call from my counterpart in Newark, New Jersey, who said that a passenger train had arrived without its baggage car. The patrons were angry.

“We discovered that the train had been properly made up in Oakland, California, and properly delivered to St. Louis, from which station it was to be carried to its destination on the east coast. But in the St. Louis yards, a thoughtless switchman had moved a piece of steel just three inches. That piece of steel was a switch point, and the car that should have been in Newark, New Jersey, was in New Orleans, Louisiana, thirteen hundred miles away” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1972, 106–7; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 91).

When you finish the story, refer to the railroad switch point on the chalkboard and ask the following questions:

- How could such a seemingly small change have such a significant effect on the location of the train? What are some potential switch points in our lives? (Answers may include events, decisions, new knowledge, or anything that changes the direction of our life. Switch points can be negative if they lead us from the truth or positive if they put us back on the right track.)

The last chapters of Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians address four doctrinal switch points where the Corinthians had departed from the truth. Explain that as we study Paul’s teachings in these chapters, we can strengthen our commitment to follow the path of righteousness that will lead to our Father in Heaven.

### Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture accounts, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

#### 1. Husbands’ and wives’ relationships with each other and with the Lord

Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 11:1–3, 11–12.

- What three relationships does Paul speak of in 1 Corinthians 11:3? Why do you think Paul included all of these relationships together? What qualities exist in the relationship between Jesus Christ and his Father? (See John 5:20;

8:29; 17:21–22.) How can we develop these qualities in our relationship with Jesus Christ? How can husbands and wives develop these qualities in their relationship?

- What does it mean that “neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord”? (1 Corinthians 11:11). Why is the relationship of husband and wife so important in the kingdom of God? What does this teach us about how husbands and wives should treat each other?

President Marion G. Romney taught: “[A husband and wife] should be one in harmony, respect, and mutual consideration. Neither should plan or follow an independent course of action. They should consult, pray, and decide together. . . . Remember that neither the wife nor the husband is the slave of the other. Husbands and wives are equal partners” (“In the Image of God,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1978, 2, 4).

If you used the attention activity, discuss how these relationships can act as positive or negative switch points in our lives.

## 2. The purpose of the sacrament

Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 11:17–29. Explain that many of the Saints in Corinth were not observing the purpose of the sacrament service. Instead of focusing on the sacrament ordinance, they were contending with each other and eating and drinking to excess (1 Corinthians 11:18–22).

- What is the primary purpose of sacrament meeting? (See 1 Corinthians 11:20, footnote 20*b*, which provides the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse: “Is it not to eat the Lord’s supper?”)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “With so very much at stake, [the sacrament] should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is. It should be a powerful, reverent, reflective moment. It should encourage spiritual feelings and impressions. As such it should not be rushed. It is not something to ‘get over’ so that the real purpose of a sacrament meeting can be pursued. This *is* the real purpose of the meeting” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 89; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 68).

- According to Paul, what are the purposes of the sacrament? (See 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; see also Luke 22:19–20.) How can we better keep our minds and hearts focused on Jesus as we partake of the sacrament?
- What did Paul teach about the importance of partaking of the sacrament worthily? (See 1 Corinthians 11:27–29.) What does it mean to partake of the sacrament unworthily? Why is examining our worthiness an important part of the sacrament?
- How has partaking of the sacrament blessed you? How can we make this ordinance more meaningful in our lives?

If you used the attention activity, discuss how our attitude toward the sacrament can be a switch point in our lives.

## 3. The importance of all spiritual gifts

Discuss 1 Corinthians 12–14. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Paul’s letter suggests that the Saints in Corinth may have placed too

much importance on the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:2–14, 27–28). In chapters 12–14, Paul explains that all the gifts of the Spirit are important, but that the Saints should seek gifts that will be for the benefit of all.

- What are spiritual gifts? (Spiritual blessings or abilities given through the Holy Ghost. See 1 Corinthians 12:7–11; D&C 46:11.) Why does God give spiritual gifts? (See D&C 46:26.)
- What gifts of the Spirit have you experienced or observed? (You may want to list and discuss some of the spiritual gifts as revealed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, Moroni 10:8–17, and D&C 46:13–25.) How have these gifts blessed you or others?
- Why do you think Paul compared the members of the Church to different parts of the body? (1 Corinthians 12:12–25. To show that each member is important to the other members and to the Church as a whole.) How can we apply this comparison to the different gifts of the Spirit?
- The scriptures counsel us to seek spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31; D&C 46:8). What should be our reasons for seeking spiritual gifts? (See 1 Corinthians 14:12; D&C 46:9. If necessary, explain that to edify is to build up, instruct, improve, and enlighten.)
- What did Paul teach is the greatest of all spiritual gifts? (See 1 Corinthians 13. Define each of the attributes of charity mentioned in verses 4–7, and discuss how we can apply them in our lives. You may want to list the attributes on the chalkboard.) Why is charity more important than any other spiritual gift? (See 1 Corinthians 13:1–3, 8–13.)
- How have you been blessed by another person who has shown charity toward you? How can we develop greater charity? (See Moroni 7:44–48.)

If you used the attention activity, discuss how charity can act as a switch point in our lives.

#### **4. The Resurrection and the degrees of glory**

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Corinthians 15. Explain that many of the Corinthians had begun to dispute the reality of the Resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12).

- What witnesses of the Resurrection did Paul cite? (See 1 Corinthians 15:5–8.) Why do you think Paul cited so many witnesses of the Resurrection? (See 2 Corinthians 13:1.) Why are witnesses of the Resurrection important to you?
- What did Paul teach about the relationship between the Fall of Adam and the Resurrection? (See 1 Corinthians 15:20–23.)
- How did Paul use the doctrine of baptism for the dead to teach about the Resurrection? (See 1 Corinthians 15:29. The ordinance of baptism for the dead would be meaningless without the Resurrection.)
- What did Paul teach about the kingdoms of glory? (See 1 Corinthians 15:35–44. We are resurrected into different kingdoms of glory—celestial, terrestrial, or telestial. See also D&C 88:27–32.) How does your knowledge of the Resurrection and the kingdoms of glory influence the way you live?

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**Conclusion** Testify of the importance of following the doctrines that will lead us back to our Father in Heaven. If you used the attention activity, invite class members to examine their own lives for switch points—attitudes and actions that, if followed, could change the direction of their lives. Encourage them to choose directions that will affect their lives positively.

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**Additional****Teaching Ideas**

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

**1. “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33)**

Have class members read 1 Corinthians 14:33. Then ask the following questions:

- What are some subjects about which there is much confusion and contention in the world? Why do you think there is so much confusion in the world? How is God the “author . . . of peace”?

**2. Youth activity**

Before class, think of several situations in the daily lives of youth in which they have the opportunity to show charity (for example, seeing a person who needs help at school, disagreeing with a brother or sister, or having a friend who is feeling lonely or unappreciated). Present these situations to the youth, and ask how they could use the attributes of charity, as taught by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, to improve the situation.

**Purpose** To encourage class members to be true disciples of Jesus Christ through applying Paul’s counsel in 2 Corinthians.

**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. 2 Corinthians 1:3–11; 4; 6:1–10; 11:21–33; 12:1–10. Paul teaches about overcoming tribulation.
  - b. 2 Corinthians 2:5–11. Paul admonishes the Saints to forgive each other.
  - c. 2 Corinthians 7:8–10. Paul teaches about feeling godly sorrow for sins.
  - d. 2 Corinthians 5:17–21. Paul exhorts the Saints to be reconciled to God.
2. If *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914) is available, show “Godly Sorrow,” an eleven-minute segment, during the lesson.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring a small amount of sand to class.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Leave time at the end of class to summarize what you have taught. A carefully planned summary can help class members organize and clarify what they have learned and consider how to apply it in their lives. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, page 81, for some methods of summarizing.)

**Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Show class members the sand you have brought to class.

- If someone you trust handed you sand with the promise that it contained gold, what would you do?

Allow class members to respond to the question. Then read the following statement by Elder Henry B. Eyring about receiving counsel from prophets:

“Don’t discard the counsel, but hold it close. If someone you trusted handed you what appeared to be nothing more than sand with the promise that it contained gold, you might wisely hold it in your hand awhile, shaking it gently. Every time I have done that with counsel from a prophet, after a time the gold flakes have begun to appear and I have been grateful” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 35; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 26).

- What is the meaning of Elder Eyring’s statement?

Explain that the book of 2 Corinthians contains prophetic counsel that applies in our day. Paul’s teachings in this letter are similar to the teachings we often hear in general conference. Elder Eyring observed, “When the words of prophets seem repetitive, that should rivet our attention [on them]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 32; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 25). Encourage class members to receive the counsel in this lesson and “hold it close.”

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This lesson is divided into four sections that focus on important topics in 2 Corinthians. Prayerfully select which of these topics to discuss with class members.

### 1. Overcoming tribulation

Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 1:3–11; 4; 6:1–10; 11:21–33; 12:1–10. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Paul’s letter to the Corinthians was written after a time of great persecution when Paul and Timothy “despaired even of life” (2 Corinthians 1:8). Why were Paul and Timothy able to avoid despair despite being troubled, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down? (See 2 Corinthians 1:3–5; 4:5–15.) Why are Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our best sources for comfort?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell assured us that Jesus Christ will help us through our afflictions:

“When we take Jesus’ yoke upon us, this admits us eventually to what Paul called the ‘fellowship of [Christ’s] sufferings’ (Philippians 3:10). Whether illness or aloneness, injustice or rejection, . . . our comparatively small-scale sufferings, if we are meek, will sink into the very marrow of the soul. We then better appreciate not only Jesus’ sufferings for us, but also His matchless character, moving us to greater adoration and even emulation.

“Alma revealed that Jesus knows how to succor us in the midst of our griefs and sicknesses precisely because Jesus has already borne our griefs and sicknesses (see Alma 7:11–12). He knows them firsthand; thus His empathy is earned. Of course, we do not comprehend it fully any more than we understand how He bore all mortal sins, but His Atonement remains the rescuing and reassuring reality” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 13; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 12).

- How have Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ helped you during adversity?
- Paul expressed a desire to help others receive the same comfort he had received from God (2 Corinthians 1:4). How can we help others receive comfort from God?
- Paul thanked the Saints who had prayed for him and Timothy in their time of adversity (2 Corinthians 1:11). Why is it important for us to pray for each other? How have the prayers of others blessed you or someone you know? How are we blessed when we pray for others?
- How can the teachings in 2 Corinthians 4:17–18 help us during tribulation? (See also D&C 121:7–8.) Why is it helpful to see our trials from an eternal perspective? How can we learn to look at our trials from an eternal perspective?
- Paul told the Corinthians of the trials that he and many of the Saints endured because of their belief in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 6:4–5; 11:23–33). What characteristics did Paul teach that we should develop to help us endure trials? (See 2 Corinthians 6:4, 6–7.) How has one or more of these characteristics helped you during a time of trial?
- Paul said that the Lord gave him an infirmity—a “thorn in the flesh” (2 Corinthians 12:7). Why did the Lord give Paul this infirmity? (See 2 Corinthians 12:7.) What did Paul learn when the Lord did not take away his “thorn in the flesh”

as he had asked? (See 2 Corinthians 12:8–10.) How can our weaknesses help us receive strength from Jesus Christ? (See Ether 12:27.) How have you seen the truth of Paul’s statement that “when I am weak, then am I strong”?

## 2. Forgiving others

Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 2:5–11.

- Paul admonished the Saints to forgive each other (2 Corinthians 2:5–8). Why is it important that we forgive others? (See Matthew 6:14–15; 2 Corinthians 2:7–8; D&C 64:9–10. Discuss how we—and others—are affected when we are forgiving and when we are unforgiving.)

President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“We see the need for [forgiveness] in the homes of the people, where tiny molehills of misunderstanding are fanned into mountains of argument. We see it among neighbors, where insignificant differences lead to undying bitterness. We see it in business associates who quarrel and refuse to compromise and forgive when, in most instances, if there were a willingness to sit down together and speak quietly one to another, the matter could be resolved to the blessing of all. Rather, they spend their days nurturing grudges and planning retribution. . . .

“If there be any who nurture in their hearts the poisonous brew of enmity toward another, I plead with you to ask the Lord for strength to forgive. This expression of desire will be of the very substance of your repentance. It may not be easy, and it may not come quickly. But if you will seek it with sincerity and cultivate it, it *will* come. . . .

“ . . . There is no peace in reflecting on the pain of old wounds. There is peace only in repentance and forgiveness. This is the sweet peace of the Christ, who said, ‘blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.’ (Matt. 5:9.)” (“Of You It Is Required to Forgive,” *Ensign*, June 1991, 2, 5).

- What can we do to become more forgiving?

## 3. Feeling godly sorrow for our sins

Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 7:8–10.

- After hearing that one of his epistles had “made [the Corinthians] sorry,” Paul rejoiced (2 Corinthians 7:8–9). Why did Paul respond this way to the Corinthians’ sorrow? (See 2 Corinthians 7:9–10.) What does it mean to have “godly sorrow” for our sins?

If you are using the video presentation “Godly Sorrow,” show it now.

- What is the difference between godly sorrow and “the sorrow of the world”? Why is godly sorrow an important part of repentance?

President Spencer W. Kimball explained: “If one is sorry only because someone found out about his sin, his repentance is not complete. Godly sorrow causes one to want to repent, even though he has not been caught by others, and makes him determined to do right no matter what happens. This kind of sorrow brings righteousness and will work toward forgiveness” (*Repentance Brings Forgiveness* [pamphlet, 1984], 8).

#### 4. Becoming reconciled to God

Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 5:17–21.

- Paul and Timothy counseled the Corinthians to “be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20). What does it mean to be reconciled to God?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Reconciliation is the process of ransoming man from his state of sin and spiritual darkness and of restoring him to a state of harmony and unity with Deity. . . . Man, who was once carnal and evil, who lived after the manner of the flesh, becomes a new creature of the Holy Ghost; he is born again; and, even as a little child, he is alive in Christ” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:422–23).

- How can we become reconciled to God? (See 2 Corinthians 5:17–19, 21; 2 Nephi 25:23; Jacob 4:10–11.)

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the truths you have discussed. Encourage class members to remember and follow Paul’s counsel in 2 Corinthians.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. The “outward man” and the “inward man” (2 Corinthians 4:16)

- Paul spoke of the “outward man” and the “inward man” (2 Corinthians 4:16). What might these two phrases mean? How might the “inward man [be] renewed day by day”? (2 Corinthians 4:16).

##### 2. “Ambassadors for Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20)

- Paul said that he and Timothy were “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20). What is an ambassador? (An ambassador is an official representative who speaks in behalf of the leadership of a country or organization. An ambassador works to establish good relationships between the people he or she represents and other people.) How were Paul and Timothy ambassadors for Jesus Christ? How can each of us be an ambassador for Jesus Christ?

Lesson  
**36**

# “Beloved of God, Called to Be Saints”

Romans

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**Purpose** To remind class members that they are children of God and to encourage them to live worthy of their divine inheritance.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Romans 2–5. Paul teaches that all people are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, which is demonstrated by righteous works.
  - b. Romans 6; 8. Paul teaches that the children of God can be reborn and become joint-heirs with Christ.
  - c. Romans 12–13; 15:1–7. Paul counsels the Romans to live as becomes Saints.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Grace,” 697; “Pauline Epistles: Romans,” 745.
3. You may want to invite a soloist or small group to sing or play “I Am a Child of God” (*Hymns*, no. 301, or *Children’s Songbook*, 2–3) or “I Feel My Savior’s Love” (*Children’s Songbook*, 74–75). If this is not feasible, you may want to prepare to sing one or both of these songs with class members.
4. Suggestion for teaching: In his epistle to the Romans, Paul reminded teachers of the importance of living the principles they teach (Romans 2:21–22). Your example can teach class members more than your words. Show class members that your testimony of gospel principles comes from living those principles each day (John 7:17). (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 9, 88–89.)

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Have a class member read Romans 3:10. Explain that in this verse Paul was not suggesting that no one ever does righteous acts; instead, he was pointing out that no one on earth is perfectly righteous. Christ was the only person who ever lived a completely sinless life. Everyone else has committed some sin (see also Romans 3:23).

- When we have sinned, what must we do to become clean again? (Exercise faith in Christ and repent of our sins so we may receive the cleansing power of his Atonement.)

Explain that once we commit sin, we cannot become completely clean again on our own. This lesson will discuss how we can become clean through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, a process that Paul called justification.

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Prayerfully select the scripture passages and questions that will best meet class members’ needs. Encourage class members to share their testimonies of the doctrines and principles discussed in the lesson.

## 1. We are justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss Romans 2–5. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Paul had been writing to Church members in several areas who had returned to practicing the law of Moses, believing that strict observance of this law was necessary for salvation. Although the Saints in Rome were strong in the gospel (Romans 1:8), Paul wrote this epistle to emphasize that justification and salvation come through faith in Christ, not through the works of the law of Moses.

- In his letter, Paul tried to help the Roman Saints understand the doctrine of justification. What does it mean to be justified? (To be reconciled to God, pardoned from punishment for sin, and declared righteous and guiltless.)
- Why do we need to be justified? (See Romans 3:10–12, 23; see also Alma 7:21. We have all offended God and become unclean through sin. Since no unclean thing can dwell with God, we must be justified in order to return to him.)
- What did Paul teach about how we are justified? (See Romans 3:24, 28; 5:1–2; see also 2 Nephi 2:6. We are justified by the grace of Jesus Christ and our faith in him.) What is grace? (Divine help or strength; see Bible Dictionary, “Grace,” 697.) How is this divine help made available to us? (See Romans 5:8–11; 2 Nephi 2:7–8. The grace of Jesus Christ is made available to us through his Atonement.) Why is it necessary for us to have faith to fully receive the Savior’s grace?
- Paul explained that justification comes through the grace of Jesus Christ, not through “the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:20, 24, 28). Why can’t we earn justification and salvation exclusively through our works? (See Mosiah 2:20–21; Alma 22:14.)
- Many people have interpreted Paul’s writings to mean that we can be justified through faith alone without good works. What is the relationship between our actions (or works) and justification through the grace of Christ? (See Romans 3:31; James 2:14–18, 24; 2 Nephi 25:23; D&C 88:38–39.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “To be justified before God we must love one another: we must overcome evil; we must visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and we must keep ourselves unspotted from the world: for such virtues flow from the great fountain of pure religion, strengthening our faith by adding every good quality that adorns the children of the blessed Jesus. We can pray in the season of prayer; we can love our neighbor as ourselves, and be faithful in tribulation, knowing that the reward of such is greater in the kingdom of heaven. What a consolation! What a joy!” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 76).

## 2. We can be reborn and become joint-heirs with Christ.

Read and discuss selected verses from Romans 6 and 8.

- Paul compared baptism to death, burial, and resurrection. How does baptism represent death, burial, and resurrection (new birth)? (See Romans 6:3–4; D&C 76:50–52.) How was baptism a new birth for you?

Explain that baptism by immersion is a symbol of our spiritual rebirth. When we go under the water, it is a symbol that we are burying our old self in a grave. When we come out of the water, we are symbolically washed clean. We have become a new person who has covenanted to follow Christ.

- How can we maintain the cleanness and “newness of life” (Romans 6:4) that we experienced at baptism? (Answers may include by renewing our baptismal covenants as we partake of the sacrament each week, by repenting and seeking forgiveness from the Lord, and by beginning each day with a renewed determination to serve God.)
- What does it mean to be “carnally minded”? (See Romans 8:5–6.) What are the consequences of being carnally minded? (See Romans 8:6–8, 13.) How can we eliminate the carnal from our minds and hearts? How have you been blessed when you have chosen to be spiritually minded?
- Paul testified “that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). How are you affected by the knowledge that you are a child of God? What does this imply about your capacities and potential?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: “Consider the power of the idea taught in our beloved song ‘I Am a Child of God’ (*Hymns*, 301). . . . Here is the answer to one of life’s great questions, ‘Who am I?’ I am a child of God with a spirit lineage to heavenly parents. That parentage defines our eternal potential. That powerful idea is a potent antidepressant. It can strengthen each of us to make righteous choices and to seek the best that is within us. Establish in the mind of a young person the powerful idea that he or she is a child of God, and you have given self-respect and motivation to move against the problems of life” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 31; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 25).

If you arranged to have “I Am a Child of God” sung or played as a special musical number, have the soloist or small group present it now. Or sing it with class members (see the “Preparation” section).

- What great promise did Paul say the children of God will receive? (See Romans 8:17.) What does it mean to be a joint-heir with Christ? (See D&C 76:50, 54–70.) What must we do to receive this great inheritance? (See D&C 76:51–53.)
- How can knowing that we are children of God and potential joint-heirs with Christ help us endure the trials of this world? (See Romans 8:18, 28, 31; see also Romans 5:3–5.) How have you seen “all things work together for good to them that love God”? (Romans 8:28).
- What did Paul teach in Romans 8:35–39 about the love of Jesus Christ? How have you felt the Savior’s love in your life? What difference has his love made in your life?

If you arranged to have “I Feel My Savior’s Love” sung or played as a special musical number, have the soloist or small group present it now. Or sing it with class members (see the “Preparation” section).

### 3. We should live as becomes Saints.

Read and discuss selected verses from Romans 12–13; 15:1–7.

- Paul exhorted the Roman Saints to present themselves as “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Romans 12:1). How can we present ourselves as living sacrifices to God? (See 3 Nephi 9:20; D&C 59:8.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained, “To present [oneself] as a living sacrifice is to come forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit through obedience” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 2:292).

- Paul counseled the Roman Saints to “be not conformed to this world” (Romans 12:2). What are some ways that we try to conform to the world today? How can we overcome this tendency? (See Romans 12:2.)
- Romans 12 and 13 list many attributes of true Saints. Have class members identify these attributes, and write them on the chalkboard. (You may want to divide the class into small groups and assign each group to search part of a chapter.) Then discuss the following questions about several of these attributes: Why is this attribute important to develop? What can we do this week to further develop this attribute?
- How did Paul instruct us to treat our enemies? (See Romans 12:19–21.) What blessings can come into our lives if we treat our enemies this way? What examples have you seen of someone using kindness to overcome evil or ill will?
- What commandment did Paul say includes all other commandments? (See Romans 13:8–9.) How does this commandment include all others? (See Romans 13:10.)
- What did Paul teach about how members who are strong in the faith should respond to members who are weak in the faith? (See Romans 15:1–7.) How can a person who is strong in the faith help a person who is weak?

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## Conclusion

Emphasize that it is through faith in Jesus Christ and righteous living that we can be justified—declared righteous and reconciled to God. Testify that we are children of God and have the potential to become joint-heirs with Christ if we have faith in him and live as he has commanded us.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (Romans 1:16)

Have a class member read Romans 1:16.

- How can we show that we are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ? (See 1 Peter 3:15 for one suggestion. List class members’ answers on the chalkboard, and encourage each class member to do at least one of these things during the coming week.)

### 2. Youth activity

Give each class member a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Have class members write on their papers the following question from Romans 8:31: “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (You may want to use the wording from the Joseph Smith Translation, which gives the last part of the sentence as “who can prevail against us?”)

Discuss how this statement can strengthen class members in their daily lives. Encourage class members to place the card where they can see it often.

Lesson  
**37**

# Jesus Christ: “The Author and Finisher of Our Faith”

*Hebrews*

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**Purpose** To remind class members that salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to his commandments.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Hebrews 1–4. Paul testifies that Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of Heavenly Father, is our Savior.
  - b. Hebrews 5; 6:20; 7. Paul explains that the Melchizedek Priesthood is a part of the fulness of the gospel.
  - c. Hebrews 8:1–10:18. Paul teaches that the law of Moses was the old covenant between God and his children, while the gospel of Jesus Christ is the new covenant. The old covenant was a type, or pattern, of the new covenant, but only the new covenant has the power to save.
  - d. Hebrews 10:19–11:40. Paul exhorts the Saints to exercise faith in Jesus Christ so they may inherit a place in the kingdom of God.
2. Additional reading: Hebrews 6; 12–13; Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Hebrews,” 746–47.
3. Suggestion for teaching: Be careful not to become a lecturer. Sometimes you will need to lecture briefly to present information, but lecturing loses its effectiveness when it is the only teaching method used. After you give information or explain a principle, be sure to provide opportunities for class members to respond and contribute. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 126.)

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**Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Describe the following situations, and ask class members to find a scripture that could be used in one of the situations. (A few scriptures are suggested in parentheses.)

1. A child you know just learned in Primary that Jesus Christ created the world and wants to know where this is explained in the scriptures. (Hebrews 1:2; John 1:1–3, 10; Ephesians 3:9; Mosiah 3:8)
2. A friend is having some personal problems and wonders how the Savior could care about her personally or understand what she is going through. (Hebrews 2:6–8, 18; 2 Nephi 1:15; Alma 7:11–12)
3. A nonmember friend wonders if it is really necessary for someone to have the priesthood to perform baptisms and other ordinances. (Hebrews 5:1, 4; Exodus 28:41; John 15:16)

Invite one or two class members to read the scriptures they have chosen for each situation. Point out that Paul's letter to the Hebrews contains scriptures that could be useful in each of the three situations. Invite class members to listen for these scriptures as you discuss the book of Hebrews.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

Explain that throughout his missionary journeys, Paul sought to convince the members of the Church that they should no longer practice the law of Moses. While the Jewish Christians had been taught that salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, many of them still believed that obedience to the law of Moses was essential to their salvation. Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews to reemphasize that the law of Moses had been fulfilled in Christ.

### 1. Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of Heavenly Father, is our Savior.

Discuss Hebrews 1–4. Invite class members to read selected verses.

- What do we learn about Jesus Christ from Hebrews 1? (List class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. He created the world (verses 2, 10).
  - b. He is in the image of God the Father (verse 3).
  - c. He atoned for our sins (verse 3).
  - d. He is the Firstborn Son of God the Father (verses 5–6).
  - e. His glory and power are eternal and unchanging (verses 8, 12).
- Paul said that the Son of God, who was “made so much better than the angels” (Hebrews 1:4), had also been “made a little lower than the angels” (Hebrews 2:9). In what way was Jesus “made a little lower than the angels”? (See Mosiah 13:34–35. He came to earth as a mortal and was subject to pain and death.) Why was this necessary? (See Hebrews 2:9–10, 16–18; 4:15–16; see also Matthew 23:10–11.)
- Paul encouraged the Saints to live righteously so they could enter into God's rest (Hebrews 3:7–19; 4:1–11). What does it mean to enter into God's rest? (See D&C 84:23–24; 3 Nephi 27:19.) What did Paul explain about why some of the children of Israel in Moses' time were unable to enter into God's rest? (See Hebrews 3:7–11, 16–19; 4:1–2.) How can we help each other become worthy to enter into God's rest? (See Hebrews 3:13–14; 4:11; Alma 13:12–13, 16.)

### 2. The Melchizedek Priesthood is part of the fulness of the gospel.

Read and discuss selected verses from Hebrews 5; 6:20; 7.

- What did Paul teach about how a man must receive and use priesthood authority? (See Hebrews 5:1–4.) Why must a priesthood holder be “called of God” rather than “[take] this honour unto himself”?
- What priesthood authority accompanied the law of Moses? (The Aaronic Priesthood, also called the Levitical, lesser, or preparatory priesthood. See D&C 84:25–27.) What priesthood authority does Jesus Christ hold? (See Hebrews 5:5–6; 6:20.) Explain that when Jesus came and fulfilled the

law of Moses, he also restored the Melchizedek Priesthood. Why was this necessary? (See Hebrews 7:11. The Aaronic Priesthood does not have the authority to perform all the ordinances necessary for salvation.)

“Neither the law of Moses nor the priesthood of Aaron which administered it was capable of bringing God’s children unto perfection. The Aaronic Priesthood is a lesser authority, and it administers the preparatory gospel only. The Melchizedek Priesthood, on the other hand, is the higher priesthood, commissioned to minister the gospel ordinances in their fulness and capable of purifying our lives so that we can again enter into the presence of the Lord” (*The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles* [Church Educational System manual, 1979], 385–86; see also D&C 107:18–20).

- Why do we call the greater priesthood the Melchizedek Priesthood? (See D&C 107:2–4.) How are members of the Church today blessed by having the Melchizedek Priesthood as well as the Aaronic Priesthood? How has the priesthood blessed your life?

### 3. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the new covenant between God and his children.

Read and discuss selected verses from Hebrews 8:1–10:18. Explain that Paul reminded the members of the Church that worship under the law of Moses had pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

- According to Hebrews 8:5, what did the Lord tell Moses to do while building the tabernacle to be used by the Israelites for worship? (Explain that the ceremonies in the tabernacle symbolized “heavenly things,” as outlined below.)

Ordinance in the tabernacle:	What it symbolized:
a. The priests offered animals as sacrifices to God (Hebrews 10:1–4, 11).	Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins (Hebrews 9:26–28; 10:4–12).
b. The priests placed blood from the sacrificed animals on the altar to symbolize the cleansing and purification of the people (Hebrews 9:6–7, 19–23).	Jesus’ blood, shed during the Atonement, cleanses and purifies us from sin (Hebrews 9:11–15).
c. The high priest went through the veil into the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:1–7).	Jesus, the great high priest, went through the veil into heaven itself (Hebrews 9:24).

- Paul explained that the law of Moses was the old covenant between God and his people (Hebrews 8:9; see also Galatians 3:24–25). What is the new covenant brought by Jesus Christ? (See Hebrews 8:6–8, 10–13. The fulness of the gospel.) Point out that the old covenant is described in the Old Testament of the Bible, while the new covenant is described in the New Testament.
- Why was the old covenant unable to make its participants perfect? (See Hebrews 10:1–4.) Why does the new covenant give us greater hope for perfection? (See Hebrews 10:9–18.)

#### 4. Those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ will inherit a place in the kingdom of God.

Read and discuss selected verses from Hebrews 10:19–11:40. Point out that after Paul explained the ways in which the fulness of the gospel is a higher, more complete law that replaces the law of Moses, he exhorted the Saints to follow this “new and living way” by putting their faith in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:19–22).

- What is the first, or most basic, principle of the gospel? (See Articles of Faith 1:4.) What is faith? (See Hebrews 11:1; Alma 32:21; Ether 12:6.) How is faith more than belief? Why is faith in Jesus Christ essential to our salvation?
- Paul gave many examples of people who accomplished great things through faith in Jesus Christ. Whom did he mention? (See Hebrews 11:4–12, 17–34.) List on the chalkboard the names of those mentioned, and discuss how each person’s actions required faith.

You may want to put class members into small groups for this discussion. Assign each group to consider a few of the people mentioned in Hebrews 11. Give the groups a few minutes to discuss how the people’s actions required faith, and then have each group briefly present their conclusions to the class.

- Paul also taught that faith can help us during times of adversity or opposition (Hebrews 11:32–38). How has faith helped you deal with adversity? What other blessings have you (or someone you know) received by exercising faith in Jesus Christ?

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#### Conclusion

Point out that we are blessed to live in a time when the fulness of the gospel is available. Testify that salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to his commandments. Encourage class members to keep the covenants and commandments of the restored gospel.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. God will keep his promises

- What does Hebrews 6:10–19 teach about God’s promises to His children? What does verse 15 teach about the relationship between enduring trials and receiving promises from God? (See also D&C 82:10.) What experiences have you had with God fulfilling his promises to you?

##### 2. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth” (Hebrews 12:6)

Have class members read Hebrews 12:5–11.

- How does the Lord chasten us? How is chastening from the Lord “for our profit”? (See Hebrews 12:10; D&C 61:8; 95:1; 101:5.) How can we use chastening as an opportunity to learn and grow? Invite class members to tell about times when the Lord has chastened them and what they have learned from the experience.

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**Purpose**

To encourage class members to follow Paul’s example and be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ even in the midst of trials and tribulation.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Acts 21:1–22:21. Despite the objections of his companions, who fear for his life, Paul travels to Jerusalem. He reports on his missionary journeys to the brethren there. He goes to the temple and is taken by an angry mob. The chief captain arrests him but allows him to speak to the people. Paul tells the people about his conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - b. Acts 22:22–23:35. The mob rejects Paul and seeks his life. The chief captain removes Paul from the mob and holds him in a castle. The next day the chief captain takes Paul before the Sanhedrin. Another great dissension arises, and again the chief captain removes Paul and has him taken to the castle. That night the Lord appears to Paul and tells him that he is called to bear witness in Rome as well as in Jerusalem. More than 40 Jews plot to kill Paul, and he is taken to Felix, the governor, for safety.
  - c. Acts 26. After several years of persecution and imprisonment, Paul is brought to testify before King Agrippa. Agrippa rejects Paul’s testimony and sends him to Rome to see Caesar.
  - d. Acts 27–28. Paul is shipwrecked on his way to Rome after the captain of the ship ignores his counsel. When he finally reaches Rome, he is imprisoned, but he preaches to all who will listen.
2. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
  - a. “Paul—A Chosen Vessel,” an eleven-minute segment of *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914). Preview this segment, if possible, so you will know when to stop the video for discussion.
  - b. A map of Paul’s journey to Rome (map 22 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible).
3. Suggestion for teaching: “It is essential that those you teach be fed, that they be taught something. Each time they come there should be at least one thought, one idea, one inspiration that is theirs for having been in the class. It can be a little thought, an ordinary one—in fact, the more fundamental it is, the more you have accomplished” (Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 154).

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**Suggested Lesson Development**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

- Is there a person in the scriptures with whom you feel you can identify, because of similar thoughts, experiences, or situations? Why do you feel a particular closeness to this person?

Allow several class members to comment. Then point out that in looking back at his experiences after the First Vision, the Prophet Joseph Smith felt that his experiences were similar to the Apostle Paul's. Have class members read Joseph Smith—History 1:23–25 to discover why.

Explain that the Apostle Paul's appearance before King Agrippa is one of the events that will be discussed in this lesson. In this situation and throughout his missionary journeys, despite rejection and persecution, Paul stood firm in the faith and courageously bore testimony of Jesus Christ.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how we can develop courage and faith as strong as Paul's. Encourage class members to tell about times when they have courageously borne testimony through their words or actions.

### 1. Paul reports on his journeys and faces an angry mob in Jerusalem.

If you are using the video presentation "Paul—A Chosen Vessel," show the first part now. Stop the video after the narrator says, "He fulfilled the Lord's words that he would bear His name before kings and rulers" (during these words, Paul is being escorted down a hallway by several soldiers).

Discuss Acts 21:1–22:21. Invite class members to read selected verses. Explain that after three successful missionary journeys that took him throughout the Roman empire, Paul returned to Jerusalem, though he knew it was dangerous to do so.

- Why did Paul's friends try to stop him from returning to Jerusalem? (See Acts 21:10–12.) How did Paul respond to his friends' concerns? (See Acts 21:13.) How did this demonstrate Paul's commitment to Christ?
- What did Paul do the day after he reached Jerusalem? (See Acts 21:17–19.) How is this similar to what missionaries today do after returning from their missions? (They report their mission experiences to the stake president and high council and often to ward or branch members in sacrament meeting.) How have you benefited from hearing about others' missionary experiences?
- Many Jewish Christians resented Paul for teaching that salvation came through Jesus Christ, not the law of Moses (Acts 15:1–35). To please these people, the brethren in Jerusalem asked Paul to go to the temple and undergo ritual cleansing as a sign that he still observed the law (Acts 21:20–25). What happened while Paul was in the temple? (See Acts 21:26–30. He was seized by a mob of people who accused him of teaching against the law of Moses and polluting the temple by bringing a non-Jew into it.) How was Paul rescued from this mob? (See Acts 21:31–36.) What did Paul do when the chief captain allowed him to speak to the people? (See Acts 21:37–22:21. Why did this require courage?

You may want to begin a list on the chalkboard of all the times in Acts 21–28 that Paul showed great courage in being a witness of Jesus Christ. Add to the list as appropriate during the lesson.

- When have you borne your testimony in a situation that required courage? How did you gain the courage to do this? How can learning about Paul's actions help us have more courage to share our testimonies with others?

## 2. Paul is taken before the Sanhedrin.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 22:22–23:35.

- How did the crowd outside the temple respond to Paul’s account of his conversion? (See Acts 22:22.) What was the chief captain’s purpose in removing Paul from the mob? (See Acts 22:24.) How was Paul able to avoid being scourged? (See Acts 22:25–26. He pointed out that he was a Roman citizen. This gave him special rights and privileges in the Roman empire, of which Jerusalem was a part.)
- What was the first thing Paul said when he was brought before the Sanhedrin (the Jewish council)? (See Acts 23:1; see also Acts 24:16. See D&C 135:4 for a similar statement made by the Prophet Joseph Smith.) How do you think Paul’s “good conscience before God” helped him at this time? Invite class members to consider what changes they need to make in their own lives to have a “good conscience before God.”
- What did the Lord say when he appeared to Paul following Paul’s examination by the Sanhedrin? (See Acts 23:11.) How has the Lord helped you “be of good cheer” during difficult times?
- The day after the Lord appeared to Paul, more than 40 Jews plotted to kill Paul, vowing not to eat or drink until they succeeded (Acts 23:12–15). How was Paul protected from their plan? (See Acts 23:16–35. You may want to point out that this was the third time in just a few days that Paul was protected from death.)

## 3. Paul testifies to Agrippa, but his testimony is rejected.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 26. You may want to summarize the following information from Acts 24–25: Paul was sent to Felix, the governor, and testified boldly before him. Paul remained a prisoner for two years while Felix hoped to receive money to free him. When Felix was succeeded as governor by Festus, the Jews asked Festus to send Paul to Jerusalem for trial. Paul refused to go, knowing he would not get a fair trial there. Instead, Paul appealed to Caesar, as was his right as a Roman citizen. Festus agreed to send Paul to Rome, but Paul first had to appear before Herod Agrippa, the Roman-appointed ruler of Judea.

If you are using the video presentation, show the second part now. Stop the video after Paul’s statement, “I would to God that not only thou, but also all who hear me this day, were such as I am, except these bonds” (just before Paul is escorted from the court of King Agrippa).

- What impresses you about Paul’s words to King Agrippa? (See Acts 26:2–27.) How did Agrippa respond to Paul’s words? (See Acts 26:28.) What might have kept Agrippa from becoming a Christian? What attitudes or other problems keep people today from accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- How were Festus’s and Agrippa’s reactions to Paul different? How were they similar? (See Acts 26:24, 28. Point out that nothing less than complete devotion is acceptable to the Lord. Although Agrippa found Paul’s message almost believable while Festus rejected it outright, both failed the test of faith Paul offered them.)

## 4. Paul is shipwrecked on his way to Rome.

Read and discuss selected verses from Acts 27–28. Explain that Agrippa had been willing to release Paul (Acts 26:32), but Paul had appealed to Caesar and so was

sent to Rome. As you discuss Paul's journey to Rome, display the map and point out relevant sites, such as Fair Havens, where Paul counseled the men to remain for the winter, and Malta (Melita), where the shipwrecked passengers swam ashore.

- What happened when the master of the ship rejected Paul's warning that it was too dangerous to sail from Fair Havens? (See Acts 27:7–20.) What motivated the centurion to disregard Paul's counsel? (See Acts 27:11–12.) Why do some of us occasionally disregard our Church leaders' counsel? How have you learned the importance of following Church leaders' counsel?
- How did Paul know that all of the passengers would arrive on land safely, though the ship would be destroyed in the storm? (See Acts 27:21–26.) How was this prophecy fulfilled? (See Acts 27:27–44.)
- How did Paul use his priesthood power while on the island of Melita? (See Acts 28:7–9.) What does this incident suggest about the purpose of priesthood power? How does honoring the priesthood help us serve as witnesses of Christ?
- After several months, Paul finally reached Rome, where he was again imprisoned. How did he turn this seeming setback to his advantage? (See Acts 28:16–31. He was given relative freedom, so he spent his time teaching the gospel and testifying of Christ.) What can we learn from Paul about being a faithful witness of Jesus Christ? (If you made a list on the chalkboard of the times that Paul showed courage in being a faithful witness, refer to it.)

If you are using the video presentation, show the remainder now.

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## Conclusion

Explain that historians assume that Paul died a martyr's death in Rome about A.D. 65. Throughout his life, he fulfilled his responsibility as an Apostle to "go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19). He also fulfilled the Lord's prophecy that he would preach the gospel "before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). He was a faithful witness of Christ despite verbal and physical attacks, unjust imprisonment, and natural disasters.

Testify that when we follow Paul's example by being faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ in all situations, He will give us the strength to endure our trials.

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## Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

### Review of Paul's life

To help class members appreciate how Paul fulfilled his life's mission to testify of Christ, have them turn to the entry under "Paul" in the Bible Dictionary (pages 742–43). Have each class member select one event in Paul's life when he testified of Christ. (Events not listed in the Bible Dictionary may also be used.) Invite each class member to share his or her selection with the class, and list all the events on the chalkboard. Then ask class members to turn to the maps of Paul's journeys (maps 19–22 in the LDS edition of the King James Bible) and identify where each event took place. Help class members review the appropriate scriptures if necessary to determine the location of the event.

Lesson  
**39**

# “For the Perfecting of the Saints”

*Ephesians*

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand that the process of “perfecting . . . the saints” (Ephesians 4:12) requires us to increase our faith in Christ, follow the teachings of the apostles and prophets, and protect ourselves from the wickedness of the world.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Ephesians 1:9–10. Paul teaches that the purpose of the dispensation of the fulness of times is to “gather together in one all things in Christ.”
  - b. Ephesians 2:12–22; 4:1–16. Paul teaches that Jesus Christ is our cornerstone. He teaches that the Lord gave us apostles and prophets to help us become perfected and come to a “unity of the faith.”
  - c. Ephesians 5:22–29; 6:1–4. Paul teaches the need for unity between husband and wife and between parents and children.
  - d. Ephesians 4:21–32; 6:10–18. Paul teaches that we should “put on the new man” and “put on the whole armour of God” to protect us from the wickedness of the world.
2. Additional reading: John 17:11; Mosiah 18:21–22; Doctrine and Covenants 27:15–18; 38:25–27; Bible Dictionary, “Dispensations,” 657–58.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring to class a piece of thread (approximately 1 to 3 feet long) and a piece of rope that is approximately the same length.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Scripture marking helps teachers and class members note important words, ideas, people, and events. You can encourage class members to mark their scriptures by pointing out important principles, giving a cross-reference, or telling what you have written in the margin of your scriptures.

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

**Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Show class members the thread and the rope (see the “Preparation” section).

- What do the thread and the rope have in common? (Both are made of fibers or strands of material.) How are they different? (The thread is a single strand, while the rope is made of many strands woven together.) Which of these objects is stronger?

Explain that, like the piece of thread, we are weak when we depend on ourselves. However, like the rope, we can be stronger when we are united with others in faith and righteousness. In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul emphasized the importance of “perfecting . . . the saints” and reaching a “unity of the faith” (Ephesians 4:12–13). This lesson discusses how as families and as a Church we

can work toward perfection and unity by trusting in the Savior, following the apostles and prophets, developing strong families, and putting on the whole armor of God.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully select the scripture passages and questions that will best meet class members' needs. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. The dispensation of the fulness of times

Read and discuss Ephesians 1:9–10.

- In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul spoke of “the dispensation of the fulness of times” (Ephesians 1:10). What is a dispensation of the gospel? (A period of time when the Lord has at least one servant on the earth who holds the keys of the priesthood and is authorized to administer the gospel. See Bible Dictionary, “Dispensations,” 657–58.)
- What is the dispensation of the fulness of times? (The dispensation that began with the restoration of the gospel and organization of the Church through Joseph Smith.) Why is our dispensation referred to as the fulness of times?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “You and I are experiencing the profound and wonderful blessings of the dispensation of the fulness of times. In this day and time there have been restored to the earth all of the principles, powers, blessings, and keys of all previous dispensations” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 98; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 70).

- What did Paul say our Father in Heaven would do in this dispensation? (See Ephesians 1:9–10.) What do you think it means to “gather together in one all things in Christ”? What are some things that are being gathered together in our day? (Answers may include the scriptures, Church members, records of the dead, and families that are sealed in the temple.) How can we help in this gathering process?

### 2. Jesus Christ as our cornerstone

Read and discuss selected verses from Ephesians 2:12–22 and 4:1–16.

- Compare Ephesians 2:12 and 2:19. How did Paul describe the changes that took place in those who had accepted and followed the Savior? How have you seen these same changes in yourself or others? How has your association with other Church members as “fellowcitizens” in the gospel blessed your life?
- What did Paul mean by teaching that Jesus Christ is the “chief corner stone” of the Church? (Ephesians 2:20). (If necessary, explain that a cornerstone is a foundation stone placed at a corner where two walls meet. The cornerstone is essential for the strength and unity of the structure.) How has Jesus Christ been the cornerstone of your faith?
- What did Paul teach in Ephesians 2:20 and 4:11–14 about the importance of apostles and prophets? Why are living apostles and prophets essential to the true Church? What are some teachings from latter-day apostles and prophets that help us progress toward perfection and unity? (You may want to list class members' responses on the chalkboard.)

President Boyd K. Packer taught: “The ministry of the prophets and apostles leads them ever and always to the home and the family. . . . The ultimate purpose of all we teach is to unite parents and children in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, linked to their generations, and assured of exaltation in the presence of our Heavenly Father” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 8).

- What did Paul mean by teaching that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism”? (Ephesians 4:5). Why is it important that we be unified in our understanding and teaching of the basic doctrines of the Church?

### 3. Unity between husband and wife and between parents and children

Read and discuss Ephesians 5:22–29; 6:1–4.

- What comparison did Paul use when he described the relationship between husband and wife? (See Ephesians 5:22–29.) What can husbands and wives learn from this comparison to help them develop greater love and unity in their marriage? (Discuss specific ways Jesus has shown his love for the Church and how each way can be applied to marriage. You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)

President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Can you find in all the holy scriptures where the Lord Jesus Christ ever failed his church? . . . Was he faithful? Was he true? Is there anything good and worthy that he did not give? Then that is what we ask—what he asks of a husband. . . .

“. . . Can you think of how he loved the Church? Its every breath was important to him. Its every growth, its every individual, was precious to him. He gave to those people all his energy, all his power, all his interest. He gave his life—what more could one give?” (*Men of Example* [address delivered to religious educators, 12 Sept. 1975], 4–5).

- What is Paul’s counsel to children in Ephesians 6:1–3? Why is this counsel important today? How have you been blessed for honoring your parents?
- What did Paul mean when he counseled parents to bring up a child in “the nurture and admonition of the Lord”? (Ephesians 6:4). How can parents nurture children spiritually? How can parents follow the Lord’s example when admonishing children?
- How can Paul’s counsel to parents and children help strengthen family relationships and maintain unity in the home? What counsel have latter-day apostles and prophets given us regarding families? Invite class members to discuss recent counsel given in general conferences, in other meetings or firesides, and in Church magazine articles.

In “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

#### 4. Putting on “the new man” and “the whole armour of God”

Read and discuss Ephesians 4:21–32 and 6:10–18.

- What did Paul mean when he encouraged the Ephesians to “put on the new man”? (Ephesians 4:24). What are some characteristics of people who have become “new” through the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See Ephesians 4:21–32.)
- While exhorting the Saints to put on the armor of God, Paul warned them against many kinds of evil influences (Ephesians 6:10–12). What are some of the evil influences in this life?
- What are the different pieces of what Paul calls the armor of God? What does each piece represent? (See Ephesians 6:13–18; D&C 27:15–18. You may want to list answers on the chalkboard under the headings *Armor* and *Representation*.) How can each piece of the armor of God protect us against the influence of Satan? What can we do to put on this armor each day?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that the Lord established his Church, with apostles and prophets, to help us become like him and return to live with him. Encourage class members to strive together for the “perfecting of the Saints” by following Paul’s teachings in Ephesians.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. “Put on the whole armour of God” (Ephesians 6:11)

Show “The Whole Armor of God,” a thirteen-minute video segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914). Then ask the following questions:

- What dangers did the soldiers in the video presentation face? What dangers did the young people face? How were members of each group blessed for wearing their armor?

##### 2. Praying for Church leaders

- Read Ephesians 6:18–20. Why do you think Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him? When have you been strengthened by the prayers of others? Why is it important that we pray for each other and for the leaders of the Church?

##### 3. “By grace are ye saved through faith” (Ephesians 2:8)

- What did Paul teach in Ephesians 2:8–9 about how a person receives salvation? Why is it impossible for us to save ourselves by our works? (See Romans 3:23; Mosiah 3:17; Alma 22:14. You may want to point out that Paul often had to remind the Jewish Saints that the works of the law of Moses could not save them. For a more detailed discussion of grace and works, see lesson 36.)

Lesson  
**40**

# “I Can Do All Things through Christ”

*Philippians; Colossians; Philemon*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to develop the characteristics of true followers of Jesus Christ.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Philippians. Paul thanks the Saints in Philippi for aid they have sent him and encourages them to be unified, faithful followers of Christ.
  - b. Colossians 1. Paul reminds the Saints in Colosse that redemption comes only through Jesus Christ.
  - c. Colossians 2:1–8, 16–23; 3; 4. Paul teaches the Colossian Saints about things they should do and attributes they should develop as the elect of God.
  - d. Philemon. Paul encourages Philemon to be forgiving toward Onesimus, a runaway slave.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Philippians,” 745–46; “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Colossians,” 746; and “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to Philemon,” 746.
3. Suggestion for teaching: A lesson outline or scripture block may contain more material than you have time to use in class. As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully decide which doctrines and principles are most useful for your class. Plan to teach these first, including other parts of the lesson if time is available. As you teach, however, be sensitive to the Spirit and flexible enough to change your plan if you feel prompted to do so. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 113.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write on the chalkboard several key words from the thirteenth article of faith, such as *true*, *honest*, *virtuous*, and *praiseworthy*.

- Which article of faith contains these words? (If class members do not know, have them look in the Articles of Faith, which are found at the end of the Pearl of Great Price.)

When class members have answered correctly, ask a class member to recite or read the thirteenth article of faith. Then have the class member again recite the first half of the article of faith, through “the admonition of Paul.”

- What is “the admonition of Paul”? Where is it found?

Have class members turn to Philippians 4:8 and compare it to the thirteenth article of faith. Explain that when Joseph Smith mentioned the admonition of Paul in the thirteenth article of faith, he was referring to Philippians 4:8, which is part of a letter that Paul wrote to the Saints in Philippi. Today’s lesson will

cover this letter and Paul's letters to the Colossians and to Philemon, all of which were written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. These letters discuss attributes we should seek to develop as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to us today just as they applied to the Saints in Paul's time. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Paul encourages the Philippian Saints to follow Jesus Christ.

Discuss Paul's epistle to the Philippians. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Paul was imprisoned in Rome when he wrote to the Philippians. How did other members of the Church react to Paul's imprisonment? (See Philippians 1:12–18.) How have you been helped by seeing or hearing about others who were courageous in serving the Lord?
- In Philippians 2:2–3, what did Paul exhort the Church members to do? In what ways should Church members be “of one mind”? (See Philippians 1:27; 2:14–15.) Why do we sometimes do things for “vainglory”? Why do you think Paul counseled against this? Why is it important that we not think we are better than other people? (See D&C 38:24–26.)
- What did Paul teach about Jesus in Philippians 2:5–8? How did Jesus set the perfect example of being humble and submissive to the will of his Father? (See John 8:29.) How can we become more humble and submissive to Heavenly Father's will?
- What do you think Paul meant when he told the Philippians, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”? (Philippians 2:12).

President David O. McKay explained: “‘Work out your own salvation’ is an exhortation to demonstrate by activity, by thoughtful, obedient effort the reality of faith. But this must be done with a consciousness that absolute dependence upon self may produce pride and weakness that will bring failure. With ‘fear and trembling’ we should seek the strength and grace of God for inspiration to obtain the final victory” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1957, 7).

- Paul repeatedly counseled the Philippians to “rejoice in the Lord” (Philippians 3:1; 4:4). How can we rejoice in the Lord?
- Paul told the Philippians that he had sacrificed all things for Christ (Philippians 3:7–8). What had Paul sacrificed? Why is it important that we make sacrifices for Christ? (See Philippians 3:9–12.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 69).

- How can we obtain the “peace of God” mentioned in Philippians 4:7? (See Philippians 4:6–7.) When have you felt the peace of God?

- How can we apply Paul’s counsel in Philippians 4:8? (See also Articles of Faith 1:13.) How are we blessed when we follow this admonition?
- Paul testified, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). How do you think Paul gained this testimony of Christ? How have you seen that you can “do all things through Christ”?

## **2. Paul reminds the Colossians that redemption comes only through Christ.**

Discuss Colossians 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that the Saints in Colosse, a small city east of Ephesus, were being influenced by teachings that minimized the importance of the Savior and focused on attaining perfection by observing ordinances and worshipping angels. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul warned against these teachings, exhorting the Saints to continue to be “grounded and settled” (Colossians 1:23; see also Colossians 2:5–7) in the knowledge that redemption comes only through Jesus Christ.

- What truths about Jesus Christ did Paul teach the Colossians? (See Colossians 1:12–22. List class members’ responses on the chalkboard.) Why was it important for the Colossians to understand these truths? How does your knowledge and testimony of Jesus Christ affect the way you live?
- What is the “inheritance of the saints” that we may receive from our Father in Heaven? (See Colossians 1:12; 2 Nephi 9:18; D&C 50:5.) Who makes this inheritance possible? (See Colossians 1:12–14.) What must we do to receive this inheritance? (See Colossians 1:10–12; 2 Nephi 9:18; Alma 5:51; D&C 50:5.)
- What did Paul mean when he exhorted the Colossians to be “grounded and settled” in the gospel? (See Colossians 1:23.) What causes some people to be “moved away from the hope of the gospel”? (Colossians 1:23). What can we do to strengthen our testimonies?

## **3. Paul teaches the Colossians what they should do as the elect of God.**

Discuss Colossians 2:1–8, 16–23; 3; 4. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- Paul wanted the Saints to have their hearts “knit together in love” and in the knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:2–3). How can we accomplish this in our own ward or branch?
- What does it mean to be “rooted and built up” in Christ? (See Colossians 2:7.) How can we become rooted in Christ? How can being “rooted and built up” in Christ help us in times of trial? (You may want to compare a tree with short, shallow roots to one with long, deep roots. Discuss which tree is more likely to survive trials such as storms or droughts.)
- What attributes of “the elect of God” are listed in Colossians 3:12–15? (List class members’ answers on the chalkboard.) How has Jesus Christ set an example in these attributes? (Ask class members to think of specific instances in which Jesus exemplified each attribute.) How can we more fully develop these attributes?
- How can we let the word of Christ dwell in us, as Paul admonished? (See Colossians 3:16–17; see also D&C 1:37; 18:34–36.) How can hymns strengthen our understanding and testimony of the word of Christ? How can we make better use of hymns and other sacred music?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: “We need to make more use of our hymns to put us in tune with the Spirit of the Lord, to unify us, and to help us teach and learn our doctrine. We need to make better use of our hymns in missionary teaching, in gospel classes, in quorum meetings, in home evenings, and in home teaching visits. Music is an effective way to worship our Heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. We should use hymns when we need spiritual strength and inspiration” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 13; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 12).

- Paul repeatedly emphasized the importance of being thankful (Colossians 2:7; 3:15, 17). Why is it important that we be thankful? How can we show gratitude to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in all circumstances?

#### 4. Paul encourages Philemon to be forgiving toward Onesimus.

Discuss Paul’s epistle to Philemon. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that Paul wrote a personal letter to Philemon, a member of the Church in Colosse, regarding Philemon’s slave Onesimus. Onesimus had robbed Philemon and run away to Rome, where he met Paul and was converted to the Church. Paul asked Philemon to forgive Onesimus and accept him as a brother in the gospel.

- What can we learn about Paul from his letter to Philemon?
- How did Paul show respect for Philemon’s agency? (See Philemon 1:14.) How did Paul show his commitment to Onesimus’s welfare?
- What can we learn from this epistle about the gospel’s power to transform human relationships? (See Philemon 1:16.) How does the gospel affect your relationships with the people around you?

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the importance of developing attributes that help us become more like Jesus Christ, such as those mentioned in Paul’s letters to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon. Invite class members to read Philippians 4:8 and Colossians 3:12–15 and choose one attribute from those verses to work on developing this week.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. Relationships between parents and children

Have a class member read Colossians 3:20–21.

- According to Paul, what is a child’s obligation to his or her parents? What is the parents’ obligation to a child? How can you improve the relationship between parents and children in your family?

##### 2. “Ye serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:24)

Have a class member read Colossians 3:23–24.

- How can we follow Paul’s instructions in these verses? (See also Matthew 25:34–40.) What difference might this attitude make in how we serve?

Lesson  
**41**

# “I Have Finished My Course”

*1 and 2 Timothy; Titus*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to learn and teach true doctrine and be righteous examples for others.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. 1 Timothy 4; 2 Timothy 1–4; Titus 1. Paul describes signs of apostasy. He teaches that learning and teaching true doctrine helps guard against apostasy.
  - b. 1 Timothy 4:12. Paul teaches that we should be “an example of the believers.”
  - c. 1 Timothy 6; Titus 2–3. Paul teaches that we should “follow after righteousness” and deny ungodliness.
2. Additional reading: Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: 1 Timothy,” 747; “Pauline Epistles: 2 Timothy,” 748; “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to Titus,” 747; “Timothy,” 785; “Titus,” 785–86.
3. If you use the attention activity, prepare wordstrips of the following statements, or prepare to write them on the chalkboard:

*To finish my course, I must:  
Learn and teach true doctrine  
Be an example of the believers  
Follow after righteousness and deny ungodliness*
4. Suggestion for teaching: Vary the materials and methods you use in teaching. For example, you might use pictures or audiovisual materials, a different discussion technique, or a different seating arrangement. Variety can help class members maintain interest in the lessons. See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, pages 56–57 and 96–97, for materials and methods that may be appropriate for your lessons.

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

- What is the last race you competed in or watched? What is the difference between *winning* and *finishing* a competitive race? How many winners are there in a typical race? What do you have to do to win?
- How is the course of our life like a race? How is it not like a race? (All people can win the “race” of life.) What must we do to finish the race of life successfully?

Ask a class member to read 2 Timothy 4:7. (You may want to point out that a “race” could also be called a “course.”) Explain that the Apostle Paul lived in such a way that he could make this declaration toward the end of his life. This lesson discusses several of Paul’s teachings that will help us as we strive to finish our course successfully.

Display the wordstrip *To finish my course, I must:*

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Scripture Discussion  
and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

Explain that Timothy and Titus were trusted associates of Paul who assisted him in preaching the gospel. After Paul’s first Roman imprisonment, he resumed his missionary travels. In Ephesus he left Timothy to minister to the Church, and in Crete he left Titus with a similar assignment. As Paul continued his journey, he wrote letters to strengthen these brethren and to counsel them in their responsibilities as pastors or shepherds over the Saints. Hence these letters are often called the pastoral epistles.

**1. Learn and teach true doctrine.**

Discuss 1 Timothy 4; 2 Timothy 1–4; and Titus 1. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- What signs of apostasy did Paul describe in his letters to Timothy and Titus? (See 1 Timothy 4:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:1–7, 13; 4:3–4; Titus 1:10–11.) How are these signs of apostasy evident today? (See 2 Nephi 28:3–9; D&C 1:15–16.) How can we protect ourselves against these evils?
- Why are some people “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”? (2 Timothy 3:7). How can we ensure that our learning brings us to a knowledge of the truth?
- What did Paul teach Timothy about the responsibilities of people who teach the gospel? (See 1 Timothy 4:6–7, 13–16; 2 Timothy 2:16, 23–25; 3:14–17; 4:2, 5. You may want to list these responsibilities on the chalkboard.) What opportunities do we have to teach the gospel? (Answers may include teaching family members, fulfilling callings in the Church, and discussing the gospel with friends and acquaintances. Point out that each of us is in some way a teacher of the gospel.) How can we teach the gospel more effectively?
- Paul emphasized the importance of teaching and learning true doctrine (1 Timothy 1:3; 4:6, 13; Titus 2:1). How can learning true doctrine help us guard against apostasy? What are some of the dangers of false teachings? How has learning the true doctrines of the gospel blessed your life?

Speaking of the power of true doctrine, Elder Boyd K. Packer said: “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior. . . . That is why we stress so forcefully the study of the doctrines of the gospel” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 20; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17).

- How can we be sure that what we teach is true doctrine? (See Mosiah 18:19–20; D&C 52:9.)

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin counseled: “God has revealed everything necessary for our salvation. We should teach and dwell on the things that have been revealed and avoid delving into so-called mysteries. My counsel to teachers in the Church, whether they instruct in wards and stakes, Church institutions of higher learning, institutes of religion, seminaries, or even as parents in their homes, is to base their teachings on the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 101; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 77).

- What did Paul counsel us to do once we have received sound doctrine? (See 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9.) What do you think it means to “hold fast”? (See 1 Nephi 15:23–24.)

If you used the attention activity, display the wordstrip *Learn and teach true doctrine*.

## 2. “Be . . . an example of the believers.”

Read and discuss 1 Timothy 4:12.

- What do you think it means to be “an example of the believers”? (1 Timothy 4:12). How have you been influenced by a person who was “an example of the believers”?

List each of the ways Paul admonished Timothy to be an example. Ask class members to describe how we can be an example in each of these ways.

Word

Conversation (may also mean conduct or behavior)

Charity

Spirit

Faith

Purity

If you used the attention activity, display the wordstrip *Be an example of the believers*.

## 3. “Follow after righteousness” and deny ungodliness.

Read and discuss selected verses from 1 Timothy 6 and Titus 2–3.

- What did Paul teach about the love of money? (See 1 Timothy 6:7–10.) In what sense is the love of money the “root of all evil”? How can we ensure that we do not focus too much on money and other material wealth? (See 1 Timothy 6:17–19; Jacob 2:18–19.)

Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught: “There is nothing inherently evil about money. The Good Samaritan used the same coinage to serve his fellowman that Judas used to betray the Master. It is ‘the *love of money* [which] is the root of all evil.’ (1 Timothy 6:10; italics added.) The critical difference is the degree of spirituality we exercise in viewing, evaluating, and managing the things of this world” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 63).

- In his letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul gave many instructions about living righteously. What counsel did Paul give in the following verses: 1 Timothy 6:11–12; 2 Timothy 2:22; Titus 2:1–8, 12; 3:1–2, 8? (Summarize class members' responses on the chalkboard. Discuss what these instructions mean and how we can apply them in our lives.)

If you used the attention activity, display the wordstrip *Follow after righteousness and deny ungodliness*.

## Conclusion

Explain that Paul knew he would soon be martyred for his testimony of Jesus Christ. But he also knew that because he had lived the gospel, “there [was] laid up for [him] a crown of righteousness” (2 Timothy 4:8). Bear testimony of the importance of doing the right things every day and staying on course so we can say with Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Additional discussion of 1 Timothy

- What counsel did Paul give about prayer in 1 Timothy 2:1–3? Why should we pray for all people? How can we do this meaningfully? Why should we pray particularly for the leaders of nations?
- In 1 Timothy 3:1–7 Paul set forth the qualifications of a bishop. Why are these qualities important for a bishop?
- What did Paul teach in 1 Timothy 5:8 about caring for our families? Why do you think Paul spoke so strongly against those who do not fulfill this responsibility?

### 2. “God hath not given us the spirit of fear” (2 Timothy 1:7)

Ask a class member to read 2 Timothy 1:7.

- What are some things that people fear in the world today? What assurance did Paul give Timothy about “the spirit of fear”? How have you found this assurance to be true in your own life?

### 3. Being good employees

Read and discuss Titus 2:9–10.

- How does Paul’s counsel to servants in these verses apply to employees? (Point out that the word *purloining* means stealing or misappropriating.) How do employees sometimes steal from their employers? (Answers may include embezzling, taking supplies for personal use, or not giving a full day’s work.)
- What did Paul say we should do instead of purloining? (Show “good fidelity,” or be faithful and trustworthy.) What results have you seen of showing “good fidelity” in the workplace?

**Purpose** To help class members understand the characteristics we should develop to live our religion more fully.

**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. James 1:1–4; 5:10–11. James teaches that we should endure affliction patiently.
  - b. James 1:5–7; 4:8. James teaches that we should pray to God in faith.
  - c. James 1:19–20, 26; 3:2–18. James teaches that we should control our tongues and be “slow to wrath.”
  - d. James 1:22–25, 27; 2:14–26; 4:17. James teaches that we should be “doers of the word,” showing our faith by our works.
2. Additional Reading: Bible Dictionary, “James,” 709; “James, Epistle of,” 709–10.
3. Suggestion for teaching: “Teach the reality of personal communication from and to God. Help each individual understand how to pray worthily and how to receive and recognize answers from God” (Richard G. Scott, “Four Fundamentals for Those Who Teach and Inspire Youth,” in *CES Old Testament Symposium Speeches, 1987* [1987], 3).

## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Write *Pure religion* on the chalkboard, and ask the following questions:

- What does the word *pure* mean? (Answers may include real, genuine, complete, and perfect.) What does *religion* mean? (Answers may include the service and worship of God, a system of beliefs and practices, and a commitment or devotion to a particular way of life.)
- How would you define pure religion?

Ask a class member to read James 1:27. Explain that this lesson discusses how we can apply James’s teachings to help us live a “pure religion” and be “undefiled before God.”

**Scripture Discussion and Application** As you discuss the teachings in the book of James, list them on the chalkboard under the heading *Pure religion*. Discuss how each concept taught by James can help us live a pure religion.

Explain that the writer of the book of James is generally thought to be the brother of Jesus Christ. After Jesus was resurrected, James served as an Apostle and was an important leader in the early Church (Acts 12:17; 15:13–20).

## 1. We should endure affliction patiently.

Read and discuss James 1:1–4; 5:10–11.

- What did James teach about facing trials of our faith? (See James 1:2–3 and footnote 2a, which shows that in the Joseph Smith Translation, the phrase *divers temptations* is changed to *many afflictions*.) How can trials help us develop patience? How are we blessed when we endure afflictions patiently? (See James 1:4; Romans 5:3–5; Alma 36:3.)

Elder Orson F. Whitney wrote: “No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God” (quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 98).

- Whom did James mention as good examples of patience in affliction? (See James 5:10–11.) How have you seen latter-day prophets demonstrate this patience? How has their example helped you?

## 2. We should pray to God in faith.

Read and discuss James 1:5–7 and 4:8.

- What counsel did James give to those who “lack wisdom”? (See James 1:5–6.) What will Heavenly Father do if we ask in faith? What experiences have you had with receiving answers to prayer?
- How was the Prophet Joseph Smith influenced by the counsel in James 1:5? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:11–13.) What can we learn from his experience? How did Joseph’s decision to follow the counsel in James 1:5 affect us? (See Joseph Smith—History 1:14–20.)

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “Because the fourteen-year-old boy went out in the woods to pray, having read in the scriptures, . . . because he did live the revelations from on high, we have The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We have all of the blessings that can make us the happiest people in the whole world, because a boy of fourteen went out into the woods to pray” (in Conference Report, Melbourne Australia Area Conference 1976, 23).

If you are teaching youth, testify that asking of God in faith and receiving wisdom are not limited by age or other circumstances. Joseph Smith was 14 years old when he put James’s words to the test and received the First Vision. He was 17 years old when the angel Moroni visited him and revealed where the golden plates were being safeguarded.

- How did James describe those who pray without faith? (See James 1:6–7.) What can we do to strengthen our faith?
- James taught, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8). How does sincere prayer bring us closer to God?

### 3. We should control our tongues and be “slow to wrath.”

Discuss James 1:19–20, 26; 3:2–18. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud.

- James taught that we should be “swift to hear, slow to speak” (James 1:19). What experiences in your life have confirmed the wisdom of this counsel? How can we become better listeners and more thoughtful speakers?
- James also taught we should be “slow to wrath” (James 1:19). What are some consequences of speaking or acting in anger? What experiences in your life have confirmed the wisdom of James’s counsel? How can we overcome or control feelings of anger?
- James taught that we should bridle our tongues (James 1:26). What is the purpose of a horse’s bridle? (To guide and control the horse.) How can we apply James’s counsel to “bridle” our tongues? (See James 4:11. Answers could include by avoiding gossiping, lies, quarreling, swearing, and angry words. Instead, we should use our tongues to speak kind words, to speak truth, to pray, and to make peace.)
- Read James 3:3–5. What did James compare the tongue to in these verses? (The bit on a horse’s bridle and the helm of a ship. You may want to explain that the bit is the steel part of the bridle that is inserted into the horse’s mouth.) What can we learn from these comparisons? How can learning to control our words help us control other aspects of our lives?
- Read James 3:9–13. What did James teach in these verses about controlling our speech? (Discuss applications of this counsel with class members. For example, if any class members are priests, you might discuss the importance of keeping their speech pure during the week so they can worthily bless the sacrament on Sunday. A similar application could be made for those who teach the gospel.)
- How can controlling our tongues help lead to peace? (See James 3:16–18.) Why is controlling our tongues an important part of pure religion?

### 4. We should be “doers of the word,” showing our faith by our works.

Read and discuss selected verses from James 1:22–25, 27; 2:14–26; 4:17.

- What does it mean to be “hearers only” of the word? (James 1:22). In what sense do “hearers only” deceive themselves? (See James 1:22–25; 4:17.) What are the blessings of being “doers of the word”?
- What did James teach about the relationship between faith and works? (See James 2:14–26.) Why is faith dead without works? How do good works strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ?
- What did James emphasize that we should do to live a pure religion? (See James 1:27 or remind class members of the attention activity.) Why do you think visiting and helping people in need is part of pure religion?
- What can we do to stay “unspotted from the world”? (James 1:27; see D&C 59:9). How does attending church and partaking of the sacrament each week help us stay unspotted from the world?

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Conclusion	Testify of the truth of James’s teachings. Emphasize that we can live our religion more purely by being patient in affliction, praying to God in faith, mastering ourselves, and doing good works.
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### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

#### 1. Class member presentations

The week before this lesson is to be taught, ask five class members to each study a different chapter of James. At the beginning of class (just after the attention activity, if you use it), have these people share their insights into the chapters they studied.

#### 2. Video presentation

Read James 1:27 and then show “The Body Is a Temple,” a six-minute video segment from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914). Discuss what this video presentation teaches about keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

#### 3. Additional discussion of the book of James

- In the Joseph Smith Translation of James 1:12, the word *endureth* is changed to *resisteth* (see footnote 12*b*). What is the difference between enduring temptation and resisting temptation? What are the promises to those who resist temptation? (See James 1:12; 4:7.)
- What did James teach about judging others? (See James 2:1–9.) Why do some people judge others by their earthly positions or material possessions? How can we learn to look beyond the outward appearance and into people’s hearts, as God does? (See 1 Samuel 16:7; D&C 38:24–27.)
- What did James teach about the effects of envy and lust? (See James 3:16; 4:1–6.) How can we overcome feelings of envy or lust? (See James 4:7–10.)
- What did James teach about administering to the sick? (See James 5:14–15.) How have you been blessed or seen others be blessed by the healing power of the priesthood?
- James emphasized the importance of helping people who “err from the truth” (James 5:19–20). How can we do this?

Lesson  
**43**

# “A Chosen Generation”

*1 and 2 Peter; Jude*

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**Purpose** To help class members live in holiness and be a chosen generation.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. 1 Peter 1; 2:1–10. Peter teaches that we must have faith and live in holiness. He teaches that the Saints are a chosen generation, called to show forth the praises of the Savior.
  - b. 1 Peter 2:19–24; 3:13–17; 4:12–19. Peter teaches that we must follow the Savior’s example in enduring trials and persecution.
  - c. 2 Peter 1. Peter exhorts us to partake of the divine nature and seek diligently to make our calling and election sure.
  - d. 2 Peter 2–3; Jude. Peter and Jude warn against false teachers and those who deny the Second Coming. They exhort the followers of Christ to remain faithful.
2. Additional reading: 1 John 3:2–3; 3 Nephi 12:48; Doctrine and Covenants 122:7–8.
3. Suggestion for teaching: Study each lesson well enough that you can teach it without looking too frequently at the manual. Knowing your material allows you to make eye contact with class members as you teach. Maintaining eye contact improves class members’ participation and behavior and helps you communicate your love and concern for them. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 107–8.)

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**Suggested Lesson  
Development**

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Share the following story told by Bishop Vaughn J. Featherstone:

“Many years ago I heard the story of the son of King Louis XVI of France. King Louis had been taken from his throne and imprisoned. His young son, the prince, was taken by those who dethroned the king. They thought that inasmuch as the king’s son was heir to the throne, if they could destroy him morally, he would never realize the great and grand destiny that life had bestowed upon him.

“They took him to a community far away, and there they exposed the lad to every filthy and vile thing that life could offer. . . . For over six months he had this treatment—but not once did the young lad buckle under pressure. Finally, after intensive temptation, they questioned him. Why had he not submitted himself to these things—why had he not partaken? These things would provide pleasure, satisfy his lusts, and were desirable; they were all his. The boy said, ‘I cannot do what you ask for I was born to be a king’” (“The King’s Son,” *New Era*, Nov. 1975, 35).

Bishop Featherstone commented:

“Our Father is a king, and just as the king’s son was exposed to every vile and perverted thing in this life, so you will be exposed to much of the filth and degradation of our generation. But you . . . are also born to be kings and queens, priests and priestesses” (*New Era*, Nov. 1975, 35).

- As spirit children of our Heavenly Father, what is our potential? How should the knowledge of our divine potential influence the way we live?

Emphasize that as children of our Father in Heaven, we can become like him and inherit all that he has. The epistles of Peter and Jude offer valuable teachings to help us live worthily as children of God.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

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Prayerfully select the scripture passages, questions, and other lesson material that will best meet class members’ needs. Discuss how these scriptures apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

### 1. Live in faith and holiness as a chosen generation.

Discuss 1 Peter 1 and 2:1–10. Invite class members to read selected verses.

- What did Peter teach in chapter 1 about the mission of Jesus Christ? (See 1 Peter 1:3–4, 18–21.) How should knowing of the Savior’s mission and sacrifice affect our daily actions? (See 1 Peter 1:8, 13–16, 22–23; 2:5. You may want to list class members’ responses on the chalkboard.)
- Why is faith “much more precious than . . . gold,” as Peter stated? (See 1 Peter 1:7; Hebrews 11:6; 1 Nephi 7:12.) What do you think it means to have our faith tried with fire? What is the ultimate purpose of our faith? (See 1 Peter 1:5, 9.)
- Peter taught that the prophets who testify of Jesus Christ have “enquired and searched diligently” (1 Peter 1:10; see also verse 11). How can diligent prayer and scripture study strengthen our testimonies of the Savior?
- Who is the chosen generation that Peter spoke of? (See 1 Peter 2:9–10 and the quotation below.) What is our responsibility as a chosen generation? (See 1 Peter 2:9.) How can we fulfill this responsibility? (See Matthew 5:16.)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie defined a chosen generation as “not those living in a particular period or age, but . . . the house of Israel both anciently, in the meridian of time, and now in these latter-days. . . . [It includes] faithful members of the Church who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ and been adopted into his family” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:294).

### 2. Follow the Savior’s example in enduring trials and persecution.

Read and discuss 1 Peter 2:19–24; 3:13–17; 4:12–19.

- Peter wrote that “Christ . . . suffered for us, leaving us an example” (1 Peter 2:21). What can we do to follow the Savior’s example in responding to trials and persecution? (See 1 Peter 2:19–23.) What examples have you seen of people who are Christlike in enduring trials? How are we blessed as we follow the Savior’s example in responding to trials?

- When have you (or someone you know) been persecuted for doing the Lord's will? How did Peter counsel us to respond in such circumstances? (See 1 Peter 3:13–17; 4:12–19. You may want to list class members' responses on the chalkboard.) In what ways do trials give us an opportunity to draw closer to the Lord and to glorify him?

### 3. Partake of the divine nature and strive to make your calling and election sure.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Peter 1.

- Which attributes did Peter describe as part of divine nature? (See 2 Peter 1:4–7. List the attributes on the chalkboard.) Why is it important that we develop these qualities? (See 2 Peter 1:8.) How have you seen these attributes demonstrated by others?
- Peter exhorted the Saints to “give diligence to make your calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10). What does it mean to make your calling and election sure? (To receive from the Lord the assurance or promise of exaltation in the celestial kingdom. A person whose calling and election is made sure knows that he or she is “sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy” [D&C 131:5]. Joseph Smith received this promise from the Lord, as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 132:49.)
- What must we do to have our calling and election made sure?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost (by the laying on of hands), . . . then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 150).

### 4. Resist false teachers and those who deny the Second Coming.

Read and discuss selected verses from 2 Peter 2–3 and Jude. Explain that Jude was a son of Joseph and Mary and a brother of Jesus.

- Peter and Jude warned that there would be false teachers among the members of the Church. What did they say were some characteristics of false teachers? (See 2 Peter 2:1–3, 10, 12–19; Jude 1:4, 8, 10–13, 16, 18–19.) How can we recognize false teachers today?
- What counsel did Peter and Jude give that can help us avoid false teachings and remain faithful as we prepare for the Second Coming? (See 2 Peter 3:11–14, 17–18; Jude 1:3, 20–21; see also Moroni 7:12–17; D&C 45:57; 46:7–8.)

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the truths you have discussed. Encourage class members to follow the teachings of Peter and Jude as they strive to live in faith and holiness.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or both of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Additional discussion of 1 Peter

- In 1 Peter 1, what contrasts did Peter make between what is corruptible or perishable and what is incorruptible or everlasting? (See 1 Peter 1:4, 7, 18–19, 23–25. List class members' responses on the chalkboard under two headings: *Corruptible or Perishable* and *Incorruptible or Everlasting*.) What can we learn from these contrasts?
- Peter taught that Jesus was “foreordained before the foundation of the world” to be the Savior (1 Peter 1:20; see also Revelation 13:8). Why is this truth important? What do scriptures revealed in the latter days add to our understanding of the Savior’s foreordination? (See Moses 4:1–4; Abraham 3:27–28.)
- What counsel did Peter give about the laws of the land? (See 1 Peter 2:13–15.) What counsel has the Lord revealed in the latter days about the laws of the land? (See D&C 58:21–22; 98:4–10; 134:5; Articles of Faith 1:12.)
- What did Peter teach about the work of preaching the gospel to the dead? (See 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6.) When did Jesus go to the spirit world to organize the preaching of the gospel among the dead? (See D&C 138:27.) Why did he do this? (See D&C 138:29–37.) What does the Savior’s ministry in the spirit world reveal about God’s work? (Answers could include that because of God’s perfect justice and mercy, all people who have lived on earth will have an opportunity to accept the gospel and enjoy its full blessings.)
- What counsel did Peter give Church leaders in 1 Peter 5:1–4? How can Church leaders “feed the flock of God”? (1 Peter 5:2; see 2 Peter 1:12–15; D&C 42:12–14). How have you been blessed by Church leaders who have followed this counsel?

### 2. “No . . . scripture is of any private interpretation” (2 Peter 1:20)

- Read 2 Peter 1:20–21. What did Peter teach in these verses about the source of the scriptures? What did Peter teach about interpreting the scriptures? How can we ensure that we interpret scriptures correctly? (Answers may include by seeking out the inspired interpretations of Church leaders and by seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost.) How have the teachings of Church leaders or the guidance of the Spirit helped you understand a particular scripture?

Lesson  
**44**

# “God Is Love”

*1, 2, and 3 John*

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**Purpose**

To help class members understand how the Father and the Son show their love for us and how we should show our love for them.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. 1 John 2:28–29; 3:1–2; 4:7–19; 5:1, 11–15. John teaches that Heavenly Father shows his love for us by providing a way for us to become like him and inherit eternal life.
  - b. 1 John 1:7–9; 2:1–2; 3:5–8, 16; 5:11–13. John teaches that Jesus showed his love for us through his atoning sacrifice, which enables us to become like our Father in Heaven.
  - c. 1 John 2:3–17; 3:9–24; 4:4–21; 5:1–10; 2 John; 3 John. John teaches that we show our love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ by our obedience and our love for one another.
2. Additional reading: Moroni 7:48; Doctrine and Covenants 45:3–5.
3. If you use the attention activity, bring a family photograph or one of the following pictures: A Family Working Together (62313); Family Fun (62384); or Family Togetherness (Gospel Art Picture Kit 616).
4. Suggestion for teaching: “Love, caring, devotion to duty, selflessness, scripture study, and prayer give your teaching a spiritual foundation. Combining these elements as you prepare lessons will help you create the lessons spiritually in your mind and heart before you teach them to your class members” (*Teaching—No Greater Call*, iii).

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**Suggested Lesson Development**

**Attention Activity**

As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Show a picture of a family.

- What are some of the ways that parents show love for their children? How do children show love for their parents, brothers, and sisters?
- In what way are we all members of the same family?

Remind class members that in addition to belonging to an earthly family, each of us is a spirit son or daughter of our Heavenly Father, who loves us and desires to bless us. In his epistles, John repeatedly emphasizes how the Father and the Son show their love for us and how we can show our love for them.

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**and Application**

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

## 1. Manifestations of Heavenly Father's love for us

Discuss the verses listed below. You may want to summarize the discussion on the chalkboard by listing the manifestations of God's love.

- If you were to use one word to describe Heavenly Father, what would it be? What word did John use to describe Heavenly Father in 1 John 4:8, 16? Why is this an appropriate word?
- Read 1 John 3:1–2. What manifestation of God's love did John mention in these verses? (God will call us his sons and make us like Christ—glorified, exalted, and joint-heirs with him; see also Romans 8:14–17.) What must we do to be called the sons of God? (See 1 John 2:28–29; 4:7; 5:1; Galatians 3:26–27; Mosiah 5:5–9; Moroni 7:48. Explain that while all of us are spirit children of God, the use of the words “sons of God” in 1 John 3:1–2 refers to those who take upon themselves the name of Christ through baptism and honor his name through faith and righteousness.)
- Read 1 John 4:9–10. What manifestation of God's love did John mention in these verses? (See also John 3:16; 1 John 5:11; 2 Nephi 9:10. Explain that the word *propitiation* in 1 John 4:10 refers to the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.) How does sending his Son to atone for our sins manifest Heavenly Father's love for us?
- Read 1 John 4:13. What manifestation of God's love did John mention in this verse? How has the Spirit been an important gift in your life?
- John taught that Heavenly Father will answer our prayers if we ask according to His will (1 John 5:14–15). How has prayer helped you feel Heavenly Father's love? Why is prayer essential for us to become like our Father in Heaven?
- John taught that “we love [God], because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). What are some of the ways God has shown his love for you? How do you feel when you consider the ways God has shown his love for you?

President Thomas S. Monson said: “Our Heavenly Father's plan contains the ultimate expressions of true love. All that we hold dear—even our families, our friends, our joy, our knowledge, our testimonies—would vanish were it not for our Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . The world has witnessed no greater gift, nor has it known more lasting love” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 77; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 62–63).

## 2. Manifestations of the Savior's love for us

Discuss the verses listed below.

- Read 1 John 3:16. What manifestation of the Savior's love did John mention in this verse? What blessings can we receive because of the Savior's atoning sacrifice? (See 1 John 1:7–9; 5:11–13; 2 Nephi 9:11–13; Alma 11:40–44. You may want to list class members' responses on the chalkboard as you discuss these verses.)
- Read 1 John 2:1–2. What manifestation of the Savior's love did John mention in these verses? What is an advocate? (One who pleads the cause of another.) What does Jesus, as our advocate, do for us? (See D&C 45:3–5.)
- John taught that the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). How do the Savior's life and teachings destroy the devil's works?

### 3. Showing our love for Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and others

Discuss the verses listed below. You may want to summarize the discussion on the chalkboard by listing the ways we can show love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

- Read 1 John 2:3–6. What can we learn from these verses about how to show our love for God? (See also John 14:15; 1 John 3:24; 5:3; 2 John 1:6.) How does obedience show our love for God?
- Read 2 John 1:4 and 3 John 1:4. How can our faithfulness bring joy to our Heavenly Father?
- Read 1 John 2:15–17. What can we learn from these verses about how to show our love for God? How do we sometimes show love for the world rather than love for God? How are we affected when we show love for the world? How can we overcome a love for worldly things?
- Read 1 John 4:7–8, 11. What can we learn from these verses about how to show our love for God? (See also 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:21.) How did John describe those who claim to love God but do not “love one another”? (See 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:14–15, 17; 4:20.) Why is our love for others a measure of our love of God? How can we come to feel and demonstrate greater love for each other? How have you been blessed by another person’s love for you?

If you used the attention activity, display the picture of the family again and ask the following questions:

- What are the blessings of living in a family whose members love each other and love God? How can we help others enjoy those same blessings as part of the family of God?

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#### Conclusion

Testify of the great love that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have for us. Encourage class members to remember John’s teachings as they strive to show their love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and for other people.

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#### Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

##### 1. “Walk in the light” (1 John 1:7)

Read 1 John 1:6–7.

- What does it mean to “walk in darkness”? What does it mean to “walk in the light”? (As part of your discussion of these questions, you may want to have class members sing “Teach Me to Walk in the Light.” See *Hymns*, no. 304, or *Children’s Songbook*, 177.)

##### 2. John cautions against the spirit of anti-Christ

- In his epistles, John repeatedly warned the Saints to avoid anti-Christ. What did John say anti-Christ try to do? (See 1 John 2:22–23; 4:1–3; 2 John 1:7.) Why do you think the adversary tries to destroy our testimonies of the Savior? What can we do to keep our testimonies strong?

Elder M. Russell Ballard taught: “Individual, personal testimony of gospel truth, particularly of the divine life and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, is essential to our eternal life. . . . Life eternal is predicated upon our own individual, personal knowledge of our Father in Heaven and His Holy Son. Simply knowing about them is not enough. We must have personal, spiritual experiences to anchor us. These come through seeking them in the same intense, single-minded way that a hungry person seeks food” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 111; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 80).

### 3. “No man hath seen God at any time” (1 John 4:12)

If class members wonder whether 1 John 4:12 means that man cannot see God, refer them to the corresponding verse in the Joseph Smith Translation, which reads, “No man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe” (1 John 4:12, footnote 12*a*). Point out that many prophets have seen God. See Exodus 33:9–11; John 6:46; Acts 7:55–56; Doctrine and Covenants 67:10–12; Moses 1:1–2; Abraham 3:11; Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17.

### 4. Youth discussion

Follow up on the attention activity with a more detailed discussion of how youth can show more love for their parents. Encourage class members to follow through with their ideas, and ask them to be ready to share their experiences next week.

### 5. Hymns about love

Choose a hymn about love (see under “Love” in the “Topics” listing of the hymnbook). Arrange to have a small group of class members sing the hymn, or sing the hymn as a class, read its words, or play a recording of it.

Lesson  
**45**

# “He That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things”

*Revelation 1–3; 12*

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**Purpose** To help class members understand some of the blessings that will come to those who overcome the trials of mortality through their testimony of Jesus Christ.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Revelation 1:1–3, 9–20. John is instructed to record the revelation he receives from the Lord through an angel. John sees in revelation several symbols representing parts of the Church of Jesus Christ.
  - b. Revelation 2–3. Through John, the Lord teaches the seven branches of the Church in Asia about the great blessings that await those who overcome the trials and temptations of mortality.
  - c. Revelation 12. John sees a vision of the War in Heaven and its continuation on the earth. He learns that the Saints overcome Satan through the Atonement of the Savior and their testimonies.
2. Additional reading: Revelation 21:7; Bible Dictionary, “Revelation of John,” 762–63.
3. If you use the attention activity, prepare to use the illustrations on page 191. You may want to draw larger versions of these illustrations on the chalkboard or a large piece of paper so all class members will be able to see them.
4. Suggestion for teaching: Good teachers are good listeners. Listening involves not just hearing but also trying to understand what is being said. Teachers who listen carefully communicate that they understand and value each class member. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 168–70).

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Ask class members to think of symbols the Lord used in his teaching during his earthly ministry. (Answers may include salt, wheat and tares, bread, and olive trees.)

- Why are symbols useful in teaching? (They can help the learner understand and remember by comparing unfamiliar ideas or things to those that are more familiar; they can have different levels of meaning; they can encourage the learner to think more deeply about what is being taught.)

Explain that symbols are used throughout the scriptures, but especially in the book of Revelation. Show the illustrations on page 191, and point out that these illustrations show symbols that are discussed in chapter 1 of Revelation. Each of these symbols will be discussed in this lesson.

You may want to explain that the Apostle John, author of the book of Revelation, came out of a culture that used symbolism extensively in its language and

literature. Readers today often have difficulty with the symbolism in John's writings. If we interpret the images literally, the book of Revelation can seem strange and confusing. If we remember that many of the images are symbolic and represent people, things, or concepts with which we are already familiar, the book becomes easier to understand.

## Scripture Discussion and Application

Prayerfully consider which scripture passages and questions from this lesson will best meet class members' needs. Spend the majority of class time discussing these passages and questions. Help class members see that the book of Revelation is relevant and useful to us today.

### 1. John sees several symbols representing parts of the Church of Jesus Christ.

Read and discuss Revelation 1:1–3, 9–20.

Review with the class the following general information about the book of Revelation:

John was one of the Savior's original Apostles. He had been banished by the Roman government to Patmos, a small island off the west coast of present-day Turkey, for bearing testimony of Jesus Christ. While there, John was visited by an angel and given a revelation that he recorded in letters to the seven branches of the Church in Asia (Revelation 1:1, 9–11). These letters became the book of Revelation.

The book of Revelation is written primarily in symbolic language. Its theme is that "there will be an eventual triumph on this earth of God over the devil; a permanent victory of good over evil, of the saints over their persecutors, of the kingdom of God over the kingdoms of men and of Satan. . . . The details about the beasts, the wars, the angels, the men, etc., contribute to the development of this theme. By a little study, the theme can be perceived even if the details are not completely identified" (Bible Dictionary, "Revelation of John," 762).

The three introductory chapters of the book record John's testimony of the truthfulness of the revelation, John's instructions from the Lord, and John's counsel to the seven branches of the Church in Asia. Chapter 4 records John's vision of heaven, and chapters 5 through 20 record his vision of the triumphant destiny of God's kingdom. This vision shows the battles against Satan's kingdom, the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the final scenes in the world's history. After this is a vision of the new heavens and new earth—the world in its celestial state (Revelation 21:1–5). The book of Revelation concludes with the angel's testimony and additional counsel from the Lord.

- What was the first image, or symbol, John saw in this revelation? (See Revelation 1:12.) What did the candlesticks represent? (See Revelation 1:20.) Why are candlesticks an appropriate symbol for branches of the Church? (See 3 Nephi 18:24 and the quotation below.) How can wards and branches today act as candlesticks?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: "Candlesticks carry light; they do not create it. Their function is to make it available, not to bring it into being. So by using seven candlesticks to portray the seven churches to whom John is now to give counsel, the Lord is showing that his congregations on earth are to carry his light to the world" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:442).

- Where was the Savior in relation to the seven candlesticks? (See Revelation 1:13.) How is the Savior in the midst of his Church today? Why is it important for us to know that he is in the midst of his people?
- What was the Savior holding in his right hand when he stood in the midst of the seven candlesticks? (See Revelation 1:16.) What did the seven stars represent? (See Revelation 1:20 and footnote 20*b*; see also Revelation 2:1, footnote 1*a*, and Revelation 3:1, footnote 1*a*. Throughout the Joseph Smith Translation of Revelation 1–3, the word *angels* is changed to *servants*, making it clear that the stars represent the leaders of the seven branches of the Church.) How are Church leaders like the stars? (Answers may include that they are constant and give direction to those who look for it.)
- What came out of the Savior’s mouth in this vision? (See Revelation 1:16.) What did this sword represent? (See D&C 6:2.) In what ways is the word of the Lord like a sword? (See Hebrews 4:12; Helaman 3:29.)
- What other symbol did the Lord possess in this revelation? (See Revelation 1:18.) What will the Savior do with these keys? (He will deliver all people from physical death, and he will deliver the righteous from spiritual death. See 2 Nephi 9:10–13.)

## 2. The Lord tells the seven branches in Asia about the blessings promised to those who overcome.

Discuss Revelation 2–3. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that chapters 2 and 3 contain the words of the Lord to each of the seven branches of the Church in Asia. The Lord reviewed some of the strengths and weaknesses in each branch and warned the Saints to correct their weaknesses.

- Just as the Lord commended and corrected the Church members in Asia, he commends and corrects us today. What might the Lord commend us for? What has the Lord told us to correct?

Explain that in his instructions to the branches of the Church in Asia, the Lord also promised great blessings to those who would overcome the trials and temptations of mortality. Write on the chalkboard *Promises to Those Who Overcome*. As you discuss each promise, list it on the chalkboard under this heading.

### *To Ephesus (Revelation 2:1–7)*

- The Lord warned the Ephesians of their need to repent, but he also promised, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.” What does the tree of life represent? (See 1 Nephi 11:21–22.) Why is this the most desirable of all blessings?

### *To Smyrna (Revelation 2:8–11)*

- The Lord warned the Saints in Smyrna that they would suffer tribulation, but he also promised, “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” What is the second death? (See Alma 12:16, 32; Helaman 14:18.) How can the Lord’s promise to the Saints in Smyrna help us see our tribulations in the proper perspective?

*To Pergamos (Revelation 2:12–17)*

- The Lord criticized some of the people in Pergamos for following the doctrine of Balaam, an Old Testament prophet who desired earthly honors and rewards more than he desired to follow the Lord's will. What earthly honors and rewards might we have to give up to obey the Lord's will?
- To the Saints in Pergamos the Lord promised, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." (The word *hidden* in this context means sacred, or not evident to everyone.) What could hidden manna represent? (See John 6:35, 49–51.)

*To Thyatira (Revelation 2:18–29)*

- In his words to the Saints in Thyatira, what did the Lord promise to those who overcome? (See Revelation 2:26–28. Explain that these promises refer to the blessings of exaltation and eternal life, when the righteous will rule over heavenly kingdoms.) What is the rod of iron with which the righteous will rule over nations? (See 1 Nephi 11:25; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 2:27.) How can we use the word of God to rule our own lives?
- Who is the morning star mentioned in Revelation 2:28? (See Revelation 22:16.) What might it mean to be given the morning star? (Answers may include to receive Christ into our lives and to receive the blessings of his Atonement.)

*To Sardis (Revelation 3:1–6)*

- What blessings did the Lord promise to the Saints in Sardis? (See Revelation 3:5.) How does participation in temple ordinances prepare us to be "clothed in white" eternally? What is the book of life? (See D&C 128:7; see also Exodus 32:33; Alma 5:58; Bible Dictionary, "Book of Life," 626–27.) What will happen to those whose names are written in the book and are not blotted out because of wickedness? (See Revelation 21:10, 23–27; Alma 5:58; D&C 88:2.)

*To Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7–13)*

- What did the Lord say he would do for the Saints in Philadelphia because they had "kept [his] word, and . . . not denied [his] name"? (See Revelation 3:10.) How does righteous living make it easier to resist temptation?
- The Lord promised to those who overcome, "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God." What does it mean to have the name of God and the name of his city written on us? (We become like God and become citizens of his eternal kingdom.)

*To Laodicea (Revelation 3:14–22)*

- The Lord condemned the Saints in Laodicea who were "lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot" (Revelation 3:15–16). How might we sometimes be spiritually "lukewarm"? How can we increase our commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- The Lord promised the Laodiceans, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21). What blessings are symbolized by the promise of sitting with the Lord on his throne? (See Romans 8:16–17.)

Refer to the list of promises on the chalkboard, and explain that when all these promises are considered together, they describe the eternal destiny of the righteous. Have class members read Doctrine and Covenants 132:20 as a summary of these promises.

### 3. John learns that the Saints overcome Satan through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and their testimonies.

Read and discuss selected verses from Revelation 12. Explain that as part of his revelation, John saw a symbolic vision of the War in Heaven and its continuation on earth.

Explain that the woman described in Revelation 12:1–2, 5 represents the Church of God. The child she brought forth represents the kingdom of God—the government that will exist on the earth during Jesus Christ’s millennial reign. (See Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:7; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:229.)

- Whom does the dragon in Revelation 12 represent? (See Revelation 12:9.) What happened to the dragon and his followers in the War in Heaven? (See Revelation 12:3–4, 7–9.) What did the dragon do after he was cast out? (See Revelation 12:17.) Who is Satan fighting today? (See Revelation 12:12.)

President Wilford Woodruff said: “There are two powers on the earth and in the midst of the inhabitants of the earth—the power of God and the power of the devil. . . . When God has had a people on the earth, it matters not in what age, Lucifer, the son of the morning, and the millions of fallen spirits that were cast out of heaven, have warred against God, against Christ, against the work of God, and against the people of God. And they are not backward in doing it in our day and generation. Whenever the Lord set His hand to perform any work, those powers labored to overthrow it” (in *Deseret Evening News*, 17 Oct. 1896, 9; quoted by Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 56; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 43).

- How will the Church and kingdom of God finally overcome Satan? (See Revelation 12:11.) How can the Atonement of Christ and our testimonies of it help us in our individual struggles against Satan?

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#### Conclusion

Testify that those who overcome the temptations and trials of the world will inherit the blessings of eternal life. Remind class members that the Savior’s Atonement provides a way for us to overcome if we repent and are faithful.

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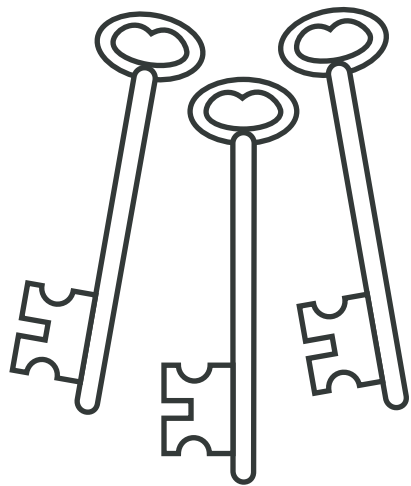
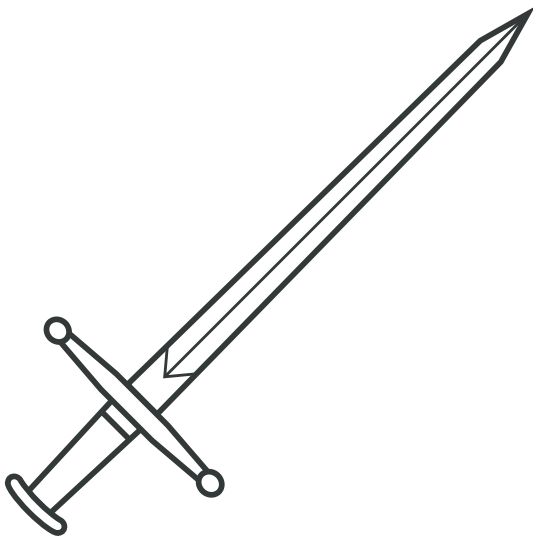
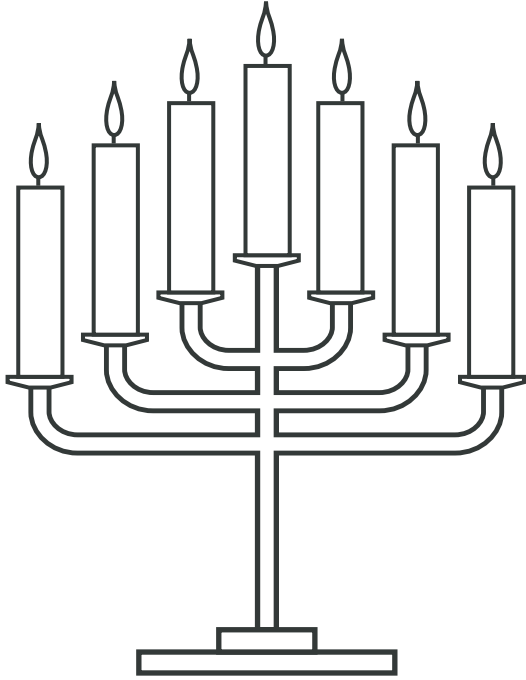
#### Additional Teaching Idea

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use this idea as part of the lesson.

##### “Behold, I stand at the door” (Revelation 3:20)

Display the picture *Jesus at the Door* (62170; Gospel Art Picture Kit 237).

- What does Revelation 3:20 teach about the Lord? (See also Revelation 22:17.) How have you found this to be true?



Lesson  
**46**

# “He Will Dwell with Them, and They Shall Be His People”

*Revelation 5–6; 19–22*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to face the future with hope because they know that the forces of evil will be overcome and the Savior will reign in triumph.

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**Preparation**

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
  - a. Revelation 5:1–5; 6. John sees through revelation a book with seven seals and observes some of the events of the first six seals, or time periods. He sees that Satan has fought against the righteous in all time periods.
  - b. Revelation 19:1–9; 20:1–11. John sees that Satan will be bound and Christ will reign in triumph during the Millennium.
  - c. Revelation 20:12–22:21. John learns that after the last judgment takes place, the righteous will dwell with God.
2. Additional reading: Doctrine and Covenants 77; Bible Dictionary, “Revelation of John,” 762–63.
3. Suggestion for teaching: “Above all, the most important preparation is of yourself. Prepare so as to have the influence of the Holy Ghost” (Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 219). Each of us should be striving to live as the Savior lived and to teach as he taught. Prayerfully consider what you can do to ensure that you are teaching with the influence of the Holy Ghost. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 9, 13.)

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## Suggested Lesson Development

**Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Display a recent newspaper, and point out two or three distressing articles, such as accounts of crimes or natural disasters.

- How do you feel when you read about incidents such as these? (Do not discuss individual incidents in detail.)

Have a class member read 2 Timothy 3:1.

Point out that we are living in the last days, in the times the Apostle Paul described as “perilous.” Explain that one of the challenges of living in the last days is learning to conquer fear and despair so we can overcome trials and temptations. This lesson will discuss how we can find hope and courage through an understanding of the events to come in the last days.

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**Scripture Discussion** Discuss how the following scripture passages can help us have hope as we face the difficulties of the last days. Help class members understand that the righteous do not need to fear the Second Coming.

## 1. Satan fights against the righteous.

Discuss Revelation 5:1–5; 6. Invite class members to read selected verses aloud. Explain that the first three chapters of the book of Revelation pertain to John’s time (see lesson 45). The rest of the book deals with events that were future to John, from the Apostasy that occurred after the death of the Apostles to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the final judgment.

Explain that chapters 5 and 6 of Revelation use the symbol of a book “sealed with seven seals” (Revelation 5:1). Each seal represents a thousand-year period of the earth’s temporal existence (D&C 77:6–7); we are living in the time period represented by the sixth seal. (See the third additional teaching idea for more information on the seven seals.) In chapter 6, the Lamb (Jesus Christ) opens the first six seals, showing some of the events associated with each time period.

- One thing we learn from chapter 6 is that Satan has fought against the righteous throughout the history of the earth. According to Revelation 6:4–11, what are some ways he has done this? (Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. Violence and warfare (Revelation 6:4, 8)
  - b. Hunger and famine (Revelation 6:5–6, 8. Explain that the Roman penny was an average day’s wages and a measure of wheat was one day’s worth of food for one person; verse 6 indicates that a day’s wages would only buy a day’s worth of food for one person.)
  - c. Persecution (Revelation 6:9–11)
- What tactics does Satan use today to try to overcome the righteous?

President Gordon B. Hinckley stated:

“That war, so bitter, so intense, has gone on, and it has never ceased. It is the war between truth and error, between agency and compulsion, between the followers of Christ and those who have denied Him. His enemies have used every stratagem in that conflict. They’ve indulged in lying and deceit. They’ve employed money and wealth. They’ve tricked the minds of men. They’ve murdered and destroyed and engaged in every other unholy and impure practice to thwart the work of Christ. . . .

“[Opposition] has been felt in the undying efforts of many, both within and without the Church, to destroy faith, to belittle, to demean, to bear false witness, to tempt and allure and induce our people to practices inconsistent with the teachings and standards of this work of God. . . .

“The war goes on. It is waged across the world over the issues of agency and compulsion. It is waged by an army of missionaries over the issues of truth and error. It is waged in our own lives, day in and day out, in our homes, in our work, in our school associations; it is waged over questions of love and respect, of loyalty and fidelity, of obedience and integrity. We are all involved in it” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 55–58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 42, 44–45).

- After making the comments quoted above, President Hinckley added, “We are winning [the war against Satan], and the future never looked brighter” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 58; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 45). How can we maintain hope and a positive outlook as we fight the war against Satan? What resources do we have to strengthen us against the power of Satan and

his followers? (Answers may include the scriptures and the teachings of living prophets, priesthood authority, temples, and association with other members of the Church.)

## **2. Satan will be bound, and Christ will reign in triumph during the Millennium.**

Read and discuss Revelation 19:1–9 and 20:1–11.

- John identified many plagues, wars, and judgments that would occur before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Revelation 8–16). Then, in Revelation 19, he described the coming of the Lord, symbolized by a marriage supper (Revelation 19:7–9). What does the wife of the Lamb represent? (The Church of Jesus Christ.) What does the symbol of the marriage supper, with Christ as the bridegroom and the Church as the bride, suggest about the relationship between the Lord and his Church?

- What must we do to be invited to this marriage supper?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: “The elders of Israel are now issuing the invitations to the marriage supper of the Lord; those who believe and obey the gospel thereby accept the invitation and shall sit in due course . . . at the marriage feast” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:563–64).

- The Second Coming of Jesus Christ will usher in the Millennium, a thousand-year period when Christ will reign personally upon the earth. What will happen to Satan during the Millennium? (See Revelation 20:1–3.) What will life be like when Satan is bound? (See 1 Nephi 22:26; D&C 45:55, 58.) How can we limit the power of Satan in our lives right now?
- After the Millennium, Satan will be loosed for a season, and one last great battle will be fought between the armies of God and the armies of Satan (Revelation 20:7–8; D&C 88:111–13). This is sometimes called the battle of Gog and Magog. What will be the result of this great battle at the end of the Millennium? (See Revelation 20:9–11; D&C 88:114–15.) Since the result of the battle is already known, what is our responsibility regarding this victory?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “Each day the forces of evil and the forces of good enlist new recruits. Each day we personally make many decisions showing the cause we support. The final outcome is certain—the forces of righteousness will win. But what remains to be seen is *where* each of us personally, now and in the future, will stand in this battle—and *how tall* we will stand. Will we be true to our last days and fulfill our foreordained missions?” (“In His Steps,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1988, 2).

## **3. After the last judgment, the righteous will dwell with God.**

Read and discuss selected verses from Revelation 20:12–22:21.

- After the last great battle, the final judgment will occur. What can we learn from Revelation 20:12 about how we will be judged? What blessings will come to those who are judged to be righteous? (See Revelation 21:3–7. List class members’ responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those listed on the next page.)

The righteous will:

- a. Dwell in God's presence (Revelation 21:3).
  - b. No longer experience death, sorrow, crying, or pain (Revelation 21:4).
  - c. Inherit all things as sons and daughters of God (Revelation 21:7).
- How can knowledge of these great blessings help us as we face difficulties in mortality?
  - Revelation 21:10–22:5 describes the celestial glory of the earth and the city in which those who have attained celestial glory will reside. Why is there no temple in the celestial city? (See Revelation 21:22. The purpose of the temple is to bring us closer to God and teach us of his plan. When we live with him again, temples will no longer be necessary.) What does Revelation 22:14 tell us we must do to be able to enter the gates of the eternal city?

President David O. McKay told of a vision in which he saw a beautiful city, many people dressed in white, and the Savior:

"The city, I understood, was [the Savior's]. It was the City Eternal; and the people following him were to abide there in peace and eternal happiness.

"But who were they?

"As if the Savior read my thoughts, he answered by pointing to a semicircle that then appeared above them, and on which were written in gold the words: *These Are They Who Have Overcome the World—Who Have Truly Been Born Again!*" (*Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay*, comp. Clare Middlemiss [1976], 60).

## Conclusion

Point out that the New Testament ends with a message of great hope. Prophets like John the Revelator have seen the things that are to come and have told us of the blessings we will receive if we remain righteous and endure to the end. Testify that the righteous will triumph at the end of the world. Encourage class members to take courage and hope from this knowledge as they stand against wickedness and seek to overcome the obstacles of this life.

## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. The dangers of setting our hearts on worldly possessions

- Revelation 18:11–18 teaches that the wicked will mourn the loss of their worldly possessions and be amazed that a great worldly kingdom could be destroyed in a brief time. When have you seen worldly possessions destroyed or lost in a brief amount of time?
- What are the dangers of setting our hearts on worldly things? In what ways do worldly things distract us from spiritual things?

### 2. The First Resurrection

Have a class member read Revelation 20:4–6. To help class members understand these verses, share the following information (on the next page):

The First Resurrection, or the resurrection of the just, will begin at the Savior's Second Coming. Those who will receive a celestial or terrestrial reward will come forward in this resurrection (D&C 88:98–99). The Second Resurrection, or the resurrection of the unjust, will not begin until the end of the Millennium. Those who will receive a telestial reward and the sons of perdition will come forward in this resurrection (D&C 88:100–102).

### 3. The seven seals in the book of Revelation

The following chart provides additional information about each of the seven seals. The chart may also be useful in understanding the structure of the book of Revelation.

Seal	Major Events
<b>First seal</b>	The creation and fall of Adam and Eve; the ministry of Enoch and the translation of his city into heaven (Revelation 6:1–2).
<b>Second seal</b>	Noah and the Flood (Revelation 6:3–4).
<b>Third seal</b>	Ministries of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph (Revelation 6:5–6).
<b>Fourth seal</b>	Ministry of Moses; the Exodus; the period of reign by judges; the period of reign by kings; the division of the kingdom; the conquering of the kingdoms (Revelation 6:7–8).
<b>Fifth seal</b>	The birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; the establishment of his Church and the ministry of the Apostles; martyrdom of the Apostles; the Apostasy (Revelation 6:9–11).
<b>Sixth seal</b>	Continuation of the Apostasy; restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith; signs of the times manifest (Revelation 20:1–6).
<b>Seventh seal</b>	Wars, plagues, and desolation; Second Coming of the Lord (Revelation 8:1–19:21). Millennium of peace (Revelation 20:1–6). Satan loosed for a season, the last great battle, and the final judgment (Revelation 20:7–15).
<b>After the seventh seal</b>	The earth is celestialized (Revelation 21:1–22:6).

- Point out that the first five seals are covered in 11 verses, the sixth seal is covered in 14 verses, and the seventh seal is covered in 216 verses. What does this emphasis teach us?

Point out that John gave the most attention to the events of our time period and the one to come. The book of Revelation was written for our day, and our lives will be blessed as we study it and prepare for the Second Coming of the Savior.

THE CHURCH OF  
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OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

