

Come Listen to
a Prophet's Voice

Covenants



President James E. Faust has made it clear that covenants are not just words we speak. If we keep our covenants, they will change our lives for the better.

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST
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We should always honor and keep sacred the saving covenants we make with the Lord. If we do, He has promised, “Thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (D&C 42:61).

Many covenants [have to be made and kept in order to have] happiness here and hereafter. Among the most important are the marriage covenants made between husband and wife. From these covenants flow the greatest joys of life.

The covenant of baptism, with its ordinance of confirmation, opens the gate for eternal life.

Temple covenants are the basis for attaining the greatest blessings the Lord has for us.

We have the great privilege of partaking of the sacrament, the Lord's Supper. Renewing our baptismal covenants as we partake of the sacrament protects us against all manner of evil. As we worthily partake of the bread and water in remembrance of the Savior's sacrifice, we witness unto God the Father that we are willing to take upon us the name of His Son and always remember Him and to keep His commandments which He has given us. If we do these things, we will always have His Spirit to be

with us (see D&C 20:77, 79). If we partake of the sacrament regularly and are faithful to these covenants, the law will be in our inward parts and written in our hearts. Let me illustrate this with a story from the *Church News*:

“A group of religion instructors [were] taking a summer course on the life of the Savior and focusing particularly on the parables.

“When the final exam time came, . . . the students arrived at the classroom to find a note that the exam would be given in another building across campus. Moreover, the note said, it must be finished within the two-hour time period that was starting almost at that moment.

“The students hurried across campus. On the way they passed a little girl crying over a flat tire on her new bike. An old man hobbled painfully toward the library with a cane in one hand, spilling books from a stack he was trying to manage with the other. On a bench by the union building sat a shabbily dressed, bearded man [in obvious distress].

“Rushing into the other classroom, the students were met by the professor, who announced they had all flunked the final exam.

“The only true test of whether they understood the Savior's life and teaching, he said, was how they treated people in need.

“Their weeks of study at the feet of a capable professor had taught them a great

deal of what Christ had said and done.” They learned the letter but not the spirit. Their neglect of the little girl and the two men showed that the message of the course had not entered into their inward parts.

We must at times search our own souls and discover what we really are. Our real character, much as we would wish, cannot be hidden. It shines from within us. Attempts to deceive others only deceive ourselves. We are often like the emperor in the fairy tale who thought

he was arrayed [dressed] in beautiful garments when he was in fact unclothed.

Christlike [behavior] flows from [deep within] the human heart and soul. It is guided by the Holy Spirit of the Lord, which is promised in gospel ordinances. Our greatest hope should be to enjoy the sanctification [being made holy] which comes from this divine guidance; our greatest fear should be to [lose] these blessings. ●

From an April 1998 general conference address.

