

## *Nourishing and Protecting the Family*

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Since we met together last year, we have met with many thousands of sisters throughout the world, and it has been at times very emotional to see you. I feel emotional now as I look in your faces and realize that among you are women who have had experiences that span all possible mortal experiences. You are each unique and precious, and Heavenly Father is teaching and preparing you for the blessings of eternal life.

In our presidency, we have talked about three lifelong responsibilities that Latter-day Saint women have to help them prepare for the blessings of eternal life. First, we are to increase faith and personal righteousness. We have heard much about that at this women's conference. Second, we have a responsibility to strengthen families and homes, and third, we have a responsibility to seek out and help those who have needs—any kind of needs. We are a *relief* society and that is what we do. We provide relief from all that hinders the joy and progress of women and all of Heavenly Father's children.

As I have pondered this assignment for many months now, I have read and studied more than you want to know about—maybe you do want to know. I have a fat folder full of ideas and thoughts, and many of these things I scribbled down in the middle of the night, reminding myself not to forget to say this. I have a big stack of books, talks, and messages from prophets that I have studied and pondered to learn how to nurture my own daughters and help others nurture their families. We will focus today on families and how to nourish and defend them.

I have thought about my own daughters and my daughter-in-law, about how hard they work and what their assignment is, and about my granddaughters, who will be growing up before very long. Our oldest granddaughter is about to turn 12, and that means she will enter the Young Women program and start preparing to be a woman. That happens fast. I have thought of a lesson my mother taught me. She actually learned it from the Winder family—Sister Susan W. Tanner's family. The Winder family was a dairy family, and one time when my mother was visiting at the Winder farm, they were displaying a new strain of milk cows to their visitors. They said, "We got these wonderful Jersey cows, and our aim is that every mother produces a superior daughter." My mother caught hold of that idea. She said, "That's the job of a mother."

Every mother should produce a superior daughter.” I don’t think I am superior to my mother, but I know my daughters are superior to me. They seem to have so much understanding.

Today I would like to focus on the doctrine of the family and then talk about some of the things that are threatening the family. I will then discuss some of the responsibilities that Latter-day Saint women have regarding the family in our day. When I think of this responsibility, I am not thinking only of those who are married or have children or those who have children now in their homes. When it comes to the family, we have responsibilities similar to those of sailors on a ship in a storm—it’s all hands on deck. That is what we need in our day.

First of all, let’s talk about the doctrine. We have “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” which was read in a general Relief Society meeting in 1995 by President Gordon B. Hinckley, who was representing the First Presidency. This proclamation summarizes the doctrine in a very succinct way, but a study of it reveals a rich depth of understanding in regard to the doctrine of the family. At the time when the proclamation was given, President Hinckley said that it was a declaration and reaffirmation of standards, doctrines, and practices relative to the family, and that prophets, seers, and revelators of this Church have repeatedly taught these things throughout the history of the Church. So when the proclamation was read, it was not anything new. It was a restatement and reaffirmation, and the doctrines are tied to the very beginning of the Restoration.

In this Church, in the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have a theology of the family. We call it the plan of salvation, the plan of happiness. It is a theology of the family, and that is important for us to know. I will tell you about the three pillars of that theology. First is the Creation, the time when the family unit was formed. The Creation was not just about creating an earth—it was about creating an earth upon which a family could dwell. In the family unit was a male and a female—Adam and Eve. The scriptures call her “our glorious Mother Eve” (D&C 138:39). Adam and Eve were each given specific responsibilities in the Father’s plan.

The second pillar of our theology is the Fall. The Fall provided a way for the family to grow—not just in numbers, but in experience, which would help them increase their faith and righteousness. The third pillar of our theology regarding family is the Atonement, which ties families together forever and gives us an opportunity for eternal growth and perfection. That is our theology. That is the Restoration. Families were in it from the beginning.

If we know our theology, we know who we are. In the proclamation on the family, we learn that “all human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents. . . . In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience.”<sup>1</sup> That is a key part of our doctrine, and key words are *parents*, *sons*, and *daughters*.

President Spencer W. Kimball said, “We have always understood that the foundations of the family, as an eternal unit, were laid even before this earth was created.”<sup>2</sup> We know that we received our “first lessons in the world of spirits,” as the Doctrine and Covenants tells us (D&C 138:56). We were prepared to come to earth for this experience. We knew about the plan of the family before we were born.

Now I want to talk about another important part of the proclamation on the family, which is marriage. The proclamation states that “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”<sup>3</sup> Soon after the proclamation was read, Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles came to BYU to speak to a women’s conference. This is what he said: “The family is not an accident of mortality. It existed as an organizational unit in the heavens before the world was formed; historically, it started on earth with Adam and Eve, as recorded in Genesis. Adam and Eve were married and sealed for time and all eternity by the Lord, and as a result their family will exist eternally.”<sup>4</sup> Isn’t that a beautiful teaching?

Both Adam and Eve had leadership roles in their family. They received their responsibilities by virtue of their celestial marriage and sealing. President Ezra Taft Benson said that this was an order of the priesthood: “This order is . . . described in modern revelation as an order of family government where a man and woman enter into a covenant with God—just as did Adam and Eve—to be sealed for eternity, to have posterity, and to do the will and work of God throughout their mortality. . . . This order of priesthood has been on the earth since the beginning, and it is the only means by which we can one day see the face of God and live.”<sup>5</sup> So that marriage was an order of the priesthood, and they needed that marriage in order to one day see the face of God and live (see D&C 84:22). They were preparing for the blessings of eternal life as they began their family.

Now some people wonder about the responsibility of Eve in that order of the priesthood and that marriage. Elder Dallin H. Oaks said of Eve: “Her act . . . [was] eternally a glorious necessity to open the doorway toward eternal life. . . . Some Christians condemn Eve for her act, concluding that she and her daughters are somehow flawed by it. Not the Latter-day Saints! Informed by revelation, we celebrate Eve’s act and honor her wisdom and courage in the great episode called the Fall.”<sup>6</sup> Eve had a leadership role in choosing to bring children to the earth in order to teach them and give other children opportunities for the blessings of eternal life.

Elder David A. Bednar taught us two reasons why marriage is essential: “Reason 1: The natures of male and female spirits complete and perfect each other, and therefore men and women are intended to progress together toward exaltation. . . . Reason 2: By divine design, both a man and a woman are needed to bring children into mortality and to provide the best setting for the rearing and nurturing of children.”<sup>7</sup> These are two important reasons why marriage is absolutely essential to fulfilling God’s plan for His children.

I love what President Boyd K. Packer said about this plan: “The great plan of happiness (see Alma 42:8, 16) revealed to prophets is the plan for a happy family. It is the love story between husband and wife, parents and children, that renews itself through the ages.”<sup>8</sup> He also said, “Nothing is more important to the Church and to civilization itself than the family!”<sup>9</sup>

I want my daughters and my granddaughters to know why we teach and talk about families. We have a granddaughter in middle school in California, and she had some experiences this last year in learning about the family and learning to defend the doctrine of the family. It was a beginning for her—sometimes painful—but she learned things that are essential for her to know.

How early did the Prophet Joseph Smith know about the doctrine of the family? Was it something that was revealed to him as he went along? If you have your scriptures, we can turn to section 2 of the Doctrine and Covenants. These words were given to 17-year-old Joseph Smith on the evening of September 21, 1823, when Moroni visited him. These are the only words from that visit that are included in the Doctrine and Covenants. Other teachings of Moroni are included in Joseph Smith's history, but these words Joseph Smith formalized and put essentially as the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Section 1 is an introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants. So the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants and the first principle recorded there is as follows:

“Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming” (D&C 2:1).

What priesthood was the Lord revealing by the hand of Elijah the prophet? It was the priesthood that prophets, seers, and revelators have taught us about. It was the priesthood that seals a man and a woman together and prepares them for the blessings of eternal life. If it were not so, the whole earth would be wasted. This points directly to the temple. Joseph Smith was taught about the blessings of the temple when he was 17 years old. Isn't that wonderful? He started right off knowing the whole picture about the theology of the family.

Now let's review briefly some of the things that are threatening the family. In Ephesians chapter 6, it says, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (verse 12). That is what we are fighting against. President Thomas S. Monson recently taught: “Just a few short generations ago, one could not have imagined the world in which we now live and the problems it presents.”<sup>10</sup>

We see evidence everywhere of the decline in the importance of the family. We know that marriage rates have declined. There is an increase in unmarried couples living together. Divorce has increased. Out-of-wedlock births have increased. One quarter of pregnancies worldwide—and this was a number of years ago—end in abortion. One fourth! There are probably more abortions now. Low birthrates are reported, and they are dropping every day. Children are less valued; families are less valued.

Marriage and family are all about “us” and “we.” The doctrines being preached by the world today are about “I” and “me.” These worldly teachings are not new. If you look in Alma chapter 1, you read about a man named Nehor, who caused a lot of trouble by teaching a doctrine about “me,” that I am important and that I should get paid for what I do. He taught that it does not really matter what we do, as long as we make ourselves happy. One of the people who believed him was Korihor. Korihor was called an antichrist because he said there would be no Christ. As recorded in Alma, he asked: “O ye that are bound down under a foolish and a vain hope, why do ye yoke yourselves with such foolish things? Why do ye look for a Christ? For no man can know

of anything which is to come” (Alma 30:13). Does this sound familiar? Have you heard these kinds of things preached? Have you read them in popular writings?

Korihor also said: “These things which ye call prophecies, which ye say are handed down by holy prophets, behold, they are foolish traditions of your fathers. How do ye know of their surety? Behold, ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ. Ye look forward and say that ye see a remission of your sins. But behold, it is the effect of a frenzied mind; and this derangement of your minds comes because of the traditions of your fathers, which lead you away into a belief of things which are not so. And many more such things did he say unto them, telling them that there could be no atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime” (Alma 30:14–17).

I hear this all the time. This is the gospel that is being preached popularly in the world. In Book of Mormon times, Korihor led away “the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in wickedness, yea, leading away many women” (Alma 30:18). I found that interesting—“many women.” This is the doctrine about “me” and “I” and what I do doesn’t affect you—I should be able to do what I want. Why would I want to tie myself down with a family? After all, a family is a burden to society. We hear these kinds of phrases in the world today.

Now, Nehor and Korihor thought they were originals, and the people who are preaching these things today also think they are being original and clever. They are not original or clever; their teachings are pirated from the leader of darkness and are taught by failed leaders. Nehor and Korihor were failed leaders who did not prosper. They are called “antichrists.” We should never forget, sisters, that antichrist teachings and principles are always anti-family. And anti-family teachings and policies are also antichrist. We believe in Christ and we testify of Him. We are baptized into a covenant with Him. We support and sustain His doctrine and His theology, that He came to this earth to provide for us.

I found a talk given by President Spencer W. Kimball in 1980. It was chilling to me. He said: “Many of the social restraints which in the past have helped to reinforce and to shore up the family are dissolving and disappearing. The time will come when only those who believe deeply and actively in the family will be able to preserve their families in the midst of the gathering evil around us.

“. . . There are those who would define the family in such a nontraditional way that they would define it out of existence. . . .

“We of all people, brothers and sisters, should not be taken in by the specious arguments that the family unit is somehow tied to a particular phase of development a mortal society is going through. We are free to resist those moves which downplay the significance of the family and which play up the significance of selfish individualism. We know the family to be eternal. We know that when things go wrong in the family, things go wrong in every other institution in society.”<sup>11</sup>

We are in those times when we are the ones who must preserve our families amid the gathering evil around us. How do we do that? How do Latter-day Saint women do that? We do that by keeping our focus clearly on the blessings of eternal life. It is our responsibility to help ourselves and our families and our loved ones prepare for the blessings of eternal life. The Lord said, “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). For this purpose the worlds were created and we were created. We need to keep our focus on that.

We know that we are involved in God’s work every day, and that changes everything. It changes the way we think. It changes our decisions. It changes the way we dress. It changes the way we talk. It changes the way we live. We have the responsibility and the challenge from the prophet to believe deeply and actively in the family. We will need to do that in order to preserve our families. That means we have to be intentional about everything we do. Our life is not just happenstance. We know where we are going and what we have to do.

Now, my mother has given me permission to tell another story about her. She came today to hear it, and if it is wrong, we will correct it in the written text, Mother. My mother was an older single and living and loving life. She had golf clubs, a tennis racket, her own car, a bowling ball, and skis. She had a university education and a career, and she was having a great time. She was introduced to my father, who was a young bishop and a widower with three children. She said, “When we met each other, all five of us fell in love with each other at once.” And so within a short time, her life changed. She was a woman who knew the plan, believed in it, and had taught and defended it. She had been a school nurse and worked in schools and hospitals. She had had a lot of great experiences. Now all of a sudden she was a mother to three beautiful children.

As she and Daddy were traveling along on their honeymoon, she wanted to talk about how they were going to proceed with this family. What are our goals? What is our family going to be like? How are we going to do things in our family? She started writing the answers and their goals, she said, on a paper sack. It was the only paper she had. As they were talking, they said, “What do we want for our children? Are our children going to be married in the temple? Yes, they are. Okay, if we want our children to be married in the temple, what kinds of things do we have to teach them in our home? Well, we will have to have scripture study.” So they wrote that down.

“How about family prayer?” Daddy said. “We already have family prayer. That is our habit.” “How about going to church?” Going to church every week was on the list. They wrote down things such as manners. “Are we going to teach our children to be polite?” That was a challenge for some of us. They made a goal about who was going to serve a mission. They certainly wanted their sons to serve missions and their daughters to serve missions if they had a desire. They made goals about education, university education, and so on. But Dad said, “Well, I’m not going to pay for it.” So Mother said, “Okay, then we’ll teach them to work.” So they wrote “work” after that.

And they began to develop the culture of their family, which was a Latter-day Saint culture. They were preparing their family to make the covenants and receive the ordinances they needed to prepare them for eternal life, and they knew that there were things their family had to do every

day. They wanted children who could contribute and build the kingdom—that is why they wanted their children to get an education. That is why they wanted to have them learn things.

They did not know that their family would grow to have ten children and that teaching table manners to ten children all at once was going to be a process, not an event. They did not know they were going to be in the university business for 25 years, helping children find jobs and save money. But they started out with family prayer, family scripture study, family home evening, and preparing children. I am so grateful for parents who were intentional about preparing a family. They created a personalized family plan for our family.

Part of the responsibility that women have—Latter-day Saint women who know—is to bear children. We have been taught through the family proclamation and the prophets that the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth has never been rescinded. President Spencer W. Kimball said a lot of great things that were very direct. He said, “It is an act of extreme selfishness for a married couple to refuse to have children when they are able to do so.”<sup>12</sup>

Bringing children into the world is the work of creation, as President Dieter F. Uchtdorf said: “If you are a mother, you participate with God in His work of creation—not only by providing physical bodies for your children but also by teaching and nurturing them. If you are not a mother now, the creative talents you develop will prepare you for that day, in this life or the next.”<sup>13</sup> He also said, “You are spirit daughters of the most creative Being in the universe. . . . [Creating] is your opportunity in this life and your destiny in the life to come.”<sup>14</sup>

I think that there is a special sadness for the sisters who desire to bring children into this world and do not have that blessing—because they are not married or were not given that blessing in this life. I remember visiting with my former Laurel adviser, Cleo Sheppard, just before she passed away last year. Cleo was in her eighties and I had loved her since I was a teenager. She was known for her exceptional friendliness, cheerful attitude, and welcoming nature. In Cleo’s long life, she had many experiences, which included not being able to have children. She eventually did adopt five children; one of those children passed away as a young adult. By the time Cleo passed away, she had lost a daughter and a husband, and now she was suffering from cancer.

She had had such a variety of experiences, and I asked her to tell me about her life. She said, “Oh, it has been a wonderful life. I have had a magnificent life.” Then she paused and said, “All except for those ten years when we couldn’t have children.” That gave me great insight into that special pain. With all the challenges and the losses that Cleo had had, that challenge still hurt. I think that happens to righteous women who know, as President Uchtdorf said, that creating is your blessing, now and in the eternities.

Many women in these days do not desire children. They think babies are a lot of trouble. I have even talked to couples who say, “Well, we decided to get a dog instead.” I know that a baby does not pay you compliments or ask you how your day is going, but it is one of our blessings to bring spirits into the world.

When the Lord sends children into our family, we have the responsibility to prepare them to receive the ordinances and covenants of baptism and the temple. In the Doctrine and Covenants, section 68, we learn that the Lord commanded parents to teach their children the gospel and prepare them for baptism and for temple covenants.

I am wearing my Young Women medallion today. Why? Because I am helping my family and myself prepare for the blessings of eternal life. I do not want to take my eyes off the temple. I earned the medallion. It taught me much about the temple and preparing for the temple. That is what we are teaching our young girls. When they come into the Young Women program, we are not just preparing them to go to camp and have a good time. We are preparing them for the blessings of the temple, which will be theirs if they are worthy.

And so we work on worthiness. We have a huge problem in our families with pornography and the influence that it is having in our families. The powerful feeling that has been coming over me is, “Sisters, fight—fight, sisters.” You have the responsibility in your homes. Many of our women are being drawn into this behavior also. At our last general conference, President Thomas S. Monson gave “a word of caution to all—both young and old, both male and female.”<sup>15</sup> This is our responsibility.

The Church has given us many helps in this fight. We cannot sit and act like victims. This is the work of a determined adversary, and we have to take responsibility for defending our homes. We must teach our families everywhere—in family home evenings, in prayer and scripture study, and at mealtimes. We must create opportunities to teach. This will require limiting activities that take us to and fro. We need to use our opportunities to teach in formal and less formal settings.

Years ago when we were driving our children back and forth to piano lessons, someone said, “Don’t you get tired of driving your children to piano lessons?” I said, “Are you kidding? What a great opportunity I have. My children are captive in my car. I have them and we can talk, teach, and ask questions.” That was a wonderful opportunity that allowed us to discuss true principles. My children could not run away from me or be busy. Today, probably all your children have cell phones. Mine did not, so we did not have that distraction. But do your best to create formal and informal opportunities to teach and help your children.

Family home evening is so important. Here is what the First Presidency said about teaching in home evenings. They sent a letter, and we all listened to it as we sat in sacrament meetings and we nodded our heads, but do we believe it? They said: “We call upon parents to devote their best efforts to the teaching and rearing of their children in gospel principles that will keep them close to the Church. The home is the basis of a righteous life, and no other instrumentality can take its place or fulfill its essential functions in carrying forward this God-given responsibility.”<sup>16</sup>

They sent another letter in which they reminded us that Monday nights are reserved for family home evenings throughout the Church, which means everywhere in the world where the Church is established.<sup>17</sup> Where practical, members may want to encourage community and school leaders to avoid scheduling activities on Monday evenings. Other interruptions to family home evenings should be avoided. I think sometimes we get in the practice of saying, “Well, we are going to use the time we have on Sunday to teach our children.” That is great—we should use



more time on Sundays for being with our families and teaching them. That was the plan when the consolidated meeting schedule was established. But Monday nights are reserved for family home evenings. And we should be the proactive ones defending that time. Why wouldn't we want Monday, in addition to Sunday, to teach our families? President Boyd K. Packer said, "The establishment of family home evening . . . is, in a sense, the sounding of an alarm to all parents . . . to prepare themselves and strengthen themselves against the challenges which now face us."<sup>18</sup>

Our closing song in this session will be about love at home, and I would like to talk about this principle. I read something from President Joseph F. Smith that I found very touching. He lost his mother at a young age, and he said this: "No love in all the world can equal the love of a true mother. . . . It was life to me; it was strength; it was encouragement; it was love that begat love or liking in myself. I knew she loved me with all her heart. She loved her children with all her soul. . . . Whenever . . . temptations became most alluring and most tempting to me, the first thought that arose in my soul was this: Remember the love of your mother. Remember how she strove for your welfare. Remember how willing she was to sacrifice her life for your good. . . . This feeling toward my mother became a defense, a barrier between me and temptation."

He also said: "If you wish your children to be taught in the principles of the gospel, if you wish them to love the truth and understand it, if you wish them to be obedient to and united with you, love them! . . . You can't do it any other way. You can't do it by unkindness; you cannot do it by driving. . . . You can coax them; you can lead them, by holding out inducements to them, and by speaking kindly to them, but you can't drive them; they won't be driven. . . . You can't force your boys, nor your girls into heaven. You may force them to hell, by using harsh words in the efforts to make them good, when you yourselves are not as good as you should be. . . . You can only correct your children by love, in kindness, by love unfeigned, by persuasion, and reason."<sup>19</sup>

Our homes, because we know we are building for eternity, should be homes based on love. The proclamation on the family declares that we have a sacred duty to love our husbands and children. Husbands need to be loved. I love section 25 of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which Emma Smith is told to be a comfort to her husband in a spirit of meekness. That creates a feeling and climate of faith, hope, and charity in a home, which the world does not teach. It is okay for a wife to cook for her husband. I have a niece who was married recently, and her mother said, "It's okay for you to cook for your husband. You should do it. It's a sign of your love for him and of how you want to take care of him and nurture him." The world would not teach you that, but the gospel does. Love at home creates a climate of faith, hope, and charity. We have to work for it and strive for it.

Now, we will need the Spirit of the Lord with us in greater abundance in times to come than we have ever had. We need to be the ones seeking every day to qualify for the Spirit, to recognize the voice of the Spirit, and to follow the voice of the Spirit because other voices will lead us in the wrong ways. We are preparing for the blessings of eternal life. Anytime we are teaching the rising generation in Sunday School, Primary, Young Women, seminary, or institute, we should remember that we are preparing them for the blessings of eternal life.

This is a faith-based work. The family and the work of women—Latter-day Saint women—is a faith-based work, and we have to call upon our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His restored

gospel and the principles He taught on the earth. We have to follow Him with all our hearts. We have to have faith in who we are and where we came from, and we have to fulfill our responsibilities on this earth and qualify for eternal blessings.

As we are doing this, we are having a mortal experience. Difficult challenges are coming. I love the teaching in Moses chapter 5, which describes the feelings of Adam and Eve as they were reviewing the blessings of mortality. They could have stayed in the garden—they had a choice. Everything was provided for them there. They wanted the blessings of eternal life, and the only way to have those blessings was to pass through a mortal experience.

Adam said, “Because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression [what she is saying is—were it not for our mortal experience] we never should have had seed.” In other words, she would not have had children. All of her children were not perfect, but she was not sorry. She was glad she was a mother. She continued, “[We] never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption [that we can be redeemed and blessed by the Atonement of Christ], and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all these things known unto their sons and their daughters” (Moses 5:10–12).

I testify to you that these are truths of the restored gospel and that we are sons and daughters of Heavenly Parents. Eliza R. Snow, a former general Relief Society president, wrote, “In the heav’ns are parents single? No, the thought makes reason stare!”<sup>20</sup> That is eternal life.

I testify to you of our Savior Jesus Christ, who came to earth to provide us the opportunity to return to God so we could have the blessings of an eternal family. I testify of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the Restoration, who restored these teachings to the earth in their purity and through whom the priesthood was restored to earth so that the saving ordinances and covenants can be ours. What a blessing!

I testify of our living prophet today, President Thomas S. Monson, who continues to be a clear voice declaring these same principles and doctrines. If we follow him, we will be safe and we do not need to worry. We owe everything to the Lord. We are so blessed to be involved in a faith-based work, a work in which we can create families, support families, defend families, teach families, and prepare them for the blessings of eternal life—and love them, love them, love them.

I bear you my testimony of these truths and leave with you my great appreciation, my confidence that the women of the Church will be the defenders of right and truth, and that you will be seen as lights in the world to those who were taught these principles before they were born. They will recognize them as you teach them. This I leave with you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## Notes

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 4.
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
4. Robert D. Hales, in *Clothed with Charity: Talks from the 1996 Women’s Conference* (1997), 134.
5. Ezra Taft Benson, “What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 9.
6. Dallin H. Oaks, in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 98; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 73.
7. David A. Bednar, “Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Ensign*, June 2006, 83–84.
8. Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 9; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 9.
9. Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 25; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 25.
10. Thomas S. Monson, “Heavenly Homes, Forever Families,” *Ensign*, June 2006, 99.
11. Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, 3–4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 4.
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13. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Happiness, Your Heritage,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 119.
14. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Happiness, Your Heritage,” 118–19.
15. See Thomas S. Monson, “Until We Meet Again,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 113.
16. First Presidency letter, Feb. 11, 1999.
17. See First Presidency letter, Oct. 4, 1999.
18. Boyd K. Packer, *Mine Errand from the Lord* (2008), 277.
19. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (1939), 314–17.
20. “O My Father,” *Hymns*, no. 292.