

The Possible Dream

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I would like to thank O'Neil Miner and Melesa Kohler for their beautiful rendition of "The Impossible Dream." Thank you to all who have worked so hard to bring about the Women's Conference and carry out the theme: "May Christ Lift Thee Up." My prayer today is that each of you will feel lifted, that you will return to your homes with a vision for your lives, knowing that "with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

In 1605, Spanish novelist Cervantes wrote his masterpiece about an idealist named Don Quixote. You know the story. It later became the Broadway musical, *Man of La Mancha*. Don Quixote believed in the power of vision, of seeing the good in every individual and lifting others to greater heights. He helped many to believe in themselves by teaching them to dream—to dream the *impossible* dream. Today, I would like to visit with you about dreaming the *possible* dream.

Do you have dreams? I hope so. We all need them. Good dreams, firmly grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ, lift and inspire.

I remember when I was a young mother and we were living in an apartment with two small children. My husband was finishing his schooling at the university, working full-time, and serving in the bishopric. Because of two years' military service, we had already moved five times, both in and out of the state, and had only been married three years!

So, as you might imagine, I was thrilled at the idea of settling into a home of our own. It was an exciting day when we moved into that little home. I thought I was at the end of my troubles and we would live happily ever after—but I did not realize which end.

For twenty-five years we lived in that home, and our family grew from two to seven children. From the beginning, the home presented great challenges. We had to dig a well for water, and the water we got from it was so full of iron that it often tasted as bad as it looked.

Even though we purchased better pumps and found different solutions to our ongoing water problems, we had a steady stream of leaks, floods, and repairs while living there. If you turned on the cold water in the kitchen while the shower was in use, the person was drenched in hot water, causing a loud yelp. And when I turned on the water to wash a

batch of clothes, I had to watch closely and turn the fill cycle twice just to get enough water to wash the clothes. If I mastered that feat, I almost never could get enough water into the rinse cycle to wash out the soap.

This water system became the bane of my life. At times I felt trapped in what seemed an impossible situation. Do you think I dreamed about a better way? Of course I did. My father gave me some sage advice: "When you feel you have reached the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on!" Sometimes I pleaded with my husband to move. But we both knew that was not the answer. We couldn't afford it.

Once when my husband was out of town, my neighbor and I removed the washer and dryer to the garage, wallpapered the utility room, bought a love seat, rocker, lamp, and table, and made a sitting room. Then, for a period of time, I took all of our dirty clothes to the laundromat once a week. I would bring the clean and folded clothes home, place them in the children's drawers and closets, and feel better about my home.

We learned to live with our water problems, however annoying they became. Our children developed patience and long-suffering—and so did their mother. For the sake of my family, I determined to stop whining and make the best of our situation. And I did.

I came to the realization that the pluses were better than the minuses. We really had a happy life in that small home. Our children could work at their grandfather's dairy, ride horses, build forts, feed baby calves, and pick fruit from the orchard.

When we sold that home some twenty-five years later, I was thrilled with the new home we built: it had an excellent water system in it. My impossible dream had finally become a reality, but I now cherished the lessons learned. We had learned to live with some rather unfavorable circumstances that actually helped us to achieve our more important dream of being a happy and united family.

As we work to realize our dreams, greater possibilities will unfold for us—and for those we love and serve. Throughout the scriptures, the Savior shares this truth in its full and most correct sense. He teaches us to do more than just dream. And he makes it clear that only "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). The Lord shows us the way; he is "the way" to make our dreams come true. With him, impossible dreams can become possible, even realities.

Let me illustrate with the story of Enoch. He built a city called Zion where the people were "of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness" (Moses 7:18). Building Zion must have seemed like an "impossible" dream even to Enoch at first. But as Enoch and his people worked toward their righteous goal, the Lord blessed them.

Establishing Zion not only is possible but is our charge as Latter-day Saints. This will not happen overnight, but each of us can be inspired by the way Enoch overcame challenges and became all that our Father in Heaven wanted him to be.

As a Relief Society, we help each other. We unitedly seek for purity of heart. We strive to become all that our Heavenly Father wants us to be—individually and collectively.

The Prophet Joseph Smith reminded the first members of the Relief Society about our divine purpose. He said: "This organization is not only for the purpose of administering to the sick and afflicted, the poor and the needy, but it is to save souls. If ye are pure in all things nothing on earth or heaven can hinder the angels from associating with you."

As individuals and as a Society, we are here to save souls. As each of us does the Lord's work in our own spheres of influence, the Lord's great work of the latter day will be accomplished. We are here to usher this Society into the next century, to join hands with sisters across the globe, and to lead each other into life eternal.

Just last conference, President Boyd K. Packer spoke of our essential role as Relief Society sisters. He said: "However much priesthood power and authority the men may possess—however much wisdom and experience they may accumulate—the safety of the family, the integrity of the doctrine, the ordinances, the covenants, indeed the future of the Church, rests equally upon the women. The defenses of the home and family are greatly reinforced when the wife and mother and daughters belong to Relief Society" (*Ensign*, May 1998, 73).

Sisters, the time has come for the Relief Society to fully realize the magnitude of its mission and to represent the Lord and his leaders to the women of the world. The time has come to raise our heads and fly the banner of righteousness. Devote yourself to Relief Society. Or, as Elder Packer admonished just last conference, "Do not allow yourselves to be organized under another banner which cannot, in truth, fulfill your needs" (*Ensign*, May 1998, 73). As a devoted Relief Society sister, you will see miracles happen in your own lives—and in the lives of those you serve. Under its banner, "impossible" dreams can come true.

Using Enoch's experience as a model, I'd like to suggest four steps toward realizing our righteous dreams as daughters of God—as wives, mothers, and Relief Society sisters.

Learn the Ways of God

In Moses 6:21 we read about Enoch's upbringing. His father Jared "taught [his sons and daughters] in all the ways of God."

Sisters, we must learn the ways of God. For Enoch and for each of us, learning gospel truths and living them is essential to all else. We begin with ourselves and then we strengthen our families. We always start in our own hearts and homes. By creating loving relationships with our husbands and children, they see and feel the difference from the ways of the world.

Prophets throughout the ages have counseled us to read, study, ponder, and pray—and to set the proper example of love and service to others. If we develop and then live our

testimony, the kingdom of God will flourish and grow.

Every sister must find her Sacred Grove—whether it's a quiet place in the bedroom or a private spot in the yard. Go to the Lord with the desires of your heart and ask for strength and direction. If you feel like you are short on faith and hope, start by asking for even the "desire to believe" (Alma 32:27). And then put the process outlined in Alma 32 to the test. Plant a seed of faith in your heart. You will be blessed with answers. You will not be disappointed. For every principle you pray about *and live*, you will be assured of its truth, and your heart will swell with love, peace, and joy. The principle will become "delicious" unto you (Alma 32:28).

Being fully taught in the ways of God also means we must make and keep necessary ordinances and sacred covenants. President Boyd K. Packer has said: "Ordinances and covenants become our credentials for admission into [God's] presence. To worthily receive them is the quest of a lifetime. To keep them thereafter is the challenge of mortality" (*Ensign*, May 1987, 24).

The completeness of the gospel of Jesus Christ is beautiful. It is a restoration rather than a reformation. You cannot find all that we have anywhere else because we have a fullness of truth. It will not fail us, *if we live it*. What makes the gospel of Jesus Christ unique?

Through the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we learn:

1. We were spirit children of our Father in Heaven.
2. We lived with him before we came to this earth.
3. We know there was a Grand Council in Heaven, and we chose to follow his plan, which included receiving a mortal body and being sent to this earth to live for a period of time to be tested—to prove ourselves worthy to live with him throughout eternity.
4. The priesthood of God has been restored to the earth, and through the priesthood we may be baptized by immersion as planned by the Savior.
5. If we live worthy and receive the saving ordinances, we can be together forever as a family.
6. Through temple and genealogy work we can also assist in the completion of the vicarious ordinance work for our ancestors.

Let me share the story of one sister's conversion with you. About thirty-five years ago, a young girl of ten was introduced to the gospel when the missionaries started meeting with her family in Uruguay. She listened carefully and knew what she was hearing was true.

She chose to be baptized, even though no one else in her family joined the Church.

That young girl, of no particular significance, prayed, studied the scriptures, and remained faithful through all these years. Her faith in Jesus Christ carried her along. She weathered the challenges that come to someone so young and so alone in her beliefs because she continued to search the scriptures and to ponder and pray about them. She learned the ways of God, even though she had not been taught them by her parents. The Spirit of the Holy Ghost rested upon her and guided her. She received her education, filled a mission, and became a valiant instrument in the Lord's kingdom.

She eventually moved close to a temple and completed the temple work for thousands of her deceased family members. She will truly be a savior on Mount Zion and be praised throughout eternity for her strength, courage, and determination.

Neither this faithful sister, nor I, would say the way is easy. But as President Howard W. Hunter explains, the Lord would have us press forward with a perfect brightness of hope. President Hunter said: "This faith and hope of which I speak is not a Pollyanna-like approach to significant personal and public problems. I don't believe we can wake up in the morning and simply by drawing a big 'happy face' on the chalkboard believe that is going to take care of the world's difficulties. But if our faith and hope are anchored in Christ, in his teachings, commandments, and promises, then we are able to count on something truly remarkable, genuinely miraculous" (*That We Might Have Joy* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994], 95).

For Enoch, and for each of us, the promise is sure. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). It really will. The Lord told Enoch, and each of us in turn, how to achieve what some might consider the impossible. And we begin by learning the ways of God and then teaching our children and those we love and serve. As we do, our dreams will take a more celestial shape. The Spirit of the Lord not only will help us design worthy dreams, it will guide us in our efforts to realize them.

Yes, Ask, "Why Me?"

Enoch's story begins much the same way any of ours would. He was faced with a challenge, given him of the Lord, and—at first—doubted his abilities to meet it. What challenges are you facing in your life? Think of yourself in the place of Enoch.

"[Enoch] heard a voice from heaven, saying: Enoch, my son, prophesy unto this people, and say unto them—Repent, for thus saith the Lord: I am angry with this people, and my fierce anger is kindled against them; for their hearts have waxed hard, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes cannot see afar off" (Moses 6:27).

Much like the people in Enoch's time, our vision can so easily become clouded by worldly concerns and cares so that our "eyes cannot see afar off" (Moses 6:27). And when we are surrounded by hearts that "have waxed hard" (v. 27), hearts that would tell us not to

believe, not to dream, how do we keep our hearts soft and strong? How do we go forward with faith?

Even Enoch had a moment of asking, "Why me?" "And when Enoch had heard [the Lord's] words, he bowed himself to the earth, before the Lord, and spake . . . : Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant" (Moses 6:31–32).

At first, Enoch could only think of his weaknesses. He was slow of speech, unpopular, and "but a lad" (Moses 6:31). But the Lord saw greatness in him.

President Hinckley wrote: "I believe that I am a child of God, endowed with a divine birthright. I believe that there is something of divinity within me and within each of you. I believe that we have a godly inheritance and that it is our responsibility, our obligation, and our opportunity to cultivate and nurture the very best of these qualities within us."

When a reporter once asked Helen Keller (who was blind and deaf from birth) what could be worse than being blind, she responded, "Having eyes to see and no vision."

Like you and me, Enoch may not have caught the vision of what one person can do in an instant. We don't create a Zion society, people, or family overnight. But as we become pure in heart, as we not only dream the dream but as we also strive to live the reality, we will be blessed with strength and vision beyond our own.

Much like us, Enoch lived in a very wicked world. He did not welcome the responsibility of calling the people to repentance. It must have seemed like an overwhelming challenge.

I will never forget when one challenge, in the form of a calling, was given to me. My husband and I had been serving as directors of Church Hosting for four years. We loved this calling and expected to remain in it for at least one more year.

On Tuesday, March 25, 1997, my husband and I left the First Presidency's office after introducing them to a dignitary from Russia whom we were hosting. This was not an unusual interaction. But receiving a call to come back and meet with President Hinckley again, shortly after returning to our Public Affairs office, *was* unusual.

President Hinckley greeted us and visited warmly with my husband for a period of time. Then he sat back in his chair and said: "I would like to call Mary Ellen Smoot as the new general Relief Society president."

I could hardly breathe. I will never forget the first words out of my mouth: I said to a prophet of the Lord: "Are you sure?"

Much like Enoch, I was deeply humbled by this calling. I, too, felt slow of speech and inadequate. But I have taken great comfort in the fact that if we humble ourselves before

the Lord and have faith in him, he will "make weak things become strong" (Ether 12:27). If we are willing to do our part, our Father in Heaven will make us equal to anything he calls us to do.

Have you ever wanted to ask, "Why me?" in your calling as a mother, a teacher, or a Relief Society leader? I would suggest that you *do* ask, "Why me?" And this is the second step toward realizing impossible dreams. Yes, ask, "Why me?" Not with a quiver of doubt, but instead, with all the faith you can muster, humbly ask the Lord what he would have you do and why you are uniquely suited to serve. Ask yourself questions like these: "What can I contribute?" "Why was I chosen to be the mother of these children?" "What can I do to strengthen the sisters in my ward?" and so forth. We each have purpose and reason for being. *Every sister has a thread to weave in the tapestry of time.* Discover your thread and begin to weave.

We are living in a trying time, to be sure. We see evil all around us. But do you suppose the call that came to Enoch could be for each of us who knows the gospel of Jesus Christ and yet still waste time complaining? Are we going to allow Satan to win? We can't afford to settle back in our easy chairs and say, "What can I do? I'm just one person."

Instead, we can say, "I *am* one person. And 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me'" (Philippians 4:13). How the faith of one person can make a difference if we forget ourselves and go to work!

One sister knelt in prayer and asked her Heavenly Father to help her have vision for her life. She wanted his help in defining a worthy dream, and so she humbly and fervently prayed, "How can I be of service?" "What would thou have me do?" And she received an answer in her heart. She felt that her calling on earth was to raise a righteous family.

This sister magnified her calling as a wife and mother and met the challenge of rearing a large family. Challenges do come our way as we teach our Father in Heaven's Saturday's Warriors. In moments of frustration or doubt, she was able to recall the peace she felt for the direction she took. Because she knew that her calling came from the Lord, because she had sincerely and faithfully asked, "Why me?" she became equal to the task.

Upon such faith great families have been built. Upon such faith our Relief Society was established. At the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Relief Society, Sarah M. Kimball detailed how the organization came about. Eliza R. Snow wrote a constitution for the women to begin an organization to assist those in building the temple. The Prophet Joseph Smith read her constitution and said that it was one of the best he had ever read. And then he declared: "This is not what the sisters want, there is something better for them. I have desired to organize the sisters in the order of the priesthood. I now have the key by which I can do it." (Minutes of the Relief Society Organization, 1:30).

The Prophet had vision for what this Society was to become. Not only would it be the largest organization of women in the world but it would also be the only one organized "in the order of the priesthood." The purpose and mission of Relief Society extends beyond

the year 2000 or the year 2002. Relief Society reaches into the eternities. What can you and I do to bring it out of obscurity? Why were we called to be Relief Society sisters in the latter day?

Choose Ye This Day to Serve the Lord God

Let's look back at the conditions in Enoch's time and see how similar they were to our own. The Lord said the people of Enoch were called to serve: "Ever since the day that I created them, have they gone astray, and have denied me, and have sought their own counsels in the dark; . . . and have not kept the commandments, which I gave unto their father, Adam" (Moses 6:28).

And yet, what did the Lord tell Enoch?

"Go forth and do as I have commanded thee, and no man shall pierce thee. Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance, for all flesh is in my hands, and I will do as seemeth me good. Say unto this people: Choose ye this day, to serve the Lord God who made you" (Moses 6:32–33).

The third step I would suggest to you in realizing your dreams is just that: "Choose ye this day, to serve the Lord God who made you." Sisters, today, right now, throughout this conference renew your commitment. Choose this day to serve the Lord, and the windows of heaven will open for you.

Remember how I told you about the new home my husband and I built after twenty-five years of living in that small home with water problems? Let me tell you the rest of the story. Shortly after we moved into our dream home, my husband and I were called to preside over the Ohio Columbus Mission. The most difficult part about leaving home, however, had little to do with the fact that I was leaving my lovely home with its glorious water system. I was concerned about transplanting my thirteen-year-old son and leaving one of my married daughters who had just given birth to her fourth child, a son named Ben, who had been born with Crouzons Syndrome, creating severe health problems.

I wanted to be there for her in her time of need. I wanted to be the attentive mother and grandmother I knew I should be, but I also wanted to serve the Lord.

And so I had to choose. I had to choose whether to answer a calling from the Lord or to stay at home and serve my family at a time when my help was really needed. At this point in my life, I knew that when the Lord calls, you go. But it still was not easy to say good-bye to my family.

What I came to realize, though, was that by choosing to serve the Lord in the mission field, my family was truly blessed. The Relief Society rallied around my daughter. Our new ward in Ohio welcomed my teenage son. And with the perspective of many years, I can see how that single decision to serve the Lord blessed my family in ways that I would

not have realized had I remained at home. But still, it took a leap of faith.

When we choose to serve the Lord, we choose to submit our will to his and to respond to the promptings of the Spirit. We start asking, "How can I be of service?" and "What would the Lord have me do?" By humbly and faithfully submitting our will to God, the once "impossible" dream ultimately becomes a living reality.

How could I have known that after arriving in Ohio our teenage son would find friends who were nationally ranked wrestling stars and coaches with an incredible wrestling program? He later became a state and national champion and a coach of the junior high school that Ben would attend.

Ben, over the years, faced great adversity with faith and humility. Through obedience, he grew in testimony and confidence. Ben, under the skilled, experienced coaching of his uncle, won the region championship as a seventh grader and was honored as outstanding wrestler of the tournament by all the coaches. My daughter and I stood and wept as the final buzzer of the championship match sounded, declaring Ben region champion. I knew that the Lord had answered my prayers of many years ago.

Choice is essential to our Heavenly Father's plan for happiness. Happiness cannot be forced upon us; it comes as we make righteous choices. Joseph Smith explained: "I teach the people correct principles and they govern themselves" (John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86], 10:57–58). Using correct principles to govern ourselves is the challenge of mortality.

Think of all the good and important choices you have already made. You chose to come to this earth. That choice alone speaks of your faithfulness. At baptism, you chose to take the name of Christ upon you. In the temple, you chose to make sacred covenants. And today, you chose to give some of your valuable time to learning and self-improvement. As your Relief Society leaders, we believe in your ability to make good choices. We trust you and know you will make correct decisions that will bring you lasting joy and peace.

In our world today, we have more choices than ever before and a lot of tough decisions to make. It can be difficult to sort through it all—especially for those who must live with the unfavorable consequences of another's bad choice. But no matter what our status in life, no matter what choices were made in the past, we *can* choose to be on the Lord's side now. We may need to redesign some of our dreams, we may need to renew some of our covenants, but we can choose the Lord's plan for happiness today.

David Gelernter, the professor at Yale University whose life was nearly taken by the explosive package sent to him from the Unabomber, commends women such as you. Mr. Gelernter writes:

"Back in 1940 you could never tell why housewives did what they did, whether it was devotion or just momentum. But today you know exactly why housewives do it: out of love. Some of their families can easily forgo the second income, some cannot; but every one

of them could improve her standing in society by taking a job. So today you can see these stubborn women for what they are, the moral backbone of the country. A country with this kind of backbone can't be such a terrible place and is probably capable of weathering anything in the end."

He goes on to say: "Nobody loves a child like his or her own parent." And I wholeheartedly agree. Children are given to us as gifts from God; how we choose to rear them is our gift to him.

All of us who love, lead, and guide God's children know the depth of that commitment and the meaning of that gift. Mothers don't get sick days, time off, or overtime compensation. Their reward is of a heavenly kind.

Linn Pribus tells us how one family reaches out to an individual child in love by using what they call the love bucket. The basic philosophy behind it is very simple—never let the sun set on an empty love bucket.

If someone has had some real disappointments or challenges during the day, everyone works to fill his or her love bucket by being extra sensitive, loving, and responsive. Whatever is done to fill the love bucket is specially designed for the person in need.

Love bucket terminology works marvelously with children, adults, and certainly with Relief Society sisters. It's something we all can understand.

Using "love bucket" terminology helps children learn to be more aware of the moods and feelings of others. A painfully shy child, for example, can be described in terms of a small love bucket that needs constant refilling. Perhaps the neighborhood bully's bucket is "all bent out of shape." Maybe an unfriendly child has a slow leak in his love bucket—or maybe it's only half full.

A serious loss, such as moving away from good friends or a death in the family, can knock the bottom right out of a love bucket so that it takes months to rebuild. When a child is confused or frightened, it would be comforting for him or her to hear, "I'll help you mend your love bucket no matter how long it takes." When a new baby gets all of the attention, an older child can be reassured, "There's still plenty of love to keep your bucket full. Don't you worry."

My husband gave this theory to some of our grandchildren, and a few days later I saw how it had already taken root. While I was visiting their home, Synthia, a ten-year-old, came in from school and said: "Guess what! I filled two love buckets today." Two different friends came to her with challenges, and Synthia had reached out to them in love.

Children learn fast. The mood of the home is very dependent on the spirit of the mother in the home. Take time to fill the love buckets in your home and in your ward. Yours will only become more and more full as you make conscious decisions to love those you

serve.

We salute you for your efforts to make righteous choices and to be where the Lord would have you be.

To "choose ye this day, to serve the Lord" (Moses 6:33) is to faithfully commit to be where the Lord would have you be, whether that is at home with your family, on a mission in a foreign land, in the temple serving your ancestors, or in the home of the afflicted.

Walk with Me

A great promise was given to Enoch, and to each of us in turn, if we will do as the Lord commands: "Behold my Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify; and the mountains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course; and thou shalt abide in me, and I in you; therefore walk with me" (Moses 6:34).

What a magnificent blessing! What more could we dream of than abiding in the Lord and walking with him? You may ask, "Can we walk with him, too?" Of course we can. And that is the fourth and final suggestion I would offer for realizing your dreams: walk with the Lord.

Faithful people have walked with God all through the ages. King Benjamin taught his people what it is like to walk with Him: "And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to that which is his due" (Mosiah 4:13).

Zion is born of such purity of heart. Dreams are turned into realities with such peaceable and godly living. And that's what Relief Society is all about. As sisters in Zion, we help each other and our families to walk with God and return to our heavenly home.

Sisters, we are united with the Brethren of the Church, and they have confidence in us. The Lord is allowing us to move the work forward in a rapid manner that will bless each of our lives. We must unite in Relief Society as never before. Listen to the prophets and follow their words. Brigham Young explained that "a perfect oneness will save a people." And he continued: "The religion of heaven unites the hearts of the people and makes them one" (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954], 282, 285.) We become one as we turn our backs on sin, selfishness, materialism, and self-indulgence. We become one as we look to God and give our lives to him.

In the early days of the Church, Relief Society president Bathsheba Smith taught how the greatness of the Relief Society is found in the pure hearts of its individual members. She encouraged the sisters to set aside petty grievances and unite in spirit and deed that they might bring to pass the great mission of this organization. On the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of Relief Society, she said: "Let us take renewed courage and be more united and earnest in this great work, and if anyone has ill feelings towards another, banish them and

make this a Jubilee in very deed."

Unity in our Relief Society, unity in our homes, unity in our hearts, is born of banishing ill feelings and taking renewed courage to be more earnest in our endeavors. As sisters in Zion, we can be nothing less than unified.

John Winthrop said of his band of Pilgrims in 1630, and we could say of ourselves and this Relief Society: "We shall be a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us, so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause HIM to withdraw His presence [and] help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world" (*A Model of Christian Charity*, 1630).

We *will* be a light to the world—but only to the degree that we are living the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ and making them an integral part of our everyday lives. May we look to Christ to lift us up at a time when we truly can be a light to the world; when, in the coming years, we really will be "a city upon a hill."

As Salt Lake City hosts the Winter Olympics in the year 2002, we must be prepared as sisters in Zion to radiate that light.

Who will be prepared for the Lord's tremendous promises to those who hearken unto his words and receive his Spirit to guide and direct them? Who will dream what the world thinks is impossible but what the Lord, through his prophets, assures us *is* possible? Faithful women everywhere.

Does the Lord need each of us to walk with him? Does this world cry out for someone with a clear, clarion call to obedience, truth, and righteous living? Yes!

Everyone wants to find answers that will make the difference in this monumental time in history when we will soon enter the new millennial year. As Relief Society sisters, we can help all of God's children to see that answers are found where they always have been: in scriptures, in prophets' teachings, and in obedience to them.

Enoch was not especially looking forward to what the Lord called him to do. But as we read in Moses 7, Enoch was obedient. He taught and led the people in righteousness. The city of Zion was established, miracles occurred, and Enoch foresaw the coming of the Son of Man, his atoning sacrifice, and the return of Zion.

Ultimately, Enoch and his people did walk with God, and "he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, Zion is Fled" (Moses 7:69).

The people of Enoch walked with God because they walked together and bolstered one another. God did not ask them—or any of us—to walk only with him. He also expects us to walk with each other. Only as we are there to love and serve our family members, our ward members, and our neighbors can he work miracles in our lives. When the bishop calls

us to serve, do we ask, "Are you sure?" When our children need extra love and attention, do we respond, "Not now"? Or do we offer a silent prayer and plead for strength, wisdom, and vision beyond our own?

At some time in our lives, each of us will go through a personal Garden of Gethsemane. And each day we have an opportunity to prepare ourselves to go through this period of life by strengthening ourselves spiritually and making righteous decisions.

Several years ago President Hinckley told about a divorced mother of seven children who felt that all of her dreams had been shattered. Not only was she afraid to dream anymore but she felt she faced a mountain of impossibilities. As she returned to her home late one night, she looked at her house and saw that all of the lights were still on. Her children, ages five through sixteen, were waiting for her.

She broke down and silently prayed: "Oh, my Father, I just can't do it tonight. I'm too tired. I can't face it. I can't go home and take care of all those children alone. Could I just come to You and stay with You for just one night? I'll come back in the morning."

And then she felt the peace of God. In her heart, she heard the answer: "No, little one, you can't come to me now. You would never wish to come back. But I can come to you" (*Ensign*, May 1991, 73).

And he will. The promise is sure: "Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you" (D&C 88:63).

No matter our circumstances, we can dream. And dreams can and will become possible for us as we learn the ways of the Lord, seek his guidance, and choose to serve him. He *will* walk with us. As individual sisters and as a Relief Society, let us have vision of where we want to be and build inner strength to get there. Like Enoch, we can have the Spirit of the Lord with us each day as we strive to do his will and make "impossible" dreams come true.

Like the man of La Mancha and my grandson Ben, may we dream dreams and walk with God, who will assist us in making those dreams become realities as we look to the millennium year and beyond.