

Christ-Centered Family Tree Class Quotes 2010

Finding & Feasting for Families, Spiritual Strength & Safety for Our Families, and the the Joy is in the Journey

By Claudia Gibb Sudweeks

“Those of you who have worked at your genealogies, who realize the importance of the work and have felt the excitement that comes from tying families together and learning of your noble heritage, need to share that excitement with others. Help them to see the joy and fulfillment you see in the work.” (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, pp.161-162)

Finding

1. Find our family members who we do not yet know about, in order to provide them with the ordinances & covenants and give them full access to the atonement of Jesus Christ.
2. We should want to find out everything we can about the lives of our ancestors and their families.
3. We must find out more about the doctrines that support this work.
4. We need to find those lessons the Lord wants us to learn while searching for our family members.
5. All of this should lead us to find Christ.

Feasting on Gospel Principles

1. “Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.” (2 Nephi 31:20)
2. “Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.” (2 Nephi 32:3)

Personal Revelation

Seeking Revelation:

(Kim Sorensen’s lists)

- Consecrate your time and efforts: 2 Nephi 32:9
- Be clean: “To get [daily] revelation it is necessary that the people live so that their spirits are as pure and clean as a piece of blank paper that lies on the desk before the inditer, ready to receive any mark the writer may make upon it.” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol.11, pp.240-241)
- Ask with real intent & for whatsoever you stand in need: Alma 7:23 & “The words ‘Thy will be done,’ written in the heart, are the window to revelation.” (Henry B. Eyring, “Rise to Your Call”, *Ensign*, November 2002)

- Do all we can ourselves: “It is contrary to the law of God for the heavens to be opened and messengers to come to do anything for man that man can do for himself.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 1:196) & BE BAPTIZED FOR THE FEW NAMES WE HAVE
- Sacrifice our best: Today’s equivalent of the firstlings of the flock and the first fruits of the field
- Record & obey: “You will find that as you write down precious impressions, often more will come.” (Richard G. Scott, BYU Devotional, 23 Jan 2001, p. 1)
- Trust in the Lord: 2 Nephi 32:5
- Keep our covenants: D&C 84:88
- Express gratitude: “Just as expressing gratitude more often in our prayers **enlarges the conduit for revelation**, so praying for others [*including those family members we are researching*] with all of the energy of our souls increases our capacity to hear and to heed the voice of the Lord.” (David A. Bednar, “Pray Always,” *Ensign*, Nov 2008, 41–44; italics added)

Recognizing Answers:

- Conscience/Light of Christ: “The Spirit of Christ can be likened unto a “guardian angel” for every person. This inner Light can warn and guard and guide.” (Boyd K. Packer, “The Light of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr 2005, 8–14)
- Peace: D&C 6:22-23
- Mind and heart: D&C 8:2
- Still small voice
- Sudden ideas or impressions: “... all of us should try to strive and give heed to the sudden ideas that come to us, and if we’ll give heed to them and cultivate an ear to hear these promptings we too – each of us – can grow in the spirit of revelation.” (Harold B. Lee, *Stand in Holy Places*)
- Words or actions of others
- Burning/stupor: D&C 9:8-9
- Angelic ministrations
- Dreams
- No answer at all: Richard G. Scott
- Many more (search the scriptures)

1. “Perhaps we regard the power bestowed by Elijah as something associated only with formal ordinances performed in sacred places. But these **ordinances become dynamic and productive of good only as they reveal themselves in our daily lives. Malachi said that the power of Elijah would turn the hearts of the fathers and the children to each other. The heart is the seat of the emotions and a conduit for revelation.**” (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, May 1993, p.37)

2. “We shall learn **by the spirit of revelation whom to be baptized for**, and whom to officiate for in the holy ordinances of the Gospel. Herein is the necessity of revelation. Take away revelation from this great dispensation of the fullness of times, and I would not give you much for the mission of Elijah or for the dispensation itself.” (Orson Pratt (*Journal of Discourses* 7:86))

Angelic Ministrations

1. "One of the things that will become more important in our lives the longer we live is the reality of angels, their work and their ministry. I refer here ... to those more personal ministering angels who are with us and around us, empowered to help us and who do exactly that"....

"I believe we need to speak of and believe in and bear testimony of the ministry of angels more than we sometimes do. They constitute one of God's great methods of witnessing through the veil...." (Jeffrey R. Holland, "For a Wise Purpose," *Ensign*, January 1996)

2. “[John the Baptist] He said that this **priesthood of Aaron “holds the keys of the ministering of angels.”** It is a tremendous thing to have the right to the ministering of angels. ... “I am convinced that the Lord would not have given it to us had He not desired that we have it so that we might enjoy the wonderful gifts, guidance, and protection which come therefrom.” (Gordon B. **Hinckley**, “Words of the Prophet: ‘Upon You My Fellow Servants’,” *New Era*, May 2002, 4)

Dreams

1. “Now there’s one more way by which revelations may come, and that is by dreams. Oh, I’m not going to tell you every dream you have is a revelation from the Lord.... But I fear that in this age of sophistication there are those of us who are prone to rule out all dreams as of no purpose.... And yet all through the scriptures there were incidents where the Lord, by dreams, has directed His people. When we begin to understand that beyond sight, as Brigham Young said, **the spirit world is right here round about us, and if our spiritual eyes could be opened, we could see others visiting with us, directing us.** And if we will learn not be so sophisticated that we rule out that possibility of impressions from those who are beyond sight, then we too may have a dream that may direct us as revelation.” (Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye In Holy Places*, p.142-143)

2. (Recognizing symbols in family history dreams – things that are lacking/missing) “And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.” (Jacob 2:19)

*We Learn through Symbols

“...**Christ ..drew frequently on temple symbolism in His teachings**” (David E. Sorensen, “Small Temples—Large Blessings,” *Ensign*, Nov 1998, 64)

The Symbolism of the Tree

1. “Famous *Roots* author, Alex Haley, once said: ‘In all of us there is a hunger, marrow-deep, to know our heritage—to know who we are and where we have come from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still ... an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness.’

“Through family history we discover the most beautiful tree in the forest of creation—our family tree. Its numerous roots reach back through history, and its branches extend throughout eternity. Family history is the expansive expression of eternal love. It is born of selflessness. It provides opportunity to secure the family unit forever.” (J. Richard Clarke, “Our Kindred Family—Expression of Eternal Love,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 60)

2. “And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I also beheld that the **tree of life was a representation of the love of God**. (1 Nephi 11:25)

3. Jacob 5, The Allegory of the Olive Tree: In this case the tree **represents the House of Israel**. This story covers the full three-fold mission of the church: caring for and nurturing each other, the greater missionary effort to gather God’s children from all corners of the Earth, as well as those who are on the other side of the veil waiting to be gathered. All of God’s children need the opportunity to accept the covenants which will graft them into the House of Israel, and make it so that we can all return to our Father in Heaven.

Faith

1. “...There is a much greater key—a key which each one of us earnestly seeks to obtain and which **will open the locks to the treasure houses of the knowledge which we desire to acquire**. That key is **the key of faith**. In this work, no lock will open without it.

“I testify that when we do all we can to accomplish the work that is before us, the Lord will make available to us the sacred key needed to unlock the treasure which we so much seek.

“The oft-quoted epistle of James was not meant exclusively for investigators. It was meant for you and me as well: “**If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God**, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

“But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

“Should any obstacles be encountered, one must seek the companionship of the Holy Spirit for guidance to solve the problem faced. I testify that the Spirit will come, the way will be opened, and the key will be provided. ...

“We need the key of faith. No locked door can withstand its opening capacity. Faith is a requisite to this work. There is within our grasp the key which will unlock to our view that which we earnestly seek. ...

“The key of faith can be ours. May we use it wisely, thus opening to the view of those who have gone before us that great vision of their opportunity in the kingdom of our Heavenly Father.” (Thomas S. Monson, “The Key of Faith,” *Ensign*, Feb 1994, 2)

***SECTION 2: Spiritual Strength & Safety for Our Families**

***Spirit of Elijah/Mission of Elijah**

1. “This restoration was accompanied by what is sometimes called the **Spirit of Elijah — a manifestation of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of the divine nature of the family**.” (Russell M. Nelson, “A New Harvest Time,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 34)

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ELIJAH?

- * **Taught by the still small voice:** [Elijah's answer wasn't in the strong wind, the earthquake or the fire.] "And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." (1 Kings 19:12)
- * **Dealt with King Ahab & Queen Jezebel:** 1 Kings 17-2 Kings 2
- * **Sealed the heavens** – the sealing power: 1 Kings 17:1, 7
- * **Fed by ravens:** 1 Kings 17:2-6
- * **Visited & helped the Widow of Zarephath :** 1 Kings 17:8-24
- * [In our day our equivalent to the widow's offering to Elijah is often time when doing Elijah's work.] "[The Lord] has promised you this: 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.' That is a true promise. When we put God's purposes first, He will give us miracles. If we **pray to know what He would have us do next**, He will multiply the effects of what we do in such a way that **time seems to be expanded.**" (Henry B. Eyring, "Education for Real Life," CES Broadcast 6 May 2001, p. 4-5)
- * **Challenge to the priests of Baal:** 1 Kings 18:21-39: Faith (choose the Lord or Baal), Repentance (rebuilt altar of Jehovah with 12 stones), Immersion (12 jars of water to immerse the offering and fill the ditch surrounding the altar), Holy Ghost (Called down the Fire which is symbolic of the Holy Ghost or the great witness of Jehovah) – 4th Article of Faith
- * **Fasted for 40 days and nights:** 1 Kings 19:8
- * **Went to Mount Horeb** (Mount Sinai – see Bible Dictionary) **to converse with the Lord:** 1 Kings 19:8-18
- * **Translated** – taken in the chariot: 2 Kings 2:11-12
- * **Mantle & Spirit of Elijah fell on Elisha:** 2 Kings 2:13-15
- * **Foreshadowed Christ:** multiplied a widow's food supply to sustain her family, raised a young boy from the dead as Jesus raised a widow's son." (Andrew C. Skinner, "Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament," *Ensign*, Jun 2002, 24) ... Many more examples as you study Elijah's ministry...
- * **Appeared in the Kirtland temple to restore keys:** "It was ... on the third day of April, 1836," said President Joseph Fielding Smith, "that the [Jewish people], in their homes at the Paschal [**Passover**] feast, opened their doors for Elijah to enter. [However,] on that very day Elijah did enter—not in the home of the Jews to partake of the Passover with them, but he appeared in the House of the Lord ... in Kirtland, and there bestowed his keys." ((In Conference Report, Apr. 1936, p. 75.) David B. Haight, "Temples and Work Therein," *Ensign*, Nov 1990, 59)
- * **Turning the hearts and planting the promises are the verses most quoted in the scriptures.** (Malachi 4:6, Luke 1:17; 3 Nephi 25:6, D&C 2:2; D&C 27:9; D&C 98:16; D&C 110:15; D&C 128:17; JS-H 1:39) – They were so important that the Lord repeated them to the Nephites who had left Jerusalem before the time Malachi made the prophecy.

“It is tremendously significant to me that this declaration, this repetition of the wondrous words of Malachi concerning the work for the dead, was given to the boy Joseph four years before he was allowed to take the plates from the hill. It was given before he received either the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood, before he was baptized, and well before the Church was organized.

“It says much concerning the **priority of this work** in the plan of the Lord.”...

“And without this work, the Lord indicated the whole purpose of creating and peopling the earth would be frustrated, would be wasted.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Mar 1995, p.61)

Blessings of Family History & Temple Service

(see webpage for quotes)

Your heart will turn to your fathers and your children

Become families of heaven

Greater love for our fellow man

Greater understanding

Greater peace and comfort

Uniting and redemption of the family of God

Bind ourselves together

Lessens the power of Satan on earth

Helps children resist temptation

Miracles

Increased spirituality and understanding of the priesthood

Abounding love of the living for the dead

Increased knowledge, wisdom and capacity to obey

Increased personal revelation and lifted thoughts

A closer relationship with the Lord

Understanding of the Lord’s concern over and love for us

Spiritual perspective

Solutions to problems and answers to prayers

Personal revelation

Sustain the soul in times of distress

Happiness and joy

Understanding your place in Heavenly Father's plan

Vision of the divine nature

Unity in the home

Grace

Mercy

Role models

Friends

Helps us to recognize our strengths and weaknesses

Increased bonds of appreciation and affection in our families

Love your family more than ever before

Bridges built between the generations

Welded links tying us together for eternity

Tempering influence

Lose interest in the riches of the world

Peel off selfish shells

Help in all affairs of life, not just in family history

Power of enlightenment, of testimony, and of understanding

Peace of mind and spirit

Better perform our duties in life

Hear things so beautiful they cannot be written down (by being in the temple)

Receive mysteries of the kingdom

Blessed with abundance

Time expanded

Prepared to commune with angels

Shield & Protection

Guardian angels to watch over our loved ones when they are tempted

“I promise you that all who faithfully attend to temple work will be blessed beyond measure. Your families will draw closer to the Lord, unseen angels will watch over your loved ones when satanic forces tempt them, the veil

will be thin, and great spiritual experiences will distill upon this people.” (Vaughn J. Featherstone, Mount Vernon Washington Stake Conference, June 1985)

“And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

“And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2 Kings 6:16-17)

“Whosoever seeks to help those on the other side receives help in return in all affairs of life. I can think of no better preparation for one’s labor on the farm, in the office, wherever it may be, than to spend a few hours in the temple, to partake of its influence and to give oneself unselfishly for the benefit of those who have gone beyond the veil.” (John A. Widstoe, *Improvement Era*, October 1952, p. 719)

“...there are some members who engage in temple work but fail to do family history research on their own family lines. Although they perform a divine service in assisting others, **they lose a blessing** by not seeking their own kindred dead as divinely directed by latter-day prophets. ...

“I have learned that those who engage in family history research and then perform the temple ordinance work for those whose names they have found will know the **additional joy of receiving both halves of the blessing**.” (President Howard W. Hunter, “A Temple-Motivated People,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, pp.4-5)

The Importance of Making and Keeping Sacred Covenants

1. “What is the source of such moral and spiritual power, and how do we obtain it? The source is God. Our access to that power is through our covenants with Him. A covenant is an agreement between God and man, an accord whose terms are set by God. ... I pray that through your covenants, you may become a powerful instrument for good in the hands of Him who is our Lord and Redeemer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” (D. Todd Christofferson, “The Power of Covenants,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 19–23)

2. “**King Benjamin taught: ‘Because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ. ...** (Paul E. Koelliker, “Gospel Covenants Bring Promised Blessings,” *Liahona*, Nov 2005, 94–95)

The Abrahamic Covenant

In Genesis we are told the promises are:

1. A promised land
2. A great posterity
3. Priesthood & gospel blessings
4. A mission of salvation to others (Christ)

Also in Abraham 2:8-11:

“My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; **therefore my hand shall be over thee.**

“ And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

“And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) **shall all the families of the earth be blessed**, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.

Brigham Young reminds us that the priesthood is for this purpose.

“There must be this chain in the holy Priesthood; it must be welded together **from the latest generation that lives on the earth back to Father Adam**, to bring back all that can be saved and placed where they can receive salvation and a glory in some kingdom. This Priesthood has to do it; **this Priesthood is for this purpose.**”

(*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.623)

Children of the Covenant

1. “The home is to be God’s laboratory of love and service.” (Russell M. Nelson, “Salvation and Exaltation,” *Ensign*, May 2008, 7–10)

2. “The hearts of men have turned to their fathers in fulfillment of the words of Malachi. The vision of Joel has been fulfilled wherein he declared:

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

"And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” (Joel 2:28-29)

(Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, November 2001)

3. President Benson reminded us that our youth are well-prepared in the latter-days.

“I believe the youth are not only willing and able to do genealogical research, but they are a good means of giving life to the whole program. How often have the youth actually been driven away by those who would close the door on genealogy to them, or at the best, insist that they must “drink milk” when they are ready for the “meat”.” (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 163)

4. Archibald F. Bennett addressed the youth: “**Blessed with youthful vigor, mental alertness, and scholastic training** denied many of their parents and grandparents, there is much that can be done by youth....

“**The future of genealogical research rests squarely upon the shoulders of youth.**” (Archibald F. Bennett, *Saviors on Mount Zion*, pp. 143-145)

5. “We need converts to temple work, drawn from all ages, from the young, from the middle-aged, and from the rich and poor, from among the busy and those of leisure. The time has come, I verily believe, in this new temple

movement, to bring into active service all the people, of all ages. From the children doing baptisms, to the aged grandparents doing endowments for the dead, all the members of the family, if we do our duty well, must be brought to the work. Temple work is quite of as much benefit to the young and the active, as it is to the aged, who have laid behind them many of the burdens of life. **The young man needs his place in the temple even more than his father and grandfather, who are steadied by a life of experience; and the young girl just entering life, needs the spirit, influence and direction that come from participation in the temple ordinances.** If I say nothing else that will linger, I hope you will remember that temple work is for the young and for the middle-aged and for the aged-for all-and not for one specialized, separated class within the Church organization.” (John A. Widstoe, from Archibald F. Bennett’s *Saviors on Mount Zion*, pp. 147-148)

6. Referring back to teaching the gospel principle of faith, I want to share a definition of faith given by a dear friend, Reesa Boren. **“Faith is acting on a promise.”** Children of the covenant act in faith.

7. “We as **children of the covenant** are highly favored. In our hearts have been planted the promises made to Fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Lord has said: “Ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God. ...“Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel.” D&C 86:9, 11. This life is the time to prepare for salvation and exaltation. **In God’s eternal plan, salvation is an individual matter; exaltation is a family matter.** (Russell M. Nelson, “Salvation and Exaltation,” *Ensign*, May 2008, 7–10)

Miracles of Today

1. Archibald F. Bennett, a prominent genealogist, said: “Sister Susan Young Gates...once asked her father [Brigham Young] how it would ever be possible to accomplish the great amount of temple work that must be done. He told her that there would be many inventors of labor-saving devices, so that our daily duties could be performed in a short time, leaving us more and more time for temple work. The inventions have come, and are still coming but many simply divert the time gained to other channels, and not for the purpose intended by the Lord.” (Brigham Young quote, *Improvement Era*, Oct 1952)

2. “Going hand in hand with this increased temple activity is an increase in our family history work. The computer in its various ramifications is accelerating the work, and people are taking advantage of the new techniques being offered to them. **How can one escape the conclusion that the Lord is in all of this? As computer facilities improve, the number of temples grows to accommodate the accelerated family history work.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “Welcome to Conference”, *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 4-5)**

3. “The Lord has poured out knowledge about how to make that information available worldwide through technology that **a few years ago would have seemed a miracle.**” (Henry B. Eyring, “Hearts Bound Together,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 77)

4. **As family history consultants, we have been told that new.familysearch.org has been created and is being constantly improved in fulfillment of this prophecy:**

“A universal system of intelligent cooperation will bring together on one record sheet every fact in existence regarding a particular family. This wealth of data will insure accuracy and banish error. Expensive and time-consuming duplications in research and repetitions in ordinances will be eliminated. No sooner will a new fact be uncovered in any part of the world by a researcher than it will be communicated to the Archives center and

be assigned to its proper place, on some family record.” (Archibald F. Bennett, Secretary of Genealogical Society of Utah, Church News, December 20, 1947, p.20)

5. And the miracles today don’t stop with the technology: “There are...hundreds of thousands and millions...in the spirit world who long to receive this gospel and have been waiting hundreds of years for their deliverance. They are waiting on you. They are praying that the Lord will awaken your hearts in their interest. They know where their records are....

“I testify to you that the spirit and influence of your dead will guide those who are interested in finding those records. **If there is anywhere on the earth anything concerning them, you will find it. ... If we have done our best and have searched and have discovered all that is available, then the day will come when God will open and part the veil, and the records ... will be revealed.**” (*Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin J. Ballard*, 229-231)

SECTION 3: The Joy in the Journey

1. “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.” (2 Nephi 2:25)

Gratitude

1. [Referring to his own ancestors, Elder Nelson said,] “My debt to them is reflected in these biblical verses: “One soweth, and another reapeth” that “both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”” (John 4:37, 36) (Russell M. Nelson, “A New Harvest Time,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 34)

2. “I am indebted to my kindred dead who made it possible for me to live in this dispensation and to have the privilege of being a member of the “only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth.” (D&C 1:30.) (David B. Haight, “Temples and Work Therein,” *Ensign*, Nov 1990, 59)

Service

1. “In a spirit of love and consecration, we must extend ourselves in the work of redemption of the dead through service in the temples of the Lord. **This service more nearly approaches the divine work of the Son of God,** who gave his life for others, than does any other work of which I know.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1983, 8)

Ordinances

1. “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. Once we have received them for ourselves and for our families, we are obliged to provide these ordinances vicariously for our kindred dead, indeed for the whole human family.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1987, 24)

Vicarious Work for the Dead & Saviors on Mt. Zion

1. “Several years ago Elder Howard W. **Hunter** said: ‘Does it seem reasonable that persons who have lived upon the earth and died without the opportunity of baptism should be deprived throughout eternity? Is there anything unreasonable about the living performing the baptisms for the dead? Perhaps **the greatest example of vicarious work for the dead is the Master himself.**’ (Russell M. Nelson, “The Spirit of Elijah,” *Ensign*, Nov 1994, 84)

2. “**demonstrates both the justice and the fairness of the gospel of Jesus Christ**” (James E. Faust, “The Phenomenon That Is You,” *Ensign*, Nov 2003, 53)

3. Elder Widtsoe said, “**In our preexistent state**, in the day of the great council, **we made a[n] ... agreement with the Almighty.** The Lord proposed a plan. ... We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we became parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but ... saviors for the whole human family. **We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work.** The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation. ...

“That places us in a very responsible attitude towards the human race. By that doctrine, with the Lord at the head, we become **saviors on Mount Zion**, all committed to the great plan of offering salvation to the untold numbers of spirits. To do this is the Lord’s self-imposed duty, this great labor his highest glory. Likewise, it is man’s duty, self-imposed, his pleasure and joy, his labor, and ultimately his glory.” (“The Worth of Souls,” *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, p. 189.) (David B. Haight, “Temples and Work Therein,” *Ensign*, Nov 1990, 59)

4. “For me, knowing that **turns my heart** not only to my ancestors who wait but **to the missionaries who teach them.** I will see those missionaries in the spirit world, and so will you. Think of a faithful missionary standing there with those he has loved and taught who are your ancestors. Picture as I do the smile on the face of that missionary as you walk up to him and your ancestors whom he converted but could not baptize or have sealed to family until you came to the rescue. I do not know what the protocol will be in such a place, but I imagine arms thrown around your neck and tears of gratitude. ...

*“If you can imagine the smile of the missionary and your ancestor, think of the Savior when you meet Him. You will have that interview. He paid the price of the sins of you and all of Heavenly Father’s spirit children. He is Jehovah. He sent Elijah. He conferred the powers of the priesthood to seal and to bless out of perfect love. And He has trusted you by letting you hear the gospel in your lifetime, giving you the chance to accept the obligation to offer it to those of your ancestors who did not have your priceless opportunity. Think of the gratitude He has for those who pay the price in work and faith to find the names of their ancestors and who love them and Him enough to offer them eternal life in families, the greatest of all the gifts of God. He offered them an infinite sacrifice. **He will love and appreciate those who paid whatever price they could to allow their ancestors to choose His offer of eternal life.**” (Henry B. Eyring, “Hearts Bound Together,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 77)

5. I read the book *House of Glory*, by S. Michael Wilcox and was struck by the thoughts he tries to think when proxying for someone. I try to remember these words as I come to love those I am serving.

“Here are my eyes; together we will look upon the beauty of the Lord’s house. Here are my ears; let us hear the words of eternal life. Here are my lips; we will make sacred covenants. Here are my hands; together we will

receive the gifts of life everlasting. Here are my knees; kneel with me at the altars of salvation, there to become one with all those we both love. I will remember you.” (S. Michael Wilcox, *House of Glory*, p.96)

***Access to the Atonement of Jesus Christ**

1. “By the baptisms we perform in behalf of the dead, we testify that “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. ... By identifying our ancestors and performing for them the saving ordinances they could not themselves perform, we are testifying of the infinite reach of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Christ “died for all.”” (D. Todd Christofferson, “The Redemption of the Dead and the Testimony of Jesus,” *Ensign*, Nov 2000, 9-11)
2. “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, **all mankind** may be saved, by obedience to the laws **and ordinances** of the Gospel.” (Articles of Faith 1:3)
3. “[Jesus Christ] died, was buried, and rose on the third day to make the atoning sacrifice **for all mankind so that death would not hold permanent power**. Because of that act, all would rejoice and enjoy mortality.” (L. Tom Perry, “The Great Plan of Our God,” *Ensign*, Feb 2009, 62-66)

Closing Thoughts: Remember the joy.

1. “God is the designer of the family. He intended the greatest of happiness, the most satisfying aspects of life, the deepest joys should come in our associations together and our concerns one for another as fathers and mothers and children.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1991, 74)
2. “[The Lord’s] purposes fail not, neither are there any who can stay his hand.” (D&C 76:3)
3. “Brethren, shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren; and on, on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad. Let the earth break forth into singing. Let the dead speak forth anthems of eternal praise to the King Immanuel, who hath ordained, before the world was, that which would enable us to redeem them out of their prison; for the prisoners shall go free.
“Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! And ye rivers, and brooks, and rills, flow down with gladness. Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord; and ye solid rocks weep for joy! And let the sun, moon, and the morning stars sing together, and let all the sons of God shout for joy! And let the eternal creations declare his name forever and ever! And again I say, how glorious is the voice we hear from heaven, proclaiming in our ears, glory, and salvation, and honor, and immortality, and eternal life; kingdoms, principalities, and powers!” (D&C 128:22-23)
4. “And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!” (D&C 18:16)