

February 10, 2019

Spiritual Preparation

We are Made of Two Parts

One of the earliest lessons in primary teaches that we are made up of two parts, a body and a spirit. While we do not have our bodies prior to earth life or between death and resurrection, one of the greatest gifts of Christ's Atonement and Resurrection is that we will be complete beings in Eternity with both a body and a spirit. We can't be perfect or like our Heavenly Father without our bodies. That is one of the main reasons we needed to come to earth.

While things of the spirit are vitally important, some people believe that the Church should only focus on spiritual things. Perhaps that is because many traditional religions have taught that the body is evil and this carries over. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sees the soul as a combination of both body and spirit. We are here to "school our body" and help it comply with God's laws. Strengthening the spirit can help us do this. Because the two parts of our eternal soul are both inseparable and important we have to pay attention to both. Unchecked physical appetites and addictions can wound the spirit and keep it from progressing. Likewise, a sick spirit can make the physical body sick. Some people in the world are unable to learn and accept the gospel because their physical needs are so immediate and critical that they can't grasp more. Wholeness comes from making sure that both the spirit and body are fed and cared for properly.

When you understand the concept of how dependent the body and the spirit are on each other to be complete it is easier to see why the Church would counsel us on physical preparedness and needs as well as the things of the spirit. Neither spiritual nor physical preparation should be exclusive. The best preparing is done with both aspects at the same time.

Recent Focus

The recent focus from prophets and apostles regarding preparedness has been on spiritual preparedness. Our prophet Pres. Nelson said in the April 2018 general conference, "In coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost."

If you need some work in this area it is okay. Start where you are and move forward. Preparing spiritually can't be done all at once like some things can. It is about making progress and working to recognize the Spirit and follow those prompting.

Spiritual Preparedness 7 Ways (The Old Sunday School Answers are the Best)

1. **Obey**—Obey commandments and covenants with exactness and without rationalizing or looking at things as "guidelines."
2. **Pray**—Pray with humble sincerity and gratitude, often. Carry the spirit of gratitude with you always and it will help you carry the spirit of prayer.
3. **Study** the scriptures—Read and study to understand the words of God as much and as often as you can. *Bonus - Learn the words to hymns. They will often come to your mind to answer prayers and guide you if you know them.
4. **Follow** the prophet—Listen to, review, and act on the teachings and admonitions of current Church leaders. These will be appropriate for our time.
5. **Serve**—As you serve others, especially with the right attitude, you become more like the Savior. You will have His

Spirit and draw closer to Him. Service helps to make us one as Alma counseled his people at the Waters of Mormon to be. *Consider your attitude regarding small acts of kindness like not complaining when gluten-free bread is served for the sacrament, when most of the best parking places are handicapped, or when requested to not wear any fragrance at church or to the temple.

6. **Participate**—It is important to be a part of ward and stake projects, activities, educational opportunities, and socials. Sometimes the best service you can give is to support others who are serving. We need each other! We are a very self-contained people, and reaching out and ministering are needed to help fortify us in the difficult times we do and will live in. *I have been a doll manufacturer, and I have found that a doll will not stand on its own for a long period of time. However, if you put two of them together with an arm around each other, they become stable. We are like that.
7. **Listen** to the Holy Ghost—We have been counseled to develop this gift/skill. We have also been told to act on the first prompting. You have to be living in a manner that invites the Holy Ghost into your life at all times to do this well. You can't afford to be in places or situations that will offend the Spirit. This often includes how you treat and talk to family members and others, or the thoughts you entertain.

Got Scriptures?

For a while there was a huge push to bring scriptures to church and make sure all family members had scriptures. With the advent of smart phones, that has changed. Many members of the church could not even tell you where they have a hard copy of scriptures right off. Many youth don't own one. I like the quickness of touching a screen to look up scriptures and cross references. However, you can't rely totally on that. If power is out for an extended time you may lose your spiritual nourishment if all you have are electronic scriptures. Remember that Lehi's family was asked to go back to obtain scriptures. They were able to keep the records contained in the Book of Mormon because of that. On the other hand, the Mulekites lost

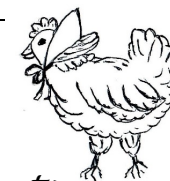
their language and the words of God because they didn't have scripture. The Lord told Nephi that without the brass plates, which contained scripture, their nation would dwindle and perish in unbelief. Scriptures also have the ability to comfort in a time of trial.

I recommend having a physical copy of all the scriptures in your emergency preps where you can grab them and go if need be. *If needed, stow an extra pair of reading glasses with your scriptures.

Prepared to Share

Living where we do it is unusual to find someone to share the gospel with. However, you never know when the opportunity may arise. It isn't a bad idea to study *Preach My Gospel* and even roll play questions or situations from time to time, but mostly be an example.

Notes from Red Hen



Dear Aunt Bitty,

This was a week of service, and it felt good! I didn't think anyone would come to the classes I offered, but they did. We had Dog, Cat, Pig, Horse, and Cow there. The chicks and I taught about planting, not only wheat but alfalfa and vegetables too. We evaluated what talents each animal had that they could donate to help the others with the project of growing things. They were all willing to contribute. We have been helping to gather seeds for spring. Perhaps others have noticed how self-reliance has benefitted my family in the last few years. We are all happy with this change and our ability to serve.

— Love, Red