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Four Fundamentals for Those Who Teach and Inspire Youth

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The time devoted to the preparation of this message has been rewarded with the deepest feelings of love, thanksgiving, and gratitude to the Lord for His mercy and kindness in providing us with the holy scriptures, for the indescribable blessing of prayer, and, when we have given sufficiently of ourselves, for the blessing of answer to prayer.

I likewise have feelings of gratitude for the declarations of the prophets that demonstrate a love for the scriptures and lead us to study, ponder, and apply them in our lives.

I have a profound feeling of love for each of you who have participated in this symposium, who so willingly devote yourselves to teaching the gospel to Father in Heaven's children. I likewise sense deep feelings of love. That love gives encouragement to try to express the feelings of my heart this morning in a way that can be understood to bless the lives of the students you, with such tender care, so willingly serve.

Some of your students may ask, "Why are we studying the Old Testament when President Ezra Taft Benson has spoken so vigorously about the need to know the Book of Mormon?"

In the 1986 October conference, our beloved prophet, President Benson, said:

That sacred and holy book has been of inestimable worth to the children of men. In fact, it was a passage from the Bible that inspired the Prophet Joseph Smith to go to a grove of trees near his home and kneel in prayer. What followed was the glorious vision that commenced the restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the earth. That vision also began the process of bringing forth new scriptures to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Bible in bearing witness to a wicked world that Jesus is the Christ and that God lives and loves His children and is still intimately involved in their salvation and exaltation. . . .

Today we have three new books of scriptures: the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. I love all of these sacred volumes. (in Conference Report, October 1986, 100–101; or *Ensign*, November 1986, 78–79)

These statements from the living prophet of God indicate the importance of all scripture. Each of your students needs to determine personally how he or she will follow the admonition of the prophet to know and to live the teachings of the Book of Mormon. However, this year's course in seminary and institute provides you with the opportunity to open the curtains of understanding to many who otherwise may never on their own find the treasures contained within the Old Testament.

I express gratitude to those who prepared the curriculum for this year and, particularly this morning, to all who have labored so diligently to prepare the workshops and messages of this symposium to further facilitate the understanding of the sacred contents of the Old Testament. They have provided you with suggestions, teaching aids, and methods to help your students find the diamonds of truth that sometimes must be carefully mined from the pages of the Old Testament. How wonderful it is that you have the opportunity to invite your students to drink of the waters of truth the Lord has placed in the Old Testament.

You have come to know that your students learn from you in three ways:

What they hear,
What they see, and
What they feel.

What they *hear* results from your painstaking preparation for each class encounter. Each skill you develop, each teaching capacity you exercise helps them benefit from what they hear.

What they *see* is more than the visual aids you use within the classroom. Paramount and predominant in what they observe is the example of your

own life—how you work; how you react to challenges in and out of the classroom; for those of you with families, how you treat them. How you live is constantly under observation. It impacts the lives of your students even in moments when you are least aware that you are being an example.

But the greatest impact of all is what they *feel* in your presence in the classroom and elsewhere. Your commitment to teach the precious children of our Father in Heaven is not alone the long hours you spend in preparation for each class, nor the many hours of fasting and prayer that you may become a more effective teacher. It is the commitment to a life every hour of which is purposefully lived in compliance with the teachings and example of the Savior and of His servants. It is a commitment to constant striving to be evermore spiritual, evermore devoted, evermore deserving to be the conduit through which the Spirit of the Lord may touch the hearts of those you are trusted to bring to a greater understanding of His teachings.

I have observed the influence of some of you, the tremendous consequences of your devoted service as instruments of truth. Years ago, when the first missionaries were being called from South America, they were few in number, enthusiastic but lacking in formal preparation. I contrast that now with the repeated example observed in many areas in South America, Central America, and Mexico, areas with which I am most familiar. There are now young men and young women who have an understanding of the truths of the gospel, a commitment to live them and to teach them to others. Years ago, the peer leaders in the missions were invariably from North America. That is no longer the case. We find equally prepared, devoted, and capable priesthood bearers from the other countries. Much of that preparation has come from laborious, patient testifying and teaching of others like you. From such efforts, there has come a core of capable, devoted, scripturally oriented leaders. One example will illustrate:

Ten years ago, a stake president was called in an area of Mexico. For nine years, he did his devoted best with relatively slow growth resulting. The stake was reorganized. A twenty-seven-year-old returned missionary, who taught seminary and institute, was called as the stake president. He and his similarly trained counselors understand the doctrine, teach and serve as guided by the Spirit, and lead from the scriptures. The result is wondrous.

I think of one of your number whom I love very much who was given the opportunity to accept a position at considerably increased salary or to continue in the Church Educational System. It was not difficult for him or

his wife to determine that they would accept fewer material blessings to continue the singular privilege of teaching truth to precious children of Father in Heaven. I am grateful for that determination and for the potent influence on the many youth that continues to result from it.

I know that each of you has been willing, and many have made great sacrifices to serve in the Church Educational System on a full-time, part-time, or Church-service basis. How can I tell you how we appreciate you, how we need you, how we love you? How can one measure the eternal consequences of your selfless service and willingness to give and to give more? How can we thank your children who likewise make sacrifices to support you in this sacred service?

Long ago, you realized that the willingness of your students to listen to your counsel, to open their hearts to you privately, to place you on a pedestal of respect and honor and appreciation is not entirely merited by your capacity or service. It is a gift of God to open hearts and minds of those willing to be taught. It is a great blessing from the Lord that you may teach each individual truth, encouraging resolute determination to live righteously and to serve generously. In those sacred moments when we ponder the most important things in life, I am confident you recognize the singular privilege and enormous blessing of being a teacher of youth. I feel blessed to be in your presence today. There radiate from you a power and a genuine love that touches me to the depths of my soul. These feelings encourage me to speak of those thoughts that I have felt so strongly to communicate this morning.

As I am lifted to the heights by the teachings of our prophet, President Benson, and consider the depth of understanding, the clarity of communicating truth embodied in his sermons, I feel the influence of a spiritual giant. I ask myself, “Who led the child to love the Lord and His teachings?” Parents, of course, and inspired teachers. They helped kindle and encourage the flame of testimony in this inspiring prophet of God.

You have a similar opportunity. More than what you teach, more than what you show or say, the spirit that radiates from you will affect your students. A truly effective, inspiring teacher of youth cannot be marginal in conviction, intermittent in testimony, or wavering in obedience.

I stand before you in honest recognition of my own weakness, having prayed, pondered, and labored intently that I might find a way to communicate understandably four fundamentals that I know will help you teach youth.

May they be considered in all you do. I pray for the ability to communicate through the Spirit and for you to receive the message by the Spirit.

Teach by the Spirit

The first fundamental I would emblazon in your mind and heart is teach by the Spirit. You never know the extent of your influence when you teach by the Spirit.

Some years ago, a young man listened to a radio broadcast in which Elder Joseph Fielding Smith said that Joseph Smith was instructed of the Lord by revelation. The word *revelation* captured the young man’s interest and penetrated deeply into his consciousness. The experience left an imprint that had a pivotal influence on his life. He has devoted his life to the study, understanding, teaching, and illuminating of the scriptures.

Through prayer and quiet, persistent effort over years, he helped touch hearts, which led to the opportunity to study the original manuscript of Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible. That and other extensive work helped establish the authenticity of the published translation. He made significant contribution to the Latter-day Saint edition of the scriptures. That man is Robert J. Matthews, dean of Religious Education and professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University.

This next example will further illustrate the vital importance of teaching by the Spirit. I am sure that the essence of the experience that I now relate has been felt time and again in your own life. I mention it so that you may remember that the most lasting impressions, the greatest teaching, and the most enduring effects for good will result from your ability to invite the Spirit of the Lord to touch the hearts and minds of those you teach.

A few years ago, I had an experience I will not forget. It occurred during a priesthood meeting. A humble, unschooled priesthood leader in Mexico struggled to teach truths of the gospel contained in his lesson material. It was obvious how deeply they had touched his life. I noted the intense desire he had to communicate those principles. He recognized that they were of great worth to the brethren present. His manner evidenced a pure love of the Savior and love of those he taught.

His love, sincerity, and purity of intent permitted a spiritual influence to envelop the room. I was so touched that, in addition to receiving again a witness of the truths that he presented, I began to receive some personal impressions as an extension of those principles taught by the humble instructor.

These impressions were intended for me personally and were related to my assignments in the area.

As each impression came, it was faithfully recorded. I recognized that because a teacher had taught by the Spirit, I had been given precious truths that were greatly needed for me to be more effective in the service of the Lord. In part, I recorded: "You are to continue to build the Church on the foundation of true principles but with increased expression of love you have been blessed to feel for the great Lamanite people." There followed specific directions, instructions, and conditioned promises that have altered the course of my life.

Subsequently, I visited the Sunday School class where a very well-educated individual presented his lesson. That experience was in striking contrast to the one enjoyed in the priesthood meeting. While technically correct, the lesson did not have the same spiritual effect. The subject was Joseph Smith; the content of the lesson, information the class would likely never otherwise hear. The instructor used his highly developed expertise, yet the message lacked spiritual power.

This second experience so contrasted with the first that strong impressions came again. I began to write down those impressions. One begins with the statement: "Teach and testify to instruct, edify, and lead others to full obedience, not to demonstrate anything of self. All who are puffed up shall be cut off." Another entry reads, "You are nothing in and of yourself, Richard."

In this experience, there came such an outpouring of impressions that I felt it inappropriate to try and record them in the midst of a Sunday School class. I sought a more private location. There I continued to write as accurately and as faithfully as possible the feelings that flooded into my mind and heart.

After each powerful impression was recorded, I meditated upon it, pondered the feelings I had received to determine if I had accurately expressed them. Then I studied their meaning and application in my own life.

Subsequently, I prayed expressing what I thought I had been taught by the Spirit. When that feeling of peace and serenity confirmed what I had sought, I asked if there were yet more that I should be given to understand. There came further impressions, and the process was repeated until I received treasured specific direction that has immeasurably enriched my life.

This experience embodies principles I know to be true regarding communication from the Lord to His children here on earth. It illustrates how as you teach by the Spirit, an environment can be established that will permit the

Lord to communicate personalized messages through the Holy Ghost to meet an individual's need. I feel, in part at least, that is what this scripture teaches: "He that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth. . . . wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together" (D&C 50:21–22).

I believe that we often leave the most precious personal direction of the Spirit unheard because we do not record and respond to the first promptings that come to us when we are in need or when impressions come in answer to urgent prayer.

Will you help your students understand these principles?

Teach the Reality of Personal Communication with God

The second fundamental I would strongly emphasize is teach the reality of personal communication from and to God. Help each individual understand how to pray worthily and how to receive and recognize answers from God.

Honestly, I only partially comprehend that process. Yet application of principles I only begin to understand has repeatedly changed the course of my life. It has brought further knowledge, truth, and motivation that could not have been known in any other way. It has shown me undiscovered truths about myself, reduced unnecessary dependence upon others, and repeatedly filled my heart, mind, and soul with such overpowering joy and such all-pervading peace as to be beyond my power to express. It has directed my thoughts and acts in efforts to help others in need, and given me specific information and knowledge unattainable by other means critical to my efforts to act as an instrument to unravel tangled lives.

Personal communication from and to God through the Holy Spirit is as real to me as life itself and far more precious than all the treasures of the earth. Please help those you serve feel the vital importance of prayer in their life. Let them know of your witness of the reality of communication with God.

You have spent years studying the scriptures and the declarations of inspired servants of the Lord relating to spiritual communication. You have pondered those truths and faithfully endeavored to try to apply them in your life. Sacred personal experiences have resulted in your own guidance and direction. While you likely will not feel prompted to share specifics of that sacred counsel, testify that it occurs so that your students, trusting your example, will venture forth in faith.

Have you learned the lesson it took me so long to recognize? When I first received Church assignments that embodied counseling and training others, I was very anxious to share personal experiences considered to have some application in the lives of those individuals. This sharing was based upon an honest desire to help. As further experience was gained, I seemed to have more examples from my own life, or lessons learned from others, that I was eager to share to benefit others. Again, this sharing was done with great sincerity and a desire to help.

As the years have passed, I find that I am now much less moved to suggest to others the specific things I have learned. Rather, I am powerfully motivated to share with them *how* the most treasured lessons were learned from the Spirit.

There have been many people who have deeply touched and molded my life. Yet I have come to recognize that the guidance, understanding, enlightenment, and experience most treasured have come directly from the Lord through the Holy Spirit.

You know that the Lord has given us no magic wand to provide immediate answers to life's challenges. You know there is no secret formula for solutions. You have confirmed that God communicates with us on the basis of simple, understandable, verifiable principles. Please testify of that knowledge to those you teach. Let them feel the certainty of your witness that the Lord answers prayers when we live worthily and ask in faith.

Kindle a Love of the Scriptures

The third fundamental I would stress is please kindle a love of the scriptures in the mind and heart of each precious youth. Help ignite within them that flame of unquenchable fire that motivates those who have felt it with a desire to know evermore of the word of the Lord, to understand His teachings, to apply them, and to share them with others.

A love of the scriptures can be encouraged in two ways:

First, walk with them step-by-step through many passages of the sacred word of the Lord. Help them feel your enthusiasm, respect, and love for the scriptures.

Second, help them learn to read, ponder, and pray privately to discover the power and peace that flow from the scriptures.

To appreciate the value of reading scriptures together, consider this counsel of President Marion G. Romney:

I urge you to get acquainted with this great book [the Book of Mormon]. Read it to your children, they are not too young to understand it. I remember reading it with one of my lads when he was very young. On one occasion I lay in the lower bunk and he in the upper bunk. We were each reading aloud alternate paragraphs of those last three marvelous chapters of Second Nephi. I heard his voice breaking and thought he had a cold, but we went on to the end of the three chapters. As we finished he said to me, "Daddy, do you ever cry when you read the Book of Mormon?"

"Yes, Son," I answered. "Sometimes the Spirit of the Lord so witnesses to my soul that the Book of Mormon is true that I do cry."

"Well," he said, "that is what happened to me tonight."

I know not all of them will respond like that, but I know that some of them will, and I tell you this book was given to us of God to read and to live by, and it will hold us as close to the Spirit of the Lord as anything I know. Won't you please read it? (in Conference Report, April 1949, 41)

Your engendering in youth a love of the scriptures can prevent tragedy. I am overwhelmed with the thoughts of what will occur in the lives of those under your influence as they live to prevent the consequence of deep sin in their lives because they accept truth and live it. These words of President Spencer W. Kimball eloquently depict what I mean:

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" says the old adage. My experience would lead me to believe that the odds are greater. When I see the simple scraping of the upper arm and the application of a little vaccine in the prevention process, I compare it with what I suffered in my twenties with the dreaded smallpox when I could have died, remembering a couple of minutes for a vaccination against many days for the disease to run its course. And when I see one wince so little at the poke of a needle against typhoid fever, I contrast that moment with the many weeks of dizziness and distress and intense fever which nearly burned me out, followed by weeks of starvation and pain and hunger and weakness, trying to gain back my strength. Then I believe that our function is in prevention rather than, or in addition to, cure, with full assurance that as the one increases, the other decreases. The less prevention the more need of cure processes, and the more prevention the less cure is needed. The more needles, the fewer hospital beds, psychiatrists' couches, and bishops' offices. ("What I Hope You Will Teach My Grandchildren," address to seminary and institute personnel, Brigham Young University, July 11, 1966, 8)

Help youth understand that personal scripture study is a joyous lifetime pursuit. President Kimball observed: "I ask us all to honestly evaluate our performance in scripture study. It is a common thing to have a few passages of scripture at our disposal, floating in our minds, as it were, and thus to have the illusion that we know a great deal about the gospel. In this sense, having a little knowledge can be a problem indeed. I am convinced that each of us, at some time in our lives, must discover the scriptures for ourselves—and not

just discover them once, but rediscover them again and again” (“How Rare a Possession—the Scriptures!” *Ensign*, September 1976, 4).

Elder Howard W. Hunter noted: “Those who delve into the scriptural library . . . find that to understand requires more than casual reading or perusal—there must be concentrated study. It is certain that one who studies the scriptures every day accomplishes far more than one who devotes considerable time one day and then lets days go by before continuing” (in Conference Report, October 1979, 91; or *Ensign*, November 1979, 64).

The Prophet Joseph Smith said:

Search the scriptures . . . and ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting, He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then know for yourselves. . . . You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God; nor will there be any room for speculation. No; for when men receive their instruction from Him that made them, they know how He will save them. Then again we say: Search the Scriptures, search the Prophets and learn what portion of them belongs to you and the people of [this] century. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938], 11–12)

President Benson teaches powerfully from the scriptures, both publicly and privately. I was blessed to be present recently when he set apart a new mission president. Then he drew his chair close to the president and his wife, opened the scriptures, and began to read and comment on verse after verse for almost an hour. Consider just one comment made that will be motivating inspiration throughout that president’s mission. President Benson said: “Your mission will soar on the Book of Mormon.”

With counsel applicable to each of us who teach of the scriptures, President Marion G. Romney states:

You can’t teach the gospel unless you know it. . . .

So I would suggest that you do study the gospel and study it every day. You should never let a day go by that you don’t read it.

Now, I don’t know much about the gospel other than what I’ve learned from the standard works. When I drink from a spring I like to get the water where it comes out of the ground, not down the stream after the cattle have waded in it. . . . I appreciate other people’s interpretation, but when it comes to the gospel we ought to be acquainted with what the Lord says and we ought to read it. You ought to read the gospel; you ought to read the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants; and you ought to read all of the scriptures with the idea of finding out what’s in them and what the meaning is and not to prove some idea of your own. Just read them and plead with the Lord to let you understand what he had in mind

when he wrote them. . . . Become converted to it. Become acquainted with the language of the scriptures and the teachings of the scriptures.

After you have done that, you have to live it. You can’t learn the gospel without living it. Jesus didn’t learn it all at one time. He went from grace to grace. . . . You can’t understand [the gospel] just by reading it and knowing the words; you have to live it. (address at coordinators’ convention, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion, April 13, 1973, 4)

Oh, how your students would be blessed if we were to teach as did Nephi: “I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculty which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God and remember to keep his commandments always in all things” (1 Nephi 15:25).

Help your students interlock scriptures throughout the standard works. Greater understanding of gospel principles will result. Consider the statement of the Master in the Sermon on the Mount before His sacrifice:

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

Now ponder His statement to the Nephites: “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect” (3 Nephi 12:48).

Jesus’ inclusion of Himself as an example in the second reference after His resurrection has great meaning.

One has to be impressed with the value of the Old Testament scriptures by considering the impact just a few of them had on the people of the Book of Mormon. Consider one example from Nephi: “And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23).

Share the beauty of the scriptures and the peace, serenity, and assurance that distill from them. Consider David’s psalm:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. (Psalm 23)

Help your students appreciate the value of considering the context in which a scripture is given.

As impressive as are the statements of Moroni concerning charity, they are tremendously more meaningful when we consider that for many years he hid from every other living being because of the certainty that his life would be taken if discovered.

There is a power that can change lives in the specific words recorded in the standard works. That power is weakened when we paraphrase or alter the actual wording. I therefore suggest that you encourage students to cite scriptural content with precision. All you do to encourage students to memorize accurately selected scriptures will bring to bear in their lives the power of their content. This experience illustrates what I mean.

Some years ago, I received an assignment to go to another part of the world to investigate allegations that a Church leader had fathered a child out of wedlock. I took with me a very spiritual mission president knowing that the assignment would be difficult. The accused was a close friend. We interviewed him, those who made the accusations, and those who supported him. After two days, I could not honestly say I had an impression of innocence or guilt. Each time there appeared to be damaging evidence, other evidence appeared to confuse or refute it. Late into the night I continued to wrestle with the matter in prayer and meditation. I searched the scriptures and was led to some I felt would be helpful.

We met with him again the next morning. This time I was impressed to take a different approach. I began, “Whoever is responsible for the act has this scripture to face. Would you read it and then explain in your own words its meaning?” He read it perfectly, but as he began to explain, he hesitated and stumbled. I continued, “This verse speaks of those sent by the servants of the Lord. Would you read it and explain its meaning?” Other scriptures followed. By then, his whole attitude had changed, and he was perspiring and nervously shifting. There came a knock at the door, and he said, “I see you have another interview. I’ll just wait outside,” which he did.

About forty-five minutes later, the phone rang. It was the man. He said, “Can I see you privately?” He entered the room, sat down, and pulled from

his pocket a piece of paper and pushed it across the table. It was a signed confession. How grateful I am for the scriptures that penetrated his heart and initiated the full operation of repentance, which in time has brought a full restoration of blessings.

Teach of the power in the written word of God.

Encourage Students to “Come unto Christ”

The fourth fundamental is more easily undertaken as a result of prayerful application of the other three: Encourage your students to “come unto Christ” (Omni 1:26). Persuade each one to make Christ the center of their life.

That is the most vital message of all. Moroni declared, “Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32).

Sometimes it is easier for a young man or a young woman to understand more fully the meaning of the life of the Savior and to love him by beginning to appreciate the powerful examples of others in the scriptures. This truth is depicted in the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball. As I read it, consider how the individuals mentioned have potently affected his life.

I’m hoping that you will involve our youngsters heavily in scripture reading. I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures, the distance narrows and the spirituality returns. I find myself loving more intensely those whom I must love with all my heart and mind and strength, and loving them more. I find it easier to abide their counsel. We learn the lessons of life more readily and surely if we see the results of wickedness and righteousness in the lives of others.

To know the patriarchs and prophets of ages past and their faithfulness under stress and temptation and persecution strengthens the resolves of youth.

To come to know Job well and intimately is to learn to keep faith through the greatest of adversities. To know well the strength of Joseph in the luxury of ancient Egypt when he was tempted by a voluptuous woman, and to see this clean young man resist all the powers of darkness embodied in this one seductive person, certainly should fortify the intimate reader against such sin.

To see the forbearance and fortitude of Paul when he was giving his life to his ministry is to give courage to those who feel they have been injured and tried. He was beaten many times, imprisoned frequently for the cause, stoned near to death, shipwrecked three times, robbed, nearly drowned, the victim of false and disloyal brethren. While starving, choking, freezing, poorly clothed, Paul was yet consistent in his service. He never wavered once after the testimony came to him following his supernatural experience. To see the growth of Peter with the gospel as the catalyst moving him from a lowly fisherman—uncultured, unlearned, and ignorant, as they rated him—blossoming out into a great organizer, prophet, leader,

theologian, teacher. Thus, youth will take courage and know that nothing can stop their progress but themselves and their weaknesses.

When one follows the devious paths of Saul from a tender of asses to king of Israel and prophet, and then through arrogance and pride and hostilities and ignoring his Lord and the prophet, to watch this madman slip down from his high place to the tent of Endor's witch, and then to see him in defeat in battle, rejected of the prophet, to ignominy and devastation; and then to see his decapitated head placed upon the wall for all his enemies to gloat over and spit at—this will surely teach vital lessons to youth. He climbed from peasant to king and prophet and then slid back to witchcraft. What a lesson on pride and arrogance.

Our children may learn the lessons of life through the perseverance and personal strength of Nephi; the Godliness of the three Nephites; the faith of Abraham; the power of Moses; the deception and perfidy of Ananias; the courage even to death of the unresisting of the Ammonites; the unassailable faith of the Lamanite mothers transmitted down through their sons, so powerful that it saved Helaman's striplings. Not a single one came to his death in that war.

All through the scriptures every weakness and strength of man has been portrayed, and rewards and punishments have been recorded. One would surely be blind who could not learn to live life properly by such reading. The Lord said, 'Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me.' And it was this same Lord and master in whose life we find every quality of goodness: Godliness, strength, controls, perfection. And how can students study this great story without capturing some of it in their lives? ("What I Hope You Will Teach My Grandchildren," 6–7).

In summary, there are four fundamentals I ask you to consider as underpinnings to your devoted service:

Teach by the Spirit.

Testify of the reality of personal communication from and to God. Help each one understand how to pray and how to receive and recognize answers from God.

Kindle a love of the scriptures in the mind and heart of each of your students.

Strive to persuade each one to "come unto Christ" to make Him and our Father in Heaven the center of life.

Although I have tried, I can never express the gratitude I feel for those who have lifted my vision beyond themselves to the Savior. I can only attempt to share with others some of what fills my heart to overflowing because of their efforts in my behalf. I have sincerely tried to qualify to be led to do that today.

As I have spoken to you, I have felt a spirit emanate from you. I have felt impressed with how the Lord loves you, how He loves others of you around the world, how He loves those who administer to your needs and direct your programs.

This year gives you an opportunity to unfold teachings about the Savior, about His plan of happiness that many do not know are in the Old Testament, to provide that additional witness of the reality of the living God.

I know He lives. I love Him with every fiber of my being. With you, I want to use my life in service to Him and in lifting Father's children around the world by striving to help them understand and live His teachings.

May you be blessed as you serve, teach, and testify. We need you. We love you. God bless you, I pray sincerely, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. **RE**