

# The Power of Inspired Invitations

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When I was called as the Sunday School general president in March of 2009, President Thomas S. Monson welcomed me into his office in his uniquely warm way. He looked at me as if he were sizing me up and said, “You’ve got broad shoulders—that’s good!” Then Elder Russell M. Nelson greeted me with equal warmth, and the three of us sat down to talk. President Monson reviewed my bio sheet and made a few comments on it. Then he issued the call to serve in the Sunday School. He told the story of Lucy Gertsch, his Sunday School teacher when he was a young boy, and shared his own conviction of the importance of learning and teaching in the Church. His purpose, I believe, was to build my confidence—to help prepare me for the responsibilities that lay ahead.

A calling is a particular kind of invitation. In fact, a calling includes several invitations. In my case, President Monson’s secretary *invited* me to accept an appointment to see him. Then President Monson *invited* me into his office and *invited* me to accept this assignment. Following my visit with President Monson, Elder Nelson *invited* me to his office, where he

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instructed me on my duties in this new calling. He *invited* me to learn my duty. At every point in the process, I could exercise my own agency to accept or reject the invitation offered to me. I could have turned down the secretary or decided not to keep the appointment or even turned down the call. The decision always rested with me, the one receiving the invitation.

The act of inviting is central to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Invitations occur not only with callings but are woven into the fabric of our daily lives as members of the restored Church. Until recently, I had never considered the central role of invitation in Lehi's vision. One of the most powerful scenes in the dream—a dream in which all scenes are powerful—is the image of Lehi immediately after he tastes the fruit of the tree of life. What is his first thought once he knows how desirable the fruit is? He wants his family to partake. So he begins looking for them afar off. He sees his wife and Sam and Nephi, and he notices that they seem unsure of where to go: “At the head thereof I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi; and they stood as if they knew not whither they should go. And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit. And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also” (1 Nephi 8:14–16).

There are multiple layers and types of invitations in Lehi's dream. At the very beginning of the vision, Lehi sees the Savior, “and it came to pass that he spake unto me, and bade me follow him” (1 Nephi 8:6). We no longer use the verb *bid* to mean *ask* or *invite*. We would not say, “He bade me come to dinner.” If we examine the former use of the word, however, we see that it was a special kind of invitation. It meant to “entreat” or “beg” or “pray” the person to come.<sup>1</sup> To *entreat* means to “ask with earnestness.” It is not a casual form of invitation. It is heartfelt, just as when Ruth said to Naomi, “Intreat me not to leave thee” (Ruth 1:16).

Then Lehi sees the tree of life. He is attracted to the tree as soon as he sees it because in this case he knows that it is an answer to his prayer. It is an invitation by the Spirit: “And after I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies. And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy” (1 Nephi 8:8, 10).

Invitations emerge throughout Lehi's vision—the first, a direct invitation to Lehi from the Savior; the second, an inaudible invitation of the Spirit; and the third, a direct invitation from Lehi to his family. When Lehi invited Sariah, Sam, and Nephi to come and partake, his earnestness was evident. He first beckoned them—meaning he motioned to them with his hand—and then he called to them in a loud voice. He wanted them to taste the fruit that he had tasted. He wanted them to experience the love of God as he had experienced it.

Throughout the scriptures, the Lord says, “Come unto me” (John 6:65; 3 Nephi 9:14; 12:19, 23; 27:20; 12:20, 24; Alma 5:16, 34, 35; Ether 4:13, 18; 12:27). These are the very words that Lehi uses when he invites his family to partake of the fruit: “And I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should *come unto me*” (1 Nephi 8:15; emphasis added). Lehi is the loving father who invites his children to come unto him, just as we are constantly being invited to come unto God.

Why are invitations so central to the gospel? Because invitations are based on agency, and moral agency is a foundational doctrine. When Lehi saw Sariah, Sam, and Nephi, they were standing at the head of the river—a river that represented the very “depths of hell” (1 Nephi 12:16). Lehi wanted to protect them from the filth in that river. He wanted them to partake of the love of God as he had. The way to help them do that was to *invite* them to come and partake. They came and partook, but Laman and Lemuel did not. Laman and Lemuel received the same invitation from the same loving father. But they rejected the invitation. The scriptures do not provide any detail about the nature of their rejection. We don't know if they were belligerent or if they simply turned away and ignored their father. But it really doesn't matter whether their resistance was passive or aggressive. They chose to distance themselves from their family and from God. Rather than accepting an inspired, loving invitation, they accepted the deceptive invitation of the adversary—they fell into temptation.

### Invitation and Temptation

An inspired invitation is one that comes from God—an invitation to do good or to be good: “But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God” (Moroni 7:13).

A deceptive invitation comes from the adversary—an invitation to do evil or be evil: “For the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually” (Moroni 7:12).

The table below contrasts inspired invitation with temptation. As the table shows, the motive for inspired invitations is always love. The Lord invites us to come unto him because he loves us. Lehi invited his family to partake of the fruit because he loved them. Temptation, on the other hand, is always motivated by selfishness. From the time of the Council in Heaven until now, the adversary has wanted all the glory for himself. He is *never* trying to help those he tempts; he is trying only to hurt them.

Invitation versus temptation		
	Inspired invitation	Temptation
Motive	Love	Selfishness
Action	Entreat	Coerce
Result	Agency and love	Addiction

How do the actions of inspired invitation and temptation differ? To *invite* means to *entreat*. An invitation is an act of love. Lehi wanted with all of his heart to have each member of his family partake of the fruit. He wanted them to “grow up unto the Lord” (Helaman 3:21). Satan and all of his followers, however, use coercion to accomplish their ends. Temptation is an act of manipulation and coercion—an attempt to cause unsuspecting victims to turn on themselves, to do something that somewhere inside they know will destroy them. The Lord has told us that in the last days, “conspiring men” (D&C 89:4) will try to lead us astray in every way imaginable. And the motives of these conspiring individuals are usually quite obvious—to satisfy their own selfish desires.

The table also contrasts the results of invitations with those of temptations. The most common result of yielding to temptation is addiction to something: drugs, sex, pornography, gambling—the list goes on and on. And some addictions, when they spin out of control, literally lead to physical death. All such addictions, however, can lead to spiritual death—moving away from God, as did Laman and Lemuel in Lehi’s dream.

The results of accepting an inspired invitation are vastly different than the results of yielding to a temptation. This is the key to understanding why

invitation, as a principle of the gospel, is so central to our eternal well-being. Accepting an invitation from God—whether that invitation comes directly from him through the Spirit or from one of his servants—has positive consequences, both immediate and eternal. Each time a person accepts an inspired invitation, that person’s power to exercise his or her moral agency increases. Agency is a gift from God that permits us to follow his will. Every time we heed his invitation to “come follow me,” our internal power to choose the good increases. We draw near unto him, and so he draws near unto us (see D&C 88:63). The closer we draw unto him, the more we want to follow his will for us in the future.

A young child does not need to experience an electrical shock to learn that it’s dangerous to insert metal objects into an outlet. With instruction—in this case, firm invitation—the child can gain self-control. The child’s power increases to choose the good thing. By accepting the parent’s invitation, which is given out of love and concern for the child, the child’s interest in making the wrong choice subsides. So it is with all of our choices. When we accept the invitation to pray often, we eventually do not need to work to make it happen. Rather, we come to a point where we never want to miss praying. We draw near unto God, and he draws near unto us. Our will gradually becomes more in tune with his will—all because of our desire to accept his invitations.

The culmination of accepting inspired invitations is increased capacity to love. This is so closely aligned with one’s capacity to exercise moral agency that the two almost merge. But I like to think of them separately, simply because it is a constant reminder of the importance of both agency and charity in our lives. When children grow up with parents who love them, the children are more likely to become loving parents themselves. But when children experience neglect and abuse, their capacity to love is damaged. Unless they receive the help they need, they may continue to suffer in their adult years.

By accepting Lehi’s inspired invitation to come unto him and partake of the fruit, Sariah, Sam, and Nephi experienced not only an increase of God’s love but also an increase in their own capacity to love. Every time we accept an inspired invitation, we grow in our ability to express love.

While serving as a mission president, I usually asked each new missionary in our first interview, “Is there anything I should know about you that would help me serve you better as a mission president?” One missionary said, “Well, yes. I probably should tell you that I’ve never spoken with anyone except my

family.” I thought he was simply telling me that he was quiet, something I had already noticed. But no, he was telling me that he had never spoken with anyone outside his own home.

I asked, “So, what did you do at school when the teacher called on you?”

He said, “They knew that I wouldn’t say anything, so they never called on me.”

“How about friends? Did you have any friends you talked with?”

“No, I didn’t have any friends, just my family—they were the only ones I ever talked to.”

“How did you ever get up the courage to come on a mission?” I asked.

“I don’t know. I’ve always wanted to serve a mission; so when the call came, I accepted it.”

I was actually quite astonished. I wondered how this missionary could ever succeed if he was unable to speak to strangers, since that would be his focus every day for the next two years. I found myself praying for him often. One day I called to see how he was doing. I asked, “How many times in one day does someone say to you, ‘Hey, you should talk more. You’re a missionary!’” He responded, “Maybe twenty or thirty times.” I said, “I’ve got something I want you to try. I want you to do just two things: speak up, and speak first.” I explained that people would no longer see him as overly quiet if he could raise his speaking volume and then speak before his companion spoke. He would not need to dominate the conversation—just do those two things.

Several months later, I had the privilege of watching him teach an investigator. At this point in his mission—about one year into his service—he was no longer perceived as being too quiet. He was confident and convincing. He had accepted his call as a missionary, even though he knew it would be the greatest challenge he would ever face. And then he eagerly followed the counsel he received. Because of that, the Lord blessed him to love the people. When you were around him, it was easy to feel the love he had for those he served. The more he accepted the invitations that came to him, the greater was his capacity to love others.

### Therefore, What?

There is great power in giving and receiving inspired invitations. The power is divine. Lehi accepted the Lord’s invitation to follow him. Lehi prayed to receive the tender mercies of the Lord, and the Lord showed him the tree of

life. Lehi then invited his family to receive these same tender mercies. Some of his family accepted the invitation while others did not. Agency and love were at play every step of the way. Agency and love were the foundational motives for the invitations, and they were the ultimate results of the actions. Sariah, Sam, and Nephi came closer to the Lord, accepted his invitations, and gave their wills to him. Their capacity to make righteous choices grew continually. Laman and Lemuel rejected the invitation of their father, yielded to temptation, distanced themselves from God, and gradually reaped the whirlwind of destruction (see Proverbs 1:27).

The implication for those who *receive* invitations is clear: be wise servants in discerning an inspired invitation from one that is deceptive—follow the whisperings of the Spirit and don't yield to temptation. However, once we know that an invitation is one we should accept, *how* exactly do we accept it? Consider callings, for example. While serving in a bishopric, I once extended a call to a faithful sister to serve as a Primary teacher. She paused and then said, "I would be happy to accept that call at any other time, but I am going in for jaw surgery this coming week, and my mouth will be wired shut for several months. Perhaps I could continue to serve in the library until I can talk again."

The bishopric was unaware of her surgery and felt fine about postponing the call. She was willing but not able. On another occasion, I went to the home of an older couple in the ward to issue a call to the sister, a faithful and devoted member of the Church. I rang the doorbell, and then I had a distinct impression not to issue the calling. I wasn't sure what to say to the sister as we began our conversation. Then I said, "I intended to call you to serve in the Primary, but I feel that this would not be the correct calling for you right now." She began to cry and then responded, "I have served in the Primary for more than twenty years, but I just can't do it right now. My health is just not good enough." I assured her that she was not turning down the call, because the call was not being issued. In essence, I withdrew the invitation I had intended to give.

Both of these sisters were totally willing, but their physical conditions did not permit them to serve in certain ways at that particular time. But what about someone who *is* physically and mentally able but who rejects the calling? This is a serious mistake. While serving as a stake president in a BYU married stake, I became concerned about the number of brethren who consistently failed to do their home teaching. As I counseled with the elders quorum presidents, I said, "I'm concerned about those who are not being visited,

but I'm actually much more concerned about those who month after month fail to carry out their priesthood duty."

Although the home teachers may not have viewed it this way, they were falling short of the covenants they had made to visit those they had been assigned to home teach. I explained to the quorum presidents that when anyone fails to keep a covenant, he or she loses something—something dies inside that person (see D&C 5:27). And when that pattern continues for a sustained period of time, the person's faith can diminish unless he "humble[s] himself . . . and keep[s the] commandments" (D&C 5:28). Passively resisting an inspired invitation is dangerous. When Laman and Lemuel resisted their father's invitation to partake of the fruit, they might have done it without any anger at all, but their decision to resist was still just as catastrophic. Covenants come to us by invitation, and it is our privilege and duty to make and keep them.

After my great-great-grandparents immigrated from England to Pennsylvania, the missionaries called upon them, taught them the gospel, and invited them to be baptized. Their history indicates that when they heard the gospel and received the invitation to join the Church, they "accepted it gladly." Soon after their baptism, they also accepted the invitation to cross the plains and settle in Utah. This is how we want to accept inspired invitations—with gladness, wholeheartedly. We can accept a calling in this way. We can also reject a calling. Or we can even accept with reluctance. The scriptures teach us that accepting with reluctance and giving our gift of service without real intent is the same as if we had not given the service at all (see Moroni 7:8). So when a calling comes—when any inspired invitation comes to us—we need to accept it gladly and carry out our duties with real intent.

What about the implications for those who *give* invitations? There are many types of inspired invitations one might offer. In fact, the variance of invitations is as wide as the variance among the individuals receiving the invitations. To be inspired, an invitation has to meet the unique needs of a certain individual. The invitation needs to be what the Lord knows that person needs.

Missionaries give invitations to their investigators. Teachers give invitations to their students. Parents give invitations to their children. We give invitations to those we believe will accept our invitations. When we invite, we are hoping the one receiving our invitation will accept. An inspired invitation can never be selfishly given. It always has to be based on love for the one receiving the invitation.



Missionaries want their investigators to accept their invitation to be baptized. Teachers want their students to accept their invitation to learn and live the gospel. Parents want their children to accept their invitation to not “fight and quarrel one with another” (Mosiah 4:14). This means that the process of giving the invitation may be as important as the invitation itself. Parents may feel inspired to invite one of their children to do something, but unless the parents deliver the invitation in the right way, the child may not accept it. And, of course, even if they do deliver the invitation in exactly the right way, the child may still choose to reject it. So the stakes are high when we are giving invitations. We need to make certain that the invitation we are giving is the one the Lord would have that person receive and that we give it in the best possible way.

In the missionary training video *District 2*, a companionship tries to commit a man to be baptized. The invitation is a good one. But the missionaries become frustrated when the man resists, and they then begin to apply pressure. Following the encounter, the missionaries realize that they could have done better. They resolve to improve their process of giving this sort of invitation in the future. Another set of missionaries offers the same invitation but in a very different way. In this scene, there is no pressure. The whole focus is on the needs of the couple considering baptism. It is the same invitation, but it is given in a very different way.

Matthew O. Richardson shared with me an experience he had in the grocery store. As he was shopping, he noticed a mother who was losing her patience with her two children. One of the children kept hitting the other. The exasperated mother took the hand of her child and began hitting it while saying, “We do not hit; we do not hit!” This was a good invitation, but it was not given in a good way.

There is an infinite variety in types of invitations, as well as in the ways those invitations can be given. One invitation can inspire, while another invitation can comfort. An invitation can strengthen, heal, or instruct. Invitations can come in the form of correction. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell said, “Be grateful for people in your lives who love you enough to correct you.”<sup>2</sup> Invitations can cause us to work, study, pray, or participate in “wholesome recreational activities”—one of my favorite phrases in the proclamation on the family.<sup>3</sup> Invitations can heal: “Have ye any that are sick among you? . . . Bring them hither and I will heal them” (3 Nephi 17:7). Invitations can testify: “Then saith he to Thomas,

Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27).

### Invitations and the Restoration

The Restoration itself began with an invitation, and it led to an endless series of additional invitations. A single verse of scripture in James was invitational for young Joseph—so powerful that he went to the grove to pray. His petition to the Lord was then answered with an invitation, in this case an invitation of what *not* to do: “I was answered that I must join none of them” (Joseph Smith—History 1:19). Later Moroni told Joseph that God had a “work for [him] to do” (v. 33).

Think of it: the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ depended on invitations being received and followed. If Joseph had not been inspired by the invitation of James, he may not have sought an answer to his question. If he had not accepted the invitation of Moroni to go to a hill, retrieve the plates, and translate them through the gift and power of God, he would not have received the blessings of doing so. The Lord would have found a different person to restore the gospel—a person who would accept his invitations. We have the blessing of being able to study the Book of Mormon and Lehi’s vision because of invitations.

But the Restoration not only began with invitations being offered and accepted—invitations are at the heart of the gospel today as well. The Restoration began with Joseph, but it did not end with him. We are all participants in the ongoing restoration. Many glorious wonders continue to be revealed to the prophets. One of those wonders is “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” This document is filled with invitations to husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, individuals, and “citizens and officers of government everywhere.”<sup>4</sup> Invitations have always been and will continue to be central to the Restoration.

In the words that the Prophet Joseph wrote to John Wentworth in 1842, “The truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent.”<sup>5</sup> Those prophetic words are reaffirmed every day, and the reaffirmations come most often through invitations being offered and accepted.

Missionaries throughout the world are extending invitations to read the Book of Mormon, attend Church meetings, and be baptized and confirmed. In fact, as we learn in *Preach My Gospel*, without some form of invitation or

commitment being extended, the missionaries have not taught an actual lesson. Invitation is an essential part of learning and teaching. My firm belief is that every time any individual learns a truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the truth of God is going forth “boldly, nobly, and independent.” Yet missionaries and newly baptized members are not the only ones who are helping the truth of God go forth. Help comes from anyone who accepts the invitation to learn and then teaches the truths of the restored gospel.

Inspired invitations are powerful because they always have blessings attached to them. Speaking to those who are less active, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf has said, “The Church needs you; we need you. It is always the right time to walk in His way. It is never too late.” He also said, “I testify that the Lord will bless your life, endow you with knowledge and joy beyond comprehension.”<sup>6</sup>

President Monson has invited us all to reach out and rescue those who have become less active in the Church. Just as Lehi invited his family to come and partake of the fruit, President Monson continues to invite us to invite our less-active neighbors to come back.<sup>7</sup>

During the past year, we have experienced the miracle of rescue in our own family. My wife’s brother Steve has been less active for most of his life. I will recount his experience in his own words:

I made some very poor choices in my life that led to my inactivity in the Church when I was in high school. I also married outside the Church, and my wife was not interested. I had been inactive for fifty years.

My first wife passed away, and I had no plans to remarry.

Then Brooke entered my life. Ours is a great love story and the beginning of my transformation. Brooke has always been active in the Church, so it wasn’t long before I was drawn into meeting and associating with members of our ward.

Two years ago Brooke and I attended Women’s Conference at BYU. We were seated in the second row from the podium on the floor of the Marriott Center. When President Monson came into the center, the audience stood and spontaneously began singing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.” It was a stirring moment. As he was standing at the podium looking out over the 22,000 people assembled and singing, he looked directly at me for a moment with a

look on his face that said to me, “Why don’t you come join us?” I was simply overwhelmed.

So Steve was invited back into activity in the Church by his wife, by President Monson, by the Spirit, and also by many in his ward and extended family. Invitations were the key. His bishop invited him to prepare to be ordained a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood and then later invited him to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. Not long after that, he received his patriarchal blessing and called to tell me what a wonderful experience it was. One invitation after another—some direct invitations to do something, others indirect invitations of example that caused him to change.

So I ask myself the following questions: Am I open to the invitations that I need to receive? Am I in tune so that I can understand each invitation and act on it? Am I sensitive enough to the needs of those around me that I can invite them as the Savior would invite them? These are pretty tall orders, but they are absolutely essential to my own progress, as well as to the progress of those around me. When I’m reading the scriptures, can I listen to the Spirit as Joseph did? Can I exercise the faith to go and do as he did? Can I receive and give invitations in my marriage that will strengthen rather than weaken the relationship? Can I receive inspired invitations from my children and give them the invitations they need? Can I give invitations in ways that will help and never in ways that will hurt? Are my invitations to others based on love rather than on my own selfish desires?

As I mentioned earlier, the first verse of Lehi’s vision was the invitation he received from the Savior to follow him. The final verse that Nephi recounts is a reflection of Lehi’s disappointment that Laman and Lemuel rejected his invitation. He first says, “And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit, said my father” (1 Nephi 8:35). Nephi then explains in verse 36 how fearful Lehi was that Laman and Lemuel would be cut off from the presence of the Lord because of their unwillingness to accept the invitation to partake of the fruit. In the next verse, Lehi exhorts Laman and Lemuel “with all the feeling of a tender parent” (1 Nephi 8:37). Inspired invitations like those of Lehi are always given in love. After preaching the truths of the gospel to his sons, Lehi’s parting invitation was for his sons to follow his invitation and keep the commandments: “And after he had preached unto them, and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord; and he did cease speaking unto them” (1 Nephi 8:38).

Lehi loved his sons enough to invite them again and again. They did not return to the Lord in this life, but my brother-in-law Steve has shown that it's possible to come back even after fifty years of inactivity. One never knows which invitation will finally be accepted, so we should never stop inviting.

In a pre-general conference training meeting for General Authorities and Area Seventies, President Monson spoke on the importance of “the rescue”—helping people like Steve come back into activity. President Monson was particularly powerful in his remarks that day. At one point he looked across the audience of Church leaders seated in front of him and asked, “Brethren, when was the last time you rescued someone?” His question was as powerful an invitation as I had ever received. A prophet of God—the only one on earth who is authorized to exercise all priesthood keys—was asking me when I last rescued someone.

His invitation hit me hard. I had actually been trying to help someone close to me return to activity. I had invited him to attend general conference, even though he was not attending any other Church meetings. So, during the break, I called him on the phone to see if he was still planning to come. He assured me that he was. He came, but he has not yet returned to full activity in the Church. On one occasion, after he had turned down one of my invitations, I asked him if he wanted me to stop inviting him. He said, “No, you can still invite me. When you invite me, I start thinking of some of the things I miss in the Church.” I said, “Good, keep thinking about all of the things you miss.”

President Monson's invitation to rescue someone is a prophetic invitation. It has already led to the reactivation of thousands of Church members. I once attended a multistake leadership meeting in which the Area Seventy reported that over four hundred prospective elders in those stakes had returned to activity during the previous year. There are still so many who would be blessed by coming back.

So, in the spirit of President Monson's invitation, I ask, “When was the last time you gave an inspired invitation?” Every inspired invitation helps rescue someone from something. An invitation might rescue someone from ignorance, from doubt, or from discouragement. It might rescue someone from making a poor decision. It might help someone set a righteous goal. If we invite in the right way—in the way the Savior would invite—those who receive the invitation and act on it will come closer to him, and their lives will improve.

Every week in classrooms throughout the Church, members old and young hope to be edified by deepening their knowledge of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Every week, teachers have the privilege of extending invitations to those they teach. The invitations are often woven into the very verses of scripture they are reviewing in class. But the teacher needs to recognize the invitation and help others in the class receive and act on it. These scriptural invitations come from the Lord and from his prophets. They are inspired invitations. And each person in the class will understand the invitation and act on it differently based upon his or her unique needs. Our role as teachers is to make certain that we help class members see and understand these inspired invitations.

My prayer is that we will reach out to those around us who need us—that we will receive and give inspired invitations. I pray that our invitations will be given “with all the feeling of a tender parent,” as Lehi’s invitations were given to his family. I pray that those who receive our invitations will respond as Sariah, Sam, and Nephi did. I know that as we give inspired invitations, the Savior himself will carry our words into the hearts of those we love. He lives. He is our Redeemer. He will never stop inviting us to come unto him.

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## Notes

1. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., “bade.”
2. Neal A. Maxwell, “Remember How Merciful the Lord Hath Been,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 44–46.
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, November 1995, 102.
4. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 102.
5. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 4:540.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “The Way of the Disciple,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 75–78.
7. See Thomas S. Monson, “Stand in Your Appointed Place,” *Ensign*, May 2003, 54–57.