

“Train up a child in the way he should go”

Kaarina’s message:

1. Why did you decide to homeschool?

There are many reasons why we decided to homeschool.

Sending our Children to School before the “Age of Accountability” -

- If my husband’s and mine responsibility is to raise our children, why would I send them off to a complete stranger for so many hours a day before the age of accountability?
- Schools are all about testing the kids - it’s not about learning - yet “No Child is Left Behind”
- I was bullied in school and I witnessed bullying in school. I witnessed actually physical fights as well. How does this help a child?

- Learning the history of how the “free” public school system was set up with Horacemann and then later with John Dewey - Utilitarianism - not wanting religion to influence the children (understanding right vs. wrong) - not wanting parents influencing their children - wanting the children to make decisions base on anything but what they are learning at school.

- David O. McKay said we already have the perfect curriculum - that would be The Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants/Pearl of Great Price, The Old and New

Testament - I want my children to understand and do normal activities of daily living: budget, cook, sew, clean, have an actual conversation, know how to properly act in any given situation, love unconditionally and judge righteously

- Our Children are our Responsibility: The Proclamation to the World: the Family

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- The NUMBER 1 Reason over all what we wanted to homeschool is so we can take our children back with us to Exaltation!

Moses 1: 39

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

- We need to live now in Zion (at home) so we can be ready - We can only achieve Zion when we have unity, and we can only have unity as we heed the prophet’s counsel and seek truth.

- In the Bible Dictionary we read, “Only the home can compare with the temple in sacredness.”

Doctrine & Coventants 88:118

And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith

[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-david-o-mckay/chapter-16?](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-david-o-mckay/chapter-16?lang=eng)

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[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-david-o-mckay/chapter-20?](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-david-o-mckay/chapter-20?lang=eng)

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[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-john-taylor/chapter-10?](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-john-taylor/chapter-10?lang=eng)

lang=eng

John Taylor - “The principles of the gospel are calculated to expand the mind, enlarge the heart, unfold the capacity and make all men feel their relationship to God and to each other, that we may all be partakers of the same blessings; that we may all be intelligent, that we may all be learned in the things of the kingdom of God and all be prepared for the celestial inheritance in the eternal worlds. This is the difference between the system that we have embraced and the systems of the world—they are of men,

this is of God. ... The kingdom of God exalts the good, blesses all, enlightens all, expands the minds of all and puts within the reach of all the blessings of eternity. ... I appreciate all true intelligence, whether moral, social, scientific, political or philosophical. ... Truth and intelligence [have] a tendency to enlarge the capacity, to expand the soul and to show man his real position, his relationship to himself and to his God, both in relation to the present and the future, that he may know how to live on the earth and be prepared to mingle with the Gods in the eternal worlds. ...”

Doctrine & Covenants Section 88 is a great section on preparing the home a a place of teaching:

118 And as all have not a faith, seek ye diligently and bteach one another words of cwisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best dbooks words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

119 aOrganize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a bhouse, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;

120 That your aincomings may be in the name of the Lord; that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord; that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with buplifted hands unto the Most High.

A question on how to teach my children was—Where did the members of the Church learn when they established school? This brought me to look at the history of the church and educating the children in the Church. History of The Kirtland Temple - It was also a school house on certain levels - a house of learning and a house of order

“In fulfilling the dedicated purposes of the Kirtland Temple, the Saints engaged in activities that today are typically associated with three kinds of buildings—temples, chapels, and schools. In so doing, the Saints were learning that all endeavors are sacred in a community laboring to build a stake of Zion.”

A House of Learning

“In these rooms on the third floor of the temple, as many as 140 Saints came together during weekdays to study a variety of subjects, including reading, writing, history, and geography. Here Joseph Smith and others studied Hebrew grammar to aid their understanding of the Old Testament. The second floor was also used primarily as a space for instruction.”

<https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/story/historic-sites/ohio/kirtland/six-things-toremember-about-the-kirtland-temple?lang=eng>

<https://www.kirtlandtemple.org/history>

A wonderful book to learn more about the educational history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is called: “Revealed Educational Principles & the Public Schools—an historical vantage depicting principle-centered education in the latter-days” by John D. Monnett

Here are some reviews on the book that sum it up beautifully:

This book tells the history of the Church of Jesus Christ's (Mormon or LDS) doctrines on education in Utah. The book takes us through the change from private to public education. The members of the church essentially rejected their leaders and sent their children to the cheaper, tax-supported public schools. In response, the church set up a separate education system to complement the public schools.

KarenTripp -

I have really been surprised as I read this book. I had no idea how strongly the LDS church leaders spoke out against public education in the early days. This is something I never even knew about until I started this book. They continuously warned & practically begged the people to not send their children to the free, public schools. This book is a history of the church & their education in the early days of the state of Utah. Public schools were just starting. It has quotes from prophets, letters from teachers of the church schools, & many other references detailing the history of how the people ignored the counsel over & over again on education.

"If on the Sabbath day, when we are assembled here to worship the Lord, one of the Elders should be prompted to give us a lecture on any branch of education with which he is acquainted, is it outside the pale of our religion? I think not. If any of the Elders are disposed to give a lecture to parents and children on letters, on the rudiments of the English language, it is my religion, it is part of my faith. Or if one Elder shall give us a lecture upon astronomy, chemistry, or geology, our religion embraces it all. It matters not what the subject be, if it tends to improve the mind, exalt the feelings, and enlarge the capacity. The truth is that in all the arts and sciences forms a part of our religion." ("Journal of Discourses," Vol. 1. p. 335.)

This is a great book regarding the early LDS church's history with education. Brigham Young warned the saints to avoid the "free" public schools and stick with tuition-paid schools where the church could control the curriculum and who taught there. But the saints either ignored the advice, or couldn't afford the church tuition schools. Also, the church had trouble recruiting good teachers with what little salary they could afford to offer back then (at times teachers were asked to treat their job as a calling and do it for free). So given all these reasons, the church membership drifted over to government schools. One can't help but wonder what might have been if the church had been successful with keeping its schools. However, all this eventually led to seminary and the church's academies and universities. There are many great quotes by general authorities in this book regarding education, which makes it worth having. A couple of gems:

"I am opposed to free education as much as I am opposed to taking property from one man and giving it to another who knows not how to take care of it... I do not believe in allowing my charities to go through the hands of robbers who pocket nine tenths themselves and give one tenth to the poor... Would I encourage free schools by taxation? No!" –Brigham Young (Journal of Discourses Vol. 18, p. 357)

"A glance over the conditions of mankind in this our day with its misery, discontent, and corruption, and disintegration of the social, religious, and philosophic fabrics, shows that this generation has been put into the balance and has been found wanting. A following, therefore, in the old grooves, would simply lead to the same results, and that is what the Lord has designed shall be avoided in Zion. President Brigham Young felt it in his heart that an educational system ought to be inaugurated in Zion in which, as he put it in his terse way of saying things, neither the alphabet nor the multiplication table should be taught without the Spirit of God." – Karl G. Maeser (Educating Zion, p. 2)

Jack Monnett discusses early education in Utah as the LDS pioneers practiced before compulsory education came to the state.

<https://youtu.be/2yYeYo86UNM>

My Cliff Notes of his Talk

D & C 55

4 And again, you shall be ordained to assist my servant Oliver Cowdery to do the work of printing, and of selecting and writing books for schools in this church, that little children also may receive instruction before me as is pleasing unto me

William W Phelps and Oliver Cowdery

1831- calvinist approach - good/bad return to God (main objective)

1835 - Oliver Cowdery-

"When the school first commenced, we received the end to it, both large and small. But in about 3 weeks, the classes became so large, and the house so crowded, that it was then advisable to dismiss the smaller students. "

Teach the adults, then the adults teach their children

Alvin R. Dyer - (1st Presidency)

Refiners Fire

Monnett's experience- how would you like to teach in the temple? We have a plat map in the city of far west. We have 24 temples on that plat map. Half are Aaronic priesthood temples and half are Melkezidic priesthood temples. What do you think you do in Aaron priesthood temples? That's where parents learn what they need to learn to teach their children. Helps parents understand the responsibility they have to teach their children.

BYU studies - Alvin R. DYER -

"By the end of the millennium, for those who will occupy the Celestial kingdom, the home will be the only meeting teaching children, teaching will be through the family."

D& C Section 68

25 And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand (parent's responsibility- not matttyhh and sciencebut teach them to return to their father in Heaven- that's the umbrella) the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

26 For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.

27 And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.

28 And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.

29 And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

30 And the inhabitants of Zion also shall remember their labors, inasmuch as they are appointed to labor, in all faithfulness; for the idler shall be had in remembrance before the Lord.

31 Now, I, the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them; and their children are also growing up in wickedness; they also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness.

(Where do the parents come in?)

Kimball - 1941 -

"I don't know why the Lord called me to be a member of the quorum of the 12, except that my father taught me how to work."

John Dewey's Golden question, "What's in it for me?"

Brigham Young said, "get all the knowledge you can get, don't worry about the job. That'll take care of itself. We are here to gain knowledge to become like our Father in Heaven."

\$50 for all As or just a dollar an A

Stanford is doing that for schools and writing checks out for the kids. Teaching greediness, love of learning or love of money?

1850 - Horacemann - district schools bishop and parents oversaw the schools

1888 - Utah- church would have their own system - away from the district schools (school was secondary to the needs if the home)

Wheat in the fields took precedence

1888-1893 : church schools had very poor attendance, Every stake and general Conference Monnett could find there was counsel to send the children to the church schools. 11% down to 5% members sending their children to church schools. 1 out of 20. Church schools had to charge tuition, district schools tried not to charge tuition. Why should I pay when I could send my children for free.

Brigham young, "Are you going to pay a gentile teacher for his good looks?"

1880s- different church's into Utah goal to bring members into christianity

Wilford Woodruff

"We should have schools where the bible, the book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text books, and where the principles of religion may form a part of the teaching of our schools. That's vital. Religious training is practically excluded from the public school to permit this condition of things among us would be criminal." Schools of the Prophets, Schools of the Elders, Weber school, Kirtland high school, Charter of Nauvoo (University of Nauvoo) - that one didn't happen

Jack Monnett on Latter-day Saint HomeSchooling:

<https://youtu.be/O0ShAnpfE2I>

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/doctrine-and-covenants-and-church-historygospel-doctrine-teachers-manual/lesson-23-see-learning-even-by-study-and-also-byfaith?lang=eng>

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/further-study-lesson/volume-2-chapter-13/>

Believing Christ: A Practical Approach to the Atonement | Stephen E. Robinson |

1990: Believing in Christ and believing Christ are two entirely different things. Taking a practical approach to the Atonement can help us grow our faith.

<https://youtu.be/VD4QeKqETtM>

Gayle Ruzicka shares her personal story about homeschooling 12 children while juggling other obligations:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0w4wwzEUTWI>

2. What worked/what didn't work?

- TIME TIME TIME - this is so precious to children - give freely of TIME

- I forget which prophet said it and I am going to quote it incorrectly but, "It's not the sermons you preach, but the sermons you live...that your children will follow

- Teach by EXAMPLE

- Love works every time - Discipline through love - live forgiveness

- Don't say what you are interested in doing. DO what you are interested in doing and THEN they will be interested in doing what you are doing (I can only imagine what Micah and Ashley's little ones say and do. Bet those conversations are awesome)

- With my husband's work and with my work, our daughter is very interested in those things. Our daughter asks a lot of questions and we have great conversations in Neuro, Health and Fitness.
- They are also interested in the Gospel because of how much I research, read and Listen about these Last Days.
- PROJECTS: dollar store
- READ to your children: ALOT - picture scriptures, and good books with beautiful lessons
- Learning to read gives your child some freedom - learning to understand what you are reading gives your child freedom! (Katjaana story) helping them understand what they are reading, prompts their curious little brain to think and then ask questions. It's cool to know the answer, but it's even cooler to not know the answer and then search for it together.
- Experiential learning is huge - let them help you cook, clean, rake, shovel, garden, building projects, writing letters (thank you letters), arts and crafts, musical instruments, stretch and exercise, etc/
- Music is HUGE. Good music is a delightful prayer to God. Tabernacle choir, hymns, children's hymns, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Handel's Messiah, Vivaldi's The four seasons, people who dedicate their music to the God.
- Relating everything they learn to the Gospel of Jesus Christ: learning about the body (our body is a temple, what should we wear, what should we listen to, who should we speak, how should we move, what should we eat - how do doing these things make us feel when we choose a bad choice?) - learning about the universe (scientists dont know how the big bang was formed - but who does?) - learning about atoms (atoms by God don't breakdown and dissappear, but atoms by scientists do, why is that?)
- 5th grade - encarta encyclopedia- anatomy- relating it to how sacred God's creation would have been wonderful
- my daughter almost 5yr says she wants to be an archeologist - how cool they have amazing facts that we can learn about the Book of Mormon (Hidden in the Heartland) and we eventually can go visit these places. I grew up either visiting family or historical places in the US. My favorite times (family bonding and history)
- Biking, rollerskating, tennis, volleyball, basketball, baseball, swimming, dancing, stretching
- When the child is older, there are different things that can be done as well - if they get into harder math, science, etc. You can either learn with them or find other homeschoolers who want to learn that too. There are many homeschool groups in your own city or even online who learn from each other
- LDSHE latter-day Saint Home Educators is a wonderful resource

What doesnt work?

- If the parents are not involved. Not everyone is a Ted Williams. Story of the soap opera mom.
- It takes a lot of time, so taking a lot of selfies to post on Social Media and looking every few minutes to see the how many likes you get or what comments are made or binge watching your favorite Netflix shows aren't your priority. Your children are your priority.
- Middle school was a wonderful time for me to be pulled out and homeschooled - problem was I was already taught I needed a thumb on my back every step of the way, otherwise I would procrastinate and just play the piano, belt on the old garage sale bought Japanese font karaoke machine, or draw. I got pretty good at some of those things. The only thing that got me to do my schooling was when dance classes weren't threatened to be taken away.
- So why was it so hard for me to complete homeschool in middle school? - I had a good curriculum where i would do the work and send it in every two weeks, but I was missing something. The child still needs the parent there. When my mother sat down with my to read these big novels, like The Hobbit, I loved every moment of it, I understood what we were reading, the story came to life (gollum was fun to act out) and we BONDED. I felt her love because she was with me for that TIME. My father is from

Finland, and let me tell you, American is different from Finland than what American history is taught in American schools. And he took TIME and brought it to life for me. I felt I experienced it. No test, just learning. No anxiety of a bad grade, just love for learning and because of loving it, I would ask more questions and learn more! When my parents were involved I learned the most and I wanted to learn. When my parents were off working (mother on computer graphics and my father designing and building houses, I was off drawing in my room) doing as my parents did. Or if they were both out of the house, I was in that karaoke machine or the piano. (My poor dogs) boundaries are still important.

- Now in my life with two little ones and times when I needed to do something for my church calling, or on the phone for a while, or something else that takes a long time and my children are done playing and want time with me, I get "Mom, I'm bored...or mom, I don't know what to do, or whiny mumbles, or I'm hungry (after they've recently eaten), I know that means they want bonding time, doesn't matter what it is, as long as you do it together and it takes TIME. We love to read, paint, play with play dough, create something out of cardboard, go on a walk when it isn't a blizzard. Put on music and dance.

- I'd say the biggest thing that didn't work, was where my focus was. On dance (being famous), on doing what I wanted to do, a forever crush on a boy, on being more selfish and not self-less. Where was the Gospel in my life? I have YW and Personal Progress, but it was another one of those things I procrastinated and tried to get it done in a hurry so I could have the same necklace as everyone else. I was a pleaser, so I wanted to look the part, but I truly didn't own the part.

How can a child truly own the part?

If the parent is "not there", no matter if in public or home school, children are able to hide things from the parent. I know there are people who say I am a helicopter parent. But we are solely responsible for that child's upbringing. The child really wants boundaries and direction so later down the road, they can be confident in who they are and own that they are a Child of God.

3. How can those without children help in the homeschooling process/ how can you involve members around you in that process?

- So my daughter didn't let me teach her how to read. She will let me teach her gymnastics with one of her friends but she wouldn't let me teach her to read.

- We are blessed to be living in my parents-in-law's basement apartment and get to do CFM with them every day. A month after we had to all quarantine because of Covid, My daughter's Mimi asked if she could teach her how to read. It was called a "project". So, Monday-Friday for 30min to an hour, they would do this project. She had this awesome book. It took longer than the 100 days, because of family visiting, getting Covid, etc but she learned to read. And she wouldn't read to me at all until she was finished with that book. Which she then did and was so proud to show me.

- My sister doesn't have any kids, but if we lived in TX near her, I would have my daughter learn how to crochet from her. Now I have to figure it out. We failed at our first time.

- For preschool, there is something called Joyschool, you can get others in your ward or even stake with same age kids and teach the children good manners skills, crafts and playtime, for 2 times a week for a couple of ours - all structured - \$100 for a lifetime membership?

- I teach gymnastics to a girl from another ward once a week - so finding those with skills who are willing to serve is nice

- I would love my daughter to take piano from someone - we can't afford to pay, but maybe there is someone who is willing to teach, even a YW for service

- for older homeschoolers, having them teach something out of service would be very educational for them as well - learning to teach, after all, parent's we supposed to become like Christ? He was The Example in everything, even teaching

- Self reliance classes

- adult education classes

- Seminary
- Callings in Church
- Visiting the Elderly and having them teach

IF you go on The Church App or on the Website, there are so many “helps” on how you can teach!
For Instance:
The Standard works
Self reliance books
Teachings of the Presidents - John Taylor, David O McKay (CES system)
CES manuals
Seminary manuals
Institute Manuals
General Conference
The Liahona
The Youth
The Friend
Hymn book
Children’s hymn book
Church’s website for music
Life Help (self-reliance, addiction, death, disabilities, media safety, etc)
Sharing the Gospel
Temple and Family History (be a detective/researcher)
You can create a Study Plan in the App

Ashley and Micah’s Message

QUOTES

"I am opposed to free education as much as I am opposed to taking property from one man and giving it to another....Would I encourage free schools by taxation? No!"

-Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 18:357

"We had to pay our own schoolteachers, raise our own bread and earn our own clothing, or go without; there was no other choice. We did it then, and we are able to do the same to-day. I want to enlist the sympathies of the ladies among the Latter-day Saints, to see what we can do for ourselves with regard to schooling our children. Do not say you cannot school them, for you can..."

-Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol.16, p.19

"We do not want outside folks to teach our children, do we? I think no. We do not want them to teach us how to get to heaven, do we? If we did, it would be of no use, for they do not know the way. Well, then, we do not want them to tamper with the minds of our little ones. You will see the day that Zion will be as far ahead of the outside world in everything pertaining to learning of every kind as we are today in regard to religious matters. You mark my words, and write them down, and see if they do not come to pass. We are not dependent upon them, but we are upon the Lord."

-John Taylor, Journal of Discourses 21:100

"We do not want men or women to teach the children of Latter-day Saints who are not Latter-day Saints themselves. Hear it you Elders of Israel, and you school-trustees! We want none of these things. Let

others who fear not God take their course; but it is for us to train our children up in the fear of God. God will hold us responsible for this trust. Hear it, you Elders of Israel and you fathers and you mothers!"

-John Taylor, Journal of Discourses 20:179

"...the duty of which [the school] is to instill patriotism and loyalty to the government and society. I think the real purpose of the school is to develop character! Educators say it is to teach the three "R's"...but the main purpose is...to develop character, loyalty to God, to the government, loyalty to the home, and loyalty to the individual himself..."

-David O. McKay, Church News, August 1963

"As a matter of general policy, the BYU Board of Trustees has long adhered to a position opposed to general federal aid to education. We have always objected to the Church or any of its branches or agencies receiving any subsidy or 'gift' from the government...We have steadfastly refused to participate in any federal education program which is based upon the subsidy principle."

-David O. McKay, Deseret News, Nov. 2, 1964

"Moral values are being neglected and prayer expelled from public schools on the pretext that moral teaching belongs to religion. At the same time, atheism, the secular religion, is admitted to class, and our youngsters are proselyted to a conduct without morality.....we are caught in a current so strong that unless we correct our course, civilization as we know it will surely be wrecked to pieces...The distance between the church and a world set on a course which we cannot follow will steadily increase."

-Boyd K. Packer, General Conference, April 1994

"Whatever you do, be choice in your selection of teachers. We do not want infidels to mold the minds of our children. They are a precious charge bestowed upon us by the Lord, and we cannot be too careful in rearing and training them. I would rather have my children taught the simple rudiments of a common education by men of God, and have them under their influence, than have them taught in the most abstruse [or complex] sciences by men who have not the fear of God in their hearts..."

-Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor, p.90

"...I take this opportunity to speak to the whole country in relation to this matter [education]. I can perceive quite an interest in educational matters, manifesting itself in our brethren who preside here; and I am much gratified in it. I hope that this whole county will go at this matter in all good faith, and where you lack good school-houses put them up; and when you have already the school-house, but lack the furniture, get it and try to make the school-house comfortable for the children; and then good teachers who are good Latter-day Saints. Shall we have them, or shall we employ teachers that will turn the infant minds of our children away from the principles of the Gospel, and perhaps lead them to darkness and death? Some say, "You ought to be very generous, quite as liberal and generous as others." I think so. But if some of these liberal people, who talk so much about liberality, would show a little more of it, we would appreciate it a little better. I would like to know if a Methodist would send his children to a Roman Catholic School, or vice versa? I think not. Do either send their children to "Mormon" schools, or employ "Mormon" teachers? I think not. Do we object to it? No, we do not; we accord to all classes their rights, and we claim rights equal with them. Well, shall we, after going to the ends of the earth to gather people to Zion, in order that they may learn more perfectly of His ways and

walk in His paths, shall we then allow our children to be at the mercy of those who would lead them down to death again? God forbid! Let our teachers be men of God, men of honor and integrity, and let us afford our children such learning as will place our community in the front ranks in educational as well as religious matters. But would we interfere with other religious denominations? No. Prevent them from sending their children where and to whom they please? No. Or from shipping where they please? No. I would not put a hair in their way, nor interfere with them in any possible way; they can take their course, and we want the same privilege."

-John Taylor, Journal of Discourses, .19:.249 - 50, October 21, 1877

"In many places it is literally not safe physically for youngsters to go to school. And in many schools - and it's becoming almost generally true - it is spiritually unsafe to attend public schools. Look back over the history of education to the turn of the century and the beginning of the educational philosophies, pragmatism and humanism were the early ones, and they branched out into a number of other philosophies which have led us now into a circumstance where our schools are producing the problems that we face."

-Boyd K. Packer, Charge to the David O. McKay School of Education at BYU, October 9, 1996

"I feel to warn you that one of the chief means of misleading our youth and destroying the family unit is our educational institutions. There is more than one reason why the Church is advising our youth to attend colleges close to their homes where institutes of religion are available. It gives the parents the opportunity to stay close to their children, and if they become alerted and informed, these parents can help expose the deceptions of men like Sigmund Freud, Charles Darwin, John Dewey, John Keynes and others. There are much worse things today that can happen to a child than not getting a full education. In fact, some of the worst things have happened to our children while attending colleges led by administrators who wink at subversion and amorality. Said Karl G. Maeser, "I would rather have my child exposed to smallpox, typhus fever, cholera or other malignant and deadly diseases than to the degrading influence of a corrupt teacher."

-The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 307.

"There is absolutely nothing in the Constitution which authorizes the federal government to enter into the field of education. Furthermore, the Tenth Amendment says: "The powers not delegated to the United States Government are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Nothing could be more clear. It is unconstitutional for the federal government to exercise any powers over education."

-The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 298.

"The world worships the learning of man. They trust in the arm of flesh (see D&C 1:19). To them, man's reasoning is greater than God's revelations. The precepts of man have gone so far in the educational system that in many cases, a higher degree today, in the so-called social sciences can be tantamount to a major investment in error. Very few men can build firmly enough on the rock of revelation to go through this kind of indoctrination and come out untainted. Unfortunately, of those who succumb, some use their higher degree to get teaching positions even in our Church Educational System, where they spread the falsehoods they have been taught. President Joseph Fielding Smith was right when he said that false educational ideas would be one of the threats to the Church within."

-Ezra Taft Benson; God, Family & Country p. 258

"The tenth plank in Karl Marx's Manifesto for destroying our kind of civilization advocated the establishment of "free education for all children in public schools." There were several reasons why Marx wanted government to run the schools. Dr. A. A. Hodge pointed out one of them when he said, "It is capable of exact demonstration that if every party in the State has the right of excluding from public schools whatever he does not believe to be true, then he that believes most must give way to him that believes least, and then he that believes least must give way to him that believes absolutely nothing, no matter in how small a minority the atheists or agnostics may be. It is self-evident that on this scheme, if it is consistently and persistently carried out in all parts of the country, the United States system of national popular education will be the most efficient and widespread instrument for the propagation of atheism which the world has ever seen."

-Ezra Taft Benson, Conference, October 1970

"Let us be sure our educational system turns out young men and women of character, who know the basic facts of economics, free enterprise, history, finance, and government and who have a respect for law and an appreciation of the spiritual - otherwise that educational system will truly have been a failure."

-The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.301

"During the past several years many of our institutions of learning have been turning out an increasing number of students schooled in amorality, relativity, and atheism -- students divested of a belief in God, without fixed moral principles or an understanding of our constitutional republic and our capitalistic, free enterprise economic system. This follows a pattern which was established years ago at some of our key colleges that produced many of the teachers and leaders in the educational field across the country today. The fruits of this kind of teaching have been tragic, not only to the souls of the individuals involved, but also to the parents, and even to our country. . . . The whole process can be quite insidious. Young people know that the best jobs are available to college graduates. They want to do well at school. When exam time comes, they must give back to the teacher what the teacher wants. Now under the guise of academic freedom -- which some apparently feel is freedom to destroy freedom -- some teachers reserve to themselves the privilege of teaching error, destroying faith in God, debunking morality, and depreciating our free economic system. If questions reflecting the teacher's false teachings appear on the exam, how will the student answer who believes in God and morality and our Constitution? ...The problem arises when under the pressure of a heavy course of study and the necessity of parroting back what certain professors have said, the student does not have the time or take the time to learn the truth. If he does not learn the truth, someday he will suffer the consequences. Many an honest student, after graduation, has had to do some unlearning and then fresh learning of basic principles which never change and which he should have been taught initially."

-Ezra Taft Benson, Conference, October 1964

We are each responsible for our individual spiritual growth. And scriptures make it clear that parents have the primary responsibility to teach the doctrine to their children.

-President Nelson, Conference, October 2018

So what do the scriptures say?

SCRIPTURES

Doctrine and Covenants 93:40

40 But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth.

Proverbs 22:6

6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it

Bible Dictionary for Teach, Teacher:

All parents are teachers within their own families.

Mosiah 23:14

Trust no one to be your teacher except he be a man of God

Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28

25 And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

26 For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.

27 And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.

28 And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.

Isaiah 54:13

All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children

What the Scriptures Say about Rearing Children (Ensign December 1972)

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord. ... As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. ...” (Ps. 127:3–5.)

The Lord commanded Adam and Eve to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” with their children (**Gen. 1:28**), with the promise that they would find joy in their posterity.

However, he has always required that parents do more for their children than simply beget them.

Parents are expected and even commanded to teach their children the gospel of Jesus Christ and to help them learn how to apply it to the events and circumstances of life.

This major facet of parenthood was highlighted by King Benjamin when he admonished his people:

“And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another. ...

“But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ... to love one another, and to serve one another.” (**Mosiah 4:14–15.**)

And the Proverbs tell us that the “rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” (**Prov. 29: 15.**)

In writing to Timothy, Paul outlined the qualifications of a bishop, qualifications that apply to all fathers. He wrote that a bishop should be “one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)” (**1 Tim. 3:4–5.**)

To the Latter-day Saints the Lord has said: “... inasmuch as parents have children ... that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin shall be upon the heads of the parents. ... And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.” (**D&C 68:25, 28.**)

There have also been warnings and reproof when parents, for whatever reason, have neglected to lead their children correctly. Joseph Smith recorded: “Now, I, the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, ... and their children are also growing up in wickedness. ...” (D&C 68:31.)

In some instances, the Lord has spoken of specific parents. For example:

“... I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth. But ... Frederick G. Williams, ... You have not taught your children light and truth, according to the commandments.” (**D&C 93:40–42.**)

“Verily I say unto ... Sidney Rigdon, that in some things he hath not kept the commandments concerning his children; therefore, first set in order thy house.” (**D&C 93:44.**)

In earlier days some Nephite fathers were so negligent in family responsibilities that Jacob said to them: “... Ye have ... lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you ...” (**Jacob 2:35**), “and also remember that ye may ... bring your children unto destruction, and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day” (**Jacob 3:10**).

How often do we tend to rationalize parental neglect with activity in the Church? Eli ministered faithfully in his calling as a priest but apparently neglected his family. When his children followed after wickedness, the Lord said: “... I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house. ... For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.” (**1 Sam. 3:12–13.**)

Parents who are careless in the gospel unwittingly teach their children to be careless. We read: “And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers.” (**D&C 93:39.**)

There are many examples of parents teaching the gospel to their children. Adam and Eve “made all things known unto their sons and their daughters.” (**Moses 5: 12**. See also **Moses 6:6**.) Of Abraham, the Lord said: “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. ...” (**Gen. 18:19**.)

We know too that Nephi, “having been born of goodly parents, ... was taught somewhat in all the learning of [his] father. ...” (**1 Ne. 1:1**.)

Enos tells us, “... [my father] taught me in his language, and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—and blessed be the name of my God for it ... and the words which I often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart.” (**Enos 1:1, 3**.)

“And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, ... that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (**2 Ne. 25:23, 26**).

Teaching the Gospel in the Home (Teachings of the Presidents: Harold B. Lee)

How can parents make their home a sanctuary and a place of preparation for eternal life?

President Harold B. Lee said of the importance of teaching the gospel in the home:

“As we read from the writings of the early prophets, we discover what seems to have been the underlying evil which brought about the wickedness which caused God, who had created mankind, to weep. In a revelation to his faithful prophet Enoch, God declared that the remnant of his children were without natural affection, even hating their own blood, which in all likelihood meant their children.

“In his answer to Enoch’s question as to why he wept, God replied that ‘... among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren.’

“Then he added: ‘... behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers. ...’ (Moses 7:36–37.)

Evidently the parents of that generation had committed the great sin of failing to comply with the command given to all parents from Adam’s day down to our own day. They had failed to teach the doctrines of salvation to their children.

“The Lord has warned us that, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. **God grant that this people will heed the call of our prophet-leaders and teach their children as the Lord has commanded and escape the chastening hand of Almighty God.**”¹

This chapter will discuss the great responsibilities given to parents to teach the gospel to their children and prepare them to live righteous lives.

Why is the home the most important place to teach the gospel?

Our homes must not only be sanctuaries but also places of preparation from which our youth can go forth confidently to lead and to face a turbulent world. We all know that what is learned at home has an amazing persistence; what is seen and experienced at home either helps or haunts our youth for years to come. **Our homes could be models for all of mankind, but we will have to take much more**

seriously the counsel of Church leaders on this topic than we have done heretofore. This has always been a special challenge, but is made more so now because of the general decay in the homes of our time. Children can “feel and see” the gospel in action at home. They can see its rightness and power firsthand; they can see how it meets the needs of the individual.²

Again and again has been repeated the statement that the home is the basis of a righteous life. ... Both the revelations of God and the learning of men tell us how crucial the home is in shaping the individual’s total life experience.³

It is becoming increasingly clear that the home and family are the key to the future of the Church. An unloved child, a child who has not known discipline, work, or responsibility, will often yield to satanic substitutes for happiness—drugs, sexual experimentation, and rebellion, whether it is intellectual or behavioral. ...

There is no better place than in the home to teach and learn about marriage, love, and sex as these can properly combine in a sanctified temple marriage. There is no better place to deal with the doubts of our young than where there is love—at home. Love can free our youth to listen to those whom they know they can trust. ...

Can a child come to love his neighbor unless he has known love himself? Can a young person who has never been trusted learn to trust? Can a boy who has never known work or responsibility see how those vital traits are needed to hold our whole society together? Can a girl who has not been a part of honest, candid discussions of gospel principles in her home cope with the criticisms of the world and the intellectual assaults on her religion? ... Without experiencing a gospel principle in action, it is much more difficult to believe in that principle. ...

In a time that we have been told would be much as in the days of Noah, we must help our young to learn how to make right choices, to grow in justified self-esteem, especially when they can be under the direct influence of the home, where family love can make repentance both possible and significant. The environment of our young outside the home and Church will often be either empty, so far as values are concerned, or it will contain ideas that contradict the principles of the gospel.⁴

Upon the parents in the home and upon the Church there is placed a great responsibility to so teach the truths of the gospel that an anchor will be provided for each soul. Without such an anchor, man would be as the “waves of the sea driven by the winds and tossed,” driven by every wind of doctrine of uncertain origin that would muddle his thinking as to that which is wrong in the sight of God [see Ephesians 4:14; James 1:6]. **We should be the best-educated people on the face of the earth if we heed the injunctions of the Lord.**

If our youth are thus fortified, they will not be disturbed in their religious faith when they come in contact with false educational ideas that contradict the truths of the gospel. They are armed against the poison darts of slander and hypocrisy.

Young men ... , if guided in their thinking by “rock bottom” truth, will not yield in an unguarded moment of weakness to a temptation that would be a moral blight throughout their lives. ...

Young sweethearts approaching marriage, if guided by thoughts conveyed by gospel truth, would sanctify themselves by keeping the law of celestial marriage to gain eternal happiness.⁵

The Lord said that the power was not given to Satan to tempt little children, “until they begin to become accountable before me” (D&C 29:47). This very significant statement follows: “That great things may be required at the hand of their fathers” (D&C 29:48). Now, that means parents. Why is it that the Lord doesn’t permit Satan to tempt a little child until he comes to the age of accountability? It’s in order to give parents their golden opportunity to plant in the hearts of little children those vital things except for which, when that time of accountability comes, they may have waited too long.⁶

We, the fathers, the teachers, the mothers, we have [a] great [task] in building human souls. True, Satan cannot tempt little children before they come to the age of accountability; but Satan gets in his licks by trying to make those of us who are entrusted with their care and their training to be negligent and careless and allow them to develop those little tendencies that will lead them away, and will [make them] unfit for the great responsibilities in meeting the contest with Satan, and fail to put on that armor by the time they come to the age of accountability.⁷

We must impress upon every father that he will be held responsible for the eternal welfare of his family: that means coming into the Church with his family; that means going to sacrament meeting with his family; that means holding family home evenings to keep his family intact; it means preparing himself to take them to the temple, so that there can be prepared thereby the steps that will make for an eternal family home.⁸

Oh, you mothers, you fathers, I plead for the return to a sense of the complete responsibility for those treasured souls. Except you prepare them for this day that is coming, who is going to? That day when [the Lord] shall come as a thief in the night, are you preparing them to stand in His presence? When they are out there on the battlefield, when they are faced with danger, and faced with temptation, is your motherly love going to extend over those thousands of miles and hold that son or daughter steadfast?⁹

Somebody sent an email asking what gospel principles they should teach their kids, this is a good section for that

What gospel principles should we teach children?

The prophet Enos wrote about the teachings of his father. He said, “I, Enos, knowing my father that he was a just man—for he taught me ... also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—and blessed be the name of my God for it” (Enos 1:1). I have pondered that statement, “My father taught me in the nurture.” What does that mean? Nurture means the process of moral training and discipline. “My father taught me and disciplined me in moral training.” What does admonition mean? It means gentle or friendly reproof, warnings or reminders. Blessed be the name of God for the father and mother that teach in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!¹⁰

The Lord himself has spoken plainly about this preparation for the safeguarding of youth from the dangerous pitfalls that would destroy them. He has placed a serious charge upon the homes of this land. Here are his words:

“And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and

of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents. ...

“And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.” [D&C 68:25, 28.]¹¹

The most powerful weapon we have against the evils in the world today, regardless of what they are, is an unshakable testimony of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Teach your little children while they are at your knee and they will grow up to be stalwart. They may stray away, but your love and your faith will bring them back.¹²

Parents should remember their labors in all faithfulness, to see that there are no idlers, that children do not grow up in wickedness, but are to be taught to seek earnestly the riches of eternity, that their eyes are not full of greediness (see D&C 68:30–31). Now that is the responsibility of a father and a mother. The Lord gives the prime responsibility in the teaching of families to parents.¹³

Every child must be taught that he is an offspring of divine parentage and that it is the business of every child to learn to act like a son or daughter of God so that in time of need he might pray and be entitled to receive favors due a faithful child.

Every child must be taught that his body is a temple of God and whoso defileth a temple of God, him will God destroy [see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17].

Every child must learn that faith sufficient to perfection can only be developed by sacrifice and except he learns to sacrifice of his appetites and fleshly desires in obedience to the laws of the Gospel he cannot be sanctified and made holy before the Lord.

Every child must be taught to be reverent towards the symbols of sacred things and respectful of authority in the home, in the Church, and in the community.

Every child must be properly schooled in the use of his hands and head and made to understand that all passions are God-given and serve a godly purpose if kept under control.

Every child must be taught to use profitably his leisure time and that play is not an end in itself. It is but the rehearsal for the part he is to play in his mature life.

Every child must be given sufficient experience to learn that unselfish service brings joy and that the work one does for which he is not paid is that which produces the greatest happiness.¹⁴

Our children should hear, in the privacy of the home, the testimonies of their parents. How wise is the father or grandfather who takes occasion to bear his personal testimony to each of his children, individually!¹⁵

How can family home evenings help parents fulfill their gospel teaching responsibilities?

Greater emphasis on the teaching of the children in the home by the parents was brought forth in what we call the family home evening program. **This was not new. ... In the last epistle written to the Church by President Brigham Young and his Counselors, it was urged that parents bring their children**

together and teach them the gospel in the home frequently. So family home evening has been urged ever since the Church was established in this dispensation.¹⁶

If we neglect our families here in having family home night and we fail in our responsibility here, how would heaven look if we lost some of those through our own neglect? Heaven would not be heaven until we have done everything we can to save those whom the Lord has sent through our lineage. So, the hearts of you fathers and mothers must be turned to your children right now, if you have the true Spirit of Elijah, and not think that it applies merely to those who are beyond the veil. Let your hearts be turned to your children, and teach your children; but you must do it when they are young enough to be schooled. And if you are neglecting your family home evening, you are neglecting the beginning of the mission of Elijah just as certainly as if you were neglecting your research work of genealogy.¹⁷

Are we constantly working within our own home circle with children and grandchildren? Are we searching out our own sheep who are in danger of straying away from the shepherd or the sheepfold? Are we teaching our families [in] family home evening? Are we having home evenings ourselves, or are we saying, "Well, these lessons don't apply to us, and Mother and I are all alone, and this is just for those with little children"?¹⁸

In your homes, I pray you, say as Joshua did of old: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). Teach your families in your family home evening; **teach them to keep the commandments of God, for therein is our only safety in these days.** If they will do that, the powers of the Almighty will descend upon them as the dews from heaven, and the Holy Ghost will be theirs.²⁰

Here are some of the doctrines our prophet (President Nelson 2018) has asked us to teach our children to better inspire home-centered gospel learning.

1. "Teach your children about the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children"
2. "I plead with you to teach your children what it really means when they sing, 'I Am a Child of God.' They are created in His very image. And He has given them a great gift of a body, with a heart that beats, with a brain that thinks, and all of these marvelous attributes they have"
3. "Teach them to converse with their Father in Heaven"
4. "And teach them about the Savior of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us"
5. "Help them to understand why we take the sacrament on Sundays and why the Lord came to planet earth to restore His Church again"
6. "Please teach your children about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. His Atonement is the most important event in the history of the world and the foundation of our religion. Everything else in our religion is secondary"

Kristen's Message

1. Why did I decide to homeschool?

My reasons for homeschooling started a little different than most. My husband never liked school and, from the beginning of our marriage, was excited about homeschooling our kids. His school experience

was much different than mine. I liked school, he did not. He dreaded school. His dad also did not have good feelings about public school. He would come home and ask “Why do you have homework? I work all day and when I come home I want to spend time with my kids! I send you to school all day! What do they do with you?”

I don't believe school ever taught me to love learning, but I enjoyed accomplishing things and being around my friends. Needless to say, I was not so excited about homeschool. I felt I lacked the necessary abilities (even though I was a teacher for 6 years), I thought it was important for my children to have friends and that school was the way to accomplish that, and I didn't know if homeschool was the best thing for our family. I had a lot to learn during the early years of our marriage, before our children were school age. It has taken all those years and more to accept that this is what Heavenly Father wants me to do as their mother. When our 1st child was 2, we took her to one of the best preschools around. Believing this would give her a head start in life, I continued to take her to preschool for the next 3 years. During that time, our 2nd started preschool and we had 2 more children. We had 4 kids 5 years old and younger. Life was very busy and preschool started to become a source of great stress for me. I really disliked being on someone else's schedule. Loading kids, driving to preschool and back, unloading kids, and then turning around less than 2 hours later to do it again. I really did not like it, but thought it was what I was supposed to do to help my kids learn to read, be social, etc. By the time my oldest was kindergarten age, I was done! I decided not to send her to kindergarten, but for that reason only. I could not handle being on someone else's schedule and it was difficult for me to load 4 kids into car seat, plan feedings and naps around school, etc. I had not received a witness that I was supposed to teach my children at home, but could not handle sending my oldest to school. We also stopped preschool at that time.

About that same time, I found a curriculum that I thought could be an answer to prayer. I had no idea how to homeschool and was totally overwhelmed by the thought. The creators of this curriculum also put on a homeschool conference that summer, I went with some of my sisters in law. I learned so much about what was happening in schools and how schooling my children at home could be of great benefit to them. The amount of resources and support available was almost overwhelming. I decided to keep going. Over the next few years, I really struggled with homeschool. It was difficult! I had and still have much to learn about family relationships and what works for each child. During those first couple years, I needed a witness from Father in Heaven that this was what I was supposed to do. Through prayer, scripture study, and reading my patriarchal blessing I knew that this was the right path for me. I have clung to that ever since. Everyone has unique family situations that can make homeschooling difficult, but the hardest things bring the greatest reward. I have truly seen this through the last 5 years of homeschooling my children. I had doubt I could ever teach my children to read. We struggled. This is one of the hardest things I have ever tried to do. It took a lot of effort. We tried many different things. When I hear my 10 year old read now, my heart is so full. Together, with the help of the Spirit, she learned to read and is a fantastic reader. This is one thing that keeps me going! I know that homeschooling has been so beneficial for my family! My children are great friends and we have a lot of fun together. Because I am able to teach my children constantly, they know how to do so many different things at very young ages. We are blessed to have so much time together. We learn to clean toilets, do dishes, do tricks on the trampoline, roller blade, ride bikes; along with the reading, writing, and arithmetic. I believe this is the way God intended it to be. The reason I homeschool still, is because of the witness I received from the Spirit.

2. What worked and what didn't work?

Frustration never works! Patience is crucial! This is probably the greatest advice I can give. If there is frustration, you need to stop and try something else. If I am struggling teaching a child something, then I

need to re-evaluate what I am doing. There have been many times in the past that our school day had to stop because I was frustrated with how things were going. I had lost my patience. I had this perfect picture in my head of how it was supposed to be and I was failing miserably. I had to stop comparing our homeschool to that of others around us and to those who have the perfect home and homeschool on YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest, etc. I don't even go there anymore! The greatest source of ideas and support have come through prayer and inspiration from the Spirit.

3. How can those without children help in the homeschooling process/ how can I involve members around me in that process?

I have thought a lot about this question, because it's something I have not done. I think that this is a question that could have even greater relevance in the future. With more and more people homeschooling and the possibility that this may be something that is of great importance for members of the church to be able to do in the future, we will need to have the help of those around us. Literally, using the village to help raise the children. There are many, in their current situation that would not be able to homeschool their children without the help of others. I think of our situation and how great a benefit our grandparents would be to our homeschooling. I also think about some of the sweet widows who could teach some valuable life skills to my children and me! I think of the great man around the corner from us, that lives alone and how much he could teach us about raising animals. There is another man in our ward that is a master gardener. Figuring out how to involve others in the process of teaching our children is an interesting topic. I am excited to think more about this and hopefully implement some of the ideas I learn from the Spirit and from this fireside!

Brian's Message:

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO HOMESCHOOL?

Like most things with God's plans, our decision to homeschool came about by a series of "random" circumstances. In May 2009, we moved our family across town and into an area where there were several elementary school choices. As my wife and I pondered and prayed to know where to send our kids, we seemed to have a stupor of thought. Nothing felt right and the more we researched and asked around, it seemed the more uncertain we felt. One day my wife was in the car with our children and our oldest daughter (who was 8 at the time) said, "Mom, I know why you can't decide on which school to send us to. It's because you're supposed to be our teacher." Like most people back then, our opinion of homeschoolers was not necessarily favorable and we didn't know anyone personally that was homeschooling. However, because we were diligently seeking the Lord's guidance in the education of our children, we treated this idea as if it was an answer to our prayers. As we researched our options for homeschooling, the doors started opening and it was as if the Lord was guiding our steps. Through this process we gained a sure witness that we were supposed to homeschool our children.

The more we went down the homeschool rabbit-hole, the more our eyes were opened to the role that the Lord expected us to play in our kids' education. We began to make connections with other homeschooling families and it soon became apparent to us that these families lived the gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that was much more compatible for our family than our other groups of friends and peers. Our gospel learning and spiritual growth was no longer something that we only addressed on Sunday but it became something that we pursued each day of the week.

Our homeschooling journey can be summarized perfectly by a quote by President Eyring from October General Conference. He said, "As you live worthy of the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Lord can direct you to safety even when you cannot see the way. For me, He has most often shown the next step or two to take. Rarely has He given me a glimpse of the distant future, but even those infrequent glimpses guide what I choose to do in daily life." Back in 2009, the Lord gave us a glimpse of the future and what He wanted us to do. After that brief glimpse, we were required to walk by faith where only the next step or two were shown. But, knowing where the Lord wants us to be in the future as a family has given us the strength over the years to push through the frustrations and fears that naturally come with taking on the responsibility of teaching children.

President Eyring's statement regarding the Lord directing us to safety is also appropriately applied to the choice to homeschool. We know that in today's world our children's spiritual safety is at stake. It's worth reading 1 Nephi 14 to understand the war that rages on right in front of us. Knowing this, how can we not do everything in our power to teach and train and testify and create as many opportunities as possible to arm our children with righteousness?

Our reasons for homeschooling have evolved over the years as our family has changed. Today, though, I would guess that the "WHY" for most of us is the same. We are homeschooling because we want to raise our children in a gospel setting where faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is taught hand in hand with math, writing, literature, history, etc. One of the glimpses of the future that the Lord showed us was gathering each morning with our children to pray, study the gospel and share testimony without time constraints and without feeling we need to race off to our babylon schedules. There are some mornings that we spend a couple of hours discussing Come, Follow Me questions or other doctrines of the gospel. It is one of the most edifying and joyous parts of my life. Because we aren't tied to the schedules that are dictated by the world, we are free to follow the Spirit and allow the Lord to teach us.

In a recent fireside, Jordan from the youtube channel IReadScriptures quoted his wife as having said, "If you are not participating in your salvation then satan will be." That statement is absolutely true and can be restated to say, "If you are not participating in the salvation and education of your children then satan will be." The scriptures are replete with this doctrine: the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30, 2 Nephi 28:21-30, and Alma 12:10-11 to name just a few. We are either embracing our faith, increasing our spiritual power, keeping our covenants and receiving the "greater portion of the word;" or, we are hardening our hearts, being led about by satan's flaxen cord, and receiving "the lesser portion of the word until (we) know nothing concerning his mysteries." There is no such thing as standing idly on the sidelines and receiving a favorable outcome or hoping that nothing negative will happen. Our lack of participation in our children's education puts their success in this war in the hands of others. My wife and I decided that we simply couldn't live with that option.

Elder Bednar quoted Elder Holland as having said, "We are witnessing an ever greater movement toward polarity. The middle-ground options will be removed from us as Latter-Day Saints. The middle of the road will be withdrawn. If you are treading water in the current of a river, you will go somewhere. You simply will go wherever the current takes you. Going with the stream, following the tide, drifting in the current will not do. Choices have to be made. Not making a choice is a choice. Learn to choose now." So, this statement begs the question: What is causing the increased polarity? I believe it is caused by the two great forces on the earth today that are increasing in power. In 1 Nephi 14:10 we learn "there are save two

churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations..." On the one hand we have the church of the devil, the wickedness and evil that is spreading across the earth. On the other hand we have the church of the Lamb of God which is also increasing in power and influence. Like two opposing magnets that continue to grow in strength and size, it is impossible for any of us to sit in the middle. How can we expect our children to navigate these increasing and opposing forces on their own? They need our vigilant involvement in their lives and specifically in their education.

Micah has a paper called "The Why is Transformative" and it is worth reviewing as you begin or continue your homeschool journey. It is important to gain a solid testimony and witness of why you are homeschooling. That testimony and knowledge will carry you through the difficult/frustrating days. There are some days where the morning devotional is pretty much all we accomplish. A day like that might not feel like a success but when we remember the "why", it becomes clear that we are on the right track.

WHAT HAS WORKED?

- Keeping focused on the WHY
- Working directly with the Lord to know what to teach
- Making others' words our words (classic literature)
- Co-ops with other families
- Finding homeschooling mentors
- Getting dads/men actively involved
- Surrounding your children with greatness
- Involving kids in the decision process
- Connecting with Christ-centered communities (non-LDS) if available
- Scheduling regular community service projects/activities
- Meeting with other parents to discuss ideas
- Getting outdoors regularly
- Traveling
- Resources
 - Loveishomegrown.com
 - The Well Educated Heart (Marlene Peterson)
 - The Good and The Beautiful (Jenny Phillips)
 - Simply Charlotte Mason
 - PragerU
 - Hillsdale College
 - Classic literature
 - Conference talks
 - Retired professionals
 - Grandparents
 - Ward members

WHAT HASN'T WORKED?

- Worrying, fearing, doubting, second-guessing
- Public school at home
- Implementing too many new elements or great ideas at once
- Trying to implement exactly what another family has done
- Too much computer time

- Not getting outdoors
- Creating a schedule that is too full

HOW CAN THOSE WITHOUT CHILDREN HELP IN THE HOMESCHOOLING PROCESS?

To all of our good brothers and sisters that are listening tonight that are retired or that are empty-nesters, you are a deep reservoir of knowledge and wisdom and skills. One of the greatest things that you can do to assist and help is to become a mentor. We have neighbors and ward members that have been an incredible influence in our childrens' lives. For example, one of our neighbors was a rancher and raised horses. He taught our kids how to ride and care for horses, taken them to rodeos, and taken them to see a newborn colt. Another neighbor was a master gardener and baker and he took our kids under his wing and shared his knowledge and experience. I have an aunt that is a retired shop teacher and she has taught woodworking classes. There really is no limit to what can be taught. EVERYONE has something to offer and to share.

HOW CAN YOU INVOLVE MEMBERS AROUND YOU IN THAT PROCESS?

We have found that people around us are anxious to share their knowledge and experience. Be bold in asking others to assist in the teaching process. Pray to know who to ask and follow the promptings that come.

I always tell my kids that whenever they have an interest in learning something, they should find someone that has the knowledge they seek and to ask that person for advice. That typically opens up other opportunities.

HAVE FAITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS! If you have taken the leap of faith to bring your children home to teach them, you must trust in Heavenly Father to guide your steps in this most-important work. You will make mistakes and things won't be perfect but that is part of the process and as President Nelson says, "The Lord loves effort!" I know that the Lord loves effort and I also know that he magnifies our efforts when we are striving to follow the Spirit in righteousness.

Proverbs 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go; and **when he is old**, he will not depart from it." Homeschooling is a long game. There will be setbacks but we are pursuing a harvest that might be years in the future. If we believe that Christ is coming soon, and my assumption is that most who attend these firesides fall into this category, shouldn't we feel an urgency to prepare a "house of learning", to keep our children close, to take every opportunity to teach them and to sacrifice whatever is necessary? Wouldn't that be an act of faith, a sign to the Lord that we believe the promptings and impressions that we are feeling? I testify that it is and I testify that "the Lord will do wonders among you" as you take those leaps of faith. I know that the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored and I know that we have a sacred responsibility to teach our children in righteousness. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Esther Langi's Testimony

I was hesitant to speak on this subject because I am brand new to the homeschooling game. But the reason I said yes is because of this shift that Saints around the world are feeling, and the decisions that they are faced with to go along with this shift. Those decisions could be building food storage, emergency stockpiling, moving to a new location, diving deeper into the scriptures, and a slew of other things. For some of us, it may also include homeschooling our children. That was the case for me last year, and so that is what I am focusing on in my testimony.

I will answer the list of questions in reverse order, and you will see why.

What can others do to help our children in their learning process? It is very easy to help. If you have a skill, offer to teach it. If you work somewhere cool, offer to give homeschool kids a field trip or job shadowing. If you love making food or babysitting, offer to babysit and/or provide homeschool snacks once in a while. If you have access to school supplies and devices that homeschooled children could use, supply it to the families. These are just a few ideas.

What has worked well for me in homeschooling? Grace. GRACE and MERCY, and lots of each! :-)

We found a distance learning curriculum that has live virtual classes with teachers and other students around the country. We paid for our children to take general core classes from them, and I lead their electives. I personally teach them P.E., piano, ukulele, and singing, and they work on other applications and websites for skills like typing and foreign languages. They are not in any sports this year because we are paying down debt.

So that being said, academically this year has been *awful!* Sometimes my children are found rolling around on the floor while their camera is off in the middle of class. They have periodic tests, and in this last test their scores were worse! My husband and I have gotten into lots of disagreements over how school is supposed to go, and we've revamped our home setup at least 5 times already. Some days I find myself on my knees praying, "What is happening here?"

Yet of all the changes our family has made these past 12 months, homeschooling is the one thing over which I receive constant reassurance. Even among the declining grades and marital spats, I get so much peace and confidence. I've noticed improvements outside of the academic realm that I didn't expect. My children get along better than before; my eldest has much less of an attitude (she's 12 going on 21); they're emotionally stronger than they were during public school (none of them were bullied at school); they understand the scriptures better (and I don't even know how that happened). A different and stronger spirit has been in our home that never has before, and I attribute it to how we've revamped our home to be a center of learning, even though it's far from perfect.

To answer my final question [**Why did we decide to homeschool?**], I'm going to share two personal stories with you.

The first was of my childhood. I did not get homeschooled growing up. My parents were busy people. They were business owners and entrepreneurs, they had ward and stake leadership callings my whole childhood, and on top of that, I was the tenth of 12 children. Education looked very different for me than for most people, but that was the life I had, it was a great life, and homeschooling was non-existent.

One day in middle school, I was in a car with my parents driving to one of their business facilities. As we were driving, I randomly asked my parents, “If all the schools suddenly shut down -- no more teachers, no more school buildings -- how would we learn? Or would we just not learn anymore?” I expected my parents would answer that I’d have to figure it out myself, since that was what I did already. But they thought for a few seconds, and then my dad said, “We would teach you.”

I was shocked. “Why?” I asked, “You guys are so busy and don’t even come to our games! Why would you be our teachers?”

And then my dad said something I’ll never forget. He said, “The responsibility for children to learn and receive an education falls on the parents. That is part of the Plan of Salvation -- if there were no more school as we know it, then it’s your mother’s and my job to teach you, and so that’s what we would do.”

Elder L. Tom Perry also said something very similar:

“While other institutions, such as church and school, can assist parents to “train up a child in the way he [or she] should go” (Proverbs 22:6), ultimately this responsibility rests with parents. According to the great plan of happiness, it is parents who are entrusted with the care and development of our Heavenly Father’s children... On God’s eternal stage, it is usually intended that parents act as the central cast members in their children’s lives. Fortunately, there are understudies involved in the production who may step in when parents can’t. It, however, is parents who have been commanded by the Lord to bring up their children in light and truth (see D&C 93:40).”

Fast forward to the question... There were several factors that went into this decision to homeschool last year, factors that most of us already know: teachers were stressed out; the school district could possibly shut down again; I am against children wearing masks for extended periods of time.

There were also several factors *against* the idea of homeschooling... my husband is in the military and could deploy again. I work out of the home part-time *and* run two online businesses. I struggle with depression and *I’m-not-good-enough-itis*, and homeschooling seemed like a bad idea. Also, after having been married 14 years, (by the way we have 5 children,) all I can say is that my marriage is OK, and that unifying parental support, which is important in a homeschooling family -- well, we don’t have that.

But even through all of those immediate and noticeable points, the conversation with my parents over 20 years ago repeated through my mind and heart last spring and summer. I kept feeling my dad’s words: “It’s the parents’ responsibility to teach the children, it’s the parent’s responsibility to teach the children,” and with everything going on in the world, I knew that this impression

needed to be taken to the Lord. So I prayed and fasted for a few months, and line upon line, I received confirmation that this was indeed what God wanted us to do.

I want to backtrack to what I said about depression, and I am going to speak to the mothers. Many mothers have apprehensions of being good enough for their children, and because of that mothers may also feel that being their child's teacher is not in the best interest of the child. Nowadays, mothers work outside the home and stay so busy that they feel there's simply no way homeschooling will happen. A good friend of mine told me last year, "I just need those 6 hours of the day to myself!" And I get it.

Here is my second personal story. Almost 10 years ago, I was a mom of 2, suicidal, taking antidepressants and living in a really crummy situation, when I found out I was pregnant with our third. For the first trimester my heart was shattered, and my prayers to Heavenly Father went something like this: "Why couldn't you give this baby to someone else? So many others are more worthy and ready than I am, you could give this baby to them! I can't be a mother anymore." That was my prayer for *weeks*.

One day I read 1 Nephi 17, where Nephi is commanded to build a ship. I read about Nephi being given the task to build a ship he's never built before, using tools he didn't have. And as he went about building, his brothers taunted him, and it hurt his heart so badly. And then I read about Nephi testifying of the power of God -- all the miracles, all the majesty, all the might and power God has. Then came these words:

50) And I said unto them: If God had commanded me to do all things I could do them. If he should command me that I should say unto this water, be thou earth, it should be earth; and if I should say it, it would be done.

51) And now, if the Lord has such great power, and has wrought so many miracles among the children of men, how is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship?

And the still small voice said to me: "Esther, if I can instruct Nephi to build a ship, I can call you to be a mother."

I'm sharing *this* story with you because the scripture applies here. For those who are parents, you have been called to be parents. Harold B. Lee told Thomas S. Monson, "...whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies." So if you have felt *at all* the inkling that taking charge of your children's education may also include homeschooling them, I urge you to know for yourself if the Lord has called you to do this work. Nothing is too hard for Him, and I testify that as you put your trust in Him, He will magnify you and lift you up in all your righteous efforts, especially the efforts of teaching your children who are also His.

Christa's Message:

Long before Covid and the start of remote learning for our children, my husband tried to get me to homeschool our children. We have 3. 10 year old twins and an 8 year old. Each time he brought it up, I would resist. I would always think, "There's no way I could do that!" Or, "I deserve this time by myself!" Or, "They are at a charter school. They're getting a good education!" Looking back, I realize this was selfish and prideful on my part. Once Covid hit, and the kids were doing "remote learning", my husband really tried to get me to start homeschooling. I was still resistant. Fast forward to October, 2020. My grandmother passed away on October 17th. We were close with her, and seeing as she only lived a few minutes from us, we saw her fairly often. For the next few days, I could feel her presence around me. It

was more than just an "oh, I'm thinking about her." It was almost as if I felt I could physically see her. After a few days of feeling very connected to her after her death, I heard her voice speak to me and say "You need to homeschool your kids." Just that plainly. I knew this was something I needed to do, and it was urgent for me to start right then. I opened my homeschool on October 28th, and it's been a blessing ever since! That's not to say that every day is easy, or that my kids don't drive me a little crazy sometimes, haha! But, that is to say that I have seen amazing things happen in my home since I started homeschooling. The spirit is more prevalent, and I have a better relationship with my children than ever before. It's been a wonderful thing for our family, and I love being able to see my children's growth every day!