

TO: WARD PREPAREDNESS SPECIALISTS  
FROM: GAYLE-MARIE NOGA AND PAM ANDERSON

SUBJECT: Theme for the year 2000 – Obedience and Self Reliance

*And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* (Luke 1:17)

Family history turns the hearts and we need to listen when Elias calls. How many of us rely on someone else to do this great work. When was the last time your family prepared names to send to the temple? Do you always have names for your youth to do the baptism work for? If not, you are taking great blessings from them. Every member of this great Church has an obligation to provide assistance for those long dead. Are you ready to attend the temple? Is your recommend current? Are you striving to be the best you can be? If not, what is keeping you away from this very sacred house?

“Do we always follow the direction of the Lord? Or do we sometimes consider we are an exception and therefore justify our disobedient behavior?” (Sacred Truths of the Doctrine and Covenants, p. 22)

Early in the church’s history the people were taught to be prepared. “For what?” the people might have asked, as we sometimes ask the same things. “We are preparing for the Lord’s coming,” is the answer. But, we must be prepared in *all* things; that we are ready for the great day of the Lord. How can we be a better prepared people if we only choose some laws to obey? Are you out of debt yet? Have you blessed or dedicated your home? (Blessed if not paid for or rented, dedicated if paid for.) If you haven’t yet, why not? Not only will your family be blessed with a more peaceful feeling, but will be provided a safer haven as well.

“Of all of God's creations, only man has agency to be disobedient to the laws of God. (See Helaman 12:4-23) However, because of his agency, man can also choose to come unto God. If man chooses to come unto God in His kingdom, then man must choose to be obedient to the laws of God pertaining to that kingdom. (See D&C 88:38-39) Man receives his reward by obedience to whichever law he chooses to obey.” (Sacred Truths of the Doctrine and Covenants Volume Two, p. 109)

In the above statement it tells us that man is the only creation of God’s which can be disobedient to His laws. Which of the commandments do we follow? Being obedient to all the laws free’s us from our own lack of wisdom. Can we use our agency? Yes, we can and we do every day. Are we wise in every decision we make?

Being prepared does not have to be dull or overwhelming. Take the time to really think about what you and your family need to improve upon. First, determine just what your family’s real needs are. Second, how are we going to responsibly finance things, e.g., food storage, education or weddings. Third, how is your family going to spiritually weather the storms of life? If prepared in all things we can withstand all the trials that will come our way. Count your blessing every day.

“For this reason our appreciation should be sincerely felt, and we should express gratitude frequently to our Father in Heaven – but not too vocally to the world. We should be gratefully aware of the source of our blessings and strengths and refrain from taking undue credit for personal accomplishments.” (Measure of Our Hearts, p. 54) Are we teaching our children to be grateful?

May the Lord in His wisdom bless you.

*Gayle-Marie Noga*