

Faith without Works is Dead. What is Works without Faith?

Here is a portion from a missionary letter [that President McMahan] received a while back that highlights the importance of living the gospel in our homes:

“We had a miracle happen this week with one of our less-active families... We went back to teach them on Friday. They have had a really long history with the church... They are a great family, but are struggling a lot. The mom knows that she needs to come back to church and said she can see how the Lord has been guiding her to come back throughout the years by sending the missionaries every time she had to make a big choice. It is so important to do the little things. She said, "When we were married we were super "active" in the church. We went every Sunday, we each had multiple callings, our kids went to primary activities, and the ward activities were usually in our house..." She explained to us how as time went on though, she realized that they were just faking it every Sunday. They were going through the motions, but weren't really living it. She wasn't happy. Then stuff happened that I guess tipped the scale and the family broke apart... she realizes now how they weren't doing the little things. That is something I've seen through my whole mission. There is a big difference in the people that do the little things and truly are converted vs. the people who just show up to church each week. There is such a different spirit. They are so much happier and have more peace and unity in their homes. The *little things* - prayer, scripture study, family home evening - those are the things that help us to build a solid foundation in Christ and His gospel. They are the things that are truly important.

[Galatians 2:16](#) “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

[D&C 63:11](#) “Yea, signs come by faith, unto mighty works, for without faith no man pleaseth God; and with whom God is angry he is not well pleased; wherefore, unto such he showeth no signs, only in wrath unto their condemnation.”

[Ether 12:12](#) (see also v.6-28) “For if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith.”

Works without Faith are just as dead as Faith without Works. We are taught that Faith Precedes the Miracle. Works done for right reason and in the right way lead to increased faith, but works done only for show or by habit or tradition help us but little. [Alma 13:2](#) “Therefore, when ye shall do your alms do not sound a trumpet before you, as will hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.” President McMahan asked us to speak on what we are doing to increase Faith in Christ 'in our homes' .. when we are outside of the public view. When we are home alone, what can we doing to show and build our faith? I propose that is it the *little things* – *personal prayer, private scripture study, regular family home evening* .. and “[go and do](#)” as we are prompted by the Spirit.

Little things are the Big things – by Small Means ..

“Is attending to our personal devotions a sacrifice? Reading the scriptures daily, daily personal and family prayers, weekly church attendance and family home evenings, home teaching, showing love for our fellow man, regular attendance at the temple, striving daily to follow the our leaders and the prophet. Some may say that these are 'Sunday School' answers, but as Brother R. Bruce Money stated in a recent BYU Devotional, “true my young friends, these are just 'Sunday School' answers, but let me say something here and now .. I have come to realize that the 'Sunday School' answers ARE the answers.”.

The 'Sunday School' answers ARE the answers. The Lord's Country and Kingdom: Your Passport by R. Bruce Money in BYU devotional given 22 July 2014 at time 26:49 of 32:08. Audio only. <http://speeches.byu.edu/?act=viewitem&id=2194>

[Alma 37:7](#) “And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by *very small means* the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.”

[Alma 37:41](#) “Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by *small means* it did show unto them marvelous works. They were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey;”

When introducing the topic we were to discuss this month, President McMahan asked us .. Are we doing the little things to build our faith? My first impression was that the little things are not really 'little' they are huge. Whenever we become slothful in the little things we stop progressing. The Brother of Jared had such great faith he was able to ask and have his family and friends protected from being confounded in their languages .. and thereby escaping the Tower of Babel, retired safely to the seashore .. and four years later .. ([Ether 2:14](#)) “And it came to pass at the end of four years that the Lord came again unto the brother of Jared, and stood in a cloud and talked with him. And for the space of three hours did the Lord talk with the brother of Jared, and chastened him because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord.” Immediately repenting, they were then able to move on to where they were really headed – their promised land. It is the little things we do when no one else is watching that shows who and where we really are ..

.. with an 'I' single to His glory ..

“Latter-day Saints whose eyes are single to God’s glory see life from a vastly different perspective than those whose attention is directed elsewhere. Such members, for instance, care little about receiving credit or recognition for their good deeds. They are more interested in feeding the Lord’s sheep than in counting them. In fact, they frequently find their greatest happiness in serving anonymously, thereby leaving the beneficiaries of their kindness with no one to thank or praise except the Lord. In this regard, we can perhaps learn a lesson from our Christian brothers and sisters in the Amish communities of Pennsylvania. It is reported that their writers frequently compose and publish poetry and religious literature anonymously, so as to deflect attention from themselves and ensure that only God receives the glory. There is something particularly noble about the good works of those who act without restraint or compulsion and with no expectation of reward or recognition. Their goodness has its source in the “desires of their hearts” ([Alma 41:3](#)) and is the result of pure motives.” ([Oct 1989 “An Eye Single to the Glory of God” Marlin K. Jensen](#) of the First Quorum of the Seventy).

[Alma 32:21](#) “.. faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true.”

[D&C 4:5](#) “And faith, hope, charity and love, with an *eye single to the glory of God*, qualify him for the work.”

[D&C 88:67](#) “And if your *eye be single to my glory*, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.”

[Ether 12:6](#) “And now, I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things; I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.”

The final words of the prophets are where they put the things they consider to be most important for us to learn. For example: [2 Ne 1](#) – we find Lehi's final words to his sons: “23 *Awake*, my sons; put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the chains with which ye are bound, and come forth out of obscurity, and *arise* from the dust. Then in [2 Ne 33](#) – we read Nephi's final words to us on charity and faith, he asks that we read his words [the Scriptures and specifically the Book of Mormon] and believe in Christ. That we “hearken unto these words and *believe in Christ*; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should *do good*.”. And finally, I love [Ether 12](#) .. here is written Moroni's first final thoughts, when he presumed his record was probably finished, on what he considered a most important thing to remember in the Book of Mormon .. and his topic for that entire chapter was on Faith. Later since he found that he was still around, he added a favorite letter from his father, Mormon, in [Moroni 7](#) and his own second final thoughts in [Moroni 10](#), speaking to us again on faith, hope, and charity ending with these words: “And Christ truly said unto our fathers: If ye have faith ye can do all things which are expedient unto me.”

KEYS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

(see also [Dispensation](#); [First Presidency](#); [Priesthood](#))

Keys are the rights of presidency, or the power given to man by God to direct, control, and govern God's priesthood on earth. Priesthood holders called to positions of presidency receive keys from those in authority over them. Priesthood holders use the priesthood only within the limits outlined by those who hold the keys. The President of the Church holds all priesthood keys ([D&C 107:65–67, 91–92; 132:7](#)) which derive from Christ – the head of the Church.

- Michael (Adam) received the keys of salvation under the direction of Jesus Christ: [D&C 78:16](#)
- Peter received the keys of the kingdom: [Matt. 16:19](#)
- Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received keys concerning the gathering of Israel, the gospel of Abraham, and the sealing powers: [D&C 110:11–16](#)
- The keys of the kingdom belong always to the First Presidency: [D&C 81:2](#)
- The First Presidency and the Twelve hold the keys of the dispensation of the fulness of times: [D&C 112:30–34](#)
- Special keys are held by the Twelve Apostles: [D&C 112:16](#)
- Officers in the priesthood hold keys: [D&C 124:123](#)
- He who has keys can obtain knowledge: [D&C 128:11](#)
- The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the key of the mysteries of the knowledge of God: [D&C 84:19](#)
- The Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys of the ministering of angels and of the gospel of repentance and baptism: [JS—H 1:69, D&C 13](#)

We each have been allocated keys necessary for our own callings as Parents, Home Teachers, in our various church assignments, and even as [“every member a missionary”](#) in our everyday lives. We will be prompted on what we should do and be working on as we listen and watch for those who need our help. As President McMahan taught in your ward council .. each of the various ward leaders on the council bring not only the mantle of their current calling but the experience and abilities of past callings. Not all the revelation needs to come from the Prophet or the Stake President or the Bishop. Each may be inspired to propose directions that can be discussed and agreed to in the council. In the same way, in your family councils, not all the revelation needs to come from the head of the house.

For example: At one point Lehi and his family were unable to eat/progress on their journey because their steel bows had “lost their springs”. [1 Ne 16:20-25](#) “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones. And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food?” Nephi went out and did what he could to solve the problem and then went to his priesthood leader, his father, to find out what to do next for their family.