

# “Five Principles to Live and Lead By”

by

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I am honored to be invited to speak to you students today. I have long respected the quality of education provided to those who attend here. Although limited, I have two very personal exposures to the work done at this campus. My wife's father attended LDS Business College, in 1938, hoping to improve his employment opportunities. Even though he didn't obtain a certificate, just having LDS Business College on his resume landed him a good employment opportunity. Additionally, in my early days of working at the Church I was in need of a secretary. I interviewed several outstanding candidates and selected one who had just graduated from LDS Business College. She was an excellent secretary. She was as good as any I have had since.

So I can say my own life has benefited directly by the effective teaching pattern of LDS Business College. With my experience of two I'm telling everyone that those who attend here are well prepared to enter the working world and make a significant contribution. So you see how just one or two people can represent an entire organization, for good or ill.

This young lady, who became my secretary, is now not known for her wonderful secretarial skills only, but she met a young man, married him, and now is known as mother and soon to be grandmother. You see I hired her in 1972. Our lives change quickly, my young friends, and the decisions we make today and principles we learn are critical for our development and direction. These principles have application in many venues of our lives.

Even though I have very positive feelings about LDS Business College as a whole, I don't know much about each of you as individuals but I do know something about you collectively. I know that there are about 1200 of you enrolled in school; that 22 percent of you are from outside the US; that 99.5 percent of you are LDS; that most of you are between 17 and 22; that every state in the union is represented in the student body; 1/3 of you are returned missionaries.

More importantly, I also know you are all children of our Heavenly Father who loves you more than you can possibly comprehend; that you were all faithful in the council of heaven and raised your hands in support of the Savior's plan of redemption.

I know you have all been blessed with specific gifts and talents, with the power to choose right and the potential to be parents to other of God's children. Basically, I know you were all faithful in your first estate or pre-earth life.

Now the question is, How will you do in this mortal experience? How will you know what is expected of you and how will you know if you are doing what you should? Here on campus there are ways to measure and predict what would be best for your future. There are tests to be taken, and interviews to be conducted. But there are other methods that may be even more effective. In addition to prayer and scripture study there is that personal revelation intended just for you and administered by your stake patriarch. How many of you have received a Patriarchal Blessing? How many of you have read it in the past week, month, year?

I recently reread my own blessing given when I was 18 years old. (That was a long time ago) Let me just share one statement from my blessing that witnesses to me their specific nature.

“Always honor the Priesthood which has been given thee and thou wilt be advanced in the quorums of the Priesthood as thou wilt be prepared for greater responsibility. Thou wilt be called to serve in the various quorums of the Priesthood and thou wilt find much joy and satisfaction in that work.”

What I understood from these words of this blessing is that I would be called to serve in the each of the quorums of the Priesthood. However, in 1971, I was ordained a high priest never having received the office of Seventy. In those days Seventies were usually called as stake missionaries. I concluded that my experience as a fulltime missionary would have to substitute for being a Seventy.

However, one should never assume the Lord didn't mean what he said, because in February of 2005, President Hinckley invited me to his office and called me to serve as a Seventy. So I want to bear testimony to you that these are revelatory blessings. If you live for the blessing and have faith in the Lord, they will come to pass. It will literally give you principles and promises to live and lead by. Critical to having your blessing being fulfilled is living your life so that the Lord can bless you according to His plan for you.

In ten years, what legacy will you have begun? Will you be on the path foretold by the Lord? Sometimes our path takes us through interesting doors and we wonder if we are doing what was foreseen.

One of the great leaders of the Book of Mormon is Captain Moroni. You may remember he was appointed at a very young age to be the leader of the Nephite armies. Can you imagine the overwhelming feeling that must have come over this young man of 25 when he was commissioned to be the commander over all the armies.

Moroni's strengths included knowing for what he stood and believing deeply in these righteous convictions. When he learned that one among them violated these principles, he

became angry and declared his feelings for holding fast to the principles and resulting gifts that had come to them. In boldness he declared his commitment to the principles by creating the Title of Liberty. This Title of Liberty he held up before his armies to give them a goal to fight and live for; to remind them of their purpose and direction.

During the season of time when my wife and I have been raising our children, there have been times when I have felt somewhat like Moroni, wanting to wave a flag to keep our attention focused on the things that matter most rather than the things that were grabbing and stealing our attention. While I don't claim to be Captain Moroni, for many reasons, I do feel there are a few very important principles that might be worth our consideration today.

In addition to the spiritual guides given to us by the Lord, I have identified five principles that I refer to as "The Principles to Live and Lead By." I will share them with you today in hopes that they might have as much impact for good in your life as they have in mine. I have tested the application of these principles over the past 30 years and my learning is that these principles, regardless of our place in life, can be applied, reapplied and grown. Their application will vary as we change and grow.

In a world where acronyms are big, and for ease of memory, I've arranged the principles so the first letters of each one forms the word TRACS.

The first principle is: Trustworthiness, or Trust- and Respect-based relationships. Other words for trustworthiness, including "respect," are humility, honesty, patience, faith, virtue, and moral purity.

This principle of trust and respect is based in always assuming the most honorable of intentions from others towards us or those we love. When a friend or parent offers a correction on the way we act, what if we assumed they were offering it because they loved us or really were trying to be helpful rather than our sometimes natural reaction to defend our action.

For example I was sitting on the stand the other day because of invitation to speak. I was really concentrating on my message on not how I appeared. After the meeting one of my family members asked if I felt well. I said yes. And he responded that perhaps I should let my face show it. He kindly mentioned that I needed to smile a little more and not look so unhappy. Assuming he was just trying to be helpful feels a lot better than thinking he was being critical.

One of the simple acts of trust in the scriptures happened when Nephi convinced Zoram, Laban's servant, that he was trustworthy, and that Zoram should come with them.

Imagine the fear that must have been in Zoram's mind when he saw Nephi's brothers outside the gates. Nephi had to convince Zoram to trust Nephi and that all would go well for him. The scriptures say:

33 And I spake unto him, even with an oath, that he need not fear; that he should be a free man like unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us.

34 And I also spake unto him, saying: Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing; and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord? Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.

35 And it came to pass that Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake . . . and he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. Yea, and he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth ( 1 Nephi 4:33-35).

The convincing quality of being trustworthy is to speak the truth and to bear witness that what you say is true.

The Savior exercised this divine principle of trust when he called Peter, Andrew, James and John to come follow him. He asked them to trust Him and leave their profession behind, declaring that he would make them fishers of men. Then he proceeded to teach and mold them into men who could stand faithful and be trustworthy after he was crucified. Peter, James, and John were so trusted and faithful that they were called on to restore the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the restoration process.

Similarly, he has asked us to follow him and be trustworthy in our relationships and attitudes. That is to stand for truth and bear witness of His gospel in all places and at all times.

One of the great expressions of trust in this world is the expression of trust God gives in allowing us to take his spirits into our homes and teach them even as the Savior taught the disciples. He trusts us that we will make good choices in selecting our companionships and entering into covenants so that he can send these little ones into our lives to care for and nurture. Maybe not too unlike Zoram we are placed in families and we must trust that we will be taught correctly. And even more importantly we will in due time have these little ones placed into our care with heavenly trust that we will lead them in righteousness.

I have often reflected on an experience with one of our grandchildren. As I was leaving Church one Sunday going to another ward, I noticed a group of children seated on the lawn by the parking area. Suddenly, one of these children broke free from the others and began a long dash across the blacktop towards me. I heard his little voice as he called, "Grandpa, Grandpa." When he reached me he thrust his hands upward and leaped into my open arms. Upon reaching that secure place he called out, "Home, Grandpa, home." To me, that is the call of every child, whether grown or growing. It is the ultimate test of trust. Will we be faithful in assuring that we and those who are trusted to our care will be able to come home?

When you left your heavenly home, our Father said in effect to you, You have proven yourself trustworthy, I therefore, give you your agency to choose righteously. Think about the synonyms for this word "trustworthy" and you will begin to glimpse what Heavenly Father wants you to live up to.

The second principle is: Responsible Leadership. This principle is closely aligned with trust-based relationships and is often driven by trust. Other words for responsible leadership are diligence, accountability, delegation, dependability, and consecration. For me the ultimate example from the scriptures of this principle is the Savior's experience in Gethsemane. You remember the account in Luke 22:39-44:

39 ¶ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Though in great agony, the Savior did not shrink from his responsibility. He had agreed to do this and nothing would take Him from His commitment.

With no less of a commitment, the Prophet Joseph Smith declared his willingness to remain true to the vision he had received. It clearly would have been easier for him to simply dismiss his experience and not be subject to the ridicule. But no, he said:

25 . . . I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true; and while they were persecuting me, reviling me, and speaking all manner of evil against me falsely for so saying, I was led to say in my heart: Why persecute me for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision; and who am I that I can withstand God, or why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation (JS-History 1:23-25).

So not too unlike the Prophet Joseph, have been blessed with light and understanding. Perhaps we have not had the same heavenly visitation, but we have been blessed to know or at a minimum we have to be charged to find out. The principle is to follow through on what we know or what we have been charged to find out.

Responsible leadership is acting righteously upon knowledge we have gained or been taught without having to be driven or prodded to act.

These acts are often not large or significant. They are often just doing what we are prompted. For example, when it was announced that a temple would be built in Anchorage, Alaska and the site was identified, a Relief Society president drove to the site and out of love and respect for the temple, she began picking up papers and cans and

other debris that had accumulated on the property. No one asked her to do it, she simply acted because she knew it was to be the place of a holy temple to our God.

When we act responsibly without thought of reward or recognition we are being responsible leaders.

The third principle is: Alignment. Other words for alignment might include obedience, compliance, submissiveness, and deference.

The simplest, practical example of alignment is found on the wheels of our car. If a vehicle's wheels are not aligned or running parallel with each other then the tires wear out prematurely. A simple test can tell whether our car is in alignment. Choosing to let our car remain out of alignment is at first just a simple wearing out of our tires. But if we ignore it completely we run the risk of a blowout at high speeds on the freeway leading to a much more severe consequence.

The Lord has taught us that we should be in alignment with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact he said he would give us a pattern in all things so we would know how we should align our lives. One of the simple patterns he gave us is found in the 90th section of the Doctrine and Covenants where he says simply "Search diligently, pray always and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good."

Because of the Savior's suffering in the garden of Gethsemane and at Golgotha, most alignment issues can be taken care of each week as we partake of the sacrament. However, if we choose to ignore the correction process, we subject ourselves to great risks and potentially destructive consequences.

The Savior taught us by His own example the importance of being aligned. He gave all glory to Father, He always said, "Father Thy will be done," and He was ever true to His word.

I'm sure each of you can think of examples of where being obedient has brought the blessings of heaven eventually. But the exercise of faith in the principle of obedience often is the real test. Remember the scriptures teach us that it is only after the trial of our faith or the demonstration of obedience that we realize the blessing.

I will long remember the conversation I had with one of my ward members shortly after being called to serve as bishop. I was quite young and had an interview with one of the more senior members of the ward who wanted a temple recommend to attend the temple marriage of his grandson. When I asked him if he kept the Word of Wisdom, he responded, "Yes, except for my morning cup of coffee." I explained that his morning cup of coffee would make it difficult for me to issue to him a temple recommend. He said "Well, all of the other bishops gave me a recommend. Will you keep me out of the temple over a cup of coffee?" I responded, "Will you let a cup of coffee keep you from receiving the blessings of the temple?" He went home without his temple recommend. A few days later, he called to say he was willing to give up his cup of coffee.

Years later he cornered me as I interviewed him, now as his stake president. He reminded me of our conversation and said it was a turning point in his life.

Here in this simple example are two levels of alignment at work. One, the member is willing to align with the commandment and two, the bishop willing to align with the guidance given by the leaders of the Church.

The fourth principle is: Continuous Learning. Other words for continuous learning are knowledge, yielding, searching, and sacrifice.

The Lord commanded, “Seek learning, even by study and also by faith”. He further warned, “It is impossible for a man (or a woman) to be saved in ignorance”. As a young missionary, I can actually remember thinking I had learned all there was to know. I just couldn’t fill my mind with anything else. There was no space left. I have subsequently repented of that thought. I know there is plenty of space. My problem now is I just can’t remember where I put the last thing I learned.

The Lord uses the word “remember” 352 times in the scriptures. I think he wants us to remember or re-learn matters that are important for our eternal progression. By that I mean to imply there is information that we don’t need to add to our knowledge base. We need to exercise some discretion on what we study. His counsel to us is to seek knowledge, especially spiritual knowledge. Study the scriptures every day, and also study the words of the living prophets. Through study and prayer, seek help for our specific questions, challenges, and opportunities. Rely upon the Holy Ghost to enlighten our minds, to teach us and to help us understand.

You should establish a pattern for study and learning. Early in my business career, I began asking others what good books they were reading and what they had learned from their reading. Try that. Find out from those that you admire or respect, what they are reading. Ask them to send you their reading list.

The Lord taught Joseph to: ...study and learn, and become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people (D&C 90:15).

Nephi taught us: For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.

16 Behold, my soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth continually upon the things which I have seen and heard. (2 Nephi 4:15-16).

One of the most powerful continuous learning experiences I remember was told to me by Elder David B. Haight. I think he would feel okay about my sharing with you. He was reflecting on the occasion of the revelation to President Spencer W. Kimball on the giving of the priesthood to all worthy male members of the Church over the age of twelve. He spoke of being in the upper room of the temple with the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. President Kimball spoke of his experience and expressed his

desire that all the Apostles should have the same witness. Elder Haight said after they knelt in prayer there was a marvelous feeling and witness that came to each one in the room. To his surprise, President Kimball asked Elder Bruce R. McConkie and Elder Haight to write down what they had felt, representing the experience. Elder Haight was surprised because he was the junior member of the Twelve. Elder McConkie volunteered to write a first draft for Elder Haight to then read and correct. Elder Haight said when he received the draft, the words reflected that they had heard a voice from heaven. Elder Haight, in his newness in the Quorum, responded back to Elder McConkie that he had not heard a voice, although he had felt a wonderful confirming spirit. Elder McConkie changed the record. Elder Haight then looked me directly in the eyes and said, “I was wrong! I did hear a voice.” And then he read me this scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants, 88:66: Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness—in the wilderness, because you cannot see him—my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound.

Then he repeated, “I did hear a voice.” I have often thought, if the Quorum of the Twelve is still learning then it is important for me to still be searching and learning.

The fifth principle is: Service. Other words for service are charity, kindness, love, endurance, Christ-centered living

The scriptures teach us: And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God (Mosiah 2:17).

I will long remember a simple act of service or charity that happened on a very ordinary day. My wife and our son had been doing some shopping and time had gotten away from us. It was well after lunch and we realized we were quite hungry. After stopping to buy a quick bite of lunch to eat on the way, at a fast food restaurant, we pulled back on the street to continue our journey. As we stopped at the corner light, a man on the side of the road was asking for a handout. Suddenly from the back seat of our car, our young son rolled down his window and handed his yet-to-be opened hamburger out the window to the waiting hand of the stranger. As we pulled away, I think I said something about perhaps our son wasn't hungry. He responded with, I think the man was hungrier. I gained some new insight that day around the meaning of service and its key component part, Charity.

45 And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

46 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

47 But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him. (Moroni 7:45-47).

Charity is a gift from God, and is the essential principle of success in God's kingdom. The Savior demonstrated this principle of service when he washed the feet of His disciples.

The scripture (John 13) records:

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

The Savior's message is that real happiness is found in giving lasting service to others.

President Hinckley recently expressed his feeling that there is a need for more kindness to be shown among Church members and in families. If we were more patient and kind towards each other there would be less anger and contention. Simple acts of kindness melt away long time hurts and offences.

When the temple was announced to be built in Boston, there was a very negative reaction by some of the neighbors. The hill where the temple was to be built was a neighborhood nature preserve. Nothing official, it was just a place where people would wander in nature. Several neighbors expressed their dismay and even tried to legally block the building of the temple. From claiming a loss of trees, to the steeple casting a shadow on their property, there were angry expressions. The local bishop and stake president continued to be gracious and avoided confrontation or angry exchanges. Eventually the temple was approved and construction permits issued. The building required blasting away some rock on the property, which was not well received. Finally, through several lawsuits including a measure to block placing a tower on the temple, the temple was ready for an open house.

It was determined to invite the neighbors to come first. Somewhat reluctantly they came and were overwhelmed at the genuine kindness shown them and the feeling of love that was expressed by those who were serving as hosts. Within days of the open house, letters expressing apology for acting as they had were received from the neighbors. Today they wander the grounds grateful for the beautiful trees and flowers that adorn the property. They even insisted that there be a tower on the temple. Can you imagine a church without a tower in Boston?

Remember, Trustworthiness, Responsible Leadership, Alignment, Continuous Learning and Service. These simple principles, my young friends are founded in the Gospel and can be a formula for real happiness. They will keep you on the TRACS towards the home my grandson wanted me to get him to.

I bear my testimony to you that the patterns of the scriptures exemplified by the Savior and taught by His prophet leaders are true and will be a source of balance and strength to you.

I frequently think of our little granddaughter who lives in an apartment behind our home. Our home and her home are connected by a glass door. Each morning she comes to the door and with both hands she knocks on the door until my wife or I come and let her in. There is no way that I would ever ignore her knocking. When she comes through the door she reaches for us and we hold her tightly.

For me it is symbolic of our daily prayer to Heavenly Father. He always opens the door but we must knock. He wants you to knock and search Him out. Pray to Him, my young friends and I know He will answer and bless you. That is my testimony.