

An Admonition to Make Provisions

Each of us is at some point in our life's journey leaning to discover and fulfill our personal mission. Requisite to successfully navigating this adventure, we must develop the ability to stand against the adversities of life. These difficulties can come in any number of different forms and almost always at times we do not expect. However, our responsibility is to have made ourselves ready, willing, and able to stand faithful, despite what may happen.

The various storms of life (we give them descriptions like: emergencies, disasters, catastrophes) can come one at a time or in multiple combinations. The most common classifications will be in the three general categories: physical, mental/emotional, and spiritual. Any difficulty in one of these areas will always have some effect to a lesser or greater degree on the other two. We are at the same time a spiritual-being and a physical-being linked together and challenged by our immediate simultaneous mental/emotional reactions.

Whether you label an event from minor, major to horrific, the events of life should be seen as an opportunity to live-through and grow-from them. However, you will only be able to do this if you have purposely made yourself ready to meet them physically, mentally/emotionally, and spiritually.

The teachings found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ are first and foremost aimed at developing our spiritual well-being and stamina needed to stand against the vicissitudes of life. As an adjunct to these spiritual teachings comes the clear directives to be physically/materially able to care for ourselves, our household, and our family in the good times as well as the difficult (*see 1 Timothy 5:8, quoted below, as well as some of my Wednesday night Zoom classes*). Because of the decades of generally widespread comfortable and peaceful life we've had in this country, it is easy to slough off, and even ignore the Lord's counsel to prepare for our future well-being in hard times.

One of God's greatest gifts to us is our individual and collective agency. Exactly where each of us stands in our personal and family preparations for the future is a stewardship. To this end, it's important to understand what I call **The Law of Stewardship**, (*I discuss this more thoroughly in one of my recent Facebook LIVE posts*). This law has three specific components listed in priority order from top to bottom:

- 1) **Authority To Act** — The right to act must only be accepted from the one who has the power to grant such a privilege. Simply put, each of us accepted the opportunity to live upon this earth by the power of agency granted to us by God our Heavenly Father.
- 2) **Responsibility To Act** — Because of the agency given to us, we live day-by-day one action at a time. The ultimate question is how well do we make our choices about each and every action: What we say or don't say, what we do or don't do, what we think or don't think, etc.
- 3) **Accountability For Actions** (or lack of action) — The consequences of every action will ultimately flow to us in perfect righteousness. Recognize that once set in action, we have no final say as to what the specific consequences will be. Some of the "rewards" of our actions will be pleasant and enjoyable beyond our current understanding; others may be painful to a point we cannot imagine. However, consequences will all be perfectly just in nature.

We must be sure of the sources of our instructions on why and to what degree are we to make ready. The voices and traditions of men will often lead one into diverse places devoid of light and divine knowledge (*see D&C 38:30 below*). It is only through the voices of the Lord's authorized servants (past, present, and future) wherein proper direction can be found. Statements by others must be held up to this standard for judgment as to whether they are to be considered or rejected.

So, there can be no question about my spiritual foundation, I am a Christian dedicated to the life, mission, teachings, and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Fifty years ago this June (two months shy of my 24th birthday) I was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (often referred to as LDS). When I quote scriptures I'll refer to the King James Version of the Holy Bible plus other canonized scriptures of the LDS Church. I may also quote recognized LDS Church leaders and other Christian leaders.

1 Timothy 5:8 — “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

Doctrine & Covenants 38:30 — “I tell you these things because of your prayers; wherefore, treasure up wisdom in your bosoms, lest the wickedness of men reveal these things unto you by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth; but if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”

D&C 78:11,13-14 — “Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, to prepare and organize yourselves by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken. Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you; That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;”

George Q. Cannon — “The greatest events spoken of by the Holy Prophets will come along so naturally as the consequences of certain causes, that unless our eyes are enlightened by the Spirit of God, and the spirit of revelation rests upon us, we will fail to see that these are the events predicted by the Holy Prophets.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 21, p. 264.

D&C 82:10 — “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.”

Spencer W. Kimball — “I like the way the Relief Society teaches personal and family preparedness as 'provident living.' This implies the husbanding of our resources, the wise planning of financial matters, full provision for personal health, and adequate preparation for education and career development, giving appropriate attention to home production and storage as well as the development of emotional resiliency.” *General Conference*, October 1977.

Ezra Taft Benson — “...In the spirit of love, members of the Church have been counseled to be thrifty and self-reliant; to avoid debt; pay tithes and a generous fast offering; be industrious; and have sufficient food, clothing, and fuel on hand to last at least one year... We do know that the Lord has decreed global calamities for the future and has warned and forewarned us to be prepared. For this reason, the brethren have repeatedly stressed a "back-to-basics" program for temporal and spiritual welfare....

Have you ever paused to realize what would happen to your community or nation if transportation were paralyzed or if we had a war or depression? How would you and your neighbors obtain food? How long

would the corner grocery store or supermarket sustain the needs of the community?...” *General Conference*, October 1980.

Spencer W. Kimball — “We encourage families to have on hand a year's supply; and we say it over and over and over and repeat over and over the scripture of the Lord where he says, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) How empty it is as they put their spirituality, so-called, into action and call him by his important names, but fail to do the things which he says.” *General Conference*, April 1976.

Gordon B. Hinkley — “... There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed.... We are carrying a message of self-reliance throughout the Church. Self-reliance cannot be obtained when there is serious debt hanging over a household. One has neither independence nor freedom from bondage when he is obligated to others.... I urge you, brethren, to look to the condition of your finances. I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.... This is a part of the temporal gospel in which we believe....” *General Conference*, October 1998.

Thomas S. Monson — “We should remember that the best storehouse system would be for every family to have a year’s supply of needed food, clothing, and, where possible, the other necessities of life....” *General Conference*, October 1988.