

The Good News Recipe

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Maelezo ya Habari Njema

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What might it look like to add more Jesus Christ into your life?

If you have ever visited my home state of Louisiana, you are probably familiar with many of our tasty dishes—gumbo, jambalaya, étouffée, and the list goes on and on.

From time to time, I find myself feeling bold enough to cook one of those tasty recipes. The undocumented final step after mixing all the ingredients and following the detailed instructions is to do the final taste test and see if anything is missing. At that point, I can hear the Creole cooking legends whispering in my ears, “Put more Tony’s in it.” Tony’s is a Creole seasoning made in Opelousas, Louisiana, my hometown. It is often used as the “secret ingredient” to compensate for the imperfections made while following the recipe.

My wife, Michelle, and I had the honor to serve as mission leaders in Louisiana. We had a tradition of teaching the missionaries how to cook her special jambalaya recipe on their last night in the mission home before they returned to their families. In addition to their testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, our missionaries left the mission with an appreciation for recipes.

A few months ago, I was browsing through the Church Media Library and saw a link to a collection of short videos called Restoration Conversations with President Russell M. Nelson. The title of one of the short videos in the list caught

Itakuwaje pale utakapomwongeza Yesu Kristo zaidi katika maisha yako?

Kama umewahi kutembelea jimbo la nyumbani kwetu la Louisiana, unaweza pengine ukafahamu vizuri vyakula vyetu vingi vitamu—gumbo, jambalaya, étouffée, na orodha inaendelea na kuendelea.

Mara kwa mara, ninajihisi jasiri vya kuto-sha kupika mojawapo ya mapishi haya matamu. Hatua ya mwisho ambayo haijaandikwa baada ya kuchanganya viungo vyote na kufuata maelekezo ni mtihani wa mwisho wa kuonja na kuona kama kuna chochote kinakosekana. Kwenye hatua hii, ningeweza kuwasikia wapishi wabobezi wa Kreole wakinong’ona masikioni mwangu, “Weka kiungo cha Tony zaidi ndani yake.” Tony ni kiungo cha kreole kilichotengenezwa huko Opelousas, Louisiana, mji wa nyumbani kwangu. Mara nyingi inatumika kama “kiungo cha siri” ili kufidia mapungufu yaliyofanyika wakati wa kufuata maelezo ya upishi.

Mimi pamoja na mke wangu Michelle tulipata heshima ya kuhudumu kama viongozi wa misioni huko Louisiana. Tulikuwa na desturi ya kuwafundisha wamisionari jinsi ya kupika mapishi yake maalumu ya jambalaya usiku wao wa mwisho katika makazi ya misioni kabla ya kurudi katika familia zao. Kama ziada kwenye shuhuda zao juu ya injili ya urejesho ya Yesu Kristo, wamisionari wetu waliaga misioni wakishukuru maelezo hayo ya upishi.

Miezi michache iliyopita, nilikuwa nikivinjari kupitia Chombo cha Habari cha Kanisa na nikaona kiungo kwenye kusanyiko la video fupi zinazoitwa Mazungumzo ya Urejesho na Rais Russell M. Nelson. Jina la mojawapo ya video

my attention and made me smile. It is called “Scriptures Are God’s Recipes for Happy Living.” I immediately clicked on that two-minute video and watched President Nelson teach a group of Primary kids a simple and powerful message about how to be happy. He taught: “If you’re making a cake, you follow the directions, don’t you? And you’ll get a good result every time, won’t you?”

He continued, speaking about turning 95 years old soon: “People say, ‘What do you eat? What’s your secret?’” He replied, “The secret’s called the scriptures. You might read them and try them.”

Well, there we have it. The simple secret for happy living is to just follow God’s recipe as detailed in the scriptures. I call it the “Good News Recipe.”

What do you do if something goes wrong when following the recipe? Well, embedded in the Good News Recipe is the “secret ingredient” to ensure you always get it right in the end. The answer is always Jesus Christ.

I think we all have moments when we feel our ingredients are not good enough, or we struggle to follow the directions, or perhaps we do something out of order, or something happens that is out of our control, and so on.

What’s the remedy? It’s simply to add more of what invites Jesus Christ into your life.

So, what might it look like to add more Jesus Christ into your life?

While serving as mission president, I had the pleasure of meeting personally with each of our young missionaries every six weeks. During the one-on-one meeting, it was common for missionaries to seek guidance on how to improve the effectiveness of their companionships.

On one occasion, a missionary came into his personal interview and sat down. I could tell from his body language that something was weighing heavily on his mind. I asked, “Elder, what would you like to discuss today?” He went on to describe some of the challenges he was having with his companion and how it was affecting their ability to do missionary work. With tears in his eyes, he looked at me and asked, “President, what should I do?”

In that instance, I honestly didn’t know how

hizi fupi kwenye orodha lilivuta usikivu wangu na kunifanya nitabasamu. Inaitwa “Maandiko ni Maelezo ya Mapishi ya Mungu kwa ajili ya Maisha ya Furaha.” Haraka nilibofya kwenye hiyo video ya dakika mbili na kumwangukia Rais Nelson akifundisha kikundi cha Watoto ujumbe rahisi wenye nguvu wa jinsi ya kuwa na furaha. Yeye alifundisha: “Kama unaoka keki, unafuata maelekezo, au siyo? Na utapata matokeo mazuri kila wakati, au siyo?”

Aliendelea, akizungumzia kuhusu kuwa na umri wa miaka 95 hivi karibuni: “Watu wana-sema, ‘Wewe unakula nini? Siri yako ni nini?’” Yeye alijibu, “Siri zinaitwa maandiko. Unaweza kuyasoma na kuyajaribu.”

Ndiyo, hiyo ndiyo siri. Siri rahisi kwa ajili ya maisha ya furaha ni kufuata tu maelezo ya mapishi hayo ya Mungu kama yalivyoainishwa katika maandiko. Nayaita “Maelezo ya Habari Njema.”

Je, wewe hufanya nini wakati kitu kinaenda mrama wakati wa kufuata maelezo ya mapishi? Ndiyo, akiwa amewekwa katika Maelezo ya Habari Njema yeye ni “kiungo cha siri” ili kuhakikisha daima hatimaye unafika kwa usahihi mwishoni. Jibu daima ni Yesu Kristo.

Nafikiri sisi sote tunazo nyakati tunapohisi viungo vyetu siyo vizuri vya kutosha, au tunahangaika kufuata maelekezo, au pengine tunafanya kitu nje ya utaratibu, au kitu fulani kinatokea kilicho nje ya udhibiti wetu, na kadhalika.

Tiba ni nini? Ni kuongeza zaidi tu kile kinachomwalika Yesu Kristo katika maisha yetu.

Hivyo, ni nini kinaweza kuonekana kama kumwongeza Yesu Kristo zaidi katika maisha yako?

Wakati nikihudumu kama rais wa misioni, nilipata heshima ya kukutana ana kwa ana na kila mmisionari kijana kila baada ya wiki sita. Wakati wa mkutano huu wa ana kwa ana, ilikuwa ni kawaida kwa wamisionari kutafuta mwongozo wa jinsi ya kuboresha ufanisi wa wenza wao.

Katika tukio moja, mmisionari mmoja alikuja katika usaili wake binafsi na kukaa nchini. Niliweza kutambua kutokana na lugha ya mwili wake kwamba kuna kitu kinamsumbua sana akilini mwake. Nilimwuliza, “Mzee ungetaka leo tujadili nini?” Alielezea baadhi ya changamoto alizokuwa nazo na mwenzake na jinsi gani inathiri uwezo wake wa kufanya kazi ya umisionari. Kwa machozi machoni mwake, alinitazama na kuuliza, “Rais, napaswa kufanya nini?”

Katika wakati huo, kwa uaminifu kabisa

to respond. After a brief moment, I asked him if it was OK for us to kneel together in prayer for guidance from the Spirit. He agreed, and we knelt together and prayed for inspiration.

After the prayer, we continued kneeling for a short time and then sat in our chairs facing each other. I asked if we could read a scripture together. As we opened our scriptures, I paused and told him, “Elder, as we read this scripture, please ask yourself the following question: If I live these attributes, will it improve my companionship and our missionary work?”

Then we opened Moroni 7:45 and read out loud: “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.”

The elder then looked at me with tears in his eyes and said, “Yes, President, but that is hard to do.” I agreed and reminded him that he is a son of God with divine potential to do it together with the Lord.

Then we briefly discussed the parable of the slope taught by Elder Clark G. Gilbert of the Seventy, which reminded us that we need to start where we are and, together with the Lord, move forward and upward in a positive direction. I could tell that he was still feeling a bit overwhelmed with the next steps, so I asked him to describe his understanding of the scripture “by small and simple things are great things brought to pass.” He went on to describe the concept that by doing small and simple things, great things can happen. I asked him to take a minute and identify two small and simple things he could do to be kind to his companion.

After a few moments, he shared his thoughts. Then I asked him to take a minute and identify two small and simple things he could do to be patient with his companion. He almost immediately shared his two thoughts. It was clear that he had already been pondering this before our meeting. I invited him to take those few items to God in prayer and to ask for confirmation, direction, and inspiration on how to execute his plan with real intent. He agreed. As we concluded, I

sikujua jinsi ya kujibu. Baada ya muda mfupi, nilimuuliza kama ingekuwa SAWA kwa sisi kupiga magoti pamoja katika sala kwa ajili ya mwongozo kutoka kwa Roho. Alikubali, na tulipiga magoti pamoja na kusali kwa ajili ya mwongozo wa kiungu.

Baada ya sala, tuliendelea kupiga magoti kwa muda mfupi na kisha tukakaa katika viti vyetu tukitazamana. Nikaomba kama tungeweza kuso ma andiko kwa pamoja. Tulipokuwa tukifungua maandiko yetu, nilisimama kidogo na kumwambia, “Mzee, tunaposoma andiko hili, tafadhali jiulize mwenyewe swali lifuatalo: Kama nitaishi sifa hizi, je, zitaboresha umoja wetu na kazi yetu ya umisionari?”

Kisha tukafungua Moroni 7:45 na kusoma kwa sauti: “Na hisani huvumilia, na ni karimu, na haina wivu, na haijivuni, haitafuti mambo yake, haifutuki kwa upesi, haifikirii mabaya, haifikirii maovu lakini hufurahia katika ukweli, huvumilia vitu vyote, huamini vitu vyote, hutumaini vitu vyote, hustahmili vitu vyote.”

Yule mzee kisha akaniangalia akiwa na machozi machoni mwake na kusema, “Ndiyo, Rais, lakini hilo ni gumu kutenda.” Nilikubali na kumkumbusha kwamba yeye ni mwana wa Mungu, mwenye uwezekano wa kiungu wa kufanya hili pamoja na Bwana.

Kisha kwa kifupi tukajadili mfano wa mpan-do uliofundishwa na Mzee Clark G. Gilbert wa Sabini, ambao ulitukumbusha kwamba tunapaswa kuanzia pale tulipo na, pamoja na Bwana, tukisonga mbele na juu katika mwelekeo chanya. Niliweza kuona kwamba bado alikuwa akihihi kuzidiwa na hatua zinazofuata, hivyo nilimwomba aelezee uelewa wake kwenye andiko lisemalo “kwa vitu vidogo na rahisi vitu vikubwa hutokea.” Alielezea dhana hiyo kwamba kwa kufanya vitu vidogo na rahisi, vitu vikubwa hutokea. Nilimwomba achukue dakika moja na ataje vitu vidogo viwili na rahisi anavyoweza kufanya ili kuwa mkarimu kwa mwenza wake.

Baada ya dakika chache alishiriki mawazo yake. Kisha nikamwomba kuchukua dakika chache na kutambua vitu vidogo na rahisi viwili anavyoweza kufanya ili kuwa mvumilivu kwa mwenza wake. Mara moja alishiriki mawazo hayo mawili. Ilikuwa ni dhahiri kwamba amekuwa tayari akitafakari hili kabla ya mkutano wetu. Nilimwalika kuchukua vile vitu vichache kwa Mungu katika sala na kuomba uthibitisho, mwelekeo, na mwongozo wa kiungu kuhusu jinsi

asked him to provide a brief update in his weekly letter.

As the next few weeks went by, I could see in his weekly letters that things were improving. Not only could I see that improvement in his weekly letters, but I could also see it in the weekly letters of his companion. During our next in-person interview, I saw a night-and-day difference in his countenance and spirit. I asked him, “So, Elder, is it true that ‘charity never faileth?’” He responded with a big smile, “Yes, and by small and simple things are great things brought to pass.”

As you follow the Good News Recipe for happy living, remember President Nelson’s teaching: “Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Learn more about His Atonement, His love, His mercy, His doctrine, and His restored gospel of healing and progression. Turn to Him! Follow Him!”

When you need to “hear Him” and know how to invite Jesus Christ into your life, consider following the steps President Nelson taught us about personal revelation:

“Find a quiet place where you can regularly go. Humble yourself before God. Pour out your heart to your Heavenly Father. Turn to Him for answers and for comfort.

“Pray in the name of Jesus Christ about your concerns, your fears, your weaknesses—yes, the very longings of your heart. And then listen! Write the thoughts that come to your mind. Record your feelings and follow through with actions that you are prompted to take. As you repeat this process day after day, month after month, year after year, you will ‘grow into the principle of revelation.’”

I testify that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. He has “accomplished everything we need to be able to return to [our] Heavenly Father.” In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

gani ya kutekeleza mpango wake kwa kusudi halisi. Alikubali. Tulipokuwa tukihitimisha, nilimwomba kutoa usasisho mfupi katika barua yake ya kila wiki.

Wiki iliyofuata ilipopita, niliweza kuona katika barua zake za kila wiki kwamba mambo yalikuwa yakifanya vizuri. Lakini siyo tu niliweza kuona maboresho katika baruazakeza kila wiki, niliweza pia kuona katika barua za kila wiki za mwenza wake. Wakati wa mkutano wetu wa ana kwa ana uliofuata, niliona tofauti ya usiku na mchana katika uso wake na roho. Nilimwuliza, “Hivyo, Mzee, ni kweli hisani haishindwi?” Alijibu kwa tabasamu kubwa: “Ndiyo, na kwa vitu vido-go na rahisi vitu vikuu hutokea.”

Unapofuata Maelezo ya Upishi ya Habari Njema kwa ajili ya kuishi kwa furaha, kumbuka mafundisho ya Rais Nelson: “Maswali au mata-tizo yoyote uliyo nayo, jibu daima linapatikana katika maisha na mafundisho ya Yesu Kristo. Jifunzeni zaidi kuhusu Upatanisho Wake, upendo Wake, rehema Yake, mafundisho Yake na injili Yake ya urejesho ya uponyaji na ukuaji. Mgeukie Yeye! Mfuateni Yeye!”

Unapohitaji “kumsikia Yeye” na kujua jinsi ya kumwalika Yesu Kristo maishani mwako, zingatia kufuata hatua za Rais Nelson alizotufundisha kuhusu ufunuo binafsi:

“Tafuta sehemu ya ukimya ambako utakwenda mara kwa mara. Jinyenyekeze mbele za Mungu. Mimina moyo wako kwa Baba yako wa Mbinguni. Mgeukie Yeye kwa ajili ya majibu na faraja.

“Omba katika jina la Yesu Kristo kuhusu matatizo yako, hofu zako, udhaifu wako—ndio, mahitaji halisi ya moyo wako. Na kisha sikiliza! Andika mawazo ambayo yanakuja kwenye akili yako. Andika hisia zako na zifuatilie kwa vitendo ambavyo unashawishiwa kufanya. Unaporudia utaratibu huu siku baada ya siku, mwezi baada ya mwezi, mwaka baada ya mwaka, ‘utakua katika kanuni za ufunuo.’”

Ninashuhudia kwamba Yesu Kristo ni Mwokozi na Mkombozi wetu. Yeye “amekamisha kila kitu tunachohitaji kuweza kurudi kwa Baba [yetu] wa Mbinguni.” Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.