

The Love of God

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Guds kærlighed

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I joyfully witness that the Savior Jesus Christ is the love of God. His love for us is perfect, personal, and perpetual.

One summer while traveling in a remote area, our family spent an evening sleeping outdoors under a cloudless sky. Clearly visible above us was the magnificent Milky Way, filled with innumerable stars and the occasional shooting star. While we marveled at the majesty of God's creation, we felt a reverent connection to Him. Our young children, who had grown up in Hong Kong, had never experienced anything like this before. They innocently asked if we lived under the same sky back home. I tried to explain to them that it was the same sky, but air and light pollution where we lived prevented us from seeing these stars even though they were there.

The scriptures teach us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." While disorienting distractions and terrestrial temptations cloud our spiritual vision, when we exercise faith in God and His Son, Jesus Christ, we receive clear assurance of Their reality and of Their concern for us.

In the Book of Mormon, the prophet Lehi saw "a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy" and was the "most sweet, above all." When he tasted the fruit, his soul was filled with great joy, and he wanted his family to taste it also. We learn that this tree represents "the love of God," and like Lehi, we too can receive a joyful witness of God when we invite Him into our lives.

Jesus Christ embodies Heavenly Father's love for us. Through His atoning sacrifice, He took upon Himself our sins and was bruised for our

Jeg vidner med glæde om, at Jesus Kristus er Guds kærlighed. Hans kærlighed til os er fuldkommen, personlig og uendelig.

En sommer, hvor vi var på ferie i et øde område, sov vores familie en nat udendørs under en skyfri himmel. Tydeligt synlig over os var Mælkevejen i sin storslåethed fyldt med utallige stjerner og lejlighedsvis stjerneskud. Mens vi frydede os over storheden i Guds skaberværk, følte vi en ærbødig forbindelse til ham. Vores små børn, der var vokset op i Hong Kong, havde aldrig oplevet noget lignende. De spurgte uskyldigt, om vi boede under den samme himmel derhjemme. Jeg prøvede at forklare dem, at det var den samme himmel, men luft- og lysforurening, hvor vi boede, forhindrede os i at se disse stjerner, selvom de var der.

Vi lærer af skriften, at »tro er fast tillid til det, der håbes på, overbevisning om det, der ikke ses«. Selvom vildledende distraktioner og terrestriale fristelser skygger for vores åndelige udsyn, så vil vi, når vi udøver tro på Gud og hans Søn, Jesus Kristus, modtage en klar vished om, at de lever og bekymrer sig om os.

I Mormons Bog så profeten Lehi »et træ, hvis frugt var ønskværdig til at gøre én lykkelig« og var »yderst sød, mere end alt andet«. Da han smagte frugten, blev hans sjæl fyldt med stor glæde, og han ønskede, at hans familie også skulle smage den. Vi lærer, at dette træ repræsenterer »Guds kærlighed«, og ligesom Lehi kan vi også modtage et glædens vidnesbyrd om Gud, når vi byder ham ind i vores liv.

Jesus Kristus legemliggør vor himmelske Faders kærlighed til os. Gennem sit sonoffer påtog han sig vores synder og blev knust for vores

iniquities. He has personally borne our griefs, carried our sorrows, and taken upon Himself our pains and sicknesses. He sends the Holy Ghost to comfort us, and the fruits of the Spirit include joy, peace, and faith, which fill us with hope and love.

While the love of God is accessible to all, many search earnestly for it, while others desire to feel God's love but do not believe that they deserve it. Some others are desperately trying to hang on to it. The scriptures and the Lord's prophet teach us that we can consistently experience God's love when, through the grace of Jesus Christ, we repeatedly repent, frankly forgive, strive to keep His commandments, and selflessly serve others. We feel God's love when we do things that draw us closer to Him, such as conversing with Him daily through prayer and scripture study, and stop doing things that distance us from Him, such as being prideful, contentious, and rebellious.

President Russell M. Nelson has invited us to "remove, with the Savior's help, the old debris in our lives" and to "lay aside bitterness." He has encouraged us to "bolster our spiritual foundations" through "centering our lives on [the Savior] and on the ordinances and covenants of His temple." He promised that "as we keep our temple covenants, we gain greater access to the Lord's strengthening power. ... We experience the pure love of Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father in great abundance!"

I have a friend who was blessed with a beautiful family and a promising career. This changed when an illness left him unable to work, which was followed by a divorce. The years since have been difficult, but his love for his children and the covenants he has made with God have sustained him. One day he learned that his former spouse had remarried and had requested a cancellation of their temple sealing. He was troubled and confused. He sought peace and understanding in the house of the Lord. The day after his visit, I received the following message from him:

"I had an amazing experience in the temple last night. I think it was obvious that I still held quite a bit of resentment. ... I knew that I must change, and I have been praying all week to do so. ... Last night in the temple I literally felt the Spirit remove the resentment from my heart. ... It was such a relief to be freed from it. ... An

syndighed. Han har personligt tålt vores sorger, båret vores lidelser og påtaget sig vores smerter og sygdomme. Han sender Helligånden for at trøste os, og Åndens frugter omfatter glæde, fred og tro, som fylder os med håb og kærlighed.

Selvom Guds kærlighed er tilgængelig for alle, og mange søger oprigtigt efter den, er der også nogle, der ønsker at føle Guds kærlighed, men som ikke tror, at de fortjener den. Andre prøver desperat at holde fast i den. Vi lærer af skrifterne og Herrens profet, at vi hele tiden kan føle Guds kærlighed, når vi gennem Jesu Kristi nåde gentagne gange omvender os, tilgiver uforbeholdent, stræber efter at holde hans befalinger og uselvisk tjener andre. Vi føler Guds kærlighed, når vi gør noget, der drager os tættere på ham, som dagligt at tale med ham gennem bøn og skriftstudium, og holder op med at gøre det, der distancerer os fra ham, såsom at være stolte, stridslystne og oprørske.

Præsident Russell M. Nelson har opfordret os til med »Frelserens hjælp at fjerne det gamle affald i vores tilværelse« og »lægge bitterhed til side«. Han har opfordret os til at »styrke vores åndelige fundament« ved at centrere vores liv om Frelseren og om ordinancerne og pagterne i hans tempel. Han har lovet, at »når vi holder vores tempelpagter, får vi større adgang til Herrens styrkende kraft ... Vi oplever Jesu Kristi og vor himmelske Faders rene kærlighed i stor overflod!«

Jeg har en ven, der blev velsignet med en smuk familie og en lovende karriere. Dette ændrede sig, da en sygdom gjorde ham ude af stand til at arbejde, hvilket blev efterfulgt af en skilsmisse. De efterfølgende år var svære, men hans kærlighed til sine børn og de pagter, han havde indgået med Gud, holdt ham oppe. En dag fandt han ud af, at hans tidligere ægtefælle havde giftet sig igen og anmodet om at få ophævet deres tempelbesegling. Han blev bekymret og forvirret. Han søgte fred og forståelse i Herrens hus. Dagen efter han havde været i templet, modtog jeg følgende besked fra ham:

»Jeg havde en fantastisk oplevelse i templet i går aften. Jeg tror, det var tydeligt, at jeg stadig følte en del bitterhed ... Jeg vidste, at jeg måtte ændre mig, og jeg havde bedt hele ugen om at gøre det ... I går aften i templet følte jeg bogstaveligt talt Ånden fjerne bitterheden fra mit hjerte ... Det var sådan en lettelse at blive befriet for

ominous physical burden bearing down on me has been lifted.”

While he still has his challenges, my friend treasures that experience in the house of the Lord, where the liberating power of the love of God has helped him to feel closer to God, more optimistic about life, and less anxious about his future.

When we experience the love of God, we can bear up our burdens with ease and submit patiently and cheerfully to His will. We have confidence that God will remember His covenants with us, visit us in our afflictions, and deliver us from bondage. We will also desire to share the joy we feel with our family and loved ones. As with Lehi’s family, each person has agency to choose whether to partake of the fruit or not, but our opportunity is to love, share, and invite in such a way that those we love can feel the love of God.

To help others feel God’s love, we need to cultivate in ourselves Christlike attributes such as humility, charity, compassion, and patience and help turn others towards the Savior through following the two great commandments of loving God and loving our fellow men.

One of our sons struggled with fitting in and self-esteem during his teenage years. My wife and I prayed to know how to help him, and we were willing to do whatever the Lord would have us do. One day I felt prompted to ask my elders quorum president if he knew of anyone in need who I could visit together with my son. After some thought, he asked us to visit a woman with significant health challenges and, with permission from the branch president, to bring the sacrament to her each week. I was elated but also concerned about how my son would react to this weekly commitment.

On our first visit, our hearts ached for this dear woman, as she was in constant pain. She was very grateful for the sacrament, and we enjoyed visiting with her and her husband. After a few visits, one Sunday I was away and could not accompany my son, but I reminded him of our assignment. When I got home, I couldn’t wait to hear how the visit went. My son replied that he didn’t think his classmates got to do cool things like this. And he elaborated by saying that he brought his brother with him to help and that the sacrament went smoothly, but this dear sister

den ... En mørk fysisk byrde, der tyngede mig, er blevet lettere.»

Selvom min ven stadig har sine udfordringer, værdsætter han den oplevelse i Herrens hus, hvor den frigørende kraft i Guds kærlighed hjalp ham til at føle sig tættere på Gud, mere optimistisk omkring livet og mindre bekymret for sin fremtid.

Når vi oplever Guds kærlighed, kan vi bære vores byrder med lethed, og vi kan tålmodigt og med glæde underkaste os hans vilje. Vi har tillid til, at Gud vil huske sine pagter med os, besøge os i vores trængsler og udfri os af trældom. Vi vil også få lyst til at dele den glæde, vi føler, med vores familie og kære. Ligesom det gjaldt for Lehis familie, har hvert individ handlefrihed til at vælge, om de vil spise af frugten eller ej, men vi har mulighed for at elske, dele og indbyde på en måde, der gør, at vores kære kan føle Guds kærlighed.

For at hjælpe andre til at føle Guds kærlighed, må vi selv udvikle kristuslignende egenskaber, såsom ydmyghed, næstekærlighed, medfølelse og tålmodighed, og lede andre til Frelseren ved at følge de to store bud om at elske Gud og elske vores næste.

En af vores sønner kæmpede med sit selv-værd og med at passe ind i sine teenageår. Min hustru og jeg bad om at vide, hvordan vi kunne hjælpe ham, og vi var villige til at gøre, hvad end Herren ønskede, at vi skulle gøre. En dag følte jeg mig tilskyndet til at spørge ældsternes kvorumspræsident, om han kendte til nogen i nød, som jeg kunne besøge sammen med min søn. Efter nogen overvejelse bad han os om at besøge en kvinde med store helbredsmæssige udfordringer, og med tilladelse fra grenspræsidenten at tage nadveren med til hende hver uge. Jeg var spændt, men også bekymret for, hvordan min søn ville reagere på denne ugentlige forpligtelse.

Ved vores første besøg blødte vores hjerte for denne kære kvinde, da hun var i konstant smerte. Hun var meget taknemmelig for nadveren, og vi nød at tale med hende og hendes mand. Efter nogle få besøg var jeg en søndag væk og kunne ikke ledsage min søn, men jeg mindede ham om vores opgave. Da jeg kom hjem, glædede jeg mig til at høre, hvordan besøget var gået. Min søn svarede, at han ikke troede, at hans klassekammerater fik lov til at gøre lige så seje ting. Og han uddybede det og sagde, at han havde taget sin bror med sig for at hjælpe, og at det gik fint med

had been sad during the week because she had invited friends to her home to watch movies, but her video player would not work. My son said he searched online, found the problem, and fixed it for her on the spot. He felt useful, happy, and trusted to do something that brightened her day. He felt God's love for him.

If despite your best efforts life is overcast, if you feel that your prayers are not heard, or if you can't feel God's love, please know that your every effort matters and, as certain as the stars above us, that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ know, hear, and love you.

On one occasion, when His disciples were in a boat being "tossed [by the] waves," the Savior walked towards them on the water and assured them, saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." When Peter wanted to walk to the Savior on the water, Jesus beckoned to him, saying, "Come." And when Peter lost his focus and began to sink, the Savior immediately reached out His hand to catch him and led him to safety while saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

When the winds are against us in our lives, are we willing to be cheerful and courageous? How can we remember that the Savior does not forsake us and that He is near us, perhaps in ways we don't yet recognize? Are we willing to go to Him in faith, especially when the path before us seems impossible? And in what ways does He lift us to safety when we flounder? How can we faithfully look unto Him in every thought, without doubt or fear?

If you would like to feel the love of God more abundantly in your life, may I invite you to consider the following:

First, pause frequently to remember that you are a child of God and think of the things you are grateful for.

Second, pray daily, asking Heavenly Father to help you know who around you needs to feel His love.

Third, ask sincerely what you can do to help that individual to feel the love of God.

And fourth, act promptly on the inspiration you receive.

If we consistently pray and ask on the behalf

at få givet hende nadveren, men denne kære søster havde været ked af det i løbet af ugen, fordi hun havde inviteret venner hjem til sig for at se en film, men hendes videoafspiller virkede ikke. Min søn sagde, at han søgte online, fandt ud af problemet og ordnede det for hende på stedet. Han følte sig nyttig, glad og selvsikker i at gøre noget, der gjorde hendes dag bedre. Han følte Guds kærlighed til sig.

Hvis livet, trods jeres bedste indsats, er overskyet, hvis I føler, at jeres bønner ikke bliver hørt, eller I ikke kan føle Guds kærlighed, så vid, at hver eneste indsats betyder noget, og lige så sikkert som stjernerne er over os, kan I vide, at vor himmelske Fader og Jesus Kristus kender, hører og elsker jer.

Ved en lejlighed, hvor Frelserens disciple var i en båd og »kæmpede med bølgerne«, gik han hen imod dem på vandet og beroligede dem med ordene: »Vær frimodige, det er mig, frygt ikke.« Da Peter ønskede at gå hen til Frelseren på vandet, rakte Jesus hånden frem mod ham og sagde: »Kom!« Og da Peter mistede fokus og begyndte at synke, rakte Frelseren straks sin hånd ud for at gribe ham og føre ham i sikkerhed, mens han sagde: »Du lidet troende, hvorfor tvivlede du?«

Når vi har modvind i livet, er vi så villige til at være frimodige og tapre? Hvordan kan vi huske, at Frelseren ikke forlader os, og at han er os nær på måder, som vi måske endnu ikke kan se? Er vi villige til at gå til ham i tro, især når stien foran os synes umulig? Og på hvilke måder løfter han os i sikkerhed, når vi snubler? Hvordan kan vi trofast se hen til ham i alle vores tanker, uden tvivl eller frygt?

Hvis I gerne vil føle Guds kærlighed i større grad i jeres liv, så lad mig opfordre jer til at overveje følgende:

For det første, stop ofte op for at huske på, at I er Guds barn, og tænk på det, I er taknemmelige for.

For det andet, bed dagligt om, at vor himmelske Fader vil hjælpe jer til at vide, hvem omkring jer, der har brug for at føle hans kærlighed.

For det tredje, spørg oprigtigt, hvad I kan gøre for at hjælpe den person til at føle Guds kærlighed.

Og for det fjerde, reager straks på den inspiration, I modtager.

Hvis vi konsekvent beder for andre, vil Gud

of others, God will show us the people we can help. And if we act promptly, we can become the means through which He answers their prayers. By doing so, in time, we will receive answers to our prayers and we will feel God's love in our own lives.

A few months ago while traveling in Vietnam, my wife and I were on a flight that took off in a heavy storm. The turbulence was severe, and dark clouds, heavy rain, and lightning could be seen from our window. After a long and volatile ascent, our airplane finally rose above the storm clouds and emerged to this glorious vista. We were reminded once again of our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and felt Their great love for us.

Dear friends, as one who has experienced God's love, I joyfully witness that the Savior Jesus Christ is the love of God. His love for us is perfect, personal, and perpetual. As we faithfully follow Him, may we be filled with His love and may we be a lighthouse that guides others to His love. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

vise os de mennesker, vi kan hjælpe. Og hvis vi handler uden at tøve, kan vi blive et middel, hvorigennem han besvarer deres bønner. Når vi gør det, vil vi med tiden modtage svar på vores bønner, og vi vil føle Guds kærlighed i vores liv.

For nogle få måneder siden, mens vi var på ferie i Vietnam, var min hustru og jeg ombord på et fly, der lettede i en kraftig storm. Turbulensen var voldsom, og vi kunne se mørke skyer, kraftig regn og lyn uden for vores vindue. Efter en lang og ustabil opstigning hævede vores fly sig endelig over uvejret og nåede op til en herlig udsigt. Vi blev endnu engang mindet om vor himmelske Fader og Jesus Kristus, og vi følte deres store kærlighed til os.

Kære venner, som en, der har oplevet Guds kærlighed, vidner jeg med glæde om, at Frelseren Jesus Kristus er Guds kærlighed. Hans kærlighed til os er fuldkommen, personlig og uendelig. Må vi, når vi trofast følger ham, være fyldt med hans kærlighed, og må vi være et fyrtårn, der leder andre til hans kærlighed. I Jesu Kristi navn. Amen.