

My Love for the Savior Is My “Why”

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Upendo Wangu kwa Mwokozi Ndiyo “Kwa Nini” Yangu

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Wa Sabini

April 2025 general conference

I love our Savior. This is the real and most powerful reason why I do what I do.

Have you ever noticed that our dear prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, continuously extends invitations to us? Not surprisingly, he has invited us to study and ponder the messages shared at the last two conferences. In April 2024, he said, “I hope you will repeatedly study the messages of this conference throughout the coming months.” Then, in October 2024, he said: “I urge you to study [the speakers’] messages. Use them as a litmus test of what is true and what is not during the next six months.”

These invitations can be added to prophetic invitations we have received throughout our lifetimes, including and especially those we have received in recent years. We may feel or think these invitations are another thing we need to add to our to-do lists, simply because we were invited or asked to do it. But could there be more to it?

Pondering over this and all the invitations we had received, I recalled something that I learned and decided long ago. I am trying to do these things which are essential to me because I love Him; I love our Savior. This is the real and most powerful reason why I do what I do, and then connected with this is my love for you, my fellow brothers and sisters.

As your brother, I hope you will consider my words as a sincere invitation to seek to under-

Ninampenda Mwokozi wetu. Hii ndiyo sababu halisi na yenye nguvu zaidi ya kufanya kile ninachokifanya.

Je, umewahi kugundua kwamba nabii wetu mpendwa, Rais Russell M. Nelson, mara kwa mara anatoa mialiko kwetu? Si ya kushangaza, ametualika tusome na tutafakari jumbe zilizotolewa kwenye mikutano mikuu miwili iliyopita. Mnamo Aprili 2024, alisema, “Ninatumaini mtajifunza jumbe za mkutano huu katika miezi yote ijayo.” Kisha, mwezi wa Oktoba 2024, alisema: “Ninawahimiza kujifunza jumbe za [wazungumzaji hao]. Zitumieni kama kipimo cha kuamua kipi ni kweli na kipi si kweli kwa miezi sita ijayo.”

Mialiko hii inaweza kuongezwa kwenye mialiko ya kinabii tuliyoipokea katika maisha yetu yote, ikijumuisha na hasa ile tuliyoipokea katika miaka ya hivi karibuni. Tunaweza kuhisi au kudhani mialiko hii ni kitu kingine tunachopaswa kuongeza kwenye orodha zetu za mambo ya kufanya, kwa sababu tulialikwa au kuombwa kufanya jambo. Lakini je, panaweza kuwa na zaidi kwenye hilo?

Nikitafakari juu ya hili na mialiko yote tuli-yokuwa tumepokea, nilikumbuka jambo fulani ambalo nilijifunza na kuliambia hapo zamani. Ninajaribu kufanya mambo haya, ambayo ni muhimu kwangu kwa sababu ninampenda Yeye; Ninampenda Mwokozi wetu. Hii ni sababu halisi na yenye nguvu zaidi ya kufanya kile ninachokifanya, na kisha lililounganika na hili ni upendo wangu kwenu, akina kaka wenzangu na dada zangu.

Kama kaka yenu, ninatumaini mtazingatia maneno yangu kama mwaliko wa dhati wa ku-

stand the opportunity to link everything we do with our love for the Savior.

Doing this will help us understand the real “why” behind everything we do as disciples of the Savior. This will help us strengthen our covenantal connection with God, understanding His divine and eternal truths—His eternal and absolute truths that will never change. Eternal truths like “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

It is interesting that sometimes because we have consistently done things to the point that they have turned into traditions, we allow these traditions or activities to dictate our efforts to build faith in Jesus Christ. It seems that we do these things because we have done them for many years, without considering their impact on our covenantal connection with the Savior.

In our world, we usually focus on what we do and on consistently accomplishing tasks and goals. In a spiritual sphere, we have the opportunity to go beyond just doing things or achieving goals by understanding why we are doing them. If we can understand and connect that the reason behind our actions relates to our love for the Savior and our Heavenly Father, by taking advantage of these opportunities we will understand that even though doing righteous things like having Church activities or traditions and appropriately doing them is a good thing, when we connect them with the “why,” we will be blessed to understand the reason. It won’t be just doing good things or doing them right; we will also get them right.

For example, when you set a goal to read the scriptures, offer sincere prayers, or prepare an activity for your family or ward, is the real goal simply to accomplish these tasks? Or are these actions the means, the tools at your disposal, to achieve the true goal? Is the purpose merely to hold an activity because we have done it for many years and then check the box that we have completed it? Or, once again, are these the means we use to learn, to feel, and to connect with the Savior?

Please don’t misunderstand my point about having activities and traditions or setting goals and working hard to achieve them; there is

tafuta kuelewa fursa ya kuunganisha kila jambo tunalolifanya na upendo wetu kwa Mwokozi.

Kufanya hivi kutatusaidia tuelewe “kwa nini” halisi nyuma ya kila jambo tunalolifanya kama wanafunzi wa Mwokozi. Hii itatusaidia kuimarisha muunganiko wetu wa kimaagano na Mungu, kuelewa kweli Zake za kiungu na za milele—kweli Zake za milele na za hakika ambazo hazitabadilika kamwe. Kweli za milele kama vile “Kwa maana jinsi hii Mungu aliupenda ulimwengu, hata akamtoa Mwanawe wa pekee, ili kila mtu amwaminiye asipotee, bali awe na uzima wa milele.”

Inafurahisha kwamba nyakati zingine kwa sababu mara nyingi tumefanya mambo hadi kufikia mahali ambapo yamegeuka kuwa desturi, tunaruhusu desturi hizi au shughuli hizi kuamua juhudi zetu za kujenga imani katika Yesu Kristo. Inaonekana kwamba tunafanya mambo haya kwa sababu tumeyafanya kwa miaka mingi, bila kuzingatia matokeo yake kwenye muunganiko wetu wa kimaagano na Mwokozi.

Katika ulimwengu wetu, mara nyingi tunafo-kasi kwenye kile tunachokifanya na kwenye kutimiza majukumu na malengo. Katika mazingira ya kiroho, tuna fursa ya kwenda zaidi ya kufanya tu mambo au kufikia malengo kwa kuelewa kwa nini tunayafanya hayo. Kama tunaweza kuelewa na kuunganisha kwamba sababu iliyo nyuma ya matendo yetu inahusiana na upendo wetu kwa Mwokozi na Baba yetu wa Mbinguni, kwa kutumia vyema fursa hizi tutaelewa kwamba japokuwa kufanya mambo ya haki, kama vile kuwa na shughuli au desturi za Kanisa na kuyafanya kwa usahihi ni jambo jema, tunapoyaunganisha na “kwa nini,” tutabarikiwa kuelewa sababu. Haitakuwa tu kufanya mambo mema au kuyafanya kwa usahihi; tutayafanya pia kwa usahihi.

Kwa mfano, unapoweka lengo la kusoma maandiko, kusali kwa dhati au kuandaa shughuli kwa ajili ya familia yako au kata yako, je, lengo halisi ni kukamilisha tu majukumu haya? Au je, matendo haya ni njia, zana ulizo nazo, ili kufikia lengo la kweli? Je, madhumuni ni kufanya tu shughuli kwa sababu tumefanya hivyo kwa miaka mingi na kisha kuweka alama ya vema kwenye kisanduku kwamba tumeikamilisha? Au, kwa mara nyingine, je, hizi ni njia tunazotumia kujifunza, ili kuhisi na kuunganika na Mwokozi?

Tafadhali usielewe vibaya hoja yangu kuhusu kuwa na shughuli na desturii au kuweka malengo na kufanya kazi kwa bidii ili kuyafikia; hakuna

nothing wrong with this. However, I invite you to open your hearts and minds to the opportunity and blessing of understanding why we do these things and how we practice our religion.

A prime example of Christ-centered traditions is the challenge President Dallin H. Oaks extended to all of us in the name of the First Presidency. President Oaks said: “As we enter this new year, let us prepare for an Easter celebration of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. ... No matter what others believe or do, we should celebrate the Resurrection of our living Savior by studying His teachings and helping to establish Easter traditions in our society as a whole, especially within our own families.” As you can see, it is not just an invitation to have traditions. Instead, we use these traditions as a means to learn more about the Savior and remember His Resurrection.

The more we can connect the reason with our love for the Savior, the more we will be able to receive what we need or are seeking. President Nelson said, “Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.” And then he extended this invitation: “Learn more about His Atonement, His love, His mercy, His doctrine, and His restored gospel of healing and progression. Turn to Him! Follow Him!”

Ponder this in your hearts and minds: Do you believe President Nelson’s invitation had the intention of helping us prepare a checklist where we will accumulate more knowledge and complete tasks so we can check off his invitation from our to-do lists? Or is he inviting us to consider the aspects of these eternal truths and principles as an opportunity to understand the “why” and connect the Savior’s covenantal love for us with our lifelong discipleship journey?

Let me illustrate the principle that I am trying to convey. One option, which is probably extreme, could be to read all the messages from general conference all at once; then, when I am done, I will check this invitation from my to-do list without doing anything else with what I read. I understand this is an extreme case, but it is not unreal. Probably, many are at some point between this and the ideal.

lo lote baya kwenye hili. Hata hivyo, ninawaalika muifungue mioyo na akili zenu kwenye fursa na baraka za kuelewa sababu ya kufanya mambo haya na jinsi tunavyofanyia kazi dini yetu.

Mfano mzuri wa desturi zenye kiini kwa Kristo ni changamoto ambayo Rais Dallin H. Oaks aliitoa kwetu sote kwa niaba ya Urais wa Kwanza. Rais Oaks alisema: “Tunapoingia mwaka huu mpya, na tujiandae kwa sherehe za Pasaka ya dhabihu ya Yesu Kristo ya kulipia dhambi. ... Bila kujali kile wengine wanachoamini na kufanya, tunapaswa kusherehekea Ufufuko wa Mwokozi wetu aliye hai kwa kujifunza mafundisho Yake na kusaidia kukuza tamaduni za Pasaka katika jumuiya zetu kwa ujumla, hususani ndani ya familia zetu wenyewe.” Kama mnavyoo-na, si tu mwaliko wa kuwa na desturi. Badala yake, tunatumia desturi hizi kama njia za kujifunza zaidi kumhusu Mwokozi na kukumbuka Ufufuko Wake.

Tunapounganisha zaidi sababu na upendo wetu kwa Mwokozi, ndivyo zaidi tutakavyoweza kupokea kile tunachokihitaji au tunachokitafuta. Rais Nelson alisema, “Maswali au shida zo zote mlizonazo, jibu daima linapatikana katika maisha na mafundisho ya Yesu Kristo.” Na kisha akatoa mwaliko huu: “Jifunzeni zaidi kuhusu Upatanisho Wake, upendo Wake, rehema Yake, mafundisho Yake na injili Yake iliyorejeshwa ya uponyaji na upigaji hatua. Mgeukieni Yeye! Mfuateni Yeye!”

Tafakarini hili mioyoni mwenu na akilini mwenu: Je, mnaamini mwaliko wa Rais Nelson ulikuwa na kusudi la kutusaidia kuandaa orodha ya kuweka alama ya vema ambapo tungekusanya ufahamu zaidi na kukamilisha majukumu ili sisi tutie alama ya vyema kwenye orodha yetu ya vitu vya kufanya? Au je, anatalika tuzingatia vipengele vya kweli hizi za milele na kanuni kama fursa ya kuelewa ile “kwa nini” na kuunganisha upendo wa kimaagano wa Mwokozi kwetu na safari ya maisha yote ya uanafunzi wetu?

Acha nifanue kanuni ambayo ninajaribu kuielezea. Namna moja, ambayo inawezakana kuzidi kiasi, ingekuwa kusoma jumbe zote kutoka kwa mkutano mkuu mara moja kisha ninapomaliza, nitawekea alama ya vema mwaliko huu kwenye orodha yangu ya mambo ya kufanya bila kufanya jambo lingine lo lote kwenye kile nilichokisoma. Ninaelewa hili ni suala kubwa, lakini ni halisi Pengine, wengi wako sehemu fulani katikati ya hili na lile lililo bora.

The invitation is to study and ponder the messages from the general conference and use them to determine and understand what we each can do to improve.

When we accept the invitation, understanding the “why” behind it, we will have more opportunities to become closer to the Savior. We will begin to understand that because I love the Savior, I want to learn more about Him by studying the words of the living prophets. And because I love my fellow man, I will share the teachings of prophets, seers, and revelators with others, starting with my loved ones.

In both examples, you are doing a righteous thing. In one, the goal seems to be using the means that Heavenly Father and the Savior have given us, which are the messages shared during general conference. The second version embraces the profound blessing of gaining insight into the underlying reasons, offering a pathway to understand eternal truth and the blessings promised to all who make the teachings and life of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the focal point of their lives.

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope you can feel and see the importance of connecting our actions with our love for the Savior. In a globalized world, many voices will try to influence you and, if possible, lead you to believe that some fundamental truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ are unnecessary. These voices start with the essential truth of the need for a restoration in these the last days, including the necessity of having God’s kingdom on earth, represented by the restored Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

You may hear voices insisting that only a personal relationship or understanding with the Savior is sufficient and that religion or the restored Church is unnecessary or nonessential. I invite you to be slow to consider or even be immune to being influenced by these misleading ideas and to be quicker to remember what the Savior has been telling and teaching us since ancient times—beginning with the love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ for us and connecting our love for Them as the reason to follow Them.

God the Father and His Son came and spoke with Joseph Smith to restore Jesus Christ’s

Mwaliko ni kusoma na kutafakari jumbe kutoka mkutano mkuu na kuzitumia kuamua na kuelewa kile kila mmoja wetu anachoweza kufanya ili kuwa bora.

Tunapokubali mwaliko, tukielewa “kwa nini” ya mwaliko huo, tutakuwa na fursa zaidi za kuwa karibu zaidi na Mwokozi. Tunapoanza kuelewa kwamba kwa sababu ninampenda Mwokozi, ninataka kujifunza zaidi kumhusu Yeye kwa kujifunza maneno ya manabii walio hai. Na kwa sababu ninawapenda binadamu wenzangu, nitashiriki mafundisho ya manabii, waonaji, na wafunuzi pamoja na wengine, kuanzia na wapendwa wangu.

Katika mifano yote miwili, unafanya jambo la haki. Katika mmoja, lengo linaonekana kuwa linatumia njia ambazo Baba wa Mbinguni na Mwokozi wametupatia, ambazo ni jumbe zilizotolewa wakati wa mkutano mkuu. Toleo la pili linakumbatia baraka kuu ya kupata umaizi kwenye sababu zilizopo, ikitoa njia ya kuelewa ukweli wa milele na baraka zilizoahidiwa kwa wote wanaofanya mafundisho na maisha ya Mwokozi wetu, Yesu Kristo, kituo cha fokasi ya maisha yao.

Wapendwa akina kaka na akina dada, ninatumaini mtahisi na kuona umuhimu wa kuunganisha matendo yetu na upendo wetu kwa Mwokozi. Katika ulimwengu wenye kuongezeka kwa kimuungano, sauti nyingi zitajaribu kukushawishi na, ikiwezekana, kukuongoza kuamini kwamba baadhi ya kweli za msingi za injili iliyorejeshwa ya Yesu Kristo si muhimu. Sauti hizi zikianza na ukweli muhimu wa hitaji la urejesho katika siku hizi za mwisho, ikijumuishia hitaji la kuwa na ufalme wa Mungu duniani, unaowakilishwa na Kanisa lililorejeshwa la Yesu Kristo la Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho.

Unaweza kusikia sauti zikisisitiza kwamba uhusiano binafsi au uelewa pekee kwa Mwokozi unatosha na kwamba dini au Kanisa lililorejeshwa si muhimu au sio lazima. Ninawaalika msiwe na haraka ya kuzingatia au hata muwe na kinga ya kushawishiwa na dhana hizi za kupotosha na kuwa wepesi kukumbuka kile ambacho Mwokozi amekuwa akituambia na kutufundisha tangu nyakati za kale—akianza na upendo wa Baba wa Mbinguni na Yesu Kristo kwa ajili yetu na kuunganisha upendo wetu Kwao kama sababu ya kuwafuata Wao.

Mungu Baba na Mwanawe walikuja na kuzungumza na Joseph Smith ili kurejesha Kanisa la

Church and to initiate the dispensation of the fulness of times, His kingdom on earth. Therefore, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the means established by Heavenly Father to access covenants that enable us to return home. Thus, we need more than just a personal relationship with Heavenly Father and His Son; we require essential priesthood ordinances through which we make covenants with Them. This provides a covenantal connection with Them and grants us access to Their covenantal love, making it possible to attain the highest kingdom of glory prepared for all those who are true and faithful to their covenants.

With all the energy of my soul, I bear witness to the reality and divinity of our Savior, Jesus Christ. He loves you. He knows what is happening in your life. His arms are wide open, extending the invitation “Come unto me, ... and I will give you rest.”

I love the Savior, and my love for Him is my “why.” In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Kristo na ili kuanzisha kipindi cha utimilifu wa nyakati, Ufalme Wake duniani. Kwa hiyo, Kanisa la Yesu Kristo la Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho ni njia iliyoanzishwa na Baba wa Mbinguni ili kufikia maagano yanayotuwzesha sisi kurejea nyumbani. Hivyo, tunahitaji zaidi ya uhusiano binafsi na Baba wa Mbinguni na Mwana Wake; tunahitaji ibada muhimu za ukuhani ambazo kupitia hizo tunafanya Nao maagano. Hii hutoa muunganiko wa kiagano na Wao na hutupatia ufikiaji kwenye upendo Wao wa kiagano, ikiwezesha upatikanaji wa ufalme wa juu zaidi wa utukufu ulioandaliwa kwa ajili ya wale wote walio wakweli na waaminifu kwenye maagano yao.

Kwa nguvu zote za nafsi yangu, ninatoa ushahidi kwenye uhalisia na uungu wa Mwokozi wetu, Yesu Kristo. Yeye anakupenda. Yeye ana-fahamu kile kinachotokea katika maisha yako. Mikono Yake imenyooshwa, ikitoa mwaliko, “Njooni kwangu, ... nami nitawapumzisha.”

Ninampenda Mwokozi, na upendo wangu Kwake ndiyo “kwa nini” yangu. Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.