

As a Little Child

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Mai te tamaiti iti

Nā te peresideni Jeffrey R. Holland

Peresideni mono nō te pupu nō te Tino 'Ahuru Ma Piti āpōsetolo

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I testify that babies and children and youth are images of the kingdom of God flourishing on earth in all of its strength and beauty.

Jesus began the last year of His mortal life by intensifying the training of His Apostles. If His message and His Church were to survive Him, more had to be pressed into the hearts of 12 very ordinary men who had known Him for scarcely 24 months.

One day Jesus witnessed an argument among the Twelve and later asked, “What was it that ye disputed among yourselves?” Apparently embarrassed, they “held their peace,” the record says. But this greatest of all teachers perceived the thoughts of their hearts and sensed the first blush of personal pride. So He “called a little child unto him, ...

“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

It should be noted that even before Christ's birth, King Benjamin's farewell sermon included this profound comment on a child's humility. It says, “The natural man is an enemy to God, ... and will be, forever and ever, unless he ... becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, ... humble, ... full of love, ... even as a child [responds] to his father.”

Tē parau pāpū nei au ē 'o te mau pēpe, te mau tamari'i ē te feiā āpī te mau hōho'a nō te bāsileia o te Atua e 'ua nei i nīa i te fenua nei, i tōna pūai tāāto'a ē tōna nehenehe tāāto'a.

'Ua ha'amata Iesu i te matahiti hope'a o tōna orara'a tāhuti nei ma te tūra'i rahi i te ha'api'ipi'ira'a o tōna mau āpōsetolo. 'Ia ora mai tōna poro'i ē tōna 'Ēkālesia, e rahi atu ā ia tei tītauhia 'ia nene'i i roto i te 'āu o teie 12 tāata noa, tei mātau iāna e 24 noa a'e āvā'e te maoro.

I te hō'e mahana, 'ua 'ite Iesu i te māniana i rotopū i te Tino 'Ahuru Ma Piti ē 'ua ui atu ra : « E aha tā 'outou i mārō noa ia 'outou iho ? » E au ē 'ua ha'amā rātou ē « māmū noa ihora », tē parau ra te pāpā'ira'a. 'Ua tā'a rā i teie 'orometua rahi i te mau 'orometua ato'a i te mana'o i tō rātou 'āau, ē tē huru 'ite ra 'oia i te tāpa'o mātāmua nō te te'ote'o o te tāata. Nō reira, « 'ua parau atu ra ['oia] i te hō'e tamaiti iti [...]

« 'Ua parau atu ra, 'Oia mau tā'u e parau atu ia 'outou nei, 'Ia 'ore 'outou 'ia fa'ahuru-ē-hia ē 'ia riro mai te tamari'i ri'i ra, e 'ore roa 'outou e o i te bāsileia ra o te ao.

« 'E teienei, 'o tei fa'aha'aha'a iāna iho ē mai teie nei tamaiti iti, 'oia te rahi i te bāsileia o te ao ra. »

'Ia tā'a ato'a ia tātou ē, nā mua ato'a i te fānau-ra'a o te Mesia, tei roto i te parau fa'atau aroha a te ari'i Beniamina teie parau hōhonu nō nīa i te ha'eha'a o te tamari'i. Tē parau nei : « 'E 'ua riro te tāata nātura nei 'ei 'enemi nō te Atua [...] 'e e vai noa ho'i ē a muri ē a muri noa atu, maori rā [...] 'ia riro 'ei tāata mo'a nā roto i te tārahara a te Mesia ra te Fatu, 'e 'ia riro ho'i mai te hō'e tamari'i ra i te auraro [...] te ha'eha'a [...] te 'i i te aroha [...] mai te hō'e tamari'i e [pāhono] i tōna

Now, there are obviously some infantile inclinations we don't encourage. Twenty-five years ago, my then-three-year-old grandson bit his five-year-old sister on the arm. My son-in-law, caring for the children that night, frantically taught his daughter all the lessons on forgiveness he could think of, concluding that her little brother probably didn't even know what a bite on the arm felt like. That ill-conceived fatherly comment worked for about a minute, maybe a minute and a half, until there was a window-rattling cry from the children's bedroom, where my granddaughter calmly called out, "He does now."

So what is it that we are to see in the virtues of life's junior varsity? What was it that brought Christ Himself to tears in the most tender scene in the entire Book of Mormon? What was Jesus teaching when He called down heavenly fire and protective angels to surround those children, commanding the adults to "behold [their] little ones"?

We don't know what prompted all of that, but I have to think it had something to do with their purity and innocence, their inborn humility, and what it could bring to our lives if we retain it.

Why are our days of despair labeled by one as "vanity of vanities"? How is it that "vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men" are the words that characterize the great and spacious building, so spiritually dead in Lehi's vision? And the Zoramites, that group who prayed so self-servingly? Of them Alma said, "O God, they [pray] unto thee with their mouths, while they are puffed up ... with the vain things of the world."

By contrast, is there anything sweeter, more pure, or more humble than a child at prayer? It is as if heaven is in the room. God and Christ are so real, but for others later on, the experience can become more superficial.

As Elder Richard L. Evans quoted some 60 years ago: "Many of us profess to be Christians, yet we ... do not take Him seriously. ... We respect Him, but we don't follow Him. ... We quote His sayings, but we don't live by them." "We admire Him, but we don't worship Him."

ra metua tāne. »

I teienei, e mea pāpū e mau peu ri'i tamari'i tā tātoue 'oree fa'aitoito nei. 'A 25 matahiti i ma'iri, 'ua hōhoni tō'u mo'otua tamāroa toru matahiti, i tōna tuahine pae matahiti, i n'ia i te rima. Nā tā'u hunō'a tāne e ha'apaō i te tamari'i i terā pō, 'ua ha'aviti 'oia i te a'o atu i tāna tamāhine i te mau ha'api'ira'a ato'a nō n'ia i te fa'aorera'a hapa, 'o tāna e nehenehe e feruri, ma te parau i te hope'a ē, pāpū ē 'aita tōna taeae iti e ta'a ra e aha te huru 'ia hōhonihia te rima. Hōē minuti paha te maoro, pēnei a'e e minuti 'e te 'āfa te manuiara'a teie ha'api'ira'a metua tāne, e hape mau, pa'a'ina mai nei te ta'i mai roto mai i te piha o te tamari'i 'e te reo hau ato'a o tō'u mo'otua tamāhine i te tuōra'a : « 'Ua ta'a iāna i teienei. »

Nō reira, e aha 'ia te faufa'a e tano 'ia hi'o mai i roto i te orara'a o hu'a mā ? E aha te mea i fa'atahe i te roimata o te Mesia iho i roto i te 'ohipa poihere roa a'e o te Buka a Moromona tā'ato'a ? E aha tā Iesu i ha'api'i 'a pi'i ai 'oia i te auahi o te ra'i 'e i te mau melahi pāruu nō te fa'aati i te reira mau tamari'i, ma te fa'au e te fei'a pa'ari 'ia « hi'o na i tā [rātou] mau tamari'i ri'i » ?

'Aita tātou i 'ite e aha tei 'ume mai i teie mau mea ato'a, 'ua feruri rā vau ē, nō tō rātou paha ateate 'e tō rātou hara 'ore, 'e tō rātou ha'eha'a mai te fānaura'a mai ā, 'e te mea tā te reirae nehenehe fa'atae mai i roto i tō tātou orara'a mai te mea e tāpē'a mai tātou i te reira.

Nō te aha pa'i i parau ai te hōē ta'ata nō te mau mahana tapineva ē e « faufa'a 'ore rahi teie ? » E aha ho'i 'o « te mau mana'o faufa'a 'ore [...] 'e te te'otē'o o te mau tamari'i a te ta'ata nei » te mau parau 'e te tāpā'o nō te fare rahi 'e te 'ā'ano 'e te pohe roa i te pae vārua, i roto i te 'ōrama a Lehi ? 'E te 'āti Zoroma 'ia, terā pupu i pure ma te rima pu'u ? 'Ua parau Alama nō rātou : « E te Atua, tē [pure] nei rātou ia 'oe i tō rātou vaha, 'ua 'i roa rā rātou [...] i te mau mea faufa'a 'ore o te ao nei. »

I te tahi atu pae, e mea ānei tei au a'e, tei ateate a'e 'e tei ha'eha'a a'e i te tamari'i e pure ra ? Mai te huru ē 'o te ra'i tei pārahi i roto i te piha. E parau pāpū roa ho'i te Atua 'e te Mesia nō rātou, nō vetahi rā i muri mai, e nehenehe te reira e riro mai 'e i 'ohipa ānia noa.

Mai tā Elder Richard L. Evans i fa'ahiti 'a 60 ti'ahapa matahiti i ma'iri : « E rave rahi o tātou e fāfā'i nei e keresetiano tātou [...] 'aita rā tātou e ti'aturi māite nei iāna [...] Tē fa'atura nei tātou iāna, 'aita rā e pe'e nei iāna [...] Tē fa'ahiti nei tātou i tāna mau parau, 'aita rā e ora nei i te reira.

How different life could be if the world esteemed Jesus above the level of a profane swearing streak from time to time.

But children really do love Him, and that love can carry over into their other relationships in the playground of life. As a rule, even in their youngest years, children love so easily, they forgive so readily, they laugh so delightfully that even the coldest, hardest heart can melt.

Well, the list goes on and on. Purity? Trust? Courage? Character?

Come with me to view the humility before God demonstrated by one young, very dear friend of mine.

On January 5, 2025—91 days ago—Easton Darrin Jolley had the Aaronic Priesthood conferred upon him and was ordained a deacon in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Easton had longed to pass the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for as long as he could remember. But this sacred opportunity was accompanied by the stomach-wrenching fear that he would fail, that he would fall, that he would be teased or embarrass himself and his family.

You see, Easton has a rare and very destructive illness, Ullrich congenital muscular dystrophy. It has progressively filled his young life with formidable challenges while shattering his hopes and dreams for the future. He will soon be in a wheelchair permanently. His family does not talk about what awaits him after that.

The Sunday after his ordination, Easton would pass the sacrament for the first time. And his privately held motivation was that he could present himself and these sacred emblems to his father, who was the bishop of the ward. In anticipating that task, he had begged and pled and wept and begged, extracting a guarantee that no one, no one, would try to help him. For many reasons, private to himself, he needed to do this alone and unaided.

After the priest had broken the bread and blessed it—an emblem representing the broken body of Christ—Easton, with his broken body, limped up to receive his tray. However, there

»« Tē fa'ahia nei tātou iāna, 'aita rā e ha'amori nei iāna. »

E aha pa'i te maita'i ta'a ē o te orara'a āhani tō te ao nei e mana'o hau atu ia Iesu, 'eiaha pa'i nō te mau parau tuhi noa, i terā ē terā taime.

E mea here mau rā te mau tamari'i iāna, 'e e nehenehe i terā here e mani'i mai i roto i te tahi atu mau tāamurā nō rātou i ni'a i te tahua o te orara'a nei. Tei mātauhia, i tō rātou āpirā'a iho, e mea ōhie roa nō te tamari'i 'ia here, e mea fa'aore ōhie roa rātou i te hapa, 'e e mea au roa ho'i tō rātou 'ata e tamarū te reira i te 'āau toeto'e roa a'e, te mea 'eta'eta roa a'e.

E'ita e fa'aea teie tāpura. Te ateate ? Te ti'aturi ? Te itoitō ? Te mana'o pa'ari ?

E haere tātou e hi'o i te ha'eha'a i mua i te Atua o te hōē taure'are'a e hoa iti rahi nō'u.

I te 5 nō Tēnuare ra 2025—'a 91 mahana i teienei—'ua hōro'ahia ia Easton Darrin Jolley te Autahu'ara'a a Aarona 'e 'ua fa'atōro'ahia 'ei diakono i roto i Te 'Ēkālesia a Iesu Mesia i te Feiā Mo'a i te mau Mahana Hope'a nei.

I tia'i maoro noa na Easton 'ia ōpere i te ōro'a nō te Tāmā'ara'a a te Fatu, mai iāna e ha'ama'ano ra. 'Ua āpēhia rā teie tia'ira'a mo'a e te ahoaho o te 'āau nō te manuia 'ore, 'oi topa mai 'oia, e fa'aōō mai te ta'ata 'e e ha'amā roa ia 'oia 'e tōna 'utuāfare ato'a.

'Ia 'ite 'outou, e ma'i varavara 'e te 'ino rahi tō Easton, 'o te ma'i puna uaua ra nō Ullrich. 'Ua āpapa haere noa mai te mau fifi ri'ari'a mau i roto i tōna orara'a tamari'i, 'a vāvahi ato'a ai i tōna mau tia'ira'a 'e te mau moemoeā nō ananahi. E'ita e maoro roa e mau tāmāu 'oia i roto i te pārahira'a tūra'i. 'Aita te 'utuāfare e paraparau nei i te mea e tia'i ra iāna i muri mai.

Te sābati i muri i tōna fa'atōro'ara'ahia, e ōpere Easton i te ōro'a nō te taime mātāmua. Te fa'aitoitōra'a rahi nōna, 'o te ti'ara'a ia ma teie mau tāpāo mo'a i mua i tōna metua tāne, 'o 'oia te 'episekōpo o te pāroita. I te ferurira'a 'oia i teie hōpoi'a, 'ua tāparu 'oia 'e 'ua ha'apehapeha, 'e 'ua ta'i 'e 'ua tāparu, 'ia ha'apāpūhia mai ē, e'ita te ta'ata, e'ita hōē a'e, e tāmata i te tauturu mai iāna. E mau tumu e rave rahi, ōmo'e iāna iho, i hina'aro ai 'oia e rave i te reira 'o 'ōna ana'e 'e ma te tauturu-'ore-hia.

I te otira'a te tahu'a i te vāvahi i te pāne 'e i te ha'amaita'i i te reira—te tāpāo nō te tino fati o te Mesia—'ua tūte'ite'i Easton i tōna tino fati nō te fa'ari'i mai i te fāri'i pāne. Terā rā ho'i, e toru

were three sizable steps from the meetinghouse floor to the elevated stand. So, after receiving his tray, he stretched up as high as he could and placed his tray on the surface above the handrail. Then, sitting down on one of the higher steps, with both hands he pulled his right leg up onto the first step. Then he pulled his left leg onto the same step, and so on up until, arduously, he was at the summit of his personal three-step Mount Everest.

He then maneuvered himself to a structural post by which he could climb to a standing position. He made his way back to the tray. A few more steps and he stood in front of the bishop, his father, who, with tears drenching his eyes and flooding down his face, had to restrain himself from embracing this perfectly courageous and faithful son. And Easton, with relief and a broad smile consuming his face, might well have said, “I have glorified [my father and] have finished the work [he gave] me to do.”

Faith, loyalty, purity, trust, honor, and, in the end, love for that father he so wished to please. These and a dozen other qualities make us also say, “Whosoever ... shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Sisters and brothers and friends, at the top of the list of the most beautiful images I know are babies and children and youth as conscientious and priceless as those we have referred to today. I testify that they are images of the kingdom of God flourishing on earth in all of its strength and beauty.

In that same spirit of testimony, I bear witness that in his youth, Joseph Smith saw what he said he saw and conversed with those with whom he said he spoke. I testify that a humble and pure Russell M. Nelson is God’s ordained and gifted prophet and seer. Coming from a lifetime of reading, I bear witness that the Book of Mormon is the most rewarding book I have ever read and the keystone of my little dwelling in a kingdom of many mansions. I bear witness that priesthood and prayer are restoring my life—Christ’s priesthood and your prayers. I know all this to be true and bear witness of it in the name of the most loyal and humble of all God’s sons—Alpha and Omega, the Great I Am, the crucified, the faithful witness—even the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

ta’ahira’a huru rahi i roto i teie fare purera’a nō te tae atu i terā tahua i ni’a. Nō reira, i muri iho i te ravera’a i tāna fāri’i, ’ua toro ’oia i tōna rima i ni’a ’a tu’u ai i te fāri’i i ni’a atu i te ’āuri tāpē’ara’a. ’Ei reira, ’ua pārahi ’oia i raro, i ni’a i te ta’ahira’a ’āvae teitei roa a’e, ’e ma tōna rima ’ua huti mai i tōna ’āvae ’atau i ni’a i te ta’ahira’a mātāmua. I muri iho ’ua huti ato’a mai i tōna ’āvae ’aui, ē nā reira noa ē tāpae atu ra ma te tauto’ora’a rahi i ni’a i te tupu’ai mou’a o tōna iho mou’a Everest e toru ta’ahira’a.

’Ua ne’e atu ra i pīha’i i te hōē pou i reira ’oia i te hutira’a iāna i ni’a nō te ti’a mai. Ho’i mai nei ’oia i te vāhi tei reira te fāri’i. E mā’a ta’ahira’a ri’i atu ā, tei mua ’oia i te ’episekōpo, tōna metua tāne, tei ha’apa’ari noa, ma te roimata e mani’i noa i ni’a i tōna mata, nō te ’ore e tauahi mai i teie tamaiti itoito hope ’e te fā’aro’o hope. ’E nō Easton, ma te mana’o tāmārū ’e te ’ataata i tūrāma i tōna mata, e ti’a roa iāna ’ia parau ē : « ’Ua ha’amaita’i au [i to’u metua tāne ’e] ’ua oti iā’u te ’ohipa [tāna] i hō mai nā’u e rave ra. »

Te fā’aro’o, te atati’a, te ateate, te ti’aturi, te tura, ’e i te hope’a, te here nō terā metua tāna i hina’aro roa ’ia ha’amāuruuru. Nō teie nei ’e te tahi atu rahi’a maita’itātoue parau ato’a ē : « ’O tei fā’aha’aha’a iāna iho ē mai teie nei tamaiti iti, ’oia te rahi i te bāsileia o te ao ra. »

Te mau tuahine ’e te mau tae’a ’e te mau hoa ē, te nūmera hōē roa i ni’a i te tāpura o te mau hōho’a nehenehe roa a’e, ’ua ’ite au ’o te mau pēpe ia ’e te mau tamari’i ’e te feiā ’āpī, mai rātou tā tātou i fa’ahiti i teie mahana, i te mea ha’apa’o maita’i ’e te hau a’e i te maita’i. Tē parau pāpū nei au ē ’o rātou te mau hōho’a nō te bāsileia o te Atua e ’ūa’a nei i ni’a i te fenua nei, i tōna pūai tāātō’a ’e tōna nehenehe tāātō’a.

Ma taua vārūa ra nō te ’itera’a pāpū, tē hōro’a nei au i tō’u ’itera’a pāpū ē, ’ua ’ite Iosepha Semita i te mea tāna i parau ē ’ua ’ite ’oia, ’e ’ua paraparau ia rātou tāna i parau ’ua paraparau ’oia. Tē parau pāpū nei au ē, ’o te ta’ata ha’ēha’a ra ’e te ateate, ’o Russell M. Nelson te peropheta ’e te hi’o ’aravihi tei fa’atōro’ahia e te Atua. Mai roto mai i tā’u mau tai’ora’a i roto i te orara’a nei, tē hōro’a nei au i tō’u ’itera’a pāpū ē ’o te Buka a Moromona te buka fa-ufa’a roa a’e tā’u i tai’o, ’e ’o te ’ōfā’i tāpē’a ’apu o tā’u nohora’a iti i roto i te bāsileia e rave rahi aora’i. Tē hōro’a nei au i tō’u ’itera’a pāpū ē, tē fa’aho’i mai nei te autahu’ara’a ’e te pure i tō’u ora—te autahu’ara’a a te Mesia ’e tā ’outou mau pure. ’Ua ’ite au e parau mau ana’e te reira ’e te hōro’a nei au i tō’u ’itera’a pāpū nō te reira nā roto i te i’oa

o te tamaiti auraro roa a'e 'e te ha'eha'a o te mau
tamaiti ato'a a te Atua—te Alepha 'e te Omega, te
Tē vai nei au rahi, tei fa'asataurohia, te 'ite ha'apa'o
maita'i—'oia ho'i te Fatu Iesu Mesia, 'āmene.