

# *The School of the Family*

*"It is impossible for a [family] to be saved in ignorance" (D&C 131:6)*

Three things are happening among the Saints. First, we are being taught the gospel more directly and more clearly than ever before, and faith is increasing. This is evidenced by the temples that now dot the land worldwide. Second, we see a corresponding rise in the power of Satan whose attacks on church, family, and freedom surpass anything we could ever have imagined. Apostles speak out on religious liberty; church leaders spend more time instructing us in protecting our youth from the latest evils; citizens are becoming informed.

And third . . . well, the third is our part. Satan has provided the opposition. The Church has provided the structure, the authority, and the ordinances. We must protect and rescue from Satan both our liberty and our children, and we must also engage in what prophets have called "the upbuilding of Zion," a work Joseph Smith said should be "our greatest object," a work of "magnitude and grandeur." Brigham Young said, "Zion will extend, eventually, all over this earth. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but what will be in Zion."

The "upbuilding" of Zion and the battle for liberty require educational foundations; "zeal without knowledge" is dangerous. Our youth should be included in both the studies and the political battles; they are called to it as much as we are, and they will be happier and more faithful if their minds and hands are busy in worthy causes.

If we can develop a vision of the new culture that Zion will eventually become, that vision will give us hope, faith, stability, and a sense of personal and family mission. Becoming Zion means becoming a different people, changed in nature. It means bringing to pass refinements and advancements in science and technology, health and healing, economics, education, government, and the arts as Zion grows to fill the whole world.

The LDS Home Educators Association would like to make a contribution to the upbuilding of Zion in the area of education. For the past twenty years we have supported and encouraged homeschoolers, as we will continue to do. Now we wish to include all families in a broader and more simple proposal: In order to strengthen the family unit, reduce the allure of sin, and bring to pass an exciting new millennial culture, we urge families to become proactive in learning truth -- not only the truth of the gospel itself, but God's truth in all areas of study. We therefore suggest the establishment of a "school" of some kind in every family in whatever way the family chooses. This may mean just a change in the conversation at the dinner table and a new bookshelf. It may involve an hour or two on Saturday mornings or Sunday afternoons. It is a *family work* -- a family gathered at home, experiencing the joy of learning truth together beyond their core gospel study (all truth is encompassed within the gospel). Learning and teaching are Christ-like attributes we inherited; our family is our practice lab. The Holy Ghost will help us -- that is His job. From small beginnings, we can and we will become families of Zion.

May I testify to the spiritual feast our own recent Kinmont School of the Family experience has been. In honor of Washington's Birthday, my husband and I and an adult daughter began studying together in the book *THE REAL GEORGE WASHINGTON* and some other sources. We started at the point where Washington had just been elected president, where we could feel the majesty of his character. We continued through the chapter on his death and then moved to the beginning of the book. We are now at the point where the mother country is exercising unrighteous dominion upon the colonists and Washington is forced to react, a situation that feels very much like our own day. We testify that Washington was among the most noble and great, that he was chosen before the world was to father a free country -- and he is still with us. We testify that true education can save our families and our country. We pray for blessings upon your efforts to become a refined, educated, Zion-focused family.

*Joyce Kinmont*

LDS Home Educators Assn.  
<http://www.ldshea.org>  
[joyce@ldshea.org](mailto:joyce@ldshea.org)  
 801-776-3555

*You will see the day that Zion will be as far ahead of the outside world in everything pertaining to learning of every kind as we are today in regard to religious matters.*

— President John Taylor, 1857

# *Suggestions for a School of the Family*

## Setting up a family school

- \* Study and pray; create your school spiritually first; name it if you wish.
- \* Decide what things your family is more important than. Make cuts.
- \* Spray your house with “house of learning” mist; it’s a new mind set.
- \* Expect opposition, just as there is when you plan to attend the temple.

*I want you to remember that you ought not to teach even the alphabet or the multiplication tables without the Spirit of God.*  
– President Brigham Young to Brother Karl Maeser

## Parental Challenges

- \* Earth is our school in godhood, home our main classroom; be grateful for the assignments and opportunities; don’t skip classes or get someone else to do your work; don’t give up!
- \* Become skilled salesmen for Family Scripture Study, Family Home Evening, and The School of the Family.
- \* Listen more; study your children to help them discover their interests, talents, and personal missions.
- \* Study your children to learn from them how best to teach them.

*I am making an unabashed appeal for a distinctly LDS approach to education.*  
– Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, President, BYU

## Goals and Purposes

- \* To build a family unit strong enough to survive evil and qualify for Zion.
- \* To develop in family members a hunger for an education in truth.
- \* To help children prepare to be teachers of their own future children.
- \* To develop the ability to learn from the Holy Ghost (Elder Scott, “To Acquire Spiritual Guidance,” Gen Conf April 2009; “To Learn and to Teach,” Education Week 2007).
- \* To rekindle the love of learning (Elder Bednar, “Learning to Love Learning,” February 2010 *Ensign*).
- \* To rekindle godly creativity (Elder Uchtdorf, “Happiness, Your Heritage,” Relief Society Conf, Oct 2008).

## What to Study

- \* Whatever the family wants to learn about. . . .
- \* Your family history, which will “turn the hearts of the children.”
- \* The Constitution and our now-critical responsibility to sustain it.
- \* American History, through accurate biographies and videos.
- \* Science, through materials from LDS and Christian sources.
- \* Literature from the best books and movies.
- \* Things mislearned at school or elsewhere, especially political and social issues.
- \* Things not learned at school or elsewhere, especially classics, finances, history, current events.

*Choose carefully what you will learn, whose teachings you will follow, and whose purposes you will serve.*  
– Elder Russell M. Nelson

## Materials

- \* There are abundant LDS-produced materials on the Constitution and history and some on-line classes.
- \* What we have or recommend will be posted under “School of the Family -- Resources” on our [website](http://www.lds.org).
- \* As families move to education mode, we expect to see many great and marvelous resources appear.

## Methods

- \* Family read-alouds, especially snuggled around mom and dad.
- \* Planned and spontaneous family discussions.
- \* Worthy movies, paused from time to time for family discussions.
- \* Teach one another; take turns in leadership.
- \* No tests, no grades, not much lecturing. Relax and enjoy each other.
- \* Journals and notebooks are recommended as personal records.
- \* Testify often.

*Do teach [the children] all you can, that they may have good minds. Be tender and kind to them.*  
– Joseph in letter to Emma

*We must choose our learning with care because learning has an eternal shelf life, and whatever useful knowledge or wisdom or “principle of intelligence” we acquire in this life “will rise with us in the resurrection.”*