



Strengthening Families and Homes

Study this material, and as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

From the Scriptures: Genesis 18:19; Mosiah 4:15; D&C 93:40; Moses 6:55–58

Strengthening at Every Opportunity

“Each of us is in a different family situation. Some families have a mother and father with children at home. Some couples no longer have children at home. Many members of the Church are single, and some are single parents. Others are widows or widowers living alone.

“No matter what our family looks like, each of us can work to strengthen our own families or help in strengthening others.

“[Once] I stayed in the home of my niece and her family. That evening before the children went to bed, we had a short family home evening and a scripture story. Their father told about the family of Lehi and how he taught his children that they must hold fast to the iron rod, which is the word of God. Holding fast to the iron rod would keep them safe and lead them to joy and happiness. If they should let go of the iron rod, there was danger of drowning in the river of dirty water.

“To demonstrate this to the children, their mother became the ‘iron rod’ that they must cling to, and their father played the role of the devil, trying to pull the children away from safety and happiness. The children loved the story and learned how important it is to hold fast to the iron rod. After the scripture story it was time for family prayer. . . .

“Scriptures, family home evening, and family prayer will strengthen families. We need to take every opportunity to strengthen families and support one another to stay on the right path.”¹

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

What Can We Do?

1. What ideas for strengthening families and homes will you share with your sisters? As you ponder their individual circumstances, the Spirit can bring ideas to your mind.
2. What priorities can you change this month to better strengthen your own family and home?

For more information, go to www.relief-society.lds.org.

From Our History

From the beginning Relief Society has had a charge to strengthen families and homes. The Prophet Joseph taught sisters at an early Relief Society meeting, “When you go home, never give a cross or unkind word to your husbands, but let kindness, charity and love crown your works henceforward.”²

In 1914 President Joseph F. Smith told Relief Society sisters, “Wherever there is ignorance or at least a lack of understanding in regard to the family, . . . there this organization exists or is near at hand, and by the natural endowments and inspiration that belongs to the organization they are prepared and ready to impart instruction with reference to those important duties.”³



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT CASEY

NOTES

1. Barbara Thompson, “His Arm Is Sufficient,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2009, 84.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 482.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 186.