



Faith • Family • Relief

# The Purpose of Relief Society

*Prayerfully 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.*

When our presidency was first called, we were given some resources about the history of Relief Society. We studied them prayerfully, wanting to know the purpose of Relief Society and what the Lord would have us do. We learned that the purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life.

To fulfill this purpose of Relief Society, the Lord has commissioned each sister and the organization as a whole to:

1. Increase in faith and personal righteousness.
2. Strengthen families and homes.
3. Provide relief by serving the Lord and His children.

We can do this work in the Lord's way only when we seek, receive, and act on personal revelation. Without personal revelation, we cannot succeed. If we heed personal revelation, we cannot fail. The prophet Nephi instructs us that the Holy Ghost will show us "all things what [we] should do" (2 Nephi 32:5). We must allow ourselves to be still enough and quiet enough to listen to the voice of the Spirit.

Sisters, we have a vital role to play in helping build the kingdom of God and preparing for the Lord's coming. In fact, the Lord's work cannot be accomplished without the help of His daughters. Because of that, the Lord expects us to increase our offering. He expects us to fulfill the purpose of Relief Society as never before.

*Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.*

## From the Scriptures

Deuteronomy 6:5–7; Luke 10:30–37;  
James 1:27; 2 Nephi 25:26; Mosiah 3:12–13

*To read about a woman who was an example of faith and personal righteousness, see page 38.*

## What Can I Do?

1. What inspiration have I received to help my sisters increase in faith and personal righteousness and strengthen their families and homes? What relief can I provide?
2. How will I use this message to strengthen my faith and increase my own commitment to personal righteousness?

For more information, go to [www.reliefsociety.lds.org](http://www.reliefsociety.lds.org).

## NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:25.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 185.
3. M. Russell Ballard, "Women of Righteousness," *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 39; *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 70.

## From Our History

At a June 9, 1842, meeting of the Relief Society, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught the sisters that their society was "not only to relieve the poor, but to save souls."<sup>1</sup> This statement of a spiritual as well as a temporal purpose has characterized Relief Society throughout its history. In 1906 President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught: "[Relief Society] has not only to deal with the necessities of the poor, the sick and the needy, but a part of its duty—and the larger part, too—is to look after the spiritual welfare and salvation of the mothers and daughters of Zion; to see that none is neglected, but that all are guarded against misfortune, calamity, the powers of darkness, and the evils that threaten them in the world."<sup>2</sup> In 2001 Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reiterated, "Every sister in this Church who has made covenants with the Lord has a divine mandate to help save souls, to lead the women of the world, to strengthen the homes of Zion, and to build the kingdom of God."<sup>3</sup> ■

