

Susan W. Tanner, “I Am the Light Which Ye Shall Hold Up,”: I remember a simple sampler that I cross-stitched as a young Primary girl. It said, “I will bring the light of the gospel into my home.” I wondered, “What is that light?” Jesus Christ Himself explained it best when He was teaching the Nephites. He said, “Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world.” Then He explained, “I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do” (3 Ne. 18:24; emphasis added).

What had the Nephites seen Him do, and could I possibly do those things in my home? When the people desired for Him to tarry with them a little longer, He had compassion upon them and lingered with them. Then He healed them, prayed with them, taught them, wept with them, blessed their little children one by one, fed them, and administered and shared the sacrament that they might covenant to always remember Him. His ministry among them was about teaching and caring for each individual, and about completing the work His Father had commanded Him to do. There was no thought for Himself. As I learned this, there began for me a lifelong quest to bring His light into my home through selfless, Christlike acts.

This is not an easy task. It might be easier to “arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations” (D&C 115:5; emphasis added) rather than that your light may be a standard for your own families.

Some of us are born into families with very difficult problems. And even good families have many challenges. We must try to do in our homes what Christ did with the Nephites. As the proclamation on the family teaches, “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Liahona, Oct. 2004, 49; Ensign, Nov. 1995, 102). We must be the light to help our families overcome sin, anger, envy, and fighting. We can pray together, weep for each other, heal each other’s wounds, and selflessly love and serve one another.

Discuss family members’ roles, and how to support one another:

As head of a family, a father is responsible for the family’s spiritual and temporal welfare.

- What different kinds of responsibilities do your fathers have in your families?
- How can you learn what your father’s daily work and Church calling require of him? What can you do to support your father in these important duties?

Point out that as a young woman learns of her father’s responsibilities and prays for him each day, she will come to realize what she can do to support and help him. Sometimes the best thing is to pray for him daily. She can also ask her father to pray for her or, when she feels the need, to give her a blessing. Emphasize that there can be great power in this kind of mutual support.

- When might you need divine help and a special blessing? (When taking an important test, beginning a new school year, giving a talk, moving, and so on.)

Explain that sometimes we need extra strength from the Lord when we are faced with anxieties, trials, or temptations. Most fathers are willing to help their children when they know their needs. But it is up to us to share these feelings with our fathers and ask for their help.

- How could asking for a father’s blessing be a way of supporting your father? Ask the young women to think about the last time they complimented their father on anything, from appearance to performance. How might a daughter express or show appreciation for such things as the following: home comforts, clothing, counsel and advice, a good example, for life itself?

Brainstorm and list on the chalkboard other ways a young woman can support her father.

- What kinds of responsibilities do your mothers have in your families?
- What is your mother’s daily schedule? How much work does her Church calling require? What can you do to support your mother in her important responsibilities? (add to chalkboard discussion)
- Why is it sometimes difficult to express affection and support for your brothers and sisters?

Point out that some people are embarrassed to show love to brothers and sisters. Others have a bad habit of belittling their brothers and sisters instead of building them up.

Sister Emma Rae McKay, the wife of President David O. McKay, tells of one young girl who enjoyed playing her own accompaniment as she sang songs for visitors or for her friends. “One day her older brother heard her, and when they reached home, he mimicked her singing, laughed and taunted her with the remark, ‘Oh, you think people like to hear you try to sing. They are just pretending.’ [She] could seldom be coaxed to sing after that; at least, she had to know that brother was nowhere in listening distance. ...

(Discuss this sibling relationship - how easily we can hurt one another’s feelings and aspirations - how we can heal one another when things like this happen?)

“Be one who nurtures and builds. Be one who has an understanding and a forgiving heart, who looks for the best in people. Leave people better than you found them” (Marvin J. Ashton, in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, p. 26; or Ensign, May 1992, p. 20).

One daughter recalls that her father demonstrated how children can fill each other’s needs within the family. “One time [dad] brought two buckets into the family room—one filled with water, one empty. Then he had each of us think of something that made us upset or frustrated or discouraged that day. For each thing we named, he took a cup of water out of the full bucket. Then he told us that we are like that bucket, and when things happen during the day that disturb us, a cup of self-esteem is taken out. Gradually we get closer and closer to ... the bottom [until the bucket is completely empty]. Then he turned to the other bucket. He asked us for suggestions on how we could help a person whose bucket was empty to fill it up again. With each suggestion, he had us step up and dip a cup of water back into the empty bucket. Then dad concluded that home is the place where we come to get our buckets filled, and that we should watch for and be sensitive to others, because we are responsible for helping to fill our brothers’ and sisters’ needs” (Eric G. Stephan and Judith Stephan Smith, *What Happy Families Are Doing* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981], pp. 57–58). List on the chalkboard ways the young women suggest to build and support their brothers and sisters.

- What are your feelings when another family member wins an award or achieves something? Are you willing to share what belongs to you with others? When was the last time you went out of your way to support a brother or sister? How did this affect your relationship with that person? Do you wait for someone to do something nice for you before offering your support to him or her?

Have a member of the class read Doctrine and Covenants 108:7 - Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings.

Give each young woman a copy of the scripture. Tell them that their supportive attitudes can be contagious. These attitudes can spread from them to every member of their families, fostering feelings of warmth and unity in the family. Suggest that each young woman do at least one thing during the coming week for her father, mother, brothers, and sisters that will show her support for them.

Activity: Before class, place strips of masking tape on Jenga pieces. During class, read *For the Strength of Youth* (pamphlet, 2001), “Family,” 10–11, and after each sentence have the girls write on the tape things that would support their family members, and build up their family unity. Build a Jenga tower as each block is written on. Once complete, talk about how the tower represents our homes, and each time we remove a block (through selfish unkind actions, teasing, fighting, quarrelling, disobedience, etc.) it gets weaker. If we strive to support and love our family members our family stays strong.

Since “no other success can compensate for failure” here, we must place high priority on our families. We build deep and loving family relationships by doing simple things together, like family dinner and family home evening and by just having fun together. In family relationships love is really spelled t-i-m-e, time. Taking time for each other is the key for harmony at home. We talk with, rather than about, each other. We learn from each other, and we appreciate our differences as well as our commonalities. We establish a divine bond with each other as we approach God together through family prayer, gospel study, and Sunday worship. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Of Things That Matter Most,”



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