



Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel

Volume 14 | Number 1

Article 3

1-2013

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"Why We Are Organized into Quorums and Relief Societies." *Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel* 14, no. 1 (2013): 18-33. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/re/vol14/iss1/3>

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Julie B. Beck

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Why We Are Organized into Quorums and Relief Societies

JULIE B. BECK

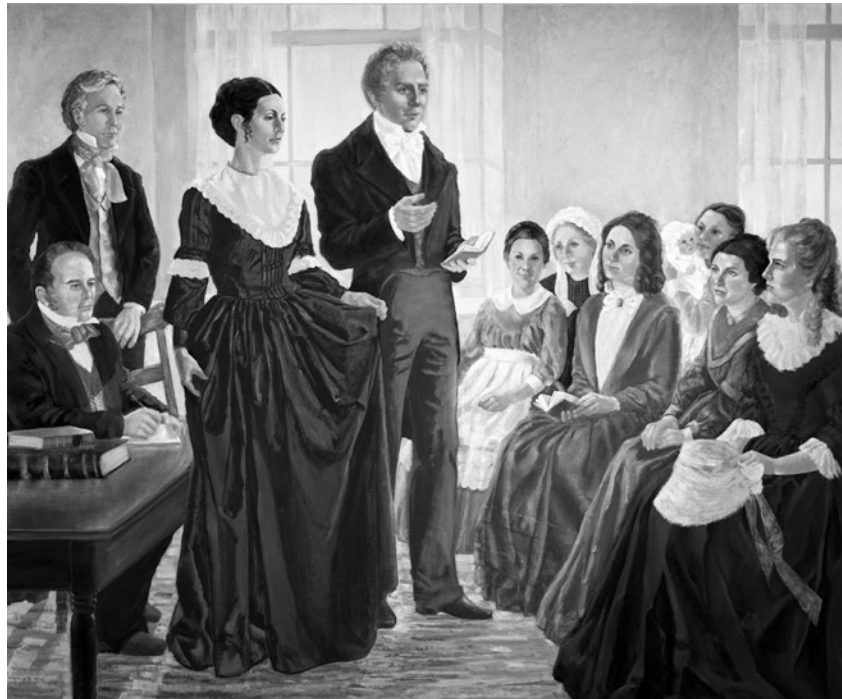
Julie B. Beck served as the Relief Society general president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 2007 to 2012.

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This devotional address was given at BYU on January 17, 2012.

Thank you for your welcome today at Brigham Young University. I love this university, and I feel blessed by every opportunity to feel the spirit that is unique to this campus. Because of my service on the Church Board of Education, I can testify of the Lord's interest in this marvelous institution, and, in your honor, I wore my best BYU blue today.

As I have pondered this opportunity to speak to you, a number of different subjects came to my mind. I thought I might try to add to the teaching you have had about dating, marriage, and establishing eternal families. Or some people suggested that I speak to you about your dress and appearance. I even thought about saying some things about what your mother wishes you had learned before you left home. But the Spirit has persisted in giving me ideas about why we are organized into quorums and Relief Societies.

Although this is probably an unusual topic for most of you to consider, I hope the Spirit will use me to teach you some things that will bless your lives



Organization of the Relief Society, Nadine B. Barton © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. 1985

When the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society, he told the sisters they were organized “under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood.”

as you continue to strengthen your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and contribute to building His kingdom.

When I was a young girl my father was called to preside over the Brazilian Mission. At that time there was only one mission in Brazil. There were no stakes or wards; there wasn’t an elders quorum in the country. That means there were no home teachers. There were over forty branches, which were generally presided over by missionaries who conducted a weekly sacrament meeting and sometimes held Sunday School and branch activities. My father had served as a stake president and a bishop prior to his call as a mission president, and he had an understanding of how to establish the Lord’s Church. He began to organize branches and districts in the pattern we are familiar with today in anticipation of future stakes and wards.

To begin the organization, some priorities were followed. First, a branch president and then an elders quorum president and a Relief Society president were called. It was understood that there could be no functioning branch without a quorum president and a Relief Society president.

As the Prophet Joseph Smith began establishing the Church in this dispensation, the Lord directed him to follow similar inspired patterns. When he set the course for the Relief Society, he told the sisters they were organized “under the priesthood after the pattern of the priesthood.”¹ This gave the sisters official responsibilities in the restored Church and the authority to function in those responsibilities. This was a pattern similar to that given to a president of a quorum of elders, who was to counsel with his presidency (see D&C 107:21).

Before we can understand why we are thus organized, it may be helpful to review the definition of a priesthood quorum and a Relief Society. Many people have the mistaken idea that a quorum or a Relief Society is merely a class or a place to sit during the third hour of church on Sunday. Perhaps some of this misunderstanding started to develop when the Church combined its major meetings into a three-hour block on Sunday. Before that time, quorum and Relief Society meetings were not connected with sacrament meeting or Sunday School.

A priesthood quorum is a group of men with the same office of priesthood who are to perform a special labor. Membership in a quorum has been called “a steady, sustaining citizenship.”² President Boyd K. Packer has said that quorums are “selected assemblies of brethren given authority that [the Lord’s] business might be transacted and His work proceed.”³ He also said that “in ancient days when a man was appointed to a select body, his commission, always written in Latin, outlined the responsibility of the organization, defined who should be members, and then invariably contained the words: *quorum vos unum* meaning, ‘of whom we will that you be one.’”⁴

President Spencer W. Kimball taught that “the Relief Society is the Lord’s organization for women. It complements the priesthood training given to the brethren.”⁵ The word *society* has a meaning nearly identical to that of *quorum*. It connotes “an enduring and cooperating . . . group” distinguished by its common aims and beliefs.⁶ When Joseph Smith organized the sisters, he told them that “there should be a select society, separate from all the evils of the world, choice, virtuous, and holy.”⁷ President Joseph F. Smith taught that Relief Society has its own unique identity and that it was “divinely made, divinely authorized, divinely instituted, divinely ordained of God to minister for the salvation of the souls of women and men.”⁸

The purposes of Relief Society are to increase faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families and homes, and seek out and provide relief

for those who are in need.⁹ The quorum is to serve others, build unity and brotherhood, instruct quorum members in the doctrines and principles of the gospel, and watch over the Church.¹⁰

Being part of a Relief Society or quorum is a designation for a way of life. We are to serve in the association of a Melchizedek Priesthood quorum or a Relief Society for a lifetime. From the quorum or Relief Society, we are called to serve in other Church assignments and organizations, such as missionary work, temple service, Sunday School, seminary or institute, Young Men, Primary, Young Women, and so forth. No matter where we serve, we always retain our “citizenship” in and our responsibility to the quorum or Relief Society. President Packer has taught that all service in the Church strengthens the higher priesthood and Relief Society and is a demonstration of our devotion to Relief Society and quorum membership.¹¹

It is true that each of us is responsible for becoming a faithful, covenant-keeping disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some may argue that we can accomplish this as individuals without the benefit of a supporting group. But President David O. McKay said that if priesthood men only needed “personal distinction or individual elevation, there would be no need of groups or quorums. The very existence of such groups, established by divine authorization, proclaims our dependence upon one another, the indispensable need of mutual help and assistance.”¹²

Inasmuch as the Lord chose to organize us in this way, it is important for us to seek for a greater understanding as to why we are thus organized and then to seek to fulfill the vision He has for us. To help facilitate that understanding I have drawn heavily from the scriptures and words of prophets to illustrate, only briefly, five important reasons why we are organized into quorums and Relief Societies.

Following Priesthood Patterns

One of the reasons we have quorums and Relief Societies is to organize us under the priesthood and after the pattern of the priesthood.¹³ Our God is a God of order, and all that He does to build His kingdom is done through His priesthood patterns.

One of those patterns is the organization of wards and stakes, each with a geographic boundary. Each ward is guided by a bishop who holds the keys, or the Lord’s authority, for his ward. He is the shepherd of the Lord’s flock within his ward and has the charge to see to the temporal and spiritual needs

of that flock. Only he can authorize the ordinances that are essential for the salvation of the members of that flock. His responsibility is monumental and is the more difficult because he is only one man who cannot possibly watch over all of the sheep at once. The quorum and Relief Society leaders are seen by the bishop as undershepherds who magnify, enhance, and distribute his watchcare.

The formation of a presidency is also a priesthood pattern. Every ward elders quorum president or Relief Society president presides over and directs the activities of the elders quorum or Relief Society in the ward.¹⁴ Quorum and Relief Society leaders have a measure of divine authority given to them regarding the government and instruction of those they are called to lead.¹⁵ They are men and women who are “called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands” (Articles of Faith 1:5). To preside means to stand guard, to superintend, and to lead.¹⁶ This means that Relief Society and quorum leaders in a ward carry the responsibility to supervise, oversee, and regulate the work of the Relief Society and the quorums on behalf of the bishop.

Sustaining those who are called to lead is also a priesthood pattern. We do not select our leaders by popular vote as is common in organizations outside the Church. It is an act of our faith in the Lord and those who are called to lead in His Church to sustain their actions and support them in their responsibilities to lead us. When Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society, he “exhorted the sisters always to concentrate their faith and prayers for, and place confidence in those whom God has appointed to honor, whom God has placed at the head to lead.”¹⁷

One of the priesthood patterns we enjoy is the ability to receive revelation. When Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society, he said the sisters were “to get instruction through the order which God has established—through the medium of those appointed to lead.”¹⁸ This ability and promise regarding personal revelation is one of the remarkable blessings that come to every quorum and Relief Society presidency. When the Lord said that each of us was to learn our duty and act in the office to which we are appointed (see D&C 107:99), He provided a way for us to do just that. I have seen humble Relief Society and quorum presidencies in many parts of the world leading with great and inspiring ability because they are organized under the priesthood and after the order of the priesthood. They follow patterns that allow them to get revelation for the work they have been set apart to do.

At the time of the Relief Society centennial the First Presidency wrote: “We ask our Sisters of the Relief Society never to forget that they are a unique organization in the whole world, for they were organized under the inspiration of the Lord. . . . No other woman’s organization in all the earth has had such a birth.”¹⁹

Focusing on the Work of Salvation

A second reason we are organized into quorums and Relief Societies is to focus Heavenly Father’s sons and daughters on the work of salvation and to engage them in it. Quorums and Relief Societies are an organized discipleship with the responsibility to assist in our Father’s work to bring about eternal life for His children. We are not in the entertainment business; we are in the salvation business. Entrance into an elders quorum or a Relief Society usually follows a significant investment from the Lord and His leaders in the teaching and preparation of younger members of the Church for such a work. The work of salvation includes missionary work and retaining in activity those who are converted. We are to do all we can to bring back into activity those of our group who have weakened in their faith. The work of a quorum and a Relief Society also focuses on temple and family history work. We carry the responsibility to teach the gospel and exemplify righteous living to one another.

The work of salvation also includes improving our temporal and spiritual self-reliance. And as a group we ensure that the needy and the poor are cared for. Elder John A. Widtsoe defined the saving work of the Relief Society as the “relief of poverty, relief of illness; relief of doubt, relief of ignorance—relief of all that hinders the joy and progress of woman.”²⁰ These same kinds of responsibilities are given to a quorum. They are honorable and heavy responsibilities. They connote a sacred trust and imply a significant contribution to the Lord’s work of salvation—a work that is both a burden and a blessing. When quorums and Relief Societies are unified in this work, they each essentially take an oar in the boat—each helping move us toward salvation.

When we are organized into Relief Societies and quorums, our personal discipleship is extended and we become engaged with others in the saving work that was modeled by the Savior. It is never modest or inconsequential. It forces us to a higher path of discipleship and a greater spiritual maturity. It is often a long-suffering and patient work and can seem thankless because there is usually a noticeable absence of public recognition for the good we do. Elder Widtsoe taught that “to save souls opens the whole field of human activity

and development.”²¹ The work of salvation is guided by the Spirit, who confirms our actions, assures us of the Lord’s approval, and supplies the true joy that comes with an affirmation of our success.

Helping Bishops Care for the Poor and Needy

A third reason we are organized into quorums and Relief Societies is to help bishops wisely manage the Lord’s storehouse. The Lord’s storehouse includes the “time, talents, compassion, materials, and financial means”²² of the members of the Church. The talents of the Saints are to be used to help care for the poor and the needy and to build the Lord’s kingdom. The Lord envisions “every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 82:19).

Bishops have charge of the Lord’s storehouse, and they depend on the quorums and Relief Societies to help them seek out and care for all in their wards. Every ward is unique and can be said to have its own DNA. This makes



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During His mortal ministry, Jesus looked after those in need. Home and visiting teachers help ensure that the Lord’s sheep are cared for.

it essential that the leaders of the quorums and Relief Societies work in councils to help bishops manage and apportion the Lord's assets. Together they evaluate the strengths and abilities of individuals and ensure that the Lord's sheep are cared for.

Our Savior taught this principle in many ways during His mortal ministry, and the scriptures contain many examples of how He looked after those who were in need. In every ward there are always a few dedicated souls who would do all of the work while others would neglect their duty and fail to offer their gifts. Quorum and Relief Society leaders have the responsibility to organize and carry out an inspired ministry to help all brothers and sisters keep their covenants to remember the Savior and consecrate their lives to His work.

If we were left to ourselves, we might prefer to care only for the popular, charming, and grateful people in our wards. It is much more challenging to care for those who are difficult to love, who have grave and complicated challenges, or who do not seem to appreciate our help. The Savior said:

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Ye are therefore commanded to be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:44–47; JST, Matthew 5:50)

One of the most significant ways this kind of watchcare is apportioned is through home teaching and visiting teaching. President Henry B. Eyring said, “The only system [that can] provide succor and comfort across a church so large in a world so varied would be through individual servants near the people in need.”²³ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who served faithfully as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, called an elder “a shepherd serving in the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd.” He taught that home teachers “have status” and that “their calls are official.” They are “sent by their quorum president, by the bishop, and by the Lord.” It was his feeling that “the greatest defect of the home teaching system in the Church is that it remains almost unused.”²⁴

President Thomas S. Monson said:

The home teaching program is a response to modern revelation commissioning those ordained to the priesthood to “teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church . . . and visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties; . . . to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them; and see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking” (D&C 20:42, 47, 53–54). . . .

From the Book of Mormon, Alma “consecrated all their priests and all their teachers; and none were consecrated except they were just men. Therefore they did watch over their people, and did nourish them with things pertaining to righteousness” (Mosiah 23:17–18).

In performing our home teaching responsibilities, we are wise if we learn and understand the challenges of the members of each family.²⁵

A visiting teacher should also consider her assignment “as a call from the Lord.”²⁶ President Kimball said to the sisters, “Your duties in many ways must be much like those of the [home] teachers, which briefly are ‘to watch over the church always’—not twenty minutes a month but always.”²⁷

Visiting teaching and home teaching become the Lord's work when our focus is centered on people rather than on percentages. The perfection of our statistics is often not a good measure of our watchcare. We can never say, “My home teaching or visiting teaching is done!” When we represent the Lord we are always on His errand. President Thomas S. Monson taught, “Home teaching is more than a mechanical visit once per month, that the statistical report of the ward will be pleasing. Ours is the responsibility to teach, to inspire, to motivate, to bring to activity and to eventual exaltation the sons and daughters of God.”²⁸ When we give an account of our stewardship each month, we are to report the spiritual and temporal well-being of those we are assigned to care for. We can also report any service we render. Special or urgent needs should always be reported immediately.²⁹ The only true measures of our success in this effort are the confirmations of the Spirit for our efforts and when those we are assigned to watch over can say three important things: (1) “My home teacher or visiting teacher helps me grow spiritually”; (2) “I know my home teacher or visiting teacher cares deeply about me and my family”; and (3) “If I have problems, I know my home teacher or visiting teacher will take action without waiting to be invited.”

The Lord said, “And if any man among you be strong in the Spirit, let him take with him him that is weak, that he may be edified in all meekness, that he may become strong also” (D&C 84:106). When these measures are our aim, then we organize and function in an inspired rather than a programmatic way.

Providing Defense and Refuge

A fourth reason for why we are organized into quorums and Relief Societies is to provide a defense and a refuge for Heavenly Father's children and their families in the latter days. President Thomas S. Monson has said: "Today, we are encamped against the greatest array of sin, vice, and evil ever assembled before our eyes. . . . The battle plan whereby we fight to save the souls of men is not our own."³⁰

We are all in the midst of a mortal experience. We all chose this experience, and the Lord will ensure that we all have one. An age-old anti-Christ deception implies that people who are smart enough or rich enough can avoid challenges (see Alma 30:17). This is not so! In our lives and the world today we are experiencing in full measure the "perilous times" of the last days the Apostle Paul described to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:1). As our times become ever more difficult, the faithful brothers and sisters in quorums and Relief Societies are to protect the homes of Zion from the shrill voices of the world and the provocative influence of the adversary.

We have been taught by Elder Dallin H. Oaks that "one of the great functions of Relief Society is to provide sisterhood for women, just as priesthood quorums provide brotherhood for men."³¹ It is our blessing to be part of a sisterhood or a brotherhood that provides "a place of healing, love, kindness, care, and belonging."³² President Packer said: "This great circle of sisters will be a protection for each of you and for your families. The Relief Society might be likened to a refuge. . . . You will be safe within it. It encircles each sister like a protecting wall."³³ He said: "How consoling it is to know that no matter where [a family may] go, a Church family awaits them. From the day they arrive, he will belong to a quorum of the priesthood and she will belong to Relief Society."³⁴

Elder D. Todd Christofferson recounted the story of Brother George Goates, who in six days lost his son Charles and three of Charles's small children during the flu epidemic of 1918. That week Brother Goates made the caskets, dug the graves, and helped prepare the burial clothing. His child and grandchildren died during the week he was to harvest his sugar beet crop, which was left freezing in the ground. After the burials, he and another son went to their fields to see if they could salvage any of their crop. When they arrived, they saw the members of his quorum leaving the empty field. His quorum had harvested every sugar beet. It was then that this man who had shown tremendous strength in the previous week sat down and sobbed like

a child. He looked up to the sky and said, "Thanks, Father, for the elders of our ward."³⁵

Whatever our mortal experience, we can have this feeling of fellowship and have the support and strength of many around us. The Lord said, "Also the body hath need of every member, that all may be edified together, that the system may be kept perfect" (D&C 84:110). It is in the sisterhood of Relief Society and the brotherhood of the quorums that we should find refuge and protection from the storms of life and the calamities of the latter days.

Supporting Each Other in Family Roles

A fifth purpose for being organized into quorums and Relief Societies is to strengthen and support us in our family roles and responsibilities as sons and daughters of God. Though many of our responsibilities in the Church are parallel, Heavenly Father's sons and daughters each have unique and distinct responsibilities in the family and in the Church. Quorums and Relief Societies are to teach our Heavenly Father's sons and daughters and inspire them to prepare for the blessings of eternal life. Our Father sees the potential of His sons and His daughters to be family leaders. Therefore, everything we do in quorums and Relief Societies is to help the Lord with His mission of preparing His children for the blessings of the eternal life He envisions for us. In these settings we are meant to learn how to become part of our Heavenly Father's eternal family.

The quorum and the Relief Society assist family leaders and future family leaders and help them establish patterns and practices of righteous behavior and covenant keeping in their lives. Brothers and sisters encourage one another to pray always, pay tithes and offerings, and renew covenants on the Lord's holy day. They are to help one another be sufficiently mature to make and keep sacred temple covenants.

The quorum and the Relief Society should help us become who our Heavenly Father needs us to become. Joseph Smith taught the sisters from 1 Corinthians about the importance of developing godlike qualities. He said the sisters were organized "according to [their] natures" and were "placed in a situation in which [they could] act according to those sympathies which God has planted in [them]."³⁶ It is for this reason that the motto of Relief Society, "Charity never faileth," was chosen.

Sister Eliza R. Snow, second Relief Society general president, said to the sisters:

We want to be ladies in very deed, not according to the term of the word as the world judges, but fit companions of the Gods and Holy Ones. In an organized capacity we can assist each other in not only doing good but in refining ourselves, and whether few or many come forward and help to prosecute this great work, they will be those that will fill honorable positions in the Kingdom of God. . . . Women should be women and not babies that need petting and correction all the time. I know we like to be appreciated, but if we do not get all the appreciation which we think is our due, what matters?³⁷

It is in the quorum that brothers are taught to “rise up” as “men of God” and “have done with lesser things. Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings.”³⁸ The work of the quorum and the Relief Society clarifies the unique identities and responsibilities of sons and daughters of God and unifies them in defense of His plan. President Harold B. Lee stated:

It seems clear to me that the Church has *no choice*—and never has had—but to do more to assist the *family* in carrying out *its* divine mission, not only because that is the order of heaven, but also because that is the most *practical* contribution we can make to our youth—to help improve the quality of life in the Latter-day Saint homes. As important as our many programs and organizational efforts are, these *should not* supplant the home; they should *support* the home.³⁹

As the Lord said to Emma Smith, we are to “lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better. . . . Cleave unto the covenants which thou hast made. . . . Keep my commandments continually, and a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive” (D&C 25:10, 13, 15). Each of us is a beloved daughter or son of God with sacred personal responsibilities. In our quorums and Relief Societies we are to be taught and inspired to become who our Father in Heaven created us to become.

Conclusion and Testimony

There is much work a quorum must do as a quorum and much a Relief Society is to do as a circle of sisters, and there is much that is to be coordinated between them. Because “the Lord’s Church is governed through councils,”⁴⁰ it is important for the Relief Society president to be included in priesthood executive meetings in which confidential welfare matters are discussed and in which bishops can facilitate the coordination of home teachers and visiting teachers.⁴¹

President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

It will be a marvelous day, my brethren . . . when our priesthood quorums become an anchor of strength to every man belonging thereto, when each such man may

appropriately be able to say, “I am a member of a priesthood quorum of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I stand ready to assist my brethren in all of their needs, as I am confident they stand ready to assist me in mine. Working together, we shall grow spiritually as covenant sons of God. Working together, we can stand, without embarrassment and without fear, against every wind of adversity that might blow, be it economic, social, or spiritual.”⁴²

President Packer recently declared to the brethren of the Church: “We need everyone. The tired or worn out or lazy and even those who are bound down with guilt. . . . Too many of our priesthood brethren are living below their privileges and the Lord’s expectations.”⁴³ “In one of the first meetings of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Joseph Smith admonished the sisters to ‘live up to [their] privilege.’”⁴⁴ In a similar vein, President Packer said to the sisters of Relief Society, “Rally to the cause of Relief Society! Strengthen it! Attend it! Devote yourselves to it! Enlist the inactive in it and bring nonmember sisters under the influence of it. It is time now to unite in this worldwide circle of sisters. A strong, well-organized Relief Society is crucial to the future, to the safety of this Church.”⁴⁵

Much of what has been taught today can be found in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society*. This new resource from the First Presidency can help brothers and sisters learn how to fulfill their responsibilities. Through this and other instructions, we “know how to act and direct [the] church, how to act upon the points of [the Lord’s] law and commandments, which [He has] given.” We are now to “bind [ourselves] to act in all holiness before [Him]” (D&C 43:8, 9).

What the Lord envisioned regarding quorums and Relief Societies has not yet been fully utilized. Many quorums and Relief Societies are at present much like sleeping giants waiting for you to breathe new life into them.

I bear you my testimony that the true restored gospel of Jesus Christ is upon the earth. My testimony of that restoration has been strengthened by knowing that quorums and Relief Societies were established so the Lord could organize His sons and daughters under the priesthood and after the pattern of the priesthood. By this means He engages His children in His work of salvation and in wisely managing His storehouse. Quorums and Relief Societies are meant to be a safety and a refuge in these difficult days and to support and strengthen the identity, roles, and responsibilities of Heavenly Father’s sons and daughters. We are “called by the voice of the Prophet of God to do it,”⁴⁶ and, as we do so, “the angels cannot be restrained from being [our] associates.”⁴⁷ Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. **RE**

Notes

1. Joseph Smith, quoted in Sarah M. Kimball, "Auto-Biography," *Woman's Exponent*, September 1, 1883, 51; cited in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), 12.
2. Boyd K. Packer, "What Every Elder Should Know—and Every Sister as Well: A Primer on Principles of Priesthood Government," *Ensign*, February 1993, 9.
3. Packer, "What Every Elder Should Know," 9.
4. Boyd K. Packer, in supplemental readings, section B, included in *A Royal Priesthood*, Melchizedek Priesthood study guide, 1975–76 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1975), 131.
5. Spencer W. Kimball, "First Presidency Message: Relief Society—Its Promise and Potential," *Ensign*, March 1976, 4; quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006), 217.
6. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2008), s.v. "society," 1184.
7. Joseph Smith, in Relief Society Minute Book, Nauvoo, Illinois, March 30, 1842, 22; spelling, punctuation, and capitalization standardized as needed in all excerpts from this minute book; quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 15.
8. Joseph F. Smith, in Minutes of the General Board of Relief Society, March 17, 1914, 54–55, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City; quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 66.
9. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2010), 9.1.1, 9.4.1.
10. See *Handbook 2*, 7.1, 7.1.2, 8.1, 8.1.2.
11. See Boyd K. Packer, "The Circle of Sisters," *Ensign*, November 1980, 110.
12. David O. McKay, in *Conference Report*, October 1968, 84.
13. See *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 12.
14. See Dallin H. Oaks, "The Relief Society and the Church," *Ensign*, May 1992, 35.
15. See Joseph Fielding Smith, "The Relief Society Organized by Revelation," *Relief Society Magazine*, January 1965, 5.
16. See Dictionary.com, "preside," <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/preside>.
17. Relief Society Minute Book, Nauvoo, Illinois, April 28, 1842, 37.
18. Joseph Smith, Relief Society Minute Book, Nauvoo, Illinois, April 28, 1842, 40; quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 14.
19. First Presidency message, July 3, 1942, "To the Presidency, Officers and Members of the Relief Society," in *A Centenary of Relief Society, 1842–1942* (Salt Lake City: General Board of Relief Society, 1942), 7; quoted in Packer, "Circle of Sisters," 111.
20. John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, arr. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987), 308.
21. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 308.
22. *Handbook 2*, 6.1.3.
23. Henry B. Eyring, "The Enduring Legacy of Relief Society," *Ensign*, November 2009, 123.
24. Bruce R. McConkie, "Speaking Today: Only an Elder," *Ensign*, June 1975, 66, 68, 67.
25. Thomas S. Monson, "Home Teaching—a Divine Service," *Ensign*, November 1997, 46–47; quoted in *Teachings of Thomas S. Monson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), 139.
26. Eyring, "Enduring Legacy of Relief Society," 123.

27. Spencer W. Kimball, "A Vision of Visiting Teaching," *Ensign*, June 1978, 24; quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 113. See also D&C 20:53.
28. Thomas S. Monson, "Prophets Speak—the Wise Obey," general conference leadership session, April 3, 1987; quoted in *Teachings of Thomas S. Monson*, 140.
29. See *Handbook 2*, 9.5–9.5.4.
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31. Oaks, "Relief Society and the Church," 37.
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41. See *Handbook 2*, 4.3.
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45. Packer, "Circle of Sisters," 111.
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