



7-2018

Teaching the Doctrine of the Family: A South African Example

Khumbulani D. Mdletshe

Michael A. Goodman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/re>



Part of the [Mormon Studies Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Mdletshe, Khumbulani D. and Goodman, Michael A. "Teaching the Doctrine of the Family: A South African Example." *Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel* 19, no. 2 (2018): 13-37.

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/re/vol19/iss2/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.



Young African American couple walking in countryside. Photo by Cathy Yeuler (123RF).

Teaching the Doctrine of the Family: A South African Example

ELDER KHUMBULANI D. MDLETSHE AND MICHAEL A. GOODMAN

Elder Khumbulani D. Mdletshe is a member of the Third Quorum of the Seventy and the director at the Roodepoort South Africa Institute of Religion.

Michael A. Goodman (professorgoodman@gmail.com) is an associate professor of Church history and doctrine at BYU.

Early in 2015, I visited my aunt's home.¹ She lives in one of the largest townships in South Africa, an urban residential area with a predominantly black African population.² Townships often have higher unemployment, greater poverty, and younger populations than other areas in South Africa. Townships also tend to have higher levels of risk behaviors such as drug abuse, unprotected sex, and crime.³ This was my first visit to my aunt's home in five years. As I entered the home, I noticed some young people I had never met. My aunt, who is in her early sixties, began to introduce me to everyone. I was surprised to learn that her granddaughter, in her early twenties and unmarried, already had two children. That meant there were four female generations living under the same roof and using the same surname. All were unmarried. The only male in the house was my aunt's unemployed son.

While my aunt's experience is not meant to be representative of all black South African families and there are many healthy, thriving families both inside and outside of the Church in South Africa, this experience highlighted some of the challenges families face in South Africa—especially among the black and colored⁴ population, who have been made vulnerable by historical

"Appreciation for ethnic, cultural, or national heritage can be very wholesome and beneficial," but there are certain cultural practices that "can also perpetuate patterns of life that should be set aside by a devoted Latter-day Saint."

and societal pressures.⁵ This article will focus on the majority population in South Africa: according to the latest, complete census data, in 2011 black and colored⁶ Africans make up almost 90 percent of South Africa's population of fifty-five million, with the remaining 10 percent made up of whites and Indians.⁷

Using verified empirical data, we will identify challenges faced by these remarkably resilient families. We will then seek to identify specific gospel principles and practices tied to "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" that can further assist these valiant families and serve as a model for all of us to overcome our own unique challenges and create happy, successful families. In highlighting the challenges facing black or colored families in South Africa, we do not seek to racialize family challenges.⁸ We recognize that families in every culture and country face their own unique challenges. However, by focusing on the challenges faced by these children of God, we hope to illustrate how gospel answers can be applied to the specific challenges we all face.

According to a study conducted by the Christian Aids Bureau of Southern Africa, 28 percent of South African women are single parents and 53 percent of those women have never married.⁹ This was confirmed by a national research project conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), the largest governmental social science research agency on the African continent. In 2009, only 33 percent of South African children were living with both parents, 33 percent lived with a single mother, 32 percent had no mother or father living with them, and 2 percent had only a father in the home.¹⁰ These numbers become even more concerning when race is included in the analysis. In 2001, 53 percent of black and colored families were headed by a single parent, as compared to 23 percent of white, Indian, and Asian families.¹¹

The definition of family in South Africa is constantly changing. The green paper¹² on families in South Africa notes, "The family is still a dynamic unit of socialisation that has not remained static. It is characterised by changing patterns of socialisation and interaction."¹³ In the South African context, the changing nature of the family has both led to and resulted from societal challenges. According to researchers at the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), more children are growing up in single-parent households with absent fathers.¹⁴ This creates tremendous challenges for mothers, fathers, and children. Many families are doing their best and valiantly trying to meet the needs of the rising generation, and yet there is measurable suffering caused by the familial challenges common to many throughout

the country. The current state of many of today's South African families is not only undermining South Africans' social, cultural, and economic objectives: tragically, it is also undermining the eternal purposes for which God created families.

The words of the prophets contained in "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" provide crucial truths that can help reverse many of the societal trends destroying the family. The family proclamation describes what God intends the family to be. Though these doctrines and practices provide a unifying framework for strengthening families, they do not require the denial or denigration of the majority of cultural practices that add a distinctive and unique identity to members worldwide. Elder Richard G. Scott explained that "appreciation for ethnic, cultural, or national heritage can be very wholesome and beneficial" but that there are certain cultural practices that "can also perpetuate patterns of life that should be set aside by a devoted Latter-day Saint."¹⁵

The doctrines and principles contained in the family proclamation and in the words of modern prophets provide a powerful tool to assist local Church leaders and parents in strengthening the family unit. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" is aptly named, as the principles contained therein have universal application. When he introduced the family proclamation in 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley reminded his listeners that the world is "confronted with more challenging problems" than ever before and that we are in a "world of turmoil, [and] shifting values."¹⁶ This reality is particularly poignant as we examine the specific situation of families in South Africa.

Family Life in South Africa

To understand the current culture of the South African family and what role the Church and the gospel can play in strengthening the family, it will be helpful to examine some historical turning points, beginning with African village life.¹⁷ Village life among black Africans before the arrival of white Europeans centered on the family. However, the traditional family unit went beyond the present-day nuclear family of the West. In most African cultures, the family included aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, and other relatives to a much greater extent than many Western cultures.¹⁸ Like families in many other places around the world, the African family has most often revolved a male figurehead. And similar to many places, male leadership has often led

to unhealthy versions of patriarchy, in which women and children are valued and treated like lesser beings. Polygamy has also been common among all African ethnic groups, including the Ndebele, San, Khoisan, Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Xhosa, Venda, and the Zulu. These black African groups constitute 80 percent of the current population of South Africa. These traditional family forms existed largely unchanged for centuries, until Europeans appeared in Africa.

The Portuguese were one of the first European powers to set up outposts in Africa in the early to mid-1400s. They were followed by the Dutch in the 1600s and the English in the 1800s. From that time, colonization, industrialization, urbanization, migrant labor systems, and ultimately apartheid were introduced to South Africa. Their introduction has altered African family life forever. The introduction of formal education, wage employment, and the nuclear family system has also greatly influenced black African life.¹⁹ Some European influences (such as formal education) were constructive and helpful; however, much of what the Europeans brought has further eroded family life among black and colored Africans. European military occupation and political supremacy translated into ideological domination, exploitation, and conquest. The 1913 and 1936 Land Acts restricted black African ownership of land to 13 percent of South Africa's total territory.²⁰ European technology influenced how the economy developed, and Africans were dispossessed of their land. The government only allowed African ownership in so-called native reserves—largely rural and underdeveloped small regions—and restricted the movement of black Africans throughout the country. Industrialization and urban development led to a migrant labor system. This system meant that many men were required to seek work far from their homes. Many would eventually live permanently apart from their wives and children.²¹ The absence of fathers placed a significant burden on mothers and children. For generations, the migrant labor system undermined the African family, and its negative impact is still strongly felt today.

The official introduction of apartheid in 1948 legalized racism and further exacerbated gender inequalities in South Africa. These policies were in force between 1948 and 1994. Apartheid laws and practices brutalized families and have had a lasting effect on black Africans. As with many unjust social systems, women and children were often the greatest victims. These social systems often placed inordinate economic burdens on families in general and on women and children in particular. During apartheid, many women were also

forced to leave their children in rural areas to find work in urban areas to help provide for their families. They often lived in harsh situations in order to save money for their families. Another added challenge in the urban areas was pass laws,²² which restricted women's movement in the cities and thus restricted their economic creativity. In such an environment, too often they found themselves with undesirable employment, such as selling alcohol, sex work, or very low-paying, menial work that offered little protection from abuse. It was not until 1996 that government laws included women in workers' rights legislation.²³ Even though apartheid officially ended in 1994, its impact on women lingers on. For example, in 2001, 49 percent of all employed women were working in basic or unskilled occupations, such as cleaning, garbage collecting, and labor-intensive farmwork. Working in these occupations severely limited the economic benefit that women so desperately needed. In addition, close to 17 percent of black women ages twenty and younger have no formal education.²⁴ As a result, many women are still excluded from vital social and economic opportunities.

Modern Families

Over time, South Africa has enacted several laws that affect family formation. The following are three major laws: (1) the Marriage Act of 1961, which permits the solemnization of a civil or religious marriage between a man and a woman. The majority of marriages in South Africa are performed under this law; (2) the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act of 1998, which allows for the registration of marriages under African customary law, including polygamous marriages; and (3) the Civil Union Act of 2006, which made South Africa the fifth country in the world to allow same-sex marriages.²⁵ These laws influence the modern marriage culture found in South Africa.

There are aspects of every culture that strengthen or weaken families. South African culture is no different. One example of a potentially strengthening cultural norm is the large influence of extended family. "It takes a village to raise a child" is a common phrase used to discuss raising children in an African setting. Unlike in many Western countries, the extended family is considered vitally important in Africa. Over 65 percent of black and coloured families in South Africa are extended rather than nuclear.²⁶ Though nuclear families are becoming more common in South Africa, African culture emphasizes that it may take more than a mother and father can do alone to teach and take care of children. Adults are expected to teach and to lead

every child they interact with. Every adult is seen as a potential influence for good in the life of children, with special emphasis on aunts, uncles, and grandparents.

The extended family is seen as an outside influence for not only good but as part of the family itself. For example, in Africa, adoption is often considered a foreign concept. No child is without a mother or a caregiver as long as there is extended family to help. Many people in Africa are actually offended by the very concept of adoption because it is seen as necessary only if the extended family is not doing its duty. Extended-family relationships are also seen as more intimate than in many other places in the world. Throughout Africa, it is common for uncles to be referred to as “Daddy” by their nephews and nieces because of the intimate relationship that is supposed to exist between them. These cultural norms fit well with the family proclamation’s injunction that “extended families should lend support when needed” and provide an example for other cultures that could strengthen families.

However, as with other countries, not all cultural practices in South Africa strengthen the family. The convergence of historical forces and new laws has led to the emergence of various family structures and numerous challenges. These challenges make implementation of the truths contained in the family proclamation especially difficult. We will examine five specific challenges faced by South African families: delayed marriage, single-parent households, spousal abuse, polygamy, and lobola. Some of these challenges are unique (though not exclusive) to black and colored South African families, while others, though flavored by unique circumstances in South Africa, are faced by many peoples and cultures. We will seek to highlight specific teachings and practices that flow from the gospel, the Church, and the Church Educational System that can and are being used to address these difficulties. Through examining cultural realities in this specific South African context, we hope to show how the gospel and the Church can provide help and solutions that could be implemented in a world whose cultural context is often not fully aligned with what Heavenly Father has revealed as crucial to successful family life.

Delayed Marriage and the Lack of Marriages

As in many places throughout the world, the average age at marriage in South Africa is continuing to rise, and many people are not marrying at all. The trend toward later marriage can be beneficial if prior cultural norms encouraged

marriage before the participants were ready to succeed. However, in most places, such early marriages are no longer common. The current trend of delayed marriage in South Africa is actually leaving larger and larger segments of society unmarried for much, if not all, of their adult life. This practice is not only contrary to Heavenly Father’s plan for his children; it is also contrary to the traditionally strong culture of marriage and family throughout Africa. Yet current research indicates that marriage rates in South Africa continue to decline. In a 2003 report on the status of youth, the Human Sciences Research Council reported statistics regarding marital status, by age-group, as shown in the table.

Table: Marital status of black Africans in South Africa

Age Group	18–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44	45+
Married	7.4%	25.1%	44.2%	57.3%	62.5%	55.4%

Source: Linda Richter, *Young People in South Africa*, 27.²⁷

The fact that only 25 percent of young adults are married by age thirty points to the growing tendency to delay marriage. Many explanations are given for this trend, including reasons that in and of themselves are positive developments, such as rising education levels, a desire for greater economic stability, and the greater control and autonomy that comes as a result. Other reasons are less positive, such as the sexual revolution, which has disassociated sexuality from marriage, as well as a tendency to avoid commitment and family formation so as to avoid responsibilities for adult life. The cultural practice of lobola also encourages delayed marriage.

Western research has long shown that early marriage, meaning marriage in the teen years, is correlated with lower levels of marital stability (higher rates of divorce) and lower levels of satisfaction. For these and other reasons, delaying marriage beyond the teen years is seen as a positive step towards stronger families. But researchers have begun to realize that delaying too long has negative consequences for stable family life.²⁸ One recent Western study found that the odds of divorce increase by 5 percent per year for every year past thirty-two years of age.²⁹ Additionally, this overall trend to delay marriage and adult responsibility often leads to troubling social patterns for young adults, such as higher-risk behaviors, more depression, and lower life satisfaction.³⁰

The family proclamation does not specifically address delayed marriage, beyond emphasizing the essential nature of marriage for our eternal destiny and the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth, which in God's plan obviously happens only after marriage. However, recently, prophets have spoken regularly on the importance of not delaying marriage too long. Elder Dallin H. Oaks addressed the young adults of the Church, stating, "Men, if you have returned from your mission and you are still following the boy-girl patterns you were counseled to follow when you were 15, it is time for you to grow up. Gather your courage and look for someone to pair off with. Start with a variety of dates with a variety of young women, and when that phase yields a good prospect, proceed to courtship. It's marriage time."³¹ In that same address, Elder Oaks quoted Elder Earl C. Tingey of the Seventy, who said the years between eighteen and twenty-five have become "a distinct and separate life stage, a strange, transitional never-never land between adolescence and adulthood in which people stall for a few extra years, [postponing] . . . adult responsibility." The article describes these transitional individuals as "permanent adolescents, . . . twentysomething Peter Pans." Putting this analysis in terms more familiar to his audience of BYU graduates and their families, Elder Tingey spoke of "the indecision some college graduates have in . . . accepting the responsibilities of marriage and family."³² Since 2010, President Thomas S. Monson, Elder Richard G. Scott, Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Elder Robert D. Hales, and Elder Quentin L. Cook have all spoke in general conference on the importance of young adults not delaying family formation too long.³³ Clearly, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve are concerned about this issue.

Not all adults who marry late are deliberately delaying marriage. However, when young adults in the Church are asked why they are delaying marriage, the answers often betray a fear of failure, a fear of being unready, and a fear of missing out on the adventures of single life.³⁴ Interestingly, though these reasons influence both genders, at least in the Church, women have traditionally felt ready and desirous of marriage before young men have. One possible reason for this is the different ways marriage and family issues have historically been dealt with in Church curriculum. Though marriage and motherhood have been taught and emphasized regularly with young women, the topics have been taught and emphasized much less frequently with young men. Part of the reason is likely a desire to keep young men focused on preparing for a full-time mission. However, the new *Come, Follow Me* curriculum

the Church has implemented worldwide—including in South Africa—is beginning to address this imbalance and may be part of the solution to young adults delaying marriage to an unhealthy extent. It will also be interesting to see what impact the change in missionary age will have on delayed marriage.

Single-Parent Households

As noted above, the most recent studies show that only one-third of children in South Africa live with both of their parents, and almost a third do not live with either parent. The SAIRR notes that, in 2007, 44 percent of all urban parents were single, and of these single parents 52 percent were black Africans.³⁵ Children from these households are more likely to be raised in poverty, to have a lower school attendance, and to find themselves involved in criminal behavior or other antisocial challenges. Though there are many reasons children raised in single parent households struggle, some research has made the direct connection to the lack of commitment by both biological parents. For example, one researcher showed that expenditures on education and health care in South Africa are correlated with the degree of genetic relatedness within the households.³⁶ He explained that children living with both their biological parents receive a higher investment in both time and money, which results in more positive outcomes.³⁷ This does not mean that all children raised without both parents will come up wanting, but research shows that they are at greater risk of hardship.

How can we encourage the rising generation to plan and prepare for their roles as mothers and fathers? It starts by actively teaching correct principles from a young age and helping our youth understand the blessings that come to both parent and child as a result of following the Lord's plan for families. As already mentioned, the new *Come, Follow Me* curriculum is beginning to assist in this area. The family proclamation provides the basis of such instruction. The proclamation teaches, "Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity." Therefore, it behooves each of us to nurture cultural practices and norms that encourage both men and women to take responsibility and provide care for the children they bring into mortality. As the proclamation states, "We call upon responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society."

The First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve Apostles regularly stress the importance of both fathers' and mothers' roles in the lives of their children. President Boyd K. Packer emphasized that God's plan for his children could be fulfilled only by the "righteous union of male and female, man and woman, husband and wife."³⁸ In the April 2015 general conference, Elder L. Tom Perry reminded us, "We also believe that strong traditional families are not only basic units of a stable society, a stable economy, and a stable culture of values—but that they are also the basic units of eternity and of the kingdom and government of God." In the same general conference, Elder D. Todd Christofferson stressed the significance of marriage and its role in God's plan, as well as in society in general:

A family built on the marriage of a man and woman supplies the best setting of God's plan to thrive—the setting for the birth of children, who come in purity and innocence from God—and the environment for the learning and preparation they will need for a successful mortal life, and eternal life in the world to come. A critical mass of families built on such marriages is vital for societies to survive and flourish. That is why communities and nations generally have encouraged and protected marriage and the family as privileged institutions. It has never been just about the love and happiness of adults.³⁹

If we examine the frequency of such teachings in general conference, it becomes clear that the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve feel that these principles need to be continually emphasized. They do not simply assume that Church members will know and accept such truth by virtue of membership alone. They seek to teach in such a way that members are encouraged to plan for, prepare for, and enter into family relationships that will last forever.

However, the First Presidency recognizes that lived experience often differs from the ideal family situation. As Elder Neil L. Andersen taught: "We will continue to teach the Lord's pattern for families, but now with millions of members and the diversity we have in the children of the Church, we need to be even more thoughtful and sensitive. . . . The Primary children are not going to stop singing 'Families Can Be Together Forever,' but when they sing, 'I'm so glad when daddy comes home' or 'with father and mother leading the way,' not all children will be singing about their own family."⁴⁰ We should also applaud and assist individuals in situations in which they are doing the best they can to care for a child even if their situations do not include a loving father and mother.

The Church in South Africa is largely made up of the younger generation.⁴¹ For example, 30 percent of members are between the ages of fourteen and thirty. To this group, the principles of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" can seem irrelevant or even strange because those teachings are often far removed from their lived experiences. Their families of origin often do not mirror the prophetically taught principles of the Church. As we teach the ideal to these precious sons and daughters of God, we want to be careful that we encourage wise current and future choices and do not simply create regret for past choices or situations outside of their control.

This situation is obviously not unique to South Africa. For example, in the United States, the percentage of members who are under thirty is higher than the percentage of those under thirty in the general population. Converts also tend to skew younger.⁴² This is one of the many reasons why the new Church curriculum and the seminaries and institutes can and should provide a crucial support system for members who find themselves in any family structure. They can help bridge the knowledge and testimony gap by teaching young members and new converts Heavenly Father's plan for the family.

Abuse of Women

Abuse of women is a problem worldwide and one that has been condemned by the Lord's prophets. South Africa is not immune from this plague. In South Africa, 55,272 rapes were reported in the one-year period between 2010 and 2011.⁴³ A report by the Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust connects this statistic to how both black and white men are often socialized in South Africa, reporting that "a substantial portion of the male population historically bonded in a violent and highly militarised context: both universal conscription of white men and the absorption of many black men into the liberation struggle, have contributed to a culture that sees violence as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts—a culture where 'tough, aggressive, brutal and competitive masculinity is promoted' and weakness regarded with contempt, as feminine."⁴⁴ In 1994, the Women's Charter for Effective Equality confirmed that domestic violence and sexual violence are still pervasive in the country.⁴⁵ For example, between July 2006 and June 2007, a total of 88,784 incidents of domestic violence were reported.⁴⁶

Thus, many women experience physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, and economic abuse regularly in South Africa. The fact that African village life was already based on a patriarchy, which too often was



Elder Mdletshe

unrighteous, laid the foundation for the abuse of women. The colonial and apartheid systems further exacerbated this gender inequality. Historians who have examined the codification of customary law have shown that African men disproportionately were the main informants on what society should be like and thus could enlist colonial administrators to solidify their own power in the face of changing society.⁴⁷ Khaya Dlanga quoted a survey conducted by the World Health Organization in 2013 which found that 50 percent of

South Africans suffered some form of emotional and verbal abuse.⁴⁸ In a similar article, he cited the Medical Research Council, which reported that, in 2012, 50 percent of women who were murdered were killed by their partner.⁴⁹

Though it is hoped that levels of spousal abuse are lower among Church members than among the general population, there are still problems that need to be addressed. The family proclamation teaches that “husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.” This obligation to love and care for each other obviously precludes such things as spousal abuse. The proclamation further states that “individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God.”

Yet, as can be seen from the previous statistics, an unrighteous patriarchal approach to gender has created great challenges for many South Africans. Though spousal abuse can be instigated by husband or wives, more often than not it is perpetrated by men. There is great need for men and women everywhere to gain a greater understanding of prophetic teachings on gender. Especially helpful to correct culturally accepted unrighteous patriarchy are the modern prophets’ words to men. President Packer has taught, “In the home it is a partnership with husband and wife equally yoked together, sharing in decisions, always working together. While the husband, the father, has responsibility to provide worthy and inspired leadership, his wife is neither behind him nor ahead of him but at his side.”⁵⁰ Elder Perry explained that “since the beginning, God has instructed mankind that marriage should unite husband and wife together in unity. Therefore, there is not a president or a vice president in a family. The couple works together eternally for the good of the family. They are united together in word, in deed, and in action as they lead, guide, and direct their family unit. They are on equal footing. They plan and organize the affairs of the family jointly and unanimously as they move forward.”⁵¹ Elder M. Russell Ballard made clear that men are to love their wives as Christ loved us:

Fathers are to preside in the home, but presiding does not mean a man is to rule or exercise unrighteous dominion over his wife or children. The Savior taught His Apostles that the rulers among the Gentiles exercised authority over their subjects. “But it shall not be so among you,” He cautioned, “but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant” (see Matt. 20:25–27). Presiding, then, is to love and serve and sacrifice. The Apostle Paul taught, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) stated: “Brethren, I say to you with all soberness, [Jesus Christ] is the

model we must follow as we take the spiritual lead in our families. Particularly is this true in your relationship with your wife.”⁵²

Obviously, simply reading such quotes to Church members will not immediately change how gender and appropriate spousal relations are viewed. It will take a regular and systematic approach that involves each of the essential doctrines and principles. However, as we begin from early childhood to emphasize the worth of each individual soul, the importance of honoring agency, the responsibility Heavenly Father places on each of us to care for each other, and the sacred roles and responsibilities of marriage, the cultural influences that lead to emotional and physical spousal abuse and that make such abuse acceptable can be lessened.

Polygamy

Polygamy has been a part of black African family life for centuries and continues to be practiced today, though less frequently than in the past. Traditionally, having multiple wives was seen as a sign of wealth and manhood. Even though modern culture has slowed the trend, a 2010 BBC news report claimed that polygamy was still considered “normal” in South Africa.⁵³ Jacob Zuma, the president of South Africa, has four wives. Through the eyes of many in the modern world, polygamy is an inherently wrong practice. However, as Latter-day Saints understand, when commanded by God and practiced righteously, this marital system can lead to positive outcomes. Even in a secular context, many still defend polygamy and its outcomes. As explored by several modern scholars, polygamy in an African context can lead to positive relationships among family members, including wives and children. Reasons given include that it can allow women to share domestic relationships in a way that enables them to have time for such things as education and greater control over their own life situations. It can provide greater economic stability for a family and provide for greater security for the aged.⁵⁴ Hence, even though we understand from a gospel perspective that plural marriage is not sanctioned at this time, we can see why some in South Africa and other places throughout the world see it as a valid and viable system of familial relations.

But just as in other areas of the world, even if the intent is good, at times the practice can create great hardship. Polygamy, as practiced in South Africa, is, by its nature, a male-dominated practice. Too often, young women are pushed into polygamous relationships with older men in order to gain upward mobility for their families. This increases the chance of these young

women contracting HIV, because older men with multiple sexual partners are more likely to have the virus.⁵⁵ Polygamous relationships in South Africa are at times founded on the belief that women are not equal to men. In such unequal pairings, women are often treated more like property than like equals.⁵⁶ However, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Marriages under the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, which recognizes polygamy, have decreased dramatically over the past decade. In 2003 there were 17,283 polygamous marriages, but in 2013 the number dropped to 3,498.⁵⁷

Polygamy has been formally prohibited in the Church since President Wilford Woodruff gave Official Declaration 1 in general conference on 6 October 1890. This declaration was reaffirmed by President Joseph F. Smith at the April 1904 general conference. Though there is no substantial push by members of the Church in South Africa for acceptance of secular plural marriage, it is important that the Church actively work to make sure members understand the difference between the prophetically authorized practice of plural marriage in the beginnings of this dispensation and the current culturally or legally authorized practice of plural marriage.

The Church is seeking to make these truths clear through its curriculum. Plural marriage is now addressed in the new seminary curriculum and is part of the new Eternal Family and Foundations of the Restoration institute curriculum. These sources only briefly outline the historical issues related to polygamy. Their main focus is on the doctrine. However, the Church has an extensive section on its website, lds.org, which deals with both the doctrines and the history of plural marriage in detail. Three essays have been written and posted on lds.org to help members understand the beginning, the Utah period, and the ending of plural marriage in the Church. These resources can be used to help members better understand not only our history but the Lord’s current commandment regarding plural marriage.

Because polygamy is legally accepted in South Africa, the Church also must work through the issue with potential converts. The Church’s official policy in South Africa requires new converts to agree to two doctrinal or policy positions regarding polygamy: (1) any person that wants to be baptized must be legally married to only one wife, and (2) any person that wants to be baptized and remain a member must live the law of chastity. Potential converts must make the decision to agree with and follow these principles before they can be baptized.

Lobola, the Bride Price

The practice of grooms paying a gift, or a bride price, to the family of the bride is ancient and existed in one form or another in ancient Mesopotamia and Greece and among Jewish and Muslim peoples. Today, some form of bride price is practiced in many nations, including Afghanistan, China, Russia, Thailand, and Papua New Guinea. According to this practice, marriage cannot take place without some form of gift from the groom to the family of the bride. The historical purpose was to express gratitude to the family for raising their daughter, for allowing her to become the man's wife, and to formalize the marriage between both families. Bride price, termed lobola in much of Africa, has been and continues to be an integral part of marriage in South Africa. Up until the twentieth century, lobola was largely a private matter. It has since become commercialized and formalized. There are several justifications for the cultural practice, some of which would appear to have merit. One organization explained that "lobola is a demonstration of how much the girl is valued by both sides. It denotes respectability, worthiness and appreciation."⁵⁸ Lobola is one way a groom is expected to demonstrate that he can provide for his bride and their future family. Furthermore, because the lobola process involves interaction between the two families, it plays a significant role in bringing both families together. It also plays a role in resolving violations of the marriage contract, which would necessitate a meeting between the two families. There are also religious overtones to lobola. Some Christians defend the practice, pointing to such texts as Genesis 24 and Genesis 29 and the stories of the gifts given to Rebekah's family and to Laban for his daughters.

Even if we assume good intentions by many, the practice of lobola has created several challenges for young couples both inside and outside of the Church. Because the bride price can often be exorbitant, it has led many couples to delay marriage for years in an effort to save sufficient money, and many couples ultimately decide that it is not worth paying lobola and that it is easier to simply cohabit. This generally brings deleterious outcomes for both the couple and any children born to the union. Many who do pay the bride price end up starting their married life deeply in debt.

Latter-day Saint young adults in South Africa are encouraged to marry in the temple and not to unduly delay marriage because of lobola expectations. As is true throughout the world, returned missionaries are encouraged to make marriage a priority, even while pursuing an education. However, the culture of lobola is strong and still leads many returning missionaries to delay

marriage because they do not have the money to pay lobola or sufficient credit to finance lobola through loans. The leaders of the Church in South Africa actively encourage members to honor their culture but caution them to not allow culture to keep them from continuing to grow and progress.

Several members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have strongly counseled members to not allow lobola to be an impediment to relationship formation and progress.⁵⁹ For example, in 2014, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf warned the South African Saints of the risks associated with lobola:

The consequences of such a tradition [lobola] are manifold and lead to behavior unbecoming for a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. We urge our young people, our fathers and mothers, all our leaders and members of the Church to discontinue this practice. Our young people should follow the Lord's pattern of marriage as practiced in the holy temple and not follow traditions that undermine God's sacred plan. By following the Lord's way, families will move close together for time and for all eternity and not be limited by unnecessary worldly traditions of our fathers. The Lord's way is the real path to bring families together forever.⁶⁰

It is interesting that President Uchtdorf focused on the consequences rather than the intent of lobola as the real problem. While local customs that allow or facilitate making and keeping sacred covenants and drawing nearer to God are to be encouraged, President Uchtdorf pointed to the importance of seeking to follow the Lord's pattern in determining which cultural traditions to embrace and which to avoid. Local leaders in the Church and in the Church Educational System seek to reinforce such counsel regularly.

It is important to help members of the Church realize that even though we may believe a given cultural practice ultimately runs counter to the Lord's teachings, those who believe in that practice often have good intentions. More often than not, those who advocate such traditions do not understand the Church's teachings that make clear to members the dangers involved. By helping members understand and even empathize with the intentions of all involved, we can help both members and nonmembers who may question the Church's stance approach these issues with respect even as the Church stands for what the Lord's servants are teaching.

Application of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" in South Africa

Besides addressing these specific challenges faced by the Saints of South Africa, both the Church and the Church Educational System are actively

trying to help members and nonmembers understand the Lord's teachings on marriage and family. Even though the family proclamation was issued by apostles and prophets, the teachings have universal application. By the time of its ten-year anniversary, the family proclamation had already been translated into seventy-seven languages and distributed to many world leaders. On 6 December 2004 the UN General Assembly accepted the Doha Declaration, which contains many of the family proclamation teachings.⁶¹ These teachings serve as a force for good to help future generations create strong, loving eternal families. They can help South African youth raise their vision of what marriage is meant to lead to. "Eternal life means to become like the Father and to live in families in happiness and joy forever."⁶²

Ecclesiastical Efforts to Promote the Family

In several African Area-wide meetings, members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve have emphasized the important truths contained in the family proclamation. Since 2010, we have had President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Elder David A. Bednar, Elder Dale G. Renlund, and Elder Quentin L. Cook address the African Saints regarding marriage and family specifically.⁶³ These efforts have been joined by the efforts of members of the Africa Southeast Area Presidency to help South African Saints more fully understand and live the sacred truths taught in "The Family: A Proclamation to the World."

One area of focus is encouraging members to prepare for eternal marriage in the temple rather than settle for a secular wedding. The Africa Southeast Area has one temple, located in Johannesburg, South Africa. This temple serves 240,000 members in twenty-eight countries. To bring the blessings of temple marriage closer to the people, the Area Presidency has instituted a General Temple Patron Assistant Fund. This fund is intended to help families going to the temple for the first time for their own living ordinances, including sealing to their families. Since the fund's inception in the Africa Southeast Area in 2012, over three thousand members have benefited from this fund, and in 2015 alone 1,140 benefited. The Area Presidency continues to teach that helping our members participate in temple ordinances will help increase their commitment to living the gospel as it relates to their families.⁶⁴ There is also great excitement about the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo and Durban South Africa Temples early in 2016, the announcement of the Harare Zimbabwe Temple

at the April 2016 general conference, and the announcement of the Nairobi Kenya Temple at the April 2017 general conference.

In 2014 the Africa Southeast Area Presidency, acting under the direction of Elder Bednar, recommended establishing special adult meetings focused on men's and women's roles in the Church and in the home. These meetings were presided over by a member of the Area Presidency or an assigned Area Seventy. In preparation for each meeting, the presiding officer was asked to distribute several articles to each participating member, including "The Family: A Proclamation to the World, 'A Gospel Culture,'" by Elder Oaks. This talk was given by Elder Oaks to African Saints on 21 November 2010 in a regional conference broadcast.⁶⁵ Its main theme was to counsel African Saints against traditions that move away from temple marriage. In addition, members were asked to read "More Diligent and Concerned at Home," by Elder Bednar, and "Power in the Priesthood," by Elder Andersen.

To further strengthen marriage and family, a pamphlet entitled *Marriage in Africa* was published in 2015 to emphasize principles and doctrines on marriage and the family. It was written to help both those preparing for marriage and those who are already married. Among the principles covered is the importance of obeying the law of chastity before and after marriage. Marriage as part of God's plan is emphasized using principles contained in "The Family: A Proclamation to the World." At a practical level, members are encouraged to abide by the laws of their countries with respect to marriage. Furthermore, members are discouraged from participating in those traditions and cultural practices that denigrate the importance of eternal marriage.

The importance of marriage to the leadership of South Africa East Area is emphasized by materials available on the Church's official website. Like many places throughout the world, the Africa Southeast Area has an area-specific version of lds.org (africase.lds.org). As part of the Area Presidency's effort to help members understand the Lord's plan for families, they have created an entire section of the africase.lds.org website to focus on marriage (africase.lds.org/marriage-in-africa). Entitled "Marriage in Africa," this resource includes both general and Africa-specific articles and videos pertaining to marriage and family. It also contains the official *Doctrine and Principles of Marriage* brochure written specifically to help the African Saints better understand the Church's doctrine on the family.

Church Educational System Initiatives to Address Family Challenges

The Church Educational System (CES) is also actively seeking to support the General Authorities and the Africa Southeast Area leadership in strengthening members to create righteous families and promote the family in society. This commitment was emphasized in interviews with Kelly Haws, then the associate administrator of Seminaries and Institutes worldwide, and Elder Tasara Makasi, Area Seventy and area director for Seminaries and Institutes in Africa Southeast. In those interviews, Haws and Elder Makasi continually stressed the importance of teachers who have a burning testimony of eternal family and who are living their lives accordingly. Both single and married teachers can do this as they place a high priority on preparing for or living true to eternal marriage. Haws stressed that “we need to find teachers that cherish their family. . . . When [teachers stand] in front of the class, the young people need to admire [them] but more importantly they [will] judge [them] by how they are with their family.”⁶⁶ When a teacher teaches a principle from “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” students need to see that principle applied in the life of the teacher, whether in his or her family of birth or family from marriage. When Elder Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve addressed seminary and institute teachers in the annual Evening with a General Authority in February 2016, he emphasized this need by admonishing those who teach to “teach by modeling.”⁶⁷ Elder Makasi added, “When I look for a full-time teacher, I look for someone who has already demonstrated throughout his or her married life that they value family life and those values align themselves with Heavenly Father’s plan.” Elder Makasi stressed that these teachers represent the First Presidency and the Savior.⁶⁸ Haws explained, “Society is going to be immoral, but as [students] see happiness in the family lives of our teachers, they will be attracted to what we teach about the families and the teacher will point them to the principles and doctrines taught in the family proclamation.”⁶⁹

Haws emphasized the central role that the family proclamation plays in understanding key doctrines on family and marriage. In order to ensure that as many institute students as possible learn these key doctrines, CES now requires the course the Eternal Family (Religion 200) for graduation from institute. In South Africa, this instruction will include the most appropriate ways to deal with issues such as lobola, plural marriage, spousal abuse, gender inequality, and other challenges faced by South African Saints. In South Africa, this course is seen as so essential to the young people that the CES

administration has begun discussions with local priesthood leaders about how to help every student possible take the class.

Rather than simply hoping that the doctrines of the family are taught and that students take the course, priesthood and CES leaders are proactively working together to ensure that the course is taught each year in each location and that students are encouraged to take it. Institute directors throughout the country have been asked to work with priesthood leaders to ensure that each stake, district, and mission within the area offers the Eternal Family course every year. Knowing the importance of accountability, institute directors are expected to report the progress of the implementation of this course to their respective supervisors, who will then report to the Area Presidency. This indicates the importance the Area Presidency places on this issue and its hope to increase members’ understanding of Heavenly Father’s teachings on marriage and to increase the number of young people choosing to marry in the temple.

It is hoped that such a strong focus on the family will help the Saints of South Africa better prepare for their destiny as part of an eternal family. Elder Makasi explained, “Young people who grow up in LDS families have confidence that they can start their own families and can make it because they have seen good examples of family life in their homes.” However, as in other parts of the world, a large percentage of youth and young single adults in South Africa (80 percent) are first-generation members of the Church. The majority of these young members have not witnessed a family guided by the principles taught by living prophets. Elder Makasi testified that “the family proclamation stands as a beacon, assuring them [first-generation members] that despite their background and circumstances, they can make it.”⁷⁰

The Church’s efforts to strengthen the family have not gone unnoticed in South Africa. Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, a prominent political leader and past minister of home affairs for South Africa, spoke at the groundbreaking of the new Durban South Africa Temple. He stated, “I appreciate the emphasis on marriage and family throughout the doctrine of the Latter-day Saints. I married my wife, Princess Irene, in July 1952, and we have remained committed to one another for almost 64 years. The Lord blessed our marriage with eight children, and I am a proud grandfather to many grandchildren. I know what it is to be family focused. . . . I wish you well as you build the Durban Temple, in the hope that the principles of moral living, commitment and family values will deepen in South Africa.” Not only South Africans but also members worldwide will benefit as we continue teach and live the principles

contained in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.” And teachers in the Church Educational System have an important role to play in bringing this goal to pass. **RE**

Notes

1. First author.
2. Story from life of the first author. In the South African context, townships are residential urban places, built to house black workers. During apartheid, racial differences were emphasized. To ensure there was no mixing of races, various government acts were passed, including the Group Areas Act, which created separate racial enclaves. Whites needed black workers, and to ensure blacks were close to the workplace, townships were built.
3. For further information regarding these risk factors in South African townships, see Elwil Beukes and Anne van der Colff, “Aspects of the Quality of Life in Black Townships in a South African City: Implications for Human Development,” *Social Indicators Research* 41, nos. 1–3 (1997): 229–50; Jacqueline Mthembu et al., “Sexism, Intimate Partner Violence and Risk Behavior amongst Men in a South African Township,” *Violence and Gender* 1, no. 2 (2014): 53–59; Lori A. J. Scott-Sheldon et al., “Patterns of Alcohol Use and Sexual Behaviors among Current Drinkers in Cape Town, South Africa,” *Addictive Behaviors* 37, no. 4 (2012): 492–97.
4. The term *colored* has a different meaning in South Africa than it does in the United States. In South Africa it refers to those of mixed race.
5. For a comprehensive demographic and sociological look at modern South African families, see Acheampong Yaw Amoateng and Tim B. Heaton, eds., *Families and Households in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Socio-Demographic Perspective* (Cape Town: HSRC, 2007).
6. The following note from Acheampong Yaw Amoateng and Tim B. Heaton, eds., *Families and Households in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Socio-Demographic Perspectives* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007), ix, explains the names used for different population groups in South Africa: “During the apartheid regime, legislation divided the South African populace into four distinct population groups based on racial classification. Although the notion of population groups is now legal history, it is not always possible to gauge the effects of past discriminatory practices and the progress of policies designed to eradicate them, without reference to it. For this reason, the HSRC continues to use the terms black/African, coloured, white or Indian/Asian people where it is pertinent to the analysis of data.”
7. *Statistical Release (Revised): Census 2011* (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2011), <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P03014/P030142011.pdf>.
8. As specific strengths and challenges of these families are identified throughout the article, every attempt will be made to avoid racial or cultural stereotypes. Both authors are sensitive to this need, and the first author, as a black South African, is intimately aware of the danger of such stereotypes. Though we identify specific challenges of black and colored South African families for this paper, it is important to realize that all families face their own cultural challenges that must be overcome. It is our hope that by highlighting the unique challenges of black and coloured South African families and the valiant ways in which many are overcoming those challenges, we can provide a model for all families to do the same within their own cultural context.
9. “28% of SA Women Single Mothers,” CABSAs, last modified 24 October 2009, <http://www.cabsa.org.za/content/28-sa-women-single-moms-14509>.

10. Monde Makiwane et al., *A Baseline Study on Families in Mpumalanga* (Pretoria: HSRC, n.d.), 37.
11. Amoateng and Heaton, *Families and Households*, 49.
12. *Green paper* is a term used in South Africa to refer to a draft document on a specific policy to be circulated among interested parties, who are invited to join a process of consultation and debate.
13. Department of Social Development, *Green Paper on Families: Promoting Family Life and Strengthening Families in South Africa*, Government Gazette No. 34657, General Notice 756 (3 October 2011), http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/34692_gen756a_o.pdf.
14. Lucy Holborn and Gail Eddy, “First Steps to Healing the South African Family” (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 2011), <http://irr.org.za/reports-and-publications/occasional-reports/files/first-steps-to-healing-the-south-african-family-final-report-mar-2011.pdf>.
15. Richard G. Scott, “Removing Barriers to Happiness,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 85.
16. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World,” *Ensign*, October 1995, 98–101.
17. This article contains only a brief historical overview of societal forces that have influenced South African families. Each issue addressed has numerous antecedent influences that could be examined in detail, many of which would clearly show the harm that has been perpetrated against South Africans by European and other powers. The cursory historical overview contained in this article is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of these external influences. Nor will any attempt be made to highlight governmental or political solutions. Rather, this historical overview will place into broader context the challenges faced by families in South Africa and the gospel principles families can use to overcome the challenges. For a more in-depth sociological and historical analysis, see Bernard Magubane, *African Sociology—Towards a Critical Perspective* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2000).
18. Makiwane et al., *A Baseline Study*, 9.
19. Acheampong Yaw Amoateng and Linda M. Richter, “Social and Economic Context of Families and Households in South Africa,” in Amoateng and Heaton, *Families and Households*, 1–25.
20. *White Paper on South Africa Land Policy, April 1997* (Pretoria: Department of Land Affairs, 1997), <http://www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/phocadownload/White-Papers/white-paperlandreform.pdf>.
21. Besides the large number of families headed by single parents, 25 percent of the husbands in “couple-headed” black African or coloured families live separately from their families due largely to the necessity of working away from their homes. See Acheampong Yaw Amoateng, and Linda M. Richter, “Living Arrangements in South Africa,” in Amoateng and Heaton, *Families and Households*, 53.
22. “Pass Laws in South Africa 1800–1994,” South African History Online, 21 March 2011, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/pass-laws-south-africa-1800-1994>.
23. *Women under Apartheid*, United Nations Office at Geneva, accessed 14 April 2016, [http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/FCE445CF05811208C1256F500048D292/\\$file/sa_women_under_apartheid.pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/FCE445CF05811208C1256F500048D292/$file/sa_women_under_apartheid.pdf).
24. “Gender Inequalities in South African Society,” *Perspectives on KwaZulu-Natal* 1, no. 6 (August 2001): www.cherylgoodenough.com/docs/genderinequalitiesinsa.pdf.
25. *Marriage and Divorces, 2013* (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2015), 1, <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0307/P03072013.pdf>.

26. Amoateng and Heaton, *Families and Households*, 52.
27. Linda Richter et al., *Young People in South Africa: The Status of Youth Report, 2003* (n.p.: Umsobomvu Youth Fund and Human Sciences Research Council, 2005).
28. See Alan Booth and John N. Edwards, "Age at Marriage and Marital Instability," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 47, no. 1 (1985): 67–75; Norval D. Glenn, Jeremy Uecker, and Robert W. B. Love Jr., "Later First Marriage and Marital Success," *Social Science Research* 39, no. 5 (2010): 787–800.
29. Nicholas Wolfinger, "Want to Avoid Divorce? Wait to Get Married, But Not Too Long," *Family Studies* 16 (2015): 1–6.
30. Kay Hymowitz et al., *Knot Yet: The Benefits and Costs of Delayed Marriage in America*, <http://twentysomethingmarriage.org>.
31. Dallin H. Oaks, "Dating versus Hanging Out," *Ensign*, June 2006, 10–16.
32. Quoted in Dallin H. Oaks, "Dating versus Hanging Out," 10.
33. See the Conference Reports for April 2011, October 2014, and October 2015.
34. For an insightful study of how young men and women in South Africa have challenged many cultural norms, see Leslie Hadfield, "Challenging the Status Quo: Young Women and Men in Black Consciousness Community Work, 1970s South Africa," *Journal of African History* 54 (2013): 247–67.
35. Gail Eddy and Lucy Holborn, "Fractured Families: A Crisis for South Africa," *Moneyweb*, 4 May 2011, <https://www.moneyweb.co.za/archive/fractured-families-a-crisis-for-south-africa>.
36. Kermyt G. Anderson, *Family Structure, Schooling Outcomes, and Investment in Education in South Africa* (Ann Arbor: Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, 2003), 4.
37. Anderson, *Family Structure*, 2.
38. Boyd K. Packer, quoted in "Strengthening the Family: Created in the Image of God, Male and Female," *Ensign*, January 2005, 49.
39. D. Todd Christofferson, "Why Marriage, Why Family," *Ensign*, May 2015, 52.
40. Neil L. Andersen, "Whoso Receiveth Them, Receiveth Me," *Ensign*, May 2016, 50.
41. Area Statistics (CMIS 310), Africa Southeast Area (7 March 2016).
42. "A Portrait of Mormons in the U.S.," Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/07/24/a-portrait-of-mormons-in-the-us/>.
43. Lisa Vetten, *Rape and Other Forms of Sexual Violence in South Africa*, Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief 72, November 2014.
44. "Supporting Recovery—Seeking Justice—Making Change," Rape Crisis: Cape Town Trust, <http://www.rapecrisis.org.za>.
45. Waheeda Amien, "Recent Development in the Area of Women Rights in South Africa: Focus on Domestic Violence and Femicide," accessed 14 December 2015, <http://www.engender.org.za/publications/DV&Femicide.pdf>.
46. Ramadimetja S. Mogale, Kathy Kovacs Burns, and Solina Richter, "Violence against Women in South Africa: Policy Position and Recommendations," *SAGE Publication* 18, no. 5 (2012): 580–94.
47. Kristin Mann and Richard Roberts, eds., *Law in Colonial Africa* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1991), 108.
48. Khaya Dlanga, "Domestic Violence: Not a Symbol of Man's Strength," *Mail & Guardian*, 1 April 2015, <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-04-01-domestic-violence-not-a-symbol-of-a-mans-strength>.

49. Khaya Dlanga, "Domestic Violence: Not a Symbol of Man's Strength,"
50. Boyd K. Packer, "The Relief Society," *Ensign*, May 1998, 73.
51. L. Tom Perry, "Fatherhood, an Eternal Calling," *Ensign*, May 2004, 69.
52. M. Russell Ballard, "Strengthening the Family: As Equal Partners," *Ensign*, October 2005, 8.
53. Elizabeth Diffin, "How Do Zulus Explain Polygamy?," *BBC News Magazine*, 10 May 2010, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uknews/magazine/8459429.stm>.
54. See Tsoaledi Daniel Thobejane, "An Exploration of Polygamous Marriages: A Worldview," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 5, no. 27 (December 2014): 1058–66; and Obonye Jonas, "The Practice of Polygamy under the Scheme of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa: A Critical Appraisal," *Journal of African Studies and Development* 4, no. 5 (July 2012): 142–49.
55. Diffin, "How Do Zulus Explain Polygamy?"
56. Emily J. Duncan, "The Positive Effects of Legalizing Polygamy: 'Love Is a Many Splendored Thing,'" *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy* 15, no. 315 (2008): 1–23.
57. Laura Grant, "10 Things about Marriage in South Africa" *Mail & Guardian*, May 19, 2015, accessed February 1, 2016, <http://mg.co.za/data/2015-05-19-10-things-about-marriage-in-south-africa>.
58. "What We Believe about Lobola," His People Church, accessed 4 February 2015, <http://www.hispeoplejoburg.org>.
59. See comments of Elder Dallin H. Oaks and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Africa General Conference Broadcasts, 2013 and 2014 respectively.
60. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Africa Regional Conference, 2014. Unpublished.
61. Nicole Seymour, "'The Family: A Proclamation to the World' Reaches 10-Year Milestone," *Ensign*, November 2004, 127.
62. Henry B. Eyring, "The Family," *Ensign*, February 1998, 10.
63. On 21 November 2010 Elder Dallin H. Oaks presided and spoke. On 23 November 2014 we had President Uchtdorf presiding and speaking. In November 2015 Elder Renlund spoke.
64. Sandile Makasi (Africa Southeast Area travel manager), interview, 20 March 2016.
65. Excerpts from this address were published in Dallin H. Oaks, "The Gospel Culture," *Ensign*, March 2012, 40–47.
66. Kelly Haws, interview, 3 March 2016.
67. M. Russell Ballard, "An Afternoon with a General Authority," *Church News*, 26 February 2016.
68. Tasara Makasi, interview, 22 December 2015.
69. Kelly Haws, interview.
70. Tarasa Makasi, email message to author, 22 December 2015.