

4. “We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

What is a principle? It is a rule, gospel law or a piece of doctrine that should be followed.

What is an ordinance? An ordinance is a sacred activity that must be performed by authority of the priesthood.

First: Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a principle. Faith is believing in something that is true, without seeing it. Example: you can't see the wind, but you know it's blowing when the leaves of the trees move and wiggle with air. To have faith in Jesus Christ means that even though you do not see Him, you believe that He lives. The first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One way to increase your faith in Him is to learn more about Him through studying the scriptures.

“Faith in Jesus Christ”

By Sydney S. Reynolds

If ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true (Alma 32:21)

Sydney S. Reynolds, "Sharing Time: Faith in Jesus Christ," *Friend*, Jan. 1999, 14

“What does it mean to have faith? Alma says that “if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true” (Alma 32:21). We have faith when we believe and trust in something that is real and true even though we have not seen it for ourselves.

Joseph Smith wanted to know which church he should join. One evening when he was reading the Bible, he read in James 1:5, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth [scold or criticize] not; and it shall be given him.”

Joseph believed this scripture and planted its truth in his heart. He trusted that the Lord would answer his prayer, even though he had never prayed out loud before. Joseph prayed in faith, and he received a wonderful answer.

What does it mean to have faith in Jesus Christ? To have faith in Jesus Christ means that although we have not seen Him, we believe that He lives and loves us and that we trust Him. When we read the scriptures, we can learn about Him. When we listen to the prophets, we can understand what we can do to follow Him. When we pray in faith for help to choose the right, we can know that our prayers will be answered. When we listen to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, we can feel Him close to us and know that He loves us.

How does our faith in Jesus Christ grow? Alma tells us that the word of God is like a seed. We show our faith when we plant a seed in the earth. We then nurture it by keeping the weeds away, by giving it

water and plant food, and by making sure that it has sunshine. If it is a good seed, it will begin to swell and grow.

When we believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ, we plant true words of God in our hearts. We nurture this kind of seed by praying, by listening to the prophets, by keeping the commandments, and by responding to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. As we do this, the seed of truth will grow within our hearts. Then we will know that Jesus Christ is happy with our efforts.

Alma says that if we continue to nourish the word of God by our faith, it will grow as large as a tree and bring forth fruit. This means that our faith in Jesus Christ will grow strong and bring blessings for us and for others. What joy that brings! We have faith in Jesus Christ when we believe Him, trust Him, obey Him, and follow Him.”


Activity:

Have the children plant a tiny seed in a cup. Have them take it home, and nurture it putting it in a sunny window, by watering it, and watch what happens. Have the children keep a log of what happens for the next month. Be mindful to tell them not to over-water it, or to let the soil get too dry. They have faith that the seed will germinate and grow, but they really don't know what it will become.

Song:


Sing the Primary song “Faith is Like a Little Seed”.

Activity 1: The Word of God Is like a Seed

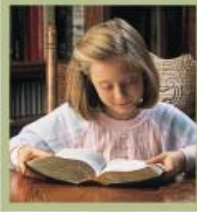



*The Word of God
Is like a Seed*
(See Alma 32:27-43.)



**Plant it:
Believe.**



**Nurture it:
Read the scriptures.
Listen to the prophets.
Keep the commandments.**

**Tend it:
Pray.
Listen and respond to the
promptings of the Holy Ghost.**

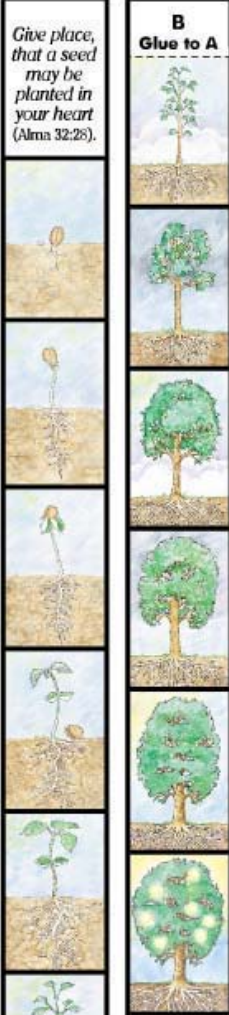
And it will grow.

*If ye will nourish the word, yea,
nourish the tree as it beginneth
to grow, by your faith with great
dilligence, and with patience,
looking forward to the fruit
thereof, it shall take root; and
behold it shall be a tree springing
up unto everlasting life*
(Alma 32:41).

ACTIVITY 2: WATCH THE SEED GROW


*Give place,
that a seed
may be
planted in
your heart*
(Alma 32:28).

**B
Glue to A**



A

*Ye shall
reap the
rewards of
your faith*
(Alma 32:43).



**Cut along
broken lines.**

Second: Repentance is a principle.

Repentance is saying “I’m sorry”. It is to make the wrong that was done be right again, to ask forgiveness, and to never repeat the wrong again. Being forgiven after repentance is a gift from God. He requires of us to forgive everyone who has done something ‘wrong’ to us.

(Make these into steps like a staircase) The Steps of Repentance are: recognition, remorse, confession, restitution, and keeping the commandments. One has to repent **before** baptism or the sins do not go away.

“Repentance-Turning from Wrong to Right”

By Karen Ashton

*For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent
(D&C 19:16)*

Karen Ashton, “Sharing Time: Repentance—Turning from Wrong to Right,” *Friend*, Apr. 1997, 36

“What is the second principle of the gospel, listed in the fourth article of faith? If you said “Repentance,” you are right!

Repentance is turning from doing wrong to doing right. The Savior wants you to turn away from wrong and turn to Him. (See 3 Ne. 30:1-2.) He gave His life to pay for your sins so that if you repent, you can be forgiven and be clean again.

When you disobey the commandments or hurt others, the Holy Ghost cannot be with you and you may feel sad, guilty, lonely, or afraid. To change these feelings, you need to turn from doing wrong to doing right. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will help you change. This changing is called repentance.

Repentance begins inside of you—in your thoughts and in your heart. When you know you have done something wrong, think about it until a feeling of sorrow comes into your heart. Do not excuse yourself or blame someone else. Tell Heavenly Father what you have done and how you feel. Tell Him how much you love Him, and ask for His help. If you have hurt someone or something, try to make it better. Promise Heavenly Father that you will try, with all your heart, to do what is right from now on.

Repentance begins on the inside, but usually it shows on the outside as well. When you promise Heavenly Father that you will do what is right, you keep your promise by changing the way you act. You treat others with more love and kindness. You keep the commandments. These actions will help you feel good about yourself and others.

You will need to repent many times throughout your life. As you turn away from wrong and try to do what is right, you will grow closer and closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ has promised that if you repent, He will bless you and remember your wrongs no more. (See Hel. 13:11; D&C 58:42.)

Discuss with the children what the word *poison* means. Tell them that it is like sin. Just as poison destroys the body, sin destroys the spirit. Explain that if you were to take poison, you might immediately realize what you had done, be sorry, tell someone, and not take any more. But that would not save you from the effects of the poison already in your body. Help the children understand that when you have sinned, or taken spiritual poison, Jesus has commanded you to repent. You must feel sorry for the sin, confess it to Heavenly Father, try to pay for what you have done, and try to not do it

again. Jesus Christ suffered and paid for all our sins so that we *can* repent. This is called the Atonement. Just as taking an antidote (medicine that works against poison) can eliminate the bad effects of poison in our system, repentance and the Atonement together can eliminate sin from our lives. Have the children look up the scriptures, then verbally fill in the blanks in the following sentences with *repent, repentance, atone, or atonement*. Discuss each scripture as you fill in the blank.

Give each child a copy of the following **activity**; suggest that he/she share it with his/her family.”

And he commandeth all men that they must _____ (2 Ne. 9:23). For the _____ satisfieth the demands of ... justice (2 Ne. 9:26). For according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an _____ made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish (Alma 34:9). We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, _____ (A of F 1:4). Now this is the commandment: _____, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name (3 Ne. 27:20). For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would _____ (D&C 19:16). For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might _____ and come unto him (D&C 18:11).

Activity:

A fun way to teach the principle of repentance is to have two jars of water, some red food coloring, and some bleach. Be sure the tabletop that you are using is covered with plastic. Explain to the girls that the bottles of water represent each of us. With one bottle, drop a few droplets of red food coloring into the water. Tell the girls that this is what happens when we commit a little ‘sin’. Add a few more for each time a person ‘sins’. It gets a shade of pinky-red. With the bleach, tell them this is what the Atonement does for us. It helps us to repent and take away those sins. Add a few drops of bleach to the red-dyed water. Stir it around. Tell them that it turns the water to clear again. Mention the scripture Isaiah 1:18 “...*though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*” **Note: Be very careful with bleach – your church building may have a rule not allowing it inside.**

Third: Baptism by Immersion is an ordinance

We follow Jesus’ example by being baptized. He was baptized by John the Baptist who had authority, the Priesthood of God. He was baptized by immersion – meaning he was completely covered in water as he was lain down in the water. This symbolizes his death and resurrection. Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. We follow the same pattern that was set by him. We are baptized by someone who is a priest in the Aaronic priesthood or who holds the Melchizedek priesthood. We are baptized by immersion – completely under the water. The water symbolically washes away our sins. We are clean and pure – just like the white jumper outfit that we put on when we go into the water. All of our past mistakes are gone!

Eight years old is the youngest a person can be baptized. It was a revelation given to Joseph Smith in November, 1831 that stated “And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of hands.” (D&C 68:27)

“I Can Keep My Covenant”

By Sydney S. Reynolds

I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

Sydney S. Reynolds, "Sharing Time: I Can Keep My Covenant," *Friend*, Aug. 1999, 45

What is a covenant? In the Church, a covenant is a mutual promise that we make with Heavenly Father. *To covenant* means to “come together,” or to be bound together by promises. Sometimes it is a promise that we make in our hearts. Even when we make a covenant in our hearts with Heavenly Father, there are things we do to show that we have made those promises.

Baptism is the occasion for one of the first covenants we make with Him. Being baptized shows that we want to keep His commandments. Some of the promises we make when we are baptized are that we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, that we will always remember Him, and that we will keep His commandments. The *Lord* promises *us* that He will give us His Spirit to always be with us.

Think about just the first part of our baptismal covenant. What do you think it means to take His name upon us? Most of us already have two names. We have a given name, like Elizabeth, or Marco, or Mei-Li; and we have a family name, like Smith, or Garcia, or Chen. When we take the name of Jesus Christ upon ourselves, it means we are part of His family. We are ready to be known as Christians. We are willing to “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things and in all places” (**Mosiah 18:9**). We want to act like Christ and follow Him.

Jesus has given us guidelines to help us follow Him. He expects us to love each other, to bear one another’s burdens, to mourn with those who are sad, and to comfort those who need comfort. That’s what He did when He was on the earth. If we want to be called by His name, we will try to do these things, too. When you help your mother tend the baby so that she can fix dinner, you are bearing another’s burdens. When you put your arm around your little brother and tell him that you’re sorry that he hurt himself, you are giving comfort. When your heart is sad because your friend’s father is very ill, and you reach out to her in love, you are mourning along with her.

Each week when we take the sacrament, we renew the covenant we made at baptism. Each day as we choose the right and follow Jesus, we are keeping our covenant and growing in faith. As we keep the covenant we have made, the Lord’s Spirit will be with us, and one day we will be worthy to go to the temple and make other very important covenants with Heavenly Father.

Look up Mosiah 18:5-11. (Have the children mark these scriptures) These are the covenants that we make today as they were made in the old days. We promise to:

- Be called his people – take upon us Jesus Christ’s name
- Willing to bear one another’s burdens that they may be light
- Mourn with those that mourn
- Comfort those that need comfort
- Stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things and in all places
- Serve God
- Keep his commandments

Have a child hold up a piece of an athletic uniform. Ask: “What do you promise when you become part of a team?” (You will come to practice, you will come to games, you will do your best, you will be a good sport.) Have an older child come up; role-play inviting her to baby-sit. Then ask: “What can I expect from her when she agrees to baby-sit for me?” (Promptness; care of children; following your rules regarding phone calls, eating your food, etc.) “What do I promise her?” (To get her home on time, provide a safe place to work, pay her.) Role-play contracting a lawn-mowing job (or a paper-delivery job) with another child. Discuss the implicit promises. If you are in the United States, ask 3 older children to stand and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance. Ask the children to show you other things they do to show that they have made a promise. (Shake hands to confirm a deal, say “I promise,” sign a check, raise the right hand to sustain someone in a calling, take an oath in a court of law, etc.) Say: “We are going to talk about one of the most important promises, or covenants, you will ever make—the covenant of **baptism**.” Write on the chalkboard and ask: “What do we promise the Lord?” Give one of the following wordstrips cut up into words to each of 3 helpers: 1. **Take upon us the name of His Son** / 2. **Always remember Him** / 3. **Keep His commandments which He has given us**. Have the helpers post the words in correct order under “What do we promise the Lord?” Now write and ask: “What does the Lord promise us?” Have a helper put the wordstrip (cut up into words) **We may always have His spirit to be with us** in order, and post them under “What does the Lord promise us?” Next, ask: “What do we promise when we are baptized?” “What does the Lord promise us?” “Why do these words sound familiar?” Every week when we take the sacrament, we renew our baptismal covenant. These words are familiar because they are part of the sacrament prayer. There are three other things the Lord promises us when we are baptized (post the wordstrips): **Membership in His church, Forgiveness of our sins, and Salvation in His kingdom**. Review the things discussed earlier about making promises. Conclude with Primary manual pictures of a modern baptism and the sacrament. Share your witness of the importance of the covenant of baptism.”

Activity:

Have the children bring their scriptures. Bring red pencils for them. Explain that these are only 3 prayers that need to be said word perfect. Have them mark D&C 20:73 – the baptism prayer and D&C 20: 77 and 79. Next time when the sacrament is to be blessed, tell them to remember these scriptures. Of course, we don’t use wine because of the alcohol factor, but explain why we should really pay attention to the prayers. These are the same covenants that we have made at our baptism. We are reminded about them every week when we partake of the sacrament.

Fourth: Laying on of Hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost

“The Greatest Gift”

“...fourth, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost”

“The Greatest Gift,” *Friend*, Dec. 1977, 38

“After you are baptized, some one having the Melchizedek Priesthood lays his hands upon your head, pronounces your name, and confirms you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then that person, usually assisted by other priesthood holders with the proper authority, invites the Holy Ghost to be your companion. If you live righteously, the Spirit of the Holy Ghost will abide with you whenever you need Him as a Protector, a Comforter, a Revelator, a Messenger of Truth from Heavenly Father and Jesus. There are other names, forms, and responsibilities the Holy Ghost assumes that are described in the following quotations:

“Truly, all things are done by the *power* of the Holy Ghost.”

—*Joseph Fielding Smith*

“It [the Holy Ghost] inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation, and social feeling. It develops and invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, invigorates and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is as it were marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.”

—*Parley P. Pratt*

“There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man.”

—*Joseph Smith*

“The Lord gives to many of us the still small voice of revelation. It comes to each man for guidance in matters that pertain to his own life. For the Church as a whole it comes to those who have been ordained to speak for the Church as a whole.”

—*Heber J. Grant*

Recorded in the *Manuscript History of Brigham Young*, February 23, 1847, at Winter Quarters was a night vision or dream wherein the Prophet Joseph Smith talked to Brigham Young about the Holy Ghost:

“Joseph stepped toward me, and looking very earnestly, yet pleasantly said, ‘Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small still voice; it will teach you what to do and where to go; to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them, their hearts will be ready to receive it. They can tell the Spirit of the Lord from all other spirits; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God.’”

“... the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

—*John 14:26*

Lorenzo Snow was baptized and confirmed in Kirtland, Ohio, when he was twenty-two years old. But he was disappointed that no miraculous manifestation (happening) took place after these ordinances were performed. Two or three weeks later, however, the young man, who was to become the fifth president of the Church, did have an unforgettable heaven-sent experience that he described in these words:

“One day while engaged in my studies, I began to reflect upon the fact that I had not obtained a *knowledge* of the truth of the work ... and I began to feel very uneasy. I laid aside my books, left the house, and wandered around through the fields under the oppressive influence of a gloomy disconsolate spirit, while an indescribable cloud of darkness seemed to envelop me.

“I had been accustomed, at the close of the day, to retire for secret prayer, to a grove a short distance from my lodgings, but at this time I felt no inclination to do so. At length, I concluded I would not forego my evening service, and knelt as I was in the habit of doing, and in my accustomed retired place.

“I had no sooner opened my lips in an effort to pray, than I heard a sound, just above my head, like the rustling of silken robes, and immediately the Spirit of God descended upon me, completely enveloping my whole person, filling me, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and O, the joy and happiness I felt! No language can describe the almost instantaneous transition from a dense cloud of mental and spiritual darkness into [one] of light and knowledge. I then received a perfect knowledge that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and of the restoration of the holy Priesthood, and the fulness of the Gospel. It was a complete baptism—a tangible immersion in the heavenly principle or element, the Holy Ghost; and even more real and physical in its effects upon every part of my system than the immersion by water; dispelling forever ... all possibility of doubt ... that the ‘Babe of Bethlehem’ is truly the Son of God; also the fact that He is now being revealed to the children of men, and communicating knowledge, the same as in the Apostolic times. I was perfectly satisfied, ... for my expectations were more than realized.

“That night, as I retired to rest, the same wonderful manifestations were repeated, and continued to be for several successive nights. The sweet remembrance of those glorious experiences ... bring them fresh before me, imparting an inspiring influence which pervades my whole being.”

“... the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.”

—*Doctrine and Covenants 130:22*

“The Holy Ghost is only given to men through their obedience to the Gospel of Christ; and every man who receives that spirit has a comforter within—a leader to dictate and guide him. This Spirit reveals, day by day, to every man who has faith, those things which are for his benefit.”

—*Wilford Woodruff*

“Communion with the Holy Spirit”

By Elder James E. Faust
of the Quorum of the Twelve

(Adapted from a talk given in general conference on April 5, 1980. See Ensign, May 1980, pages 12-14.)

[James E. Faust, “Communion with the Holy Spirit,” Friend, Aug.-Sept. 1985, inside front cover](#)

”Latter-day Saints, having received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, are entitled to personal inspiration in the small events of life as well as when they are confronted with the giant Goliaths of life.

“Many faithful Latter-day Saints have been warned by the Spirit, preventing injury or death. Among these was President Wilford Woodruff, who said:

“When I got back to Winter Quarters from the pioneer journey (1847), President Young said to me, ‘Brother Woodruff, I want you to take your wife and children and go to Boston and stay there until you can gather every Saint of God in New England and Canada and send them up to Zion.’

“I did as he told me. It took me two years to gather up everybody, and I brought up the rear with a company (there were about one hundred of them). We arrived at Pittsburgh one day at sundown. We did not want to stay there, so I went to the first steamboat that was going to leave. I saw the captain and engaged passage for us on that steamer. I had only just done so when the spirit said to me, and that, too, very strongly, ‘Don’t go aboard that steamer, nor your company.’ Of course, I went and spoke to the captain, and told him I had made up my mind to wait.

“Well, that ship started and had only got five miles down the river when it took fire, and three hundred persons were burned to death or drowned. If I had not obeyed that spirit and had gone on that steamer with the rest of the company, you can see what the result would have been.”

“There are some rules necessary for one to receive revelation and inspiration; they include (1) to try honestly and sincerely to keep God’s commandments, (2) to be spiritually attuned as a receiver of a divine message, (3) to ask in humble, fervent prayer, and (4) to seek with unwavering faith.”

Props for an Activity:

Assign each of the girls bring in a prop and describe why it is similar to the Holy Ghost. Possible props are: A wrapped empty box like a present, an umbrella, a blanket, a compass, a flashlight, a CD case, a small tape recorder with whispering voices saying positive things or warnings, and anything else you could think of that would help the girls remember what the Holy Ghost symbolizes.
