



Journal writing has been encouraged since the earliest days of the Church and has been the source of much of what is known about Church history. Many Latter-day Saints today, including children, youth, and adults, regularly record their experiences in personal journals.

journal from youth up, all through his life” (“The Foundations of Righteousness.” *Ensign* 7 [Nov. 1977]:4).

Also in recent years, a new reason for journal writing has been voiced: the value of journals as a gift to descendants—a linking of the generations. President Kimball said: “I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records, they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations. . . . Rich passages . . . will be quoted by your posterity” (p. 61).

Because of the admonitions of scripture and leaders, journal writing, especially in recent decades, has become an integral part of the religious experience of many Latter-day Saints. Parents have been encouraged to write their own personal journals and to help their children begin writing theirs, to make the experience pleasant. President Kimball said in 1980: “Those who keep a personal

journal are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives” (p. 61).

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## JOY

The Prophet Joseph SMITH declared, “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it” (*TPJS*, p. 255). The concept of true joy to be experienced in this life and in the life to come lies at the core of LDS thought. The Book of Mormon prophet LEHI taught, “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25; cf. Alma 42:8).

Latter-day Saints believe in a PREMORTAL LIFE in which all lived with God, the literal father of the spirits of humankind. Part of God’s plan for the growth and progress of his children—the goal of which is to help everyone become as God himself is and to know the joy that he knows—involves a mortal experience. Therein people obtain a physical body, the power of procreation, and an independence and AGENCY that allow experiences of diverse kinds and thereby enhance the powers of self-determination.

In this light, Latter-day Saints view the physical body, the mortal environment, the procreative power, and the freedom of choice as essential elements of joy. Thus, Heavenly Father created this earth and sent his children to it that they might know joy. In this profound sense, joy and happiness arise from combinations of experience, responsibility and service, and pain and grief, along with pleasure and enjoyment. At the center of God’s plan to make maximum joy accessible to his children is the ATONEMENT of Christ (2 Ne. 2:10–14, 22–27).

One can identify aspects of joy that are available in this life. First are the simple joys of being

aware of and appreciating the gifts of life, the earth, and personal agency (e.g., taste, smell, beauty, music). A second is the joy of using these gifts to create opportunities or to develop relationships (e.g., marriage, parenting, charity). A third is the joy of coming to understand how mortality fits into the divine purpose or plan of the Heavenly Father (*see* PLAN OF SALVATION). This understanding derives from learning of God's plan for his children's salvation and using it as a framework for comprehending and assimilating life's experiences. Another is the joy of accepting Christ as Savior and feeling his acceptance and approval of one's efforts. This joy is accompanied by the power and beauty of Christ's spirit in one's life. In this connection, the Book of Mormon describes a scene wherein "the spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience" (Mosiah 4:3; cf. John 15:10–12).

LDS doctrine teaches that joy is obtained only by RIGHTEOUSNESS (Mosiah 4:3, 20). Consequently, Latter-day Saints view God's COMMANDMENTS as loving counsel from a wise Father—a Father whose goal is human happiness. They believe that lives which conform to God's will and are governed by his standards will create the most joyful response to all of life's circumstances, bringing both a fulfillment in life's accomplishments and a sweet resolve in life's sorrows.

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## JUDGMENT

All humankind shall stand before Jesus, "and he shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:32). The verb "separate" reflects the Lord's determination of exact boundaries between good and evil, since he "cannot look upon sin with the least

degree of allowance" (D&C 1:31). The Greek New Testament word for judgment (*krino*) means to separate or to decide, and refers not only to God's decisions but to those made by man as well (Matt. 7:1–2).

AMULEK warned that this life is the time to prepare to meet God (Alma 34:32). MORTALITY requires basic decisions of a moral and spiritual character, in which individuals are free to choose for themselves yet are accountable to God for their choices. In turn, God will render a perfect and just decision to determine blessings or punishments. In the judgment there will be a perfect restoration of joy for righteous living and of misery for evil (Alma 41:3–5). After death is not the time to repent: "Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God; . . . for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life . . . will have power to possess your body in that eternal world" (Alma 34:34).

Judgment applies to "the whole human family" (Morm. 3:20; cf. John 5:25–29; *TPJS*, p. 149). Every soul will come before the bar of God through the power of the ATONEMENT and the RESURRECTION (Jacob 6:9). Indeed, as Christ was lifted up on the cross, he will raise all men before him in judgment (3 Ne. 27:14–15; *TPJS*, p. 62). Christ has been given the responsibility for judgment. He taught, "The Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). Others have been given some role in judgment, such as the twelve apostles in Palestine and the twelve disciples among the Nephites as described in the Book of Mormon (Morm. 3:18–19). Individuals will also judge themselves either by having a perfect knowledge of their joy and righteousness or by having a perfect knowledge of their guilt and unrighteousness (2 Ne. 9:14, 46). All have the assurance, however, that final judgment is in the hands of Christ (2 Ne. 9:41).

Three sets of records will be used in judgment: the records kept in heaven, the records kept on earth (D&C 128:6–7), and the records embedded in the consciousness of each individual (*MD*, p. 97; cf. Alma 11:43). Individuals are judged according to their works, thoughts, words, and the desires of their hearts (Alma 12:14; D&C 137:9).

There can be no pretense or hypocrisy in the manner in which people accept and live the gospel (2 Ne. 31:13). The Lord will judge members of the