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GOSPEL STUDY FOR
INCARCERATED WOMEN

Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work

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GENERAL PRESIDENT

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We can offer our hands to do the work God has for us

Dear sisters, how we love you! As we watched that beautiful video, did you see your own hand reaching out to help someone along that covenant path? I was thinking about a young Primary girl named Brynn who has only one hand, and yet she uses that hand to reach out to bless her family and her friends—Latter-day Saints and those of other faiths. Isn't she beautiful? And so are you! Sisters, we can offer hands to help and hearts to hasten Heavenly Father's wonderful work.

Just as our faithful sisters in the scriptures, such as Eve, Sarah, Mary, and many others, knew their identity and purpose, Brynn knows that she is a daughter of God.¹ We too can know of our own divine heritage as beloved daughters of God and the vital work He has for us to do.

We should be willing to do the work of a disciple, as Jesus asked the rich young man to do

The Savior taught, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). What do we need to know and do "to live with him someday"?² We can learn from the story of the rich young man who asked Jesus what he needed to do in order to receive eternal life.

Jesus answered him, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

The young man asked Him which ones he should keep. Jesus then reminded him of several of the Ten Commandments we are all familiar with.

The young man responded, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"

Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (see Matthew 19:16–22).

Jesus called him to become a part of His work—the work of a disciple. Our work is the same. We are to "lay aside the things of [the] world, . . . cleave unto [our] covenants" (D&C 25:10, 13), and come unto Christ and follow Him. That's what disciples do!

Just as our faithful sisters in the scriptures, such as Eve, Sarah, Mary, and many others, knew their identity and purpose, . . . we too can know of our own divine heritage as beloved daughters of God and the vital work He has for us to do.

Now, sisters, let's not start beating ourselves up because the Savior spoke to the rich young man about becoming perfect. The word *perfect* in this account was translated from a Greek word that means "complete." [See Matthew 5:48, footnote *b*.] As we try our best to move forward along the covenant path, we become more complete and perfect in this life.

Like the rich young man in Jesus's day, sometimes we are tempted to give up or turn back because maybe we think we can't do it alone. And we are right! We cannot do the difficult things we have been asked to do without help. Help comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and the helping hands of others.

Mormon was a true disciple of Christ

A faithful single sister recently testified that through the Atonement, she found strength to use her helping hands and willing heart to raise the four children her sister had left behind when she died of cancer. That reminded me of something Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: "All the easy things that the Church has had to do have been done. From now on, it's high adventure, and followership is going to be tested in some interesting ways."³ You have been sent to earth in this dispensation of time because of who you are and what you have been prepared to do! Regardless of what Satan would try to persuade us to think about who we are, our true identity is that of a disciple of Jesus Christ!

Mormon was a true disciple who lived in a day when "every heart was hardened, . . . and there never had been so great wickedness among all the children of Lehi" (Mormon 4:11–12). How would you like to have lived in that day? And yet Mormon boldly declared, "Behold, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (3 Nephi 5:13).

Don't you love Mormon? He knew who he was and what his mission was and was not distracted by the evil that surrounded him. In fact, he considered his calling to be a gift (see Moroni 7:2).

Think what a blessing it is to be called to give our gift of daily discipleship to the Lord, declaring in word and deed, "Behold, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ!"

Everyday stories of women's discipleship

I love the story President Boyd K. Packer told of a dear sister who was ridiculed for following the prophet's counsel to store food. The one who criticized suggested that if times became desperate, her leaders would ask her to share her food

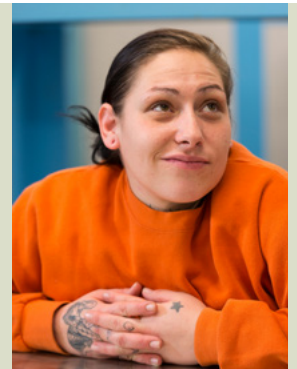
storage with others. Her simple and resolute response as a true disciple was, "At least I will have something to bring."⁴

I love the women of the Church, young and old. I have seen your strength. I have seen your faith. You have something to give and are willing to give it. You do this without fanfare or publicity, drawing attention to the God we worship, not yourselves, and with no thought of what you will receive (see 2 Nephi 26:29–30). That's what disciples do!

Why Should I Care?

As you do your best to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, you will:

- Become more like the Savior.
- Be able to help with God's work where you are now.
- Find courage to keep covenants and promises you have made to God and others.
- See your value as a child of God more completely.



I recently met a young woman in the Philippines whose family became less active in the Church when she was only 7 years old, leaving her alone to walk a dangerous road to church week after week. She told how at age 14 she decided that she would stay true to her covenants so she would be worthy to raise her future family in a home "blessed by the strength of priesthood pow'r."⁵ The best way to strengthen a home, current or future, is to keep covenants, promises we've made to each other and to God.

That's what disciples do!



That's what disciples do!

A faithful Japanese sister and her husband visited our mission in Korea. She didn't speak Korean and was limited in her ability to speak English, but she had a willing heart to use her unique gifts and helping hands to do the Lord's work. That's what disciples do! She taught our missionaries how to do a simple piece of origami—a mouth that could open and shut. She then used the few English words she knew to teach the missionaries to “open their mouths” to share the gospel—a lesson they will never forget, nor will I.

Visualize for a minute you and me standing together with the other millions of sisters and brothers in His Church, going forth boldly, doing what disciples do—serving and loving like the Savior. What does it mean to you to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

We can answer spiritual “help wanted” signs

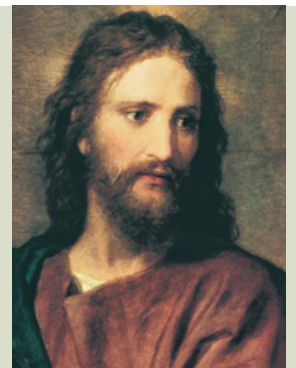
Mormon Helping Hands vests and shirts have been worn by hundreds of thousands of selfless disciples of Jesus Christ who have embraced the opportunity to provide temporal service. But there are other ways to serve as devoted disciples. Imagine with me some of the possible spiritual “help wanted” signs related to the work of salvation:

- Help wanted: parents to bring up their children in light and truth
- Help wanted: daughters and sons, sisters and brothers, aunts and uncles, cousins, grandparents, and true friends to serve as mentors and offer helping hands along the covenant path
- Help wanted: those who listen to the promptings of the Holy Ghost and act on impressions received
- Help wanted: those who live the gospel daily in small and simple ways
- Help wanted: family history and temple workers to link families eternally
- Help wanted: missionaries and members to spread the “good news”—the gospel of Jesus Christ

Do It Yourself

Think about ways that you can help someone else spiritually. What can you do this week?

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a “help wanted” sign and write how you plan to help someone over the next week.



- Help wanted: rescuers to find those who have lost their way
- Help wanted: covenant keepers to stand firm for truth and right
- Help wanted: true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ

Even though we are not yet perfect, the Lord needs righteous women

Years ago, Elder M. Russell Ballard issued a clarion call to the sisters of the Church when he said:

"Between now and the day the Lord comes again, He needs women in every family, in every ward, in every community, in every nation who will step forward in righteousness and say by their words and their actions, 'Here am I, send me.'"

"My question is, 'Will you be one of those women?'"⁶

I hope each of us can answer with a resounding "Yes!" I close with the words of a Primary song:

We are cov'nant [daughters] with a gift to give.

We will teach the gospel by the way we live.

With each word and action, we will testify:

We believe, and we serve Jesus Christ.⁷

As true disciples, may we offer our willing hearts and our helping hands to hasten His work. It does not matter if, like Brynn, we have only one hand. It does not matter if we are not yet perfect and complete. We are devoted disciples who reach out and help each other along the way. Our sisterhood reaches across the generations to those faithful sisters who have walked before. Together, as sisters and in unity with living prophets, seers, and revelators with restored priesthood keys, we can walk as one, as disciples, as servants with willing hearts and hands to hasten the work of salvation. As we do so, we will become like the Savior. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

[Note: Subheadings were added or altered in this article. Scripture references have been moved from the endnotes into the text of the talk.]

Endnotes

1. See "Brynn," [lds.org/media-library/video/2011-01-007-brynn](https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/2011-01-007-brynn).
2. "I Am a Child of God," *Hymns*, no. 301; or *Children's Songbook*, 2–3.
3. Neal A. Maxwell, "The Old Testament: Relevancy within Antiquity" (address to Church Educational System religious educators, Aug. 16, 1979), 4; [si.lds.org](https://www.lds.org).
4. In Boyd K. Packer, "The Circle of Sisters," *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 111.
5. "Love Is Spoken Here," *Children's Songbook*, 190–91.
6. M. Russell Ballard, "Women of Righteousness," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 70; *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 39.
7. "Holding Hands around the World," *Friend*, July 2002, 44–45; *Liahona*, Oct. 2003, F12–13.

Wanted: Hands and Hearts to Hasten the Work

RESPONSE FORM

1. How does knowing that you are a daughter of God with a divine heritage change how you view yourself?

2. Why do we sometimes feel that we cannot do difficult things? On whom can we rely for help? What examples from the Savior's life illustrate how He helped people overcome difficulty?

3. How can you become a true disciple of Jesus Christ?

4. Sister Burton lists nine "help wanted" notices. Which of these notices do you feel that you could apply now?

5. How do you plan to put your willing heart and hands to work to hasten the work of salvation for yourself and your fellow human beings?

6. What else have you learned in this lesson that you would like to share?

Name: _____ **Offender #:** _____

Please answer the questions on this response form, detach, and return to the address below:

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Please request the next lesson you would like to study: _____