

## “Trusting the Lord to See All He Has Provided Us”

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Good morning, friends and students. It's truly an honor for me to speak to you today. I'm grateful to President Ashton for inviting me to speak on something I care deeply about.

We all know that being employed in purposeful and honest work that enables us to provide for ourselves and for our families feels good. The Lord wants us to be joyfully working, to be “anxiously engaged in a good cause.”<sup>1</sup> It's a noble endeavor to be working for the purpose of being self-reliant and serving in the Lord's Kingdom.

Yet, when we are unemployed, underemployed, or struggling in our small business, it can tear at our sense of worth and well-being. Years ago, I read a quote by President Gordon B. Hinckley that profoundly touched me. What he said applies to men and women all over the world:

A man out of work is of special moment to the Church because, deprived of his inheritance, he is on trial as Job was on trial—for his integrity. As days lengthen into weeks and months and even years of adversity, the hurt grows.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout my travels, I have met people who are without work or are working for very little from day to day. I see how the lack of work darkens their hopes and aspirations. Yet, I've also listened to countless stories from individuals, regardless of their circumstances, who have worked hard and have overcome their employment challenges.

One of my favorite things to do when I visit a country is to observe the vitality and positive energy of people working. Walking in open markets or on streets, I see people moving with purpose, creating solutions, and solving problems. Yes, there may be economic challenges, but I also see people busily engaged, adapting, and striving to provide for themselves and their families.<sup>3</sup>

Years ago, I started the practice of talking with strangers who are employed in a good job or who are running their own successful business. I'm curious, so I ask for their stories. I like to know what barriers they overcame and where they started from to get where they are. I have learned that they follow some of the same principles that the scriptures and the words of living prophets and apostles teach us. Today, I'd like to share three of those principles.

### **1. Seek the Lord's guidance.**

When we seek the Lord's guidance with sincere desire, doors of opportunity open and fears diminish.<sup>4</sup> When it comes to looking for a job or starting a business, we often listen to our fears more than our feelings of hope. We incorrectly assume we know perfectly that our circumstances will not improve. But thankfully, because faith presumes not to have a perfect knowledge, we can choose to be hopeful.<sup>5</sup> And because God knows all, we can trust Him to help us see things differently.<sup>6</sup>

In the Book of Mormon, the Prophet Nephi is an example of someone who learned to see things differently. Rather than becoming discouraged by uncertainty about his father's dream of the tree of life, Nephi turned to the Lord. Like Laman and Lemuel, Nephi did not initially know the meaning of his father's vision. But Nephi did something his brothers did not do. He went to the wilderness to pray with a desire for understanding.<sup>7</sup>

After returning with divine clarity and a new perspective, Nephi found his brothers still arguing. When they admitted, “We cannot understand the words which our father hath spoken,” Nephi asked, “Have ye inquired of the Lord?” Their response: “We have not; for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us.”<sup>8</sup>

In other words, they didn’t put forth the effort to understand their father’s dream. Their answer underscores how entitlement can weaken our faith in the Lord. When we feel entitled, we don’t put forth effort, and we tend to blame God and others for any unfairness.<sup>9</sup> While Laman and Lemuel remained in confusion, Nephi inquired of the Lord and received light and understanding.

So, I invite us all to do what Nephi did, to let the Lord help us see things differently. To trust Him. Opportunities may seem hidden; in fact, there really is such a thing called “the hidden job market” — but not for those with eyes to see. The Lord will guide us to see what we would otherwise overlook. He can open our minds to pathways that were always there but that we simply had not recognized. I know this principle to be true because He has helped me see things differently.

## **2. Trust that the Lord has prepared opportunities for you.**

The second principle is to trust that the Lord has provided opportunities and resources for you because He loves you. In April 1834, when the early Church was facing severe financial hardship and heavy debts, the Lord spoke to the Church members who were struggling in their poverty:

And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. ... For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves.<sup>10</sup>

What a remarkable promise! The Lord did not create a world of scarcity. He created a world filled with resources to bless our lives. I have learned that wherever there are Saints on the earth, there are opportunities for them to discover, to be “agents unto themselves” to provide for themselves and their families. I would say that you students are Saints. Wherever you may live, no matter your circumstances, please know that He has provided opportunities for you.

## **3. Act with diligent effort.**

The third principle is to act with diligent effort. In a practical way, what does effort look like as it relates to finding a job, having a successful career, or starting a business?

The Lord provides an answer. Referring again to the time in 1834 when Church leaders had a serious problem of debt, and it weighed heavily on their minds and hearts, the Lord gave a solution that also applies to solving the problem of unemployment or of a struggling business. He told them to be diligent, be humble, and have a prayer of faith. Then He gave this promise:

And inasmuch as you are diligent and humble, and exercise the prayer of faith, behold, I will soften the hearts of those to whom you are in debt, until I shall send means unto you for your deliverance.<sup>11</sup>

Another wonderful promise from the Lord! If we need work, the Lord will send means unto us for our deliverance if we put forth the effort to do our part. So, what does effort require?

**First, effort requires diligence.** If we need work, then we should seek every day to proactively identify resources, make contacts, and meet people whom the Lord has prepared to help us. When we do, God will soften hearts on our behalf to open doors of opportunity. I have seen how the Lord has softened the hearts of employers for the benefit of those diligently looking for a job. And I’ve seen how resources become available for the self-employed. The Lord can help us when we are diligent, when we are acting and not being acted upon by our fears.<sup>12</sup>

**Second, effort requires humility.** Yes, when looking for a job, it's hard to talk to employers. Starting a business is not easy. Rejection and failure are painful. But sometimes pride becomes the real obstacle. It can be a stumbling block when we surrender to the fear of failure.

Humility is the opposite of pride. If we are not humble and teachable, it's hard to see the opportunities right in front of us. President Dallin H. Oaks said, "When we are humble, we can more clearly hear the Lord's voice."<sup>13</sup> I personally know that it can feel embarrassing to be unemployed, be underemployed, or have a small business that is struggling. But when we are humble, we hear the Lord's voice guiding us. We learn from our mistakes, and we can move forward.

**Third, effort requires a prayer of faith.** Just like Nephi, if we start with desire,<sup>14</sup> put a plan together, pray for the Lord's help, and do our part, then "deliverance" will come. Faith is not passive. When we take steps forward — even baby steps — our faith will grow.

Lastly, what I know about you is that — as a BYU-Pathway student earning a degree from BYU-Idaho or Ensign College — you *are* being diligent, humble, and faithful. You are already striving. Think of the courage it took to enroll in your first class! You are already showing effort every day to improve your situation. So, whatever your circumstances, this promise in the Book of Mormon applies to you:

Yea, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him.<sup>15</sup>

I bear witness that when we truly desire answers from the Lord, if we have a prayer of faith, show humility, and diligently do our part, we will see opportunities where others only see obstacles. No matter our circumstances, we will discover how the Lord has truly provided for us, "for the earth is full and there is enough and to spare."<sup>16</sup> In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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<sup>1</sup> [Doctrine and Covenants 58:27](#)

<sup>2</sup> Gordon B. Hinckley, *Helping Others to Help Themselves: The Story of the Mormon Church Welfare Program* (1945), 4

<sup>3</sup> See [Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28](#)

<sup>4</sup> See [James 1:5–6](#)

<sup>5</sup> See [Alma 32:21](#); [Hebrews 11:1](#)

<sup>6</sup> See [2 Nephi 2:24](#); [Doctrine and Covenants 38:2](#)

<sup>7</sup> See [1 Nephi 10:17](#); [15:7–9](#)

<sup>8</sup> [1 Nephi 15:7–9](#)

<sup>9</sup> See Dale G. Renlund, "[That I Might Draw All Men unto Me](#)," *Liahona*, Apr. 2016, 39–40

<sup>10</sup> [Doctrine and Covenants 104:15, 17](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Doctrine and Covenants 104:78–80](#)

<sup>12</sup> See [2 Nephi 2:16](#)

<sup>13</sup> Dallin H. Oaks, "[Coming Closer to Jesus Christ](#)" (BYU devotional, Feb. 10, 2026), [speeches.byu.edu](#)

<sup>14</sup> See [1 Nephi 10:17](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Helaman 12:1](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Doctrine and Covenants 104:17](#)