
Every Convert Is Precious”

Insight and counsel from President Gordon B. Hinckley



Every convert needs “a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God.’ ”

Gordon B. Hinckley, “Every Convert Is Precious,” *Liahona*, Feb. 1999, 9

It is not an easy thing to become a member of this Church. In most cases it involves setting aside old habits, leaving old friends and associations, and stepping into a new society which is different and somewhat demanding.

“With the ever-increasing number of converts, we must make an increasingly substantial effort to assist them as they find their way. Every one of them needs three things: a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God’ (Moro. 6:4). It is our duty and opportunity to provide these things.” 1

“I am hopeful that a great effort will go forward throughout the Church, throughout the world, to retain every convert who comes into the Church.” 2

“The challenge now is greater than it has ever been because the number of converts is greater than we have ever before known.” 3

A Friend

“I plead with you ... ; I ask of you, each of you, to become a part of this great effort. Every convert is precious. Every convert is a son or daughter of God. Every convert is a great and serious responsibility.” 4

“[Converts] come into the Church with enthusiasm for what they have found. We must immediately build on that enthusiasm. You have people in your wards who can be friends to every convert. They can listen to them, guide them, answer their questions, and be there to help in all circumstances and in all conditions. ... I invite every member to reach out in friendship and love for those who come into the Church as converts.” 5

A Responsibility

“Every convert who comes into this Church should have an immediate responsibility. It may be ever so small, but it will spell the difference in his life. ... I cannot understand why converts aren’t given more responsibility immediately when they come into the Church. The tendency is to say, ‘They don’t know enough.’ Well, take a chance on them. Think of what a chance the Lord has taken on you. Give them something to do, be it ever so small, something that’s specific and by which they will grow. ... You will not develop people in this Church unless you give them responsibility.” 6

Nurturing with “the Good Word of God”

“Moroni [writes] concerning [new members]: ‘And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith’ (Moro. 6:4).

“In these days as in those days, converts are ‘numbered among the people of the church ... [to] be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer.’ ... Let us help them as they take their first steps as members.

“This is a work for everyone. It is a work for home teachers and visiting teachers. It is a work for the bishopric, for the priesthood quorums, for the Relief Society, the young men and young women, even the Primary.

“I was in a fast and testimony meeting only last Sunday. A 15- or 16-year-old boy stood before the congregation and said that he had decided to be baptized.

“Then one by one boys of the teachers quorum stepped to the microphone to express their love for him, to tell him that he was doing the right thing, and to assure him that they would stand with him and help him. It was a wonderful experience to hear those young men speak words of appreciation and encouragement to their friend. I am satisfied that all of those boys, including the one who was baptized last week, will go on missions.” 7

Finding the One Lost

“In a recent press interview I was asked, ‘What brings you the greatest satisfaction as you see the work of the Church today?’

“My response: ‘The most satisfying experience I have is to see what this gospel does for people. It gives them a new outlook on life. It gives them a perspective that they have never felt before. It raises their sights to things noble and divine. Something happens to them that is miraculous to behold. They look to Christ and come alive.’

“Now, ... I ask each of you to please help in this undertaking. Your friendly ways are needed. Your sense of responsibility is needed. The Savior of all mankind left the ninety and nine to find the one lost. That one who was lost need not have become lost. But if he is out there somewhere in the shadows, and if it means leaving the ninety and nine, we must do so to find him. (See Luke 15:3–7.)”