



PERSONAL FINANCES

FOR SELF-RELIANCE



MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The Lord has declared, “It is my purpose to provide for my saints” (D&C 104:15). This revelation is a promise from the Lord that He will provide temporal blessings and open the door of self-reliance, which is the ability for us to provide the necessities of life for ourselves and our family members.

This workbook has been prepared to help members of the Church learn and put into practice principles of faith, education, hard work, and trust in the Lord. Accepting and living these principles will better enable you to receive the temporal blessings promised by the Lord.

We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles and teach them to your family members. As you do so, your life will be blessed. You will learn how to act on your path toward greater self-reliance. You will be blessed with greater hope, peace, and progress.

Please be assured that you are a child of our Father in Heaven. He loves you and will never forsake you. He knows you and is ready to extend to you the spiritual and temporal blessings of self-reliance.

Sincerely,

The First Presidency

Published by
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Salt Lake City, Utah

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Printed in the United States of America

English approval: 8/16

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EVALUATING MY EFFORTS

INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.

Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle			Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances		
Example	<i>Be obedient</i>				
				<i>Track expenses</i>	
Week 1	Self-reliance is a principle of salvation			Track expenses	
Week 2	Exercise faith in Jesus Christ			Track expenses	
Week 3	Repent and be obedient			Track expenses	
Week 4	Live a balanced life			Build a budget	
Week 5	Solve problems			Choose a budgeting system	
Week 6	Use time wisely			Put money toward financial priority	
Week 7	Show integrity			Put money toward financial priority	
Week 8	Work: take responsibility and persevere			Put money toward financial priority	
Week 9	Communicate: petition and listen			Put money toward financial priority	
Week 10	Seek learning: resolve where you are going and how to get there			Put money toward financial priority	
Week 11	Become one, serve together			Put money toward financial priority	

KEY: ● Minimal Effort
 ● Moderate Effort
 ● Significant Effort

<p>© Hold a Family Council</p>	<p>ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner</p>	<p>Action Partner's Initials</p>
<p><i>Counsel about obedience</i> ○ ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ○</p>	<p><i>SN</i></p>
<p>Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about debt ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about debt ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>
<p>Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●</p>	<p>● ● ●</p>	<p>_____</p>

FOR FACILITATORS

Thank you for facilitating a self-reliance group. The group should function as a council with the Holy Ghost as the teacher. Your role is to help each person feel comfortable sharing ideas, successes, and failures.

DO'S	DON'TS
<p>BEFORE EACH MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Download videos at srs.lds.org/videos. ○ Check that video equipment works. ○ Review the chapter briefly. ○ Prepare yourself spiritually. <p>DURING EACH MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start and end on time. ○ Ensure that everyone reports, even those who arrive late. ○ Choose a timekeeper. ○ Encourage everyone to participate. ○ Be a group member. Make, keep, and report your commitments. ○ Have fun and celebrate success. ○ Trust and follow the workbook. <p>AFTER EACH MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact and encourage members during the week. ○ Evaluate yourself using the “Facilitator Self-Assessment” (page v). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare a lesson. ○ Cancel meetings. If you cannot attend, please ask a group member to facilitate for you. ○ Teach or act as the expert. ○ Speak more than others. ○ Answer every question. ○ Be the center of attention. ○ Sit at the head of the table. ○ Stand up to facilitate. ○ Skip the “Ponder” section. ○ Give your opinion after each comment. ○ Forget to update the stake self-reliance specialist on the group’s progress.

IMPORTANT: REPORT AND IMPROVE

- Complete the Group Registration Form at your first meeting and the End of Group Report and Certificate Request Form at your last meeting. Visit srs.lds.org/report.
- Review the booklet *Facilitating Groups* at srs.lds.org/facilitator.

FACILITATOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

After each group meeting, review the statements below. How well are you doing?

HOW AM I DOING AS A FACILITATOR?	Never	Some- times	Often	Always
1. I contact group members during the week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I share my excitement and love for each group member.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I help ensure that every group member can report on his or her commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I talk less than other group members. Everyone participates equally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I let group members answer questions instead of answering them myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I stay within the recommended time for each section and activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I make time for the "Ponder" section so the Holy Ghost can guide group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I follow the workbook as written and complete all sections and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOW IS MY GROUP DOING?	Never	Some- times	Often	Always
1. Group members love, encourage, and serve each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Group members keep their commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Group members are achieving both temporal and spiritual results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Action partners regularly contact and encourage each other during the week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



1

BECOMING A WISE AND FAITHFUL STEWARD

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Self-Reliance Is a Principle of Salvation

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Become a Wise and Faithful Steward
2. Counsel with the Lord about Your Finances
3. Track Your Income and Expenses

GETTING STARTED—Maximum Time: 15 Minutes

Have an opening prayer.

Introduce yourselves. Each of you take one minute to share your name and something about you.

WELCOME TO OUR SELF-RELIANCE GROUP!

Read: This group will help you learn about, create, and use a budget. You will begin to build an emergency fund, create a debt elimination plan, learn to save for future expenses, and plan for retirement. Most important, you will learn more about your relationship with Heavenly Father and be invited to manage your money in ways that are pleasing to Him. Each group meeting lasts about two hours.

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

Read: Self-reliance groups function like a council. There is no teacher or expert. Instead, you follow the materials as they are written. With the guidance of the Spirit, you will help each other as follows:

- Contribute equally to discussions and activities. No one, especially the facilitator, should dominate the conversation.
- Love and support each other. Show interest, ask questions, and learn about each other.
- Share positive and relevant comments.
- Make and keep commitments.

Elder M. Russell Ballard taught, “There is no problem in the family, ward or stake that cannot be solved if we look for solutions in the Lord’s way by counseling—really counseling—with one another” (*Counseling with Our Councils*, rev. ed. [2012], 4).

Watch: “My Self-Reliance Group,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Skip to “Without a Teacher, How Will We Know What to Do?” on page 3.)

Discuss: What made the group in the video so successful? What will we do as a group to have a life-changing experience?

WITHOUT A TEACHER, HOW WILL WE KNOW WHAT TO DO?

Read: It's easy. Simply follow the materials. Each chapter in the workbook has six parts:

Report: Discuss the progress you made during the week on your commitments.

Foundation: Review a gospel principle that will lead to greater spiritual self-reliance.

Learn: Learn practical skills that will lead to greater temporal self-reliance.

Ponder: Listen for the Holy Ghost to offer inspiration.

Commit: Promise to act on commitments during the week that will help you progress.

Act: During the week, practice what you learned.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

WHEN YOU SEE THESE PROMPTS, FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS				
Read	Watch	Discuss	Ponder	Act
One person reads aloud for the whole group.	The whole group watches the video.	Group members share thoughts for two to four minutes.	Individuals quietly consider, meditate, and write for two to three minutes.	Group members work individually or with others for the specified time.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Read: Group members who attend meetings and keep their commitments may receive a self-reliance certificate from LDS Business College. See page 208.



MY FOUNDATION: SELF-RELIANCE IS A PRINCIPLE OF SALVATION—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: John 10:10 (on the right)

Discuss: What is an abundant life?

Watch: “He Polished My Toe,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 5.)

Discuss: Do you believe there are solutions to your problems? How can we qualify for the Lord’s power to assist us?

Read: The *Handbook 2* reference and the quote by Elder Dallin H. Oaks (on the right). Being self-reliant does not mean that we can do or obtain anything we set our mind to. Rather, it is believing that through the grace, or enabling power, of Jesus Christ and our own effort, we are able to obtain all the spiritual and temporal necessities of life we require for ourselves and our families. Self-reliance is evidence of our trust or faith in God’s power to move mountains in our lives and to give us strength to triumph over trials and afflictions.

Discuss: How has Christ’s grace helped you obtain the spiritual and temporal necessities of life?

ACTIVITY

Step 1: Choose a partner and read each principle below.

Step 2: Discuss why believing these truths can help you become more self-reliant.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE

1. Self-reliance is a commandment.	“The Church and its members are commanded by the Lord to be self-reliant and independent” (<i>Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball</i> [2006], 116).
2. God can and will provide a way for His righteous children to become self-reliant.	“And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine” (D&C 104:15).
3. The temporal and spiritual are one to God.	“Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual” (D&C 29:34).

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

JOHN 10:10

“Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. As members become self-reliant, they are also better able to serve and care for others.”

HANDBOOK 2: ADMINISTERING THE CHURCH (2010), 6.1.1

“Whatever causes us to be dependent on someone else for decisions or resources we could provide for ourselves weakens us spiritually and retards our growth toward what the gospel plan intends us to be.”

DALLIN H. OAKS,
“Repentance and Change,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 40

Discuss: Read President Marion G. Romney's quote (on the right). How do you know if you are becoming more self-reliant?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each commitment.

- Read the First Presidency letter inside the front cover, and underline the promised blessings. What must you do to obtain them? Write your thoughts below.

- Share what you've learned today about self-reliance with your family or friends.

HE POLISHED MY TOE

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



ELDER ENRIQUE R. FALABELLA:

When I was growing up, we didn't have much. I remember one day when I approached my father and said to him, "Papa, I need a new pair of shoes. These ones are already worn out." He stopped and looked at my shoes and saw they were really worn out. He said, "I think this is something we can fix." He took a bit of black polish and polished my shoes, leaving them shiny and nice. He said to me, "Now they're fixed, son." I replied, "No, not yet. You can still see my toe sticking out of my shoe." He said, "Well, we can fix that too!" He took a little more polish and he polished my toe!

That day I learned that there is a solution to every problem. I am convinced that this principle of self-reliance and this initiative is a way to hasten the Lord's work. It's part of the work of salvation. All of us can become better than what we are now. You have to let go of apathy. Many times we become complacent, and this destroys our progress. Every day is a day I can make progress if I decide to do something different to improve what I've done poorly in the past. If you do it with faith, exercising faith and hope in Christ that He will be there helping you, you will find the way to make progress in temporal and spiritual things. This is because God lives and you are His son or daughter.

Back to page 4.

"Without self-reliance one cannot exercise these innate desires to serve. How can we give if there is nothing there? Food for the hungry cannot come from empty shelves. Money to assist the needy cannot come from an empty purse. Support and understanding cannot come from the emotionally starved. Teaching cannot come from the unlearned. And most important of all, spiritual guidance cannot come from the spiritually weak."

MARION G. ROMNEY,
"The Celestial Nature of Self-Reliance,"
Ensign, Nov. 1982, 93



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

1. BECOME A WISE AND FAITHFUL STEWARD

Ponder: Take a minute to quietly ponder the following question and write down your thoughts.

- How confident am I about my financial future?

Read: In the parable of the talents, Christ teaches us that we must take care of what we have been given. The Lord allows us to be caretakers—or stewards—over His gifts to us. To those who are faithful with His gifts, Christ promises, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21).

Discuss: What does it mean to you that all things belong to the Lord?

Read: As part of our stewardship, we are encouraged to be wise with our finances. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught:

“I urge you . . . to look to the condition of your finances. I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.

“This is a part of the temporal gospel in which we believe. May the Lord bless you to set your houses in order. If you have paid your debts, if you have a reserve, even though it be small, then should storms howl about your head, you will have shelter for your [families] and peace in your hearts” (“To the Boys and to the Men,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 54).

As you strive to use your money wisely, your faith in Christ can increase, paving the way for future blessings.

Discuss: How does managing your finances make you a better steward?

We Can Manage Our Finances Wisely

Read: The diagram on page 8—the Financial Stewardship Success Map—illustrates principles for wise and faithful financial management. You will study and apply these principles over the next 12 weeks. Throughout this course, you will work on increasing your faith in Jesus Christ, building unity with your spouse, and strengthening your commitment to self-reliance. Each lesson will focus on a specific part of the Financial Stewardship Success Map.

Discuss: Take turns reading the items on the Financial Stewardship Success Map (page 8). How can each of these help you on your path to successful financial stewardship?

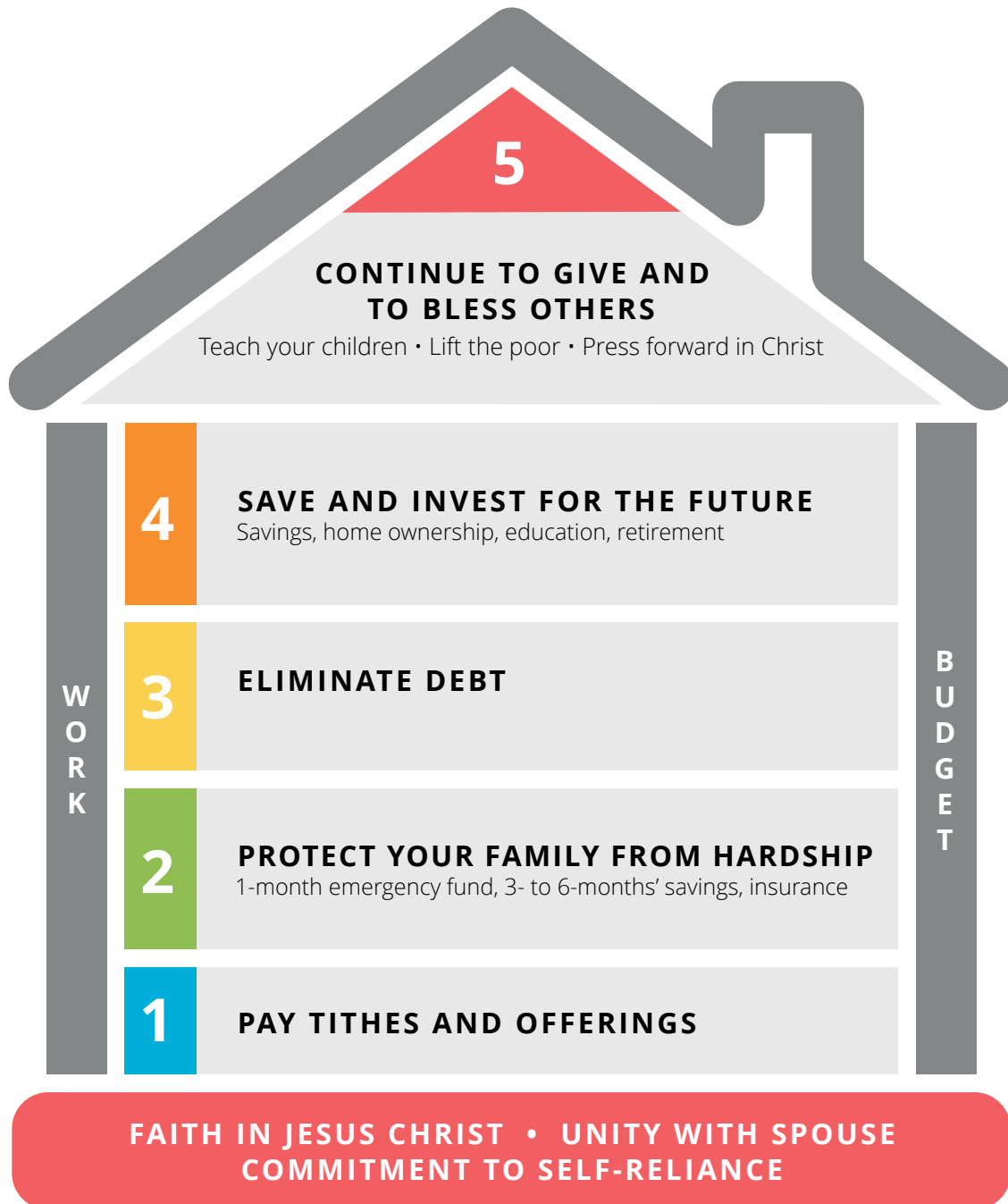
2. COUNSEL WITH THE LORD ABOUT YOUR FINANCES

Read: Challenges will undoubtedly arise as you apply these principles of successful financial stewardship. As you seek the help of fellow group members, and continually seek the Lord's help, you will be strengthened to overcome those difficulties. Remember, the Lord always provides a way to fulfill His commandments (see 1 Nephi 3:7).

Amulek taught the poor among the Zoramites to “cry unto [the Lord] over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them. Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may increase” (Alma 34:24–25). As you counsel with the Lord about your temporal needs and challenges and work toward financial self-reliance, He will bless and strengthen you.

Counseling with the Lord about your finances means praying to Heavenly Father and asking for guidance about financial matters. One of your commitments this week will be to counsel with the Lord about your finances.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP



3. TRACK YOUR INCOME AND EXPENSES

Read: The first step to successful financial stewardship is understanding your current financial situation. When you gain a better understanding of where your money is being spent, you can better plan where you want it to go. You will begin by tracking your income and expenses for the first four weeks of this course.

Ponder: Take a few minutes and quietly think about the following questions:

- Do I know where I spend my money each month?
- Do I feel in control of where my money goes?

ACTIVITY (25 minutes)

Step 1: Individually, think about all of the ways you spend money. Below are common categories where people spend money. Circle the areas where you spend money often, and write down additional categories as appropriate. The miscellaneous category is for expenses that do not fit neatly into other categories.

Tithes and offerings	Transportation	Entertainment	
Rent or mortgage	Savings	Restaurants	
Insurance	Groceries	Miscellaneous	
Home utilities	Cell phones		

Step 2: As a group, discuss the additional categories you created. You will use the categories above later to organize your income and expenses as you track them.

Step 3: Throughout the next few weeks, write down each time you receive or spend money. On a spreadsheet or in a notebook, create a table that looks like

the following example. Fill out the table each day. When you receive money, record the amount in the income column; when you spend money, record the amount in the expense column. To practice, take a few minutes and write down as many expenses from the last 24 hours as you can remember. Include the categories you created.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY	INCOME	EXPENSE
6/1	Paycheck	Income	1,500.00	
6/1	Juan's Market	Groceries		78.32

Discuss: What challenges might you have tracking your expenses?

Ponder: Write some ways you will overcome these challenges.



TRACKING EXPENSES HAS BECOME A HABIT!

I didn't think it was possible to track expenses long term. But now I keep my receipts for the day and then write down all of my expenses each evening. It only takes me a few minutes each night and a little bit of wallet space to store the receipts for the day!



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine. And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine” (D&C 104:14–15).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?

ACTION PARTNERS

THE BENEFIT OF ACTION PARTNERS

Read: With the help of others, you can accomplish great things. For example, missionaries have companions for support. In our groups, we have action partners. Each week we will choose and work with a different action partner. Action partners help each other keep commitments by:

- Calling, texting, or visiting each other during the week.
- Talking about what we learned in the group.
- Encouraging each other to keep commitments.
- Counseling together about challenges.
- Praying for each other.

Discuss: How has another person helped you accomplish something difficult?

Read: Being an action partner is not hard or time consuming. To start the conversation, you could ask:

- What did you like about our last group meeting?
- What good things have happened to you this week?
- How have you used the My Foundation principle this week?

The most important part of the discussion will be helping each other keep commitments. You could ask:

- How are you doing with your commitments?
- If you haven't kept some of them, do you need help?
- How can I best support your efforts?

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Step 1: Choose someone in the group to be your action partner.

- You may change partners each week if desired.
- Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Step 2: Write how and when you will contact each other.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Each week we make commitments. When we meet next week, we will begin by reporting on our commitments. Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

Ⓑ I will track my income and expenses every day this week.

Ⓒ I will counsel with the Lord about my finances and seek His help.

Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



2

BECOMING UNIFIED IN OUR APPROACH TO FINANCES

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Exercise Faith in Jesus Christ

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Work and Take Responsibility
2. Work Together to Manage Money
3. Hold Regular Family Councils



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Track my income and expenses.
- Ⓒ Counsel with the Lord about my finances.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.					
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort					
Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Action Partner's Initials	
Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner		
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●			JK
Week 1 Self-reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●			
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●			
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●			
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●			
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●			
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●			
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●			
Week 8 Work with responsibility and perseverance ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●			
Week 9 Communicate, petition and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●			
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●			
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●			

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - How is counseling with the Lord helping you?
 - What did you learn from tracking your expenses?
 - How is working with an action partner helping you?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: EXERCISE FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: How does my faith in Jesus Christ affect my self-reliance?

Watch: “Exercise Faith in Jesus Christ,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 21.)

Discuss: Why does true faith always lead to action? Why is faith necessary for God to help us temporally and spiritually?

Read: Matthew 6:30 and the quote from *Lectures on Faith* (on the right)

ACTIVITY

The path to self-reliance is a journey of faith. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve are inviting us to make increasing our faith in Heavenly Father and His Son a priority in our life.

Step 1: As a group, read the prophetic priorities below.

Step 2: Discuss how faithfully honoring the Sabbath, taking the sacrament, and reading the Book of Mormon will help you become more self-reliant.

PROPHETIC PRIORITIES AND PROMISES

“Imagine the scope of that statement! The fulness of the earth is promised to those who keep the Sabbath day holy” (Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 130; see also D&C 59:16).

“Spirituality is not stagnant and neither are [sacrament] covenants. Covenants bring not only commitments but they bring spiritual power” (Neil L. Andersen, General Authority training meeting, Apr. 2015).

“I bear witness that [the Book of Mormon] can become a personal ‘Urim and Thummim’ in your life” (Richard G. Scott, “The Power of the Book of Mormon in My Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1984, 11).

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Show your faith this Sunday by keeping the Sabbath day holy and reverently partaking of the sacrament.
- Read from the Book of Mormon every day.
- Read the scriptures on page 21. Choose one and share it with your family or friends.

“Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”

MATTHEW 6:30

“Are not all your exertions of every kind, dependent on your faith? . . . As we receive by faith all temporal blessings that we do receive, so we in like manner receive by faith all spiritual blessings that we do receive. But faith is not only the principle of action, but of power also.”

Lectures on Faith (1985), 2, 3

EXERCISE FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



ELDER DAVID A. BEDNAR: Taking action is the exercise of faith. The children of Israel are carrying the ark of the covenant. They come to the River Jordan. The promise is they will cross over on dry land. When does the water part? When their feet are wet. They walk into the river—act. Power follows—the water parts.

We oftentimes believe, “I’m going to have this perfect understanding, and then I’m going to transform that into what I do.” I would suggest that we have enough to get started. We have a sense of the right direction. Faith is a principle—the principle—of action and of power. True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action.

(See “Seek Learning by Faith” [address to Church Educational System religious educators, Feb. 3, 2006], [lds.org/media-library](https://www.lds.org/media-library))

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SCRIPTURES ABOUT FAITH IN ACTION

Because Daniel would not stop praying, he was thrown into a den of lions, but “God . . . sent his angel, and . . . shut the lions’ mouths, . . . and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God” (Daniel 6:22–23; see also verses 16–21).

The Lord gave Lehi the Liahona to guide his family, and “it did work for them according to their faith in God. . . . [When] they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence . . . they did not progress in their journey” (Alma 37:40–41).

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now

herewith . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).

During a famine, Elijah asked a widow to give him her last meal. Elijah promised that because of her faith the Lord would provide food to her, and her food never ran out. (See 1 Kings 17.)

“When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them” (Isaiah 41:17; see also verse 18).



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



- **Faith in Jesus Christ**
- **Unity with Spouse**
- **Commitment to Self-Reliance**

1. WORK AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

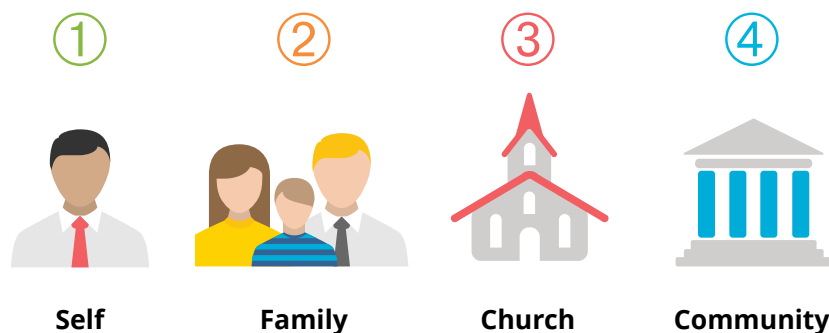
Read: When Adam and Eve were asked to leave the Garden of Eden, God said, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Genesis 3:19). While the Lord desires to provide us with everything we need temporally, He expects us to work hard and take responsibility for our own needs. Notice that one of the supporting walls on the Financial Stewardship Success Map (see page 8) is “work.” Becoming temporally self-reliant requires continual hard work and diligence.

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught, “The Lord doesn’t expect us to work harder than we are able. He doesn’t (nor should we) compare our efforts to those of others. Our Heavenly Father only asks that we do the best we can. . . . Work is an antidote for anxiety, an ointment for sorrow, and a doorway to possibility. . . . When our wagon gets stuck in the mud, God is much more likely to assist the man who gets out to push than the man who merely raises his voice in prayer—no matter how eloquent the oration” (“Two Principles for Any Economy,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 56–57).

Discuss: Think of examples of hard workers in your life. What attributes do these people have in common?

We Must Eliminate Our Temporal Reliance on Others

Read: President Spencer W. Kimball taught, “The responsibility for each person’s social, emotional, spiritual, physical, or economic well-being rests first upon himself, second upon his family, and third upon the Church if he is a faithful member thereof. No true Latter-day Saint, while physically or emotionally able, will voluntarily shift the burden of his own or his family’s well-being to someone else. So long as he can, under the inspiration of the Lord and with his own labors, he will supply himself and his family with the spiritual and temporal necessities of life” (*Teachings of President Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 116).



Elder Dale G. Renlund, quoting Elder Wilford W. Andersen, taught: “The greater the distance between the giver and the receiver, the more the receiver develops a sense of entitlement” (“That I Might Draw All Men unto Me,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2016, 39). Entitlement is feeling that you deserve something without taking the proper and complete action needed to obtain it. It is the opposite of responsibility. When you feel entitled to temporal blessings, the Spirit withdraws from your life. As you draw closer to Christ, feelings of responsibility for your own welfare will fill your heart, and feelings of entitlement will dissipate.

- Discuss:**
- How can depending on others limit our personal growth?
 - Why is it important to avoid dependencies on government or social programs?
 - What other risks are associated with relying on others, including family, for our personal needs?

2. WORK TOGETHER TO MANAGE MONEY

Ponder: How have your finances affected you spiritually and emotionally?

Read: One of Satan's most prevalent and powerful tools for destroying families is financial carelessness and its accompanying stress. Because families are central to Heavenly Father's plan (see *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*), it is important that we avoid blame, distrust, and anger in our homes. Whether you are married or single, wise financial stewardship can bring loved ones closer to each other and to God, and can be a safeguard from evil; a unified approach to financial stewardship can ultimately bring gratitude, harmony, and peace.

Discuss: Why is it important for spouses to be one in financial matters?

Read: Spouses often come from different cultural, economic, and religious backgrounds. They may have different traditions, child-rearing techniques, and spending habits. One spouse may be naturally interested in tracking expenses and following a budget, and the other may find it tedious and burdensome. This may spark disagreements. However, embracing each other's differences and truly listening with love and humility will foster an environment of unity. If you are single, it is important to be honest with yourself and to involve the Lord in your financial stewardship decisions.

Many couples believe that the solution to their financial problems is increasing their income. However, a divided approach to managing money can be far more damaging to a relationship than low income or lack of financial resources.

Discuss: How can financial discord be more damaging than low income or lack of resources?

Read: Elder Marvin J. Ashton taught, “Management of family finances should be mutual between husband and wife in an attitude of openness and trust. Control of the money by one spouse as a source of power and authority causes inequality in the marriage and is inappropriate. Conversely, if a marriage partner voluntarily removes himself or herself entirely from family financial management, that is an abdication of necessary responsibility” (*One For the Money: Guide to Family Finance* [booklet], 2006, 3).

Discuss: How will being unified with your spouse change your life?

Wise Financial Stewardship Prepares Us for Marriage

Read: Whether you are preparing for marriage or are single, divorced, or widowed, wise financial stewardship can help you be ready for future relationships. Many new couples are burdened by debt and poor spending habits brought into the relationship, which can cause a difficult beginning to their marriage. Striving to develop good spending habits, build up savings, and reduce or eliminate debt will invite the Spirit into your relationship and create a bedrock for a successful marriage.

Discuss: How can being a wise financial steward now help you prepare to be a better spouse in the future?

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Answer each of the following questions honestly.

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT MY SPENDING?	Never	Some-times	Often	Always
1. I counsel with the Lord about my finances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I counsel with my spouse about our finances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Finances are a source of personal stress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I hide (or wish I could hide) my spending from my spouse.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I disagree with my spouse about finances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 2: Alternate sharing your above responses with your spouse or a partner. If your spouse is not present, ask him or her to complete the same assessment when you are together, and then review your answers. Remember to listen with love and humility to your partner’s responses.

Ponder: How can you better align yourself with your spouse and the Lord?

3. HOLD REGULAR FAMILY COUNCILS

Read: Last week we discussed the importance of counseling with the Lord. He wants to help you succeed. In addition to counseling with the Lord, prophets have taught the importance of having regular family councils.

Watch: “Family Councils,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 31.)



Discuss: How could holding family councils benefit you and your family?

DISCUSS FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: A regular executive family council between husband and wife is the perfect setting to discuss financial stewardship. If you are single, choose a parent or other family member, roommate, mentor, or friend and hold a regular and honest council with the person about your finances. If you are married, you will probably need to have important discussions with your spouse throughout this course. After this course, holding regular family councils will help you continue to become more unified and more self-reliant.

One of your commitments this week will be to designate a time to hold a regular family council. As part of your family council, you should discuss finances. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline on the next page to guide this part of your family council.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- Are you adequately tracking your expenses? What are you learning about your spending? How can you improve your expense-tracking process?
 - Discuss the results of the assessment on page 26.
-

Part 2: Plan

- How can you better communicate about your finances?
- What can you do, if needed, to eliminate your temporal reliance on family, government, church, or social assistance?



TOGETHER, EVERY NIGHT

It took us five kids and many years to figure this out (probably more than 20), but having a couple's prayer every night—just she and I, out loud, kneeling and holding hands—is one of the most powerful things we have ever done to bless and strengthen our relationship. When one of us is traveling, we do it over the phone!



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine”
(D&C 38:27).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

Ⓑ I will continue to track my income and expenses this week.

Ⓒ I will hold a family council and discuss financial stewardship.

Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

FAMILY COUNCILS

Elder M. Russell Ballard shared the following about family councils:

“I believe councils are the most effective way to get real results. Additionally, I know councils are the Lord’s way and that He created all things in the universe through a heavenly council, as mentioned in the holy scripture.

“Until now, however, I have never talked in general conference about the most basic and fundamental—and perhaps the most important—of all councils: the family council.

“Family councils have always been needed. They are, in fact, eternal. We belonged to a family council in the premortal existence, when we lived with our heavenly parents as their spirit children.

“A family council, when conducted with love and with Christlike attributes, will counter the impact of modern technology that often distracts us from spending quality time with each other and also tends to bring evil right into our homes.

“Please remember that family councils are different from family home evening held on Mondays. Home evenings focus primarily on gospel instruction and family activities. Family councils, on the other hand, can be held on any day of the week, and they are primarily a meeting at which parents listen—to each other and to their children.

“I believe there are at least four types of family councils:

- First, a general family council consisting of the entire family.
- Second, an executive family council consisting of a mother and father.
- Third, a limited family council consisting of parents and one child.
- Fourth, a one-on-one family council consisting of one parent and one child.”

(“Family Councils,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2016, 63)

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3

PAYING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Repent and Be Obedient

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Change Your Approach to Managing Money
2. Pay Tithes and Offerings



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Track my income and expenses.
- Ⓒ Discuss financial stewardship in my family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Consider ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.					
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort					
Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Action Partner's Initials
Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner		
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●			<i>[Signature]</i>
Week 1 Self-reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●			_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●			_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●			_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●			_____
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●			_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●			_____
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●			_____
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and persevere ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●			_____
Week 9 Communicate, partition and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●			_____
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●			_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●			_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What patterns or habits have you discovered while tracking your expenses?
 - What did you learn from your family council? What did you learn from the financial assessment (see page 26)?
 - How is working with an action partner helping you?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: REPENT AND BE OBEDIENT

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: How are repentance and obedience connected to self-reliance?

Watch: “Obedience Brings Blessings,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 37.)

Discuss: What blessings have you received by obeying God’s laws?
How does repentance help us progress?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21 and the quote by the Prophet Joseph Smith (on the right).

“There is a law . . . upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.”

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS
130:20–21**

ACTIVITY

Obedience to specific laws leads to specific blessings.

Step 1: On your own, write some blessings you desire in the left column.

Step 2: Identify which laws or principles you will need to obey in order to receive the blessings you desire.

BLESSINGS I WANT TO RECEIVE	LAWS OR PRINCIPLES TO OBEY
Three months of savings	Tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:10–12) Follow a budget

Discuss: Read Joshua 3:5 and the quotes by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland and President Spencer W. Kimball (on page 37). Why do we need to repent, sanctify ourselves, and try to do good as we seek to become self-reliant?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Obey the law you chose in the activity above.
- Share what you’ve learned today about obedience with your family or friends.

“I made this my rule: When the Lord commands, do it.”

Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 160

OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSINGS

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON:

What a glorious promise! “He that keepeth [God’s] commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things” [D&C 93:28]. . . .

My brothers and sisters, the great test of this life is obedience. “We will prove them herewith,” said the Lord, “to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” [Abraham 3:25].

Declared the Savior, “For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world” [D&C 132:5].

No greater example of obedience exists than that of our Savior. Of Him, Paul observed:

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” [Hebrews 5:8–9].

The Savior demonstrated genuine love of God by living the perfect life, by honoring the sacred mission that was

His. Never was He haughty. Never was He puffed up with pride. Never was He disloyal. Ever was He humble. Ever was He sincere. Ever was He obedient. . . .

When faced with the agony of Gethsemane, where He endured such pain that “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” [Luke 22:44], He exemplified the obedient Son by saying, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” [Luke 22:42].

As the Savior instructed His early Apostles, so He instructs you and me, “Follow thou me” [John 21:22]. Are we willing to obey?

The knowledge which we seek, the answers for which we yearn, and the strength which we desire today to meet the challenges of a complex and changing world can be ours when we willingly obey the Lord’s commandments. I quote once again the words of the Lord: “He that keepeth [God’s] commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things” [D&C 93:28].

It is my humble prayer that we may be blessed with the rich rewards promised to the obedient. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, amen.

(“Obedience Brings Blessings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 89, 92)

“Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.”

JOSHUA 3:5

“The Lord blesses those who want to improve, who accept the need for commandments and try to keep them. . . . He will help you repent, repair, fix whatever you have to fix, and keep going. Soon enough you will have the success you seek.”

JEFFREY R. HOLLAND,
“Tomorrow the Lord Will Do Wonders among You,” *Ensign*
or *Liahona*, May 2016,
126

“If we like luxuries or even necessities more than we like obedience, we will miss the blessings which he would like to give us.”

SPENCER W. KIMBALL,
in *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball,*
ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 212

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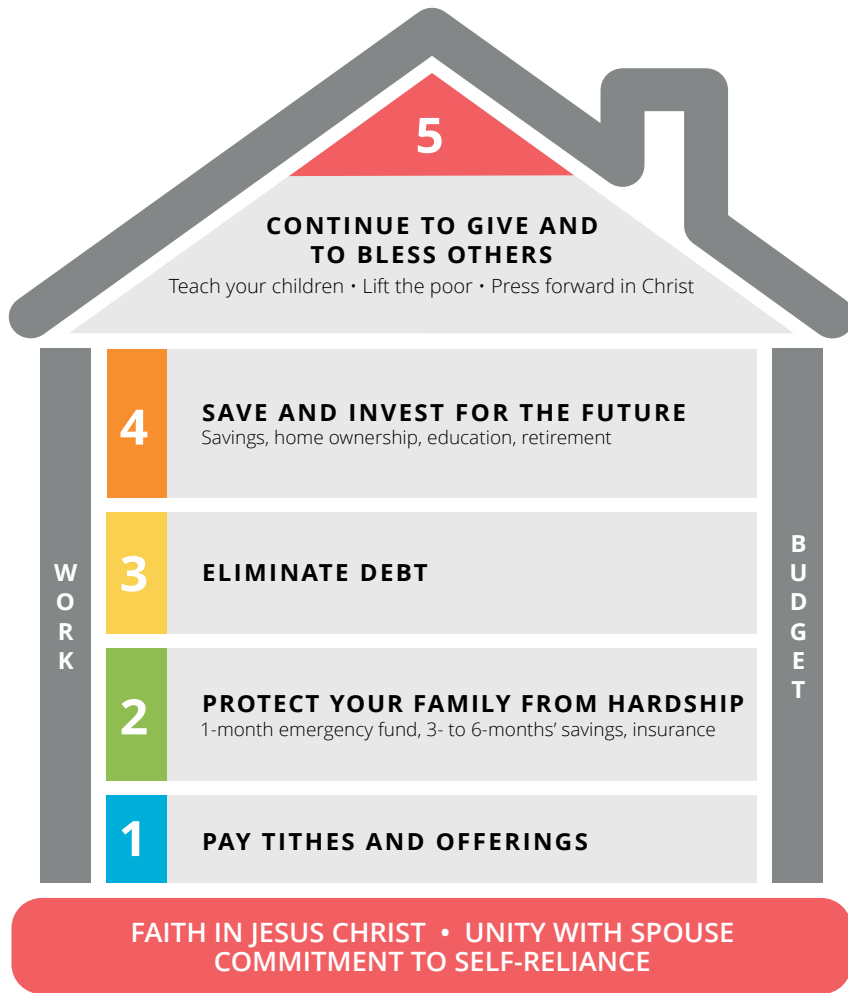
LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes



TODAY'S DISCUSSION:

1

PAY TITHES AND OFFERINGS



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

Discuss: Why do you think that “pay tithes and offerings” is the first layer in the Financial Stewardship Success Map?

Read: Church members have been counseled to pay their tithes and offerings before paying other expenses, even necessities. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “The payment of tithing is a test of priorities” (“Tithing,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 35). As you show God your priorities, you will unlock greater opportunities for Him to bless you. The scriptures often emphasize that things must be done in order. (For examples, see 1 Corinthians 14:40, Mosiah 4:27, and Doctrine and Covenants 93:43.)

President Heber J. Grant taught, “The men and the women who have been absolutely honest with God, who have paid their tithing, . . . God has given them wisdom whereby they have been able to utilize the remaining nine-tenths, and it has been of greater value to them, and they have accomplished more with it than they would if they had not been honest with the Lord” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1912, 30).

Discuss: How do you think paying tithing first helps you make better use of the remaining nine-tenths of the money you have?

1. CHANGE YOUR APPROACH TO MANAGING MONEY

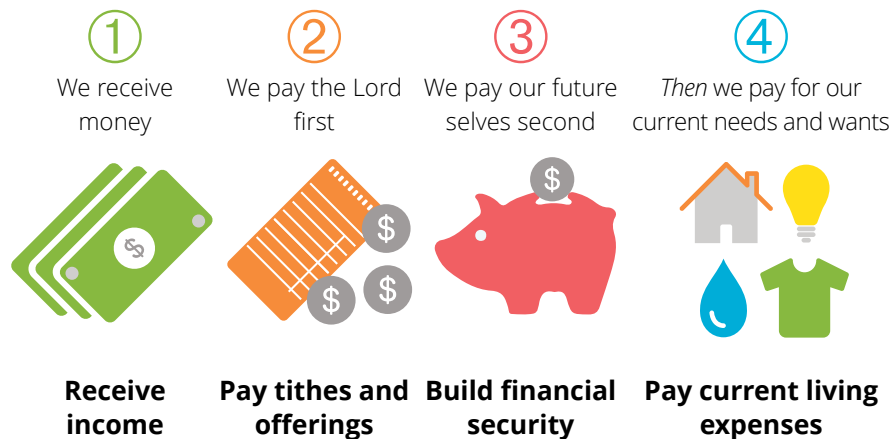
Read: In order to pay tithes and offerings first, it may be necessary to change your general approach to managing money. Taking care of current living expenses can often overwhelm our ability to save for the future and build financial security. Many people follow this approach to financial stewardship: they pay for immediate needs like food, shelter, transportation, and health care first, while intending to save money and pay tithing with what is left. This method is illustrated in the following diagram.

COMMON APPROACH



Read: While this practice may be very common, there is a better approach to financial stewardship: When you receive income, first pay your tithing and then set aside money for your future self—even if it’s just a little bit. Then, use what is left (the majority of your income) to pay for your living expenses. This method is illustrated in the diagram below.

SELF-RELIANT APPROACH



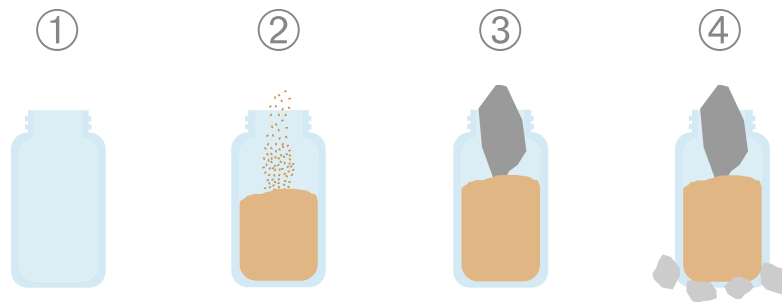
Discuss: What are some of the differences between these two approaches? Why do so many people end up taking the more common approach to financial stewardship?

Read: We will use the illustrations below of a jar, some rocks, and sand to show the wisdom of setting money aside first for the Lord and for our future self (see Stephen R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill, and Rebecca R. Merrill, *First Things First: To Live, to Love, to Learn, to Leave a Legacy* [1994], 88–89).

The jar represents our income: a resource of limited size. We each have jars of different sizes, but the principle discussed here is the same for everyone. The rocks and the sand, when placed in the jar, represent the ways we can use our money. In this example, the big and small rocks represent our long-term priorities—setting aside money for the Lord and our future self—and the sand represents our current needs and wants.

Let's place the items into the jar using the more common approach to financial stewardship.

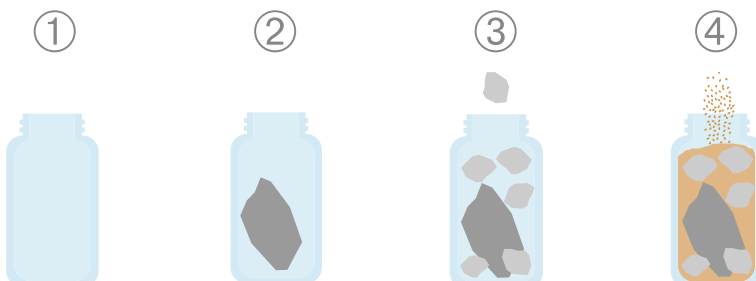
COMMON APPROACH



Read: Notice that when you pour the sand in first, there is not enough room for the rocks to all fit.

Now let's place the items in the jar using the more self-reliant approach to financial stewardship.

SELF-RELIANT APPROACH



Read: Notice that if you place the rocks in first, there is still room for all of the sand.

Discuss: How does this jar example relate to paying tithing and saving money? Why did everything fit in the jar the second time? How is putting rocks in the jar first an example of showing faith?

Read: Throughout this course you will continually learn how to take the more self-reliant approach to financial stewardship. Though following this self-reliant approach may be uncomfortable at first, it will help you better prepare for the future. It is natural to worry that you may not have enough money for your current needs if you pay tithing and set aside money for savings first. It is a test of faith. A wise bishop once told a nervous new convert, "If paying tithing means that you can't pay for water or electricity, pay tithing. If paying tithing means you can't pay your rent, pay tithing. If paying tithing means that you don't have enough money to feed your family, pay tithing. The Lord will not abandon you" (in Aaron L. West, "Sacred Transformations," *Ensign*, Dec. 2012, 38).

As you have been tracking your expenses, you have likely also received income. Consider how you currently manage your money and how you can improve to pay tithing and your future self first. One of your commitments this week will be to apply these principles and to continue to track your income and expenses this week.

While taking the self-reliant approach to financial stewardship requires exercising faith in Jesus Christ, it also requires applying proper financial skills. Next week, you will begin mastering the skill of properly using a budget, which will help you take control of your spending and stretch your money to pay for all of your expenses.

Discuss: How can paying tithing and saving money first change your life?

2. PAY TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Read: “The law of tithing is simple,” taught President James E. Faust of the First Presidency. “We pay one-tenth of our individual increase annually. *Increase* has been interpreted by the First Presidency to mean income. What amounts to 10 percent of our individual income is between each of us and our Maker. . . . As a convert in Korea once said: ‘With tithing, it doesn’t matter whether you are rich or poor. . . . If you make lots of money, you pay 10 percent. If you make very little, you still pay 10 percent’” (“Opening the Windows of Heaven,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 59).

Watch: “Widow of Zarephath,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 49.)



Discuss: Why did the widow of Zarephath give her last meal to the prophet Elijah? Could you have done that? Why or why not?

Read: The law of tithing has been around since Old Testament times. In Malachi, we read that if we pay our tithing, the Lord will open the “windows of heaven” unto us (see Malachi 3:10).

Elder David A. Bednar taught, “The imagery of the ‘windows’ of heaven used by Malachi is most instructive. Windows allow natural light to enter into a building. In like manner, spiritual illumination and perspective are poured out through the windows of heaven and into our lives as we honor the law of tithing. . . . We may need and pray for help to find suitable employment. . . . The spiritual gift of enhanced discernment [can] empower us to identify job opportunities that many other people might overlook. . . . We may appropriately desire and work to receive a pay raise in our employment to better provide the necessities of life. . . . [Or in some cases] we might want and expect a larger paycheck, but the blessing that comes to us through heavenly windows may be greater capacity to

act and change our own circumstances rather than expecting our circumstances to be changed by someone or something else" ("The Windows of Heaven," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 18).

Discuss: In what ways has spiritual illumination (or personal inspiration) guided you to change your own circumstances?

The Law of the Fast

Read: "A proper fast day observance typically includes abstaining from food and drink for two consecutive meals in a 24-hour period, attending fast and testimony meeting, and giving a generous fast offering to help care for those in need" (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010] 21.1.17).

Fast offerings are used to help the poor and those in need. Giving a generous fast offering will also increase our own capacity to be self-reliant.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught, "I bear witness of the miracles, both spiritual and temporal, that come to those who live the law of the fast. . . . Cherish that sacred privilege at least monthly, and be as generous as circumstances permit in your fast offering and other humanitarian, educational, and missionary contributions. I promise that God will be generous to you, and those who find relief at your hand will call your name blessed forever" ("Are We Not All Beggars?" *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 42).

Discuss: What can you do to improve your fasting?

DISCUSS TITHES AND OFFERINGS IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: During your family council this week, discuss the benefit of paying tithing and setting some money aside for savings immediately after receiving your income. Determine with your spouse how to improve your fasting.

You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- Are you paying a full and honest tithe?
 - Are you giving a generous fast offering?
 - How are you doing with tracking your income and expenses (see chapter 1)?
-

Part 2: Plan

- What can you do to pay a full and honest tithe?
- What do you consider to be a generous fast offering?
- How can you improve your fasting?
- How can you adopt the self-reliant approach to financial stewardship (see pages 39–40)?

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Answer each of the following questions honestly.

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE?	Never	Some-times	Often	Always
1. Every group member reports on his or her commitments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Our group starts and ends on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I feel a bond with my group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I feel the Spirit at our group meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Everyone in the group participates equally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I feel that I'm making progress toward self-reliance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I feel loved by my group members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discuss: What can we do to improve our group experience?



IT WAS SO EASY!

At home one evening after a group meeting, my wife and I determined to start setting aside money for savings before we paid for our current living expenses. She spoke with someone at our credit union the next day, and they told her they could automatically route a portion of each direct deposit paycheck into checking and another portion—whatever amount we decided upon—into savings. Now every time I get paid, it automatically routes to separate accounts. It was so easy! Saving money now isn't even something we have to think about!



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, . . . and prove me here-with, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10–12).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

Ⓑ I will continue to track my income and expenses this week.

Ⓒ I will hold a family council and discuss tithes and offerings.

Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

The widow of Zarephath, who was among the poorest of the poor, was actually a very self-reliant person in the middle of her starving, drought-stricken land. Now, you may recall, she was about to run out of food and was gathering sticks to build a fire to cook one last meal. That seems like the opposite of self-reliant. But so deep were her spiritual roots of self-reliance, that when a prophet of God asked for her last portions of food, “she went and did according to the saying of Elijah” (1 Kings 17:15). The scriptures tell us that after she used her last grain to feed the prophet, “the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail” (verse 16), and “she, and he, and her house, did eat many days” (verse 15). She was about to run out of food, but she did not—not because she had enough money, but because she had enough faith. As we do our best to live the gospel and do all that we can to support ourselves, the Lord will reward our faith and hard work.

Back to page 43.



4

CREATING A BUDGET

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Live a Balanced Life

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Build a Budget
2. Balance a Budget



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Track my income and expenses.
- Ⓒ Discuss tithes and offerings in my family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS				
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder why you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.				
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort				
Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances	Ⓒ Hold a Family Council	Ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	JK
Week 1 Self reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and persevere ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 9 Communicate, partition and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - How is counseling with the Lord helping you?
 - What did you learn from tracking your income and expenses?
 - How is working with an action partner helping you?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: LIVE A BALANCED LIFE

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: How do I keep the daily demands of life in balance?

Watch: “Of Regrets and Resolutions,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 55.)

Discuss: What did the Savior do to achieve a balanced life?

Read: Mosiah 4:27, 2 Nephi 9:51, and the quotes by Elder M. Russell Ballard (on the right) and President James E. Faust (on page 55)

Discuss: What things can be simplified or eliminated from our lives so we can experience more joy?

ACTIVITY

Step 1: Read the quotes by Elder Dallin H. Oaks (on page 55).

Step 2: On your own, think about how you live your life each week. Now imagine you are 25 years older and you are still living the same way. Complete the two statements below about your life:

I just didn't spend enough time

I spent too much time

Step 3: To avoid future regrets, write one or two things you can do to bring more balance in your life.

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the boxes when you complete each action:

- Act on your idea to bring more balance to your life.
- Share with your family or friends what you have learned about finding balance.

“See that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength.”

MOSIAH 4:27

“Do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy.”

2 NEPHI 9:51

“Just do the very best you can each day. Do the basic things and, before you realize it, your life will be full of spiritual understanding that will confirm to you that your Heavenly Father loves you. When a person knows this, then life will be full of purpose and meaning, making balance easier to maintain.”

M. RUSSELL BALLARD,
“Keeping Your Life in Balance,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2012, 50

OF REGRETS AND RESOLUTIONS

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF:

Isn't it true that we often get so busy? And, sad to say, we even wear our busyness as a badge of honor, as though being busy, by itself, was an accomplishment or sign of a superior life.

Is it?

I think of our Lord and Exemplar, Jesus Christ, and His short life among the people of Galilee and Jerusalem. I have tried to imagine Him bustling between meetings or multitasking to get a list of

urgent things accomplished.

I can't see it.

Instead I see the compassionate and caring Son of God purposefully living each day. When He interacted with those around Him, they felt important and loved. He knew the infinite value of the people He met. He blessed them, ministered to them. He lifted them up, healed them. He gave them the precious gift of His time.

(Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Regrets and Resolutions," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 22)

Back to page 54.

"Balance in large measure is knowing the things that can be changed, putting them in proper perspective, and recognizing the things that will not change."

JAMES E. FAUST, "The Need for Balance in Our Lives," *Ensign*, Mar. 2000, 5

"Many breadwinners worry that their occupations leave too little time for their families. . . . However, I have never known of a man who looked back on his working life and said, 'I just didn't spend enough time with my job.'"

DALLIN H. OAKS, "Good, Better, Best," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 105

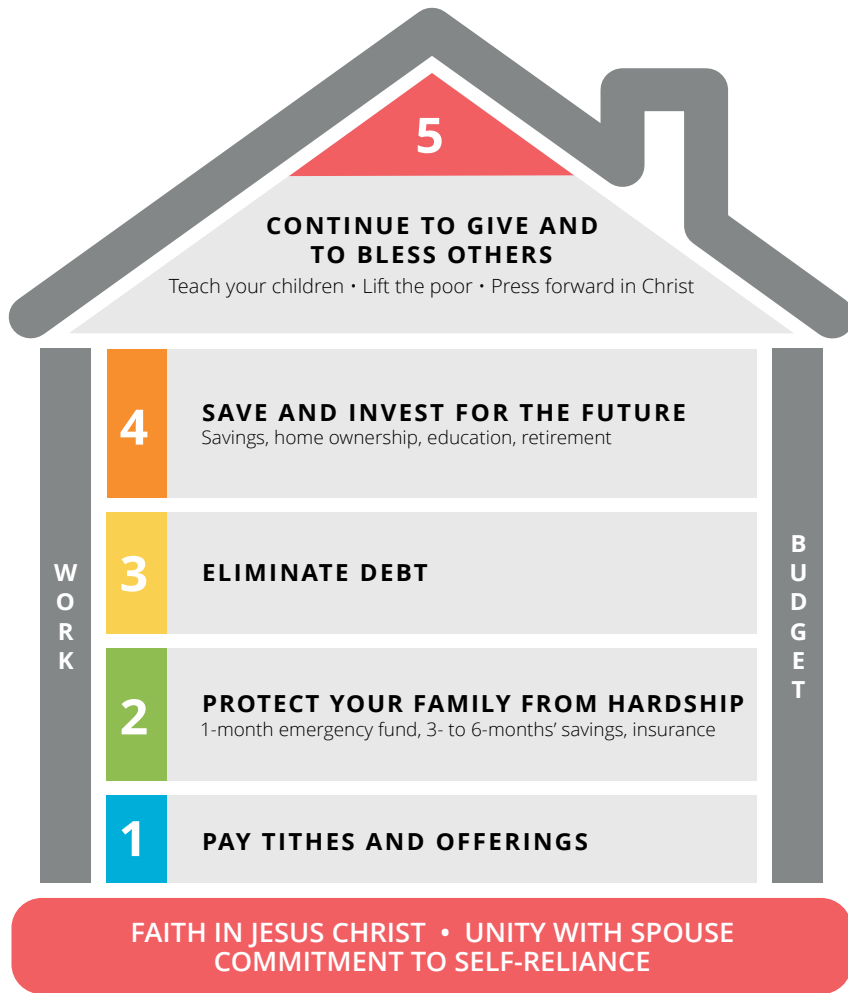
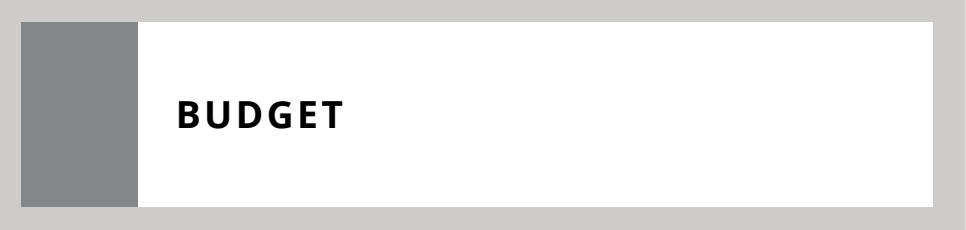
"The number of good things we can do far exceeds the time available to accomplish them. Some things are better than good, and these are the things that should command priority attention in our lives."

DALLIN H. OAKS, "Good, Better, Best," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 104



LEARN — Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

Discuss: Why do you think “budget” is a wall on the Financial Stewardship Success Map instead of a layer?

Read: Today we will discuss one of the most vital tools for building financial security and becoming self-reliant: creating and effectively using a budget. A **budget** is a plan. Using a budget, you plan how you will use your money for a certain period of time.

Following a budget will help you and your family take control of your temporal life, put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), and invite the Spirit into your home. Budgeting can also help you to protect your family from hardship as you use it to allocate money for building an emergency fund, paying down debt, and saving for future expenses.

Creating and following a budget is an act of faith. We cannot predict the future, and costs often arise unexpectedly. It is important to remember that a budget must be flexible—continually adjusted and improved. When you create a budget this week, remember that it will need to be consistently reviewed and revised during your regular family councils. If you go over budget, don't give up! It may take several months of adjustments before you have an effective budget.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Step 1: Take a minute to quietly review the paragraphs you just read about using a budget. Underline the specific blessings of using a budget.

Step 2: Then go around the group and share the underlined blessing that is most meaningful to you.

1. BUILD A BUDGET

Read: In the following activities, we will practice creating a budget.

For today, you will estimate the asked-for amounts based on what you know and what you have learned from tracking your income and expenses. One of your commitments this week will be to repeat this exercise with real numbers using the table at the end of this chapter.

To build a budget, start with your income.

ACTIVITY (3 minutes)

In the sample budget on page 60, fill in the first cell of the “Income” column with your estimated monthly net income. **Net** means what you actually take home.

Read: The next step to creating a budget is to classify and estimate your expenses. You have been tracking your expenses and placing them in the categories you created in chapter 1. Now we will split our expenses into two types: “Fixed” and “Variable.” Below are some examples.

FIXED EXPENSES (F)	VARIABLE EXPENSES (V)
Mortgage/rent	Utility bills
Car payment	Groceries
Insurance payment	Eating out
Tithing	Fuel and transportation
Emergency fund	Home supplies
Other bills	Entertainment

Fixed Expenses

Read: Fixed expenses are for a definite amount and do not change. Most of these expenses will be monthly, but there may be some that occur more or less frequently. Fixed expenses cannot directly be controlled by spending habits; instead, fixed expenses are controlled by assessing your situation and making changes. A

good way to identify fixed expenses is to ask, “Does this expense occur regularly, and is this expense the same amount each time?” Common examples include a mortgage, rent, a car payment, and certain expenses like internet, cable, or cell phone bills.

There are also fixed expenses that aren’t necessarily monthly; sometimes expenses occur annually, semiannually, or quarterly. For example, if you pay car insurance every 6 months or life insurance every 12 months, this is a fixed expense. To convert this fixed expense to fit your budget, divide the amount you pay by the number of months between payments. While you may not pay this bill monthly, you will set aside the necessary portion each month so you can pay the bill when it is due.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Write your fixed expenses in the sample budget on the next page. Write an *F* in the “Type” column, and estimate the amount of the expense in the third column. As you add expenses, keep a running balance of how much income is left in the “Balance” column. See the example budget for help.

Variable Expenses

Read: Variable expenses are not the same amount each month. There are some variable expenses that are not directly controlled by your spending habits. For example, expenses like your utility bills (water, gas, electric, and so on) fluctuate based on usage. However, even though the monthly amount may vary, you can still budget for these.

When it comes to budgeting, the most important variable expenses are the ones you have the most control over. These are directly controlled by your spending habits. A good way to identify many of these expenses is to ask yourself, “Do I buy this from a store (or online)?” For many variable expenses, you can make the choice to spend more or less in these areas. Examples include groceries, fuel, eating out, cell phones, and entertainment.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Write your variable expenses in the sample budget. Write a "V" in the "Type" column, and estimate the amount of the expense in the third column. As you add expenses, keep a running balance of how much income is left in the "Balance" column. See the example budget for help.

Sample Budget Activity (Using Estimated Values)

DESCRIPTION	TYPE	INCOME	EXPENSE	BALANCE
Income	(NA)			
Balance				

Example Budget

DESCRIPTION	TYPE	INCOME	EXPENSE	BALANCE
Income	(NA)	1,000		
○ Tithes and offerings	F		110	890
○ One-month emergency fund	F		50	840
○ Insurance	F		80	760
○ Rent	F		300	460
○ Utilities	V		30	430
○ Groceries and food	V		230	200
○ Debt payments	V		80	120
○ Transportation	V		50	70
○ Entertainment	V		30	40
○ Miscellaneous	V		40	0
Balance				0

2. BALANCE A BUDGET

Read: As you put together your budget, you may find that you have more in expenses than income. If this is your situation, you are not alone. And this is a problem you can solve. There are two ways to fix this challenge: Earn more income, or spend less money. For now, let's discuss how we can use a budget to help us spend less by learning how to control how much we spend on our wants.

Watch: "Continue in Patience" available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 66.)



Discuss: How are you like these children at times? Which child are you?

ACTIVITY (7 minutes)

Step 1: Individually analyze your current spending patterns by checking the boxes in the following chart. Could you adjust your spending to better prioritize long-term needs over short-term wants?

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT MY SPENDING?	I spend too little	I feel good about my spending	I spend too much
Eating out at restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Groceries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snacks and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rent or mortgage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cell phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 2: Pair up with your spouse or action partner. Identify where in your budget you could spend less, and write your ideas below.

**THE COMMISSION PREDICAMENT**

My husband gets paid on commission, so one paycheck is never the same as the last one. And sometimes there is a gap between receiving a paycheck at all! We've learned to just 'go in order': pay the most important bill first, then the next most important. Everyone has to decide what 'most important' means to them.

DISCUSS BUDGETING IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: Elder Robert D. Hales taught, “[One] important way we help our children learn to be provident providers is by establishing a family budget. We should regularly review our family income, savings, and spending plan in family council meetings. This will teach our children to recognize the difference between wants and needs and to plan ahead for meaningful use of family resources” (“Becoming Provident Providers Spiritually and Temporally,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 9).

During your family council this week, work together with your spouse to create your family budget. If you are single, or if you would like additional help, counsel with a friend, parent, family member, mentor, or group member. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- How much do you spend in each category?
 - How is budgeting an act of faith?
-

Part 2: Plan

- Create a budget using the instructions in this chapter. Fill out the “My Budget” table on page 67.
- Are you being realistic about each budget category?
- If needed, where can you spend less in your budget so that it is balanced or so that your spending aligns more closely with your needs or values?



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing” (D&C 88:119).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

Ⓑ I will create a budget using the "My Budget" table on page 67.

Ⓒ I will discuss my budget during family council.

Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

CONTINUE IN PATIENCE

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf shared the following counsel:

“In the 1960s, a professor at Stanford University began a modest experiment testing the willpower of four-year-old children. He placed before them a large marshmallow and then told them they could eat it right away or, if they waited for 15 minutes, they could have two marshmallows.

“He then left the children alone and watched what happened behind a two-way mirror. Some of the children ate the marshmallow immediately; some could wait only a few minutes before giving in to temptation. Only 30 percent were able to wait. . . .

“What started as a simple experiment with children and marshmallows became a landmark study suggesting that the ability to wait—to be patient—was a key character trait that might predict later success in life. . . .

“. . . God's promises are not always fulfilled as quickly or in the way we might hope. . . .

“Patience means staying with something until the end. It means delaying immediate gratification for future blessings. . . .

“. . . The work of patience boils down to this: keep the commandments; trust in God, our Heavenly Father; serve Him with meekness and Christ-like love; exercise faith and hope in the Savior; and never give up.”

(“Continue in Patience,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 56, 58, 59)

Back to page 61.



5

STICKING TO A BUDGET

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Solve Problems

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Set Realistic, Motivating Financial Goals
2. Find and Use a Budgeting System
3. Hold Yourself Accountable
4. Seek the Lord's Help, and Keep Trying



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Create a budget.
- Ⓒ Hold a family council and discuss our budget.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS				
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.				
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort				
Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances	Ⓒ Hold a Family Council	Ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 1 Self-reflect: Is a principle of liberation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 8 Work take responsibility and persevere ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 9 Communicate, partition and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 10 Seek learning: resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What did you learn while creating a budget?
 - How did your family council help as you created the budget?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: SOLVE PROBLEMS

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: Why does Heavenly Father allow us to face problems and challenges?

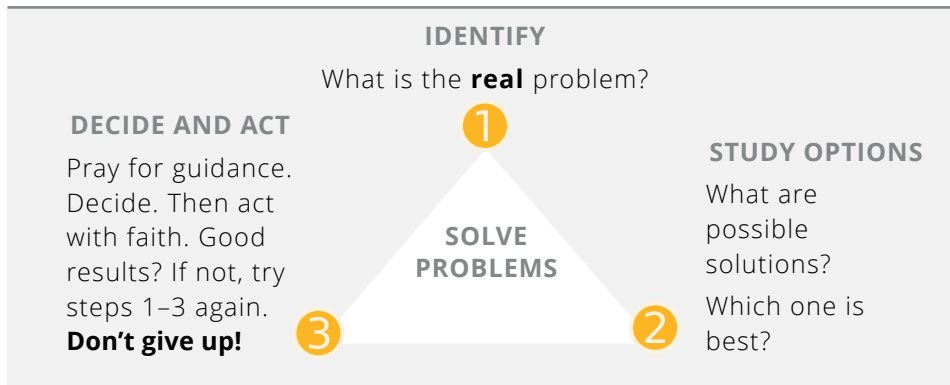
Watch: “A Bigger Truck?” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 73.)

Discuss: What is the real problem in this story? What are some options for the two men?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–9 and the quote by Elder Robert D. Hales (on the right)

ACTIVITY

Step 1: Choose a partner, and read the steps below.



Step 2: Choose a problem you are facing and write it below.

Step 3: Apply each step to your problem.

Identify: _____

Study options: _____

Decide and act: _____

“Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

“But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 9:7–9

“The Lord expects us to help solve our own problems. . . . We are thinking, reasoning human beings. We have the ability to identify our needs, to plan, to set goals, and to solve our problems.”

ROBERT D. HALES,
“Every Good Gift,”
New Era, Aug. 1983, 8, 9

Read: 1 Nephi 17:51 and 1 Nephi 18:2–3 (on the right)

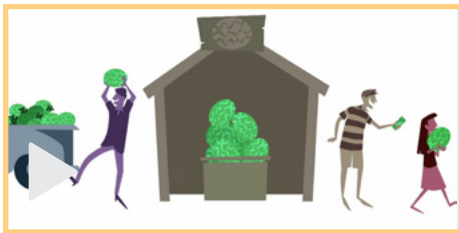
Discuss: How was Nephi able to build a ship?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Act on the steps you discussed in the activity to begin solving your problem. Remember, don't give up. It takes time to solve problems and make changes.
- Share what you've learned today about solving problems with your family or friends.

A BIGGER TRUCK?

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS: Two men formed a partnership. They built a small shed beside a busy road. They obtained a truck and drove it to a farmer's field, where they purchased a truckload of melons for a dollar a melon. They drove the loaded truck to their shed by the road, where they sold their melons for a dollar a melon.

They drove back to the farmer's field and bought another truckload of melons for a dollar a melon. Transporting them to the roadside, they again sold them for a dollar a melon. As they drove back toward the farmer's field to get another load, one partner said to the other, "We're not making much money on this business, are we?" "No, we're not," his partner replied. "Do you think we need a bigger truck?" ("Focus and Priorities," *Ensign*, May 2001, 82)

Back to page 72.

"And now, if the Lord has such great power, and has wrought so many miracles among the children of men, how is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship?"

1 NEPHI 17:51

"Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me; wherefore, it was not after the manner of men.

"And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things."

1 NEPHI 18:2-3



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes



TODAY'S DISCUSSION:

BUDGET

Read: Congratulations on building a budget! A budget can be a powerful tool for controlling your financial situation and reducing stress in your life. In the scriptures, we learn that “truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24).

Discuss: How might this verse from the Doctrine and Covenants apply to your finances and the use of a budget?

Read: Knowing where your family finances really stand is essential for successful financial stewardship. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught, “Those who live safely within their means know how much money comes in each month, and even though it is difficult, they discipline themselves to spend less than that amount” (“Earthly Debts, Heavenly Debts,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2004, 42).

Sticking to a budget can be difficult. It requires commitment, discipline, and perseverance—it may take several tries to get it right! As you strive to change your spending behaviors, remember to counsel with the Lord and your spouse or an accountability partner. With sustained effort and loving support, you can become more like the children who waited in the marshmallow experiment (discussed in the previous chapter).

Discuss: How can the Lord help us develop Christlike attributes, including self-discipline and diligence?

Read: Today we will discuss four principles for sticking with a budget:

1. Set realistic, motivating financial goals.
2. Find and use a budgeting system.
3. Hold yourself accountable.
4. Seek the Lord's help, and keep trying!

1. SET REALISTIC, MOTIVATING FINANCIAL GOALS

Read: Goal setting is a powerful tool that helps us develop and maintain a long-term perspective.

Elder M. Russell Ballard taught, "Let me tell you something about goal setting. I am so thoroughly convinced that if we don't set goals in our life and learn how to master the technique of living to reach our goals, we can reach a ripe old age and look back on our life only to see that we reached but a small part of our full potential. When one learns to master the principle of setting a goal, he will then be able to make a great difference in the results he attains in this life" ("Do Things That Make a Difference," *Ensign*, June 1983, 69–70).

Discuss:

- How have goals helped you progress in the past?
- How is goal setting an act of faith?

Read: It is important to set financial goals that are both realistic and motivating. Throughout the next few chapters, we will learn about many financial goals and priorities, including building a one-month emergency fund, getting out of debt, building a longer-term emergency fund, investing for retirement, and saving for other worthy expenses. The following activity will help you identify which of these should be your current financial priority.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Answer the questions below by yourself. The first question to which you answer “no” represents what should be your current financial priority.

WHAT IS MY CURRENT FINANCIAL PRIORITY?	YES	NO
1. Do I pay tithing? (See chapter 2.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do I have a one-month emergency fund? (See chapter 6.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do I have health insurance or some other access to medical care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Am I free from consumer debt, like credit cards and car loans? (See chapter 7.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do I have a three- to six-month emergency fund? (See chapter 9.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Am I contributing to a retirement savings fund? (See chapter 11.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Am I working to eliminate mortgage and education loans? (See chapter 10.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Write your current priority: _____

Read: You can choose to work toward other long-term goals in addition to your current financial priority, which may include saving for education, a mission, a car, a home, or a family vacation or other recreational expenses. There will be many temptations to choose the short-term perspective over the long-term perspective. Goals can give you a reason to say no now by giving you something to look forward to in the future.

Discuss: What motivates you personally to want to stick with your budget?

2. FIND AND USE A BUDGETING SYSTEM

Read: There are many tools and systems available to help you manage your budget and track your expenses. Effective budgeting systems range from simple pen-and-paper systems to mobile and computer applications.

There are two primary ways to pay for goods and services: cash or electronic payments. Each of these general methods has positives and negatives and will affect the way you manage your budget and track your expenses. In the next few sections, we will go over two common budgeting systems. One of your commitments this week will be to find the right system for you.

Watch: “The Envelope System,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 83.)



Watch: “Digital Systems,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 84.)



ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Divide into small groups of two to four people.

Step 2: As small groups, read from the chart below the positives and negatives associated with each budgeting system.

Step 3: Discuss additional positives and negatives you think of, and write them in the following chart.

Step 4: Come back together as a full group. Invite a member from each small group to share his or her additional positives and negatives with the whole group.

COMPARING BUDGET MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

SYSTEM	PROS	CONS
CASH ENVELOPE	Clear boundaries: you know when you have run out of budgeted money	Very manual process: need to organize your cash after every pay period; need to keep manual records
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
DIGITAL SYSTEMS	Real-time information about your budget	Can be easy for some people to ignore or forget to record or review expenses
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Read: With any method, be sure that you:

- Don't cheat by changing your established amount or borrow from other categories. Counsel with your spouse or accountability partner if adjustment is needed.
- Track all expenses closely, and adjust your budget categories next month as necessary.

3. HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

Read: You can only succeed in sticking to a budget by holding yourself accountable. Your weekly family council can serve as a way to review your goals and budget and to make adjustments if necessary. If you have a difficult time holding yourself accountable, it may be wise to report your progress to someone else—a friend, action partner, mentor, or financial adviser. The important thing is that you make time to consistently evaluate your progress and that you make changes as needed.

Discuss: Why is it important to hold yourself accountable? How will you hold yourself accountable to your budget?

4. SEEK THE LORD'S HELP AND KEEP TRYING

Read: Remember that faithful financial stewardship may require you to change your perspective, habits, and behaviors. Faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement will help you to undergo this transformation. Because these changes may uproot deep habits, and because budgeting is a learning process, you may fail at times to stick to your budget.

Additionally, you may slip up and make impulsive purchases or encounter financial crises like job loss, medical emergencies, or unforeseen maintenance costs. You will learn about building an emergency fund and handling financial crises in later chapters, but for now it is important to remember that a budget is adaptable and that sticking to a budget requires perseverance.

When you encounter setbacks to your budget, discuss them in your family council, and review areas of your budget that may need adjusting. While you may feel discouraged and inclined to give up on sticking to a budget, remember that you can keep trying, and by counseling with the Lord and seeking His help, you will gain the power and ability to persist in your efforts.

Discuss: What will you do when you face setbacks to your budget?

DISCUSS STICKING TO A BUDGET IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: Sticking to a budget requires unity with your spouse and with your family. This week, discuss possible budgeting systems you can use and ways in which you can adjust your budget should you encounter challenges. Additionally, discuss your current financial priority and other long-term goals and your plans for achieving them. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below. Remember, if you are not married, your family council might include a roommate, friend, family member, or mentor.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- What can you do to improve your budget?
 - What is your current financial priority? Discuss the assessment on page 76.
-

Part 2: Plan

- What are your financial priorities and long-term goals?
- What budgeting system will you use to keep a budget and track expenses?
- How will you stick to your budget, and what will you do if you go over budget?



TAKE NO MONEY OUT THE DOOR

My wife and I realized that for some reason we always spent more on silly things toward the end of the month; perhaps as a psychological reward or something. So we made it our rule to take no money out the door the last five days of the month. We call it our ‘TANOMOD week,’ and it has both saved us money and helped us better plan the rest of the month.



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?”
(Luke 14:28).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

Ⓑ I will choose a budgeting system.

Ⓒ I will discuss sticking to a budget in my family council.

Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

THE ENVELOPE SYSTEM

The cash envelope system is simple: immediately after being paid, you place the amount of money you have allotted to spend in each budget category into its own envelope.

For example, let's say you have budgeted 400 for the "groceries" category this month. When you receive your pay for the month or for the next few weeks, deposit that amount (in cash) into an envelope labeled "Groceries." No money—and this means no money—comes out of that envelope except to pay for food. If you go to the market and find you've left the envelope at home, go home and get the envelope! Keep a written record (in a simple notebook) of all expenses, so that you can later review it during your family council to remind you where your money is going.

In another envelope, place the budgeted amount for your transportation expenses. You will take from this second envelope when appropriate the portion needed for those costs, and track each expense in your notebook.

Divide each of your budget categories in this same way: rent or mortgage payment in one envelope; utilities in another; tithing and fast offerings in another; medical; insurance; and so on—each in its own envelope.

Each time you get paid, deposit the appropriate portion of your monthly budgeted amount into each envelope so that the total amount placed in each envelope each month is the amount predetermined in your written budget.

Do not spend more than you have budgeted. When the envelope is empty, you are done! If you must spend more in that category, you will have to take it out of another envelope. For the

(Continue to the next page.)

first few months this will require adjustments. Within that period you should gain a more accurate picture of whether your initial budgeted numbers are adequate—you'll learn the real average over a couple of months.

Some use the envelope system for everything. Others use this cash-only system for those categories that tend to tempt them to overspend, or for which it is easy to lose track or lose control, like food, restaurants, entertainment, gasoline, and clothing. Any left-over should go toward your financial priority.

Back to page 77.

DIGITAL SYSTEMS

If seeing extra cash tempts you to spend more than you otherwise would, then using a debit card may be your best option. As with the cash-envelope method, a debit card draws from money already in your bank account.

When using a debit card, it is critical to track your expenses because, unlike the cash envelope system, a debit card does not provide hard boundaries between budget categories. You can record your expenses with a pen and paper or with a mobile phone or computer application.

Numerous financial management apps are available for cell phones or other mobile devices. These apps can store and organize information for you, and you can then access it from your home computer or other devices, as well.

Spend some time this week researching the best apps available in your language and region, using “money management,” “personal finance tools,” or “budgeting apps” as search terms. Many very good ones are free or cost very little.

Remember, to keep your information secure, access your personal financial information only from your own devices, not from public computers.

Back to page 78.



6

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY FROM HARDSHIP

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Use Time Wisely

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Protect Your Family from Hardship
2. Build a One-Month Emergency Fund
3. Acquire Adequate Insurance



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Choose a budgeting system.
- Ⓒ Discuss sticking to a budget during family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
<small>INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.</small>					
<small>KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort</small>					
Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials	
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	JH	
Week 1 Self-reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 8 Work with responsibility and persistence ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 9 Communicate, petition, and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 10 Seek learning, observe where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What budgeting system did you choose, and why? What features of the system are most important to you?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: USE TIME WISELY

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: Why is time one of God’s greatest gifts?

Watch: “The Gift of Time,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 91.)

Discuss: What did you learn from Sister Benkosi?

Read: Alma 34:32 and the quote by President Brigham Young (on the right)

“For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors.”

ALMA 34:32

ACTIVITY

Step 1: With a partner, read the five steps you can take each day to use your time well.

1	2	3	4	5
LIST TASKS	PRAY	SET PRIORITIES	SET GOALS, ACT	REPORT
Each morning, make a list of tasks to do. Add names of people to serve.	Pray for guidance. Review your list of tasks. Listen. Commit to do your best.	On your list of tasks, put a 1 by the most important, a 2 by the next most important, and so on.	Listen to the Spirit. Set goals. Work hard. Start with the most important task and work down the list.	Each night, report to Heavenly Father in prayer. Ask questions. Listen. Repent. Feel His love.

Step 2: On a separate piece of paper, list your tasks. These should be important tasks for your work, for school, for church, or for family service—not just daily chores. Pray about and prioritize your list.

Step 3: Tomorrow you should set goals, act, and report how you’ve used your time.

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action:

- Practice these steps every day to use your time more wisely. Report each night to Heavenly Father in your prayers.
- Share what you’ve learned today about using time wisely with your family or friends.

“Time is all the capital stock there is on the earth. . . . If properly used, it brings that which will add to your comfort, convenience, and satisfaction. Let us consider this, and no longer sit with hands folded, wasting time.”

BRIGHAM YOUNG, in Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 214

THE GIFT OF TIME

If you are unable to watch the video, choose roles and read this script.



KOFI: Hello, Sister Benkosi. How are you?

SISTER BENKOSI: Are you okay, Kofi?

KOFI: Oh, Sister Benkosi. I'm so busy. I have to work and serve and help my family . . . and then my football, too. I have no time!

SISTER B.: Kofi, you have all the time there is.

KOFI: What?

SISTER B.: My boy, God has given us a great gift—our time. We must do with it what matters most.

KOFI: But how, Sister Benkosi? You have always done so much. You have succeeded with your family, with your business. You have served and blessed many, like me. I don't know how you do it.

SISTER B.: Do you really want to know? If you will sit still and listen, I will tell you my secret.

Every morning I rise before the sun. I dress and wash my face and hands.

I read the scriptures. Then I make a list of what I should do that day.

I think of who I might serve. I pray to know God's will. And I listen.

Sometimes the names or faces of people come to mind. I add them to my list.

KOFI: Is that how you always know just who needs your service?

SISTER B.: Yes, Kofi. And I pray for strength and wisdom. I pray that God will "consecrate [my] performance." It says that in 2 Nephi 32.

I thank Him. I promise to do my best. I ask that He will do what I cannot.

Then I look at my list. I put a 1 by the most important thing, then a 2.

KOFI: How do you know the priorities?

SISTER B.: I listen when I pray! Then I go to work. I look at number 1 and try to do it first, then number 2.

Sometimes things change. The Holy Ghost tells me to do something else. That is good.

I work very hard, but I have peace. I know God will help me.

So, with my list and the Spirit, I do what matters, Kofi.

KOFI: That sounds simple and hard at the same time.

SISTER B.: You are right! When I finally prepare for bed, I pray. I report to Heavenly Father. I tell Him how the day went. I ask questions. I ask what I can do better. I listen. I often feel His love. I know He magnifies what I try to do. Then I have peace, Kofi, and I sleep.

KOFI: That is good, Mamma Benkosi. I want this peace. I want to use my time. I want to work and serve better.

Back to page 90.



LEARN — Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



2

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM HARDSHIP



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

1. PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM HARDSHIP

Read: Preparation is a powerful gospel principle. The Lord promises that “if ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30).

After our obligation to pay the Lord first through tithing and other offerings, our second obligation is to work to protect our families from hardship. We can do this only if we develop a long-term perspective. In this chapter we will learn two steps to protect our families from financial hardship:

- Develop a one-month emergency fund
- Acquire adequate insurance

Discuss: Take a few moments to look at the Financial Stewardship Success Map. Why do you think that protecting your family from hardship is the second priority after paying tithes and offerings?

2. BUILD A ONE-MONTH EMERGENCY FUND

Read: By tracking your expenses for at least four weeks, you should have now identified the amount of money required for one month’s worth of living expenses. Your one-month emergency fund should equal this amount.

For your one-month emergency fund, you should save cash in a safe and accessible place such as a bank account. Do not use this money for anything other than emergencies. If you have an emergency and must use money from your one-month emergency fund, immediately begin putting money back into the fund until it is full. Later, after you have paid down all of your consumer debt, you will begin to save enough money to cover your expenses for three to six months (we will cover this step in chapter 9).

You should work to build a one-month emergency fund as fast as possible. Put any extra money you have toward your emergency fund until it is complete. Even if you have debt, make only the minimum required debt payment until you have built a one-month emergency fund. To help speed up this process, you may want to find extra or better work, sell some things you can live without, or eliminate some unnecessary expenses.

Discuss: What blessings can come to your family from having a one-month emergency fund? Why should you build an emergency fund before paying down debt?

3. ACQUIRE ADEQUATE INSURANCE

Read: How would it impact you or your family financially if one of you became very ill or disabled, or perhaps even passed away? What would be the financial impact of something like a house fire or a serious car accident? These types of hardships happen, and if we are not prepared, they can cause major financial problems. A good source of protection against possible hardship is insurance. **Insurance** is an arrangement in which an organization (typically an insurance agency) guarantees to compensate an individual for specific hardships in exchange for a fixed payment.

President N. Eldon Tanner taught, "Nothing seems so certain as the unexpected in our lives. With rising medical costs, health insurance is the only way most families can meet serious accident, illness, or maternity costs. . . . Life insurance provides income continuation when the provider prematurely dies. Every family should make provision for proper health and life insurance" ("Constancy amid Change," *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 82).

Discuss: Why is insurance so critical? What blessings can come from having adequate insurance?

Benefits of Insurance

Read: Insurance can help protect you from the financial devastation that accidents and other hardships can bring.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

As a group, review the two scenarios below. Then discuss how insurance was beneficial in these situations.

Scenario 1: You were in an automobile accident and it was your fault. Your car was severely damaged, as was the other driver's. Both you and the other driver suffered some injuries and had to receive medical care. The total cost to repair both vehicles and to pay the medical bills ends up being over 15,000.

	WITHOUT INSURANCE	WITH INSURANCE
Total cost	15,000	15,000
Cost covered by insurance	0	12,000
Cost you must cover	15,000	3,000

Scenario 2: A 45-year-old father has worked as an electrician and has earned 3,500 per month. He is the sole provider for his wife and three children. He injured his back and will no longer be able to work as an electrician. He won't earn any money until he can get a different job, which may require school or other training.

	WITHOUT INSURANCE	WITH INSURANCE
Monthly income from employment	0	0
Monthly income from insurance	0	3,000
Total monthly income	0	3,000

Types of Insurance

Read: You do not need to insure all things—that is why you are building an emergency fund and other savings. However, it is critical that you protect yourself from hardship that could be financially devastating. President Marion G. Romney taught that “we have . . . been counseled [to] have a reserve of cash to meet emergencies and to carry adequate health, home, and life insurance” (“Principles of Temporal Salvation,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1981, 6).

There are many types of insurance, but the four most common are these:

- **Property insurance:** Property insurance, such as homeowners, renters, and automobile insurance, can help cover the cost to replace or repair property in the event of serious damage, theft, or destruction.
- **Health insurance:** Health insurance can help cover the cost of health care, from covering well-care visits and treating illness to paying for major medical events. Depending on your location, health care may be a government service and your need for health insurance may vary.
- **Life insurance:** Life insurance provides a family with a sum of money if an insured family member dies.
- **Disability insurance:** Disability insurance guarantees that a portion of the insured person’s income will be paid if he or she becomes disabled and is unable to work for an extended period of time.

ACTIVITY (3 minutes)

Pair up with your spouse or action partner, and share your understanding of property, health, life, and disability insurance. Discuss what types of insurance coverage would be important to have in your circumstances.

Insurance Costs

Read: Now that we have a basic understanding of insurance and some of its potential benefits, let's discuss some of the costs. The two primary types of costs or expenses associated with insurance are the premium and the deductible.

A **premium** represents the price of the insurance—or the money you pay directly (often monthly or annually) to the insurance company in exchange for the coverage.

A **deductible** represents the amount of money that you pay toward your expenses (such as medical expenses or automobile repair costs) before the insurance company will cover the remaining costs.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Read: When comparing insurance plans, you are essentially trying to compare what the plan could potentially cost you versus what it could potentially provide in coverage. It may be helpful to compare best-case to worst-case scenarios.

Annual Minimum Cost (The Best-Case Scenario)

To calculate the annual minimum cost, simply multiply your monthly premium by 12 months ($12 \times$ the monthly premium), or look at the annual premium if you are billed just once a year. This scenario assumes that you do not have an insurable event in the year.

Annual Maximum Cost (The Worst-Case Scenario)

To calculate your annual maximum cost, add your annual minimum cost to the annual deductible ($[12 \times$ the monthly premium] + deductible). This scenario assumes that the expenses of the insurable event exceed your annual deductible.

With this information you can now compare the expense ranges of different plans. The following example demonstrates a way that you can compare plans.



CALCULATOR EXERCISE

Step 1: Divide into small groups of two to four people.

Step 2: Read through the following scenario as a small group. Each person in the group should use his or her calculator, as directed. Help each other as needed, and ensure that every person is able to get the right answer.

Note: See the “Resources” section at the end of the chapter for answers.

Read: Imagine that you are comparing two renters insurance plans: a plan with a high deductible of 2,000 that costs 10 each month, and a plan with a lower deductible of 500 that costs 40 each month.

Calculate: Each person in the group should calculate the annual minimum and maximum costs for each plan. Write your answers below.

	ANNUAL MINIMUM COST	ANNUAL MAXIMUM COST
High-deductible plan		
Low-deductible plan		

Calculate: How much money will the high-deductible plan save you in the best-case scenario (assuming you pay only the annual minimum cost)? Write your answer below.

Answer: _____

Hint: (Low-deductible plan annual minimum cost) – (High-deductible plan annual minimum cost)

Read: Notice that in the best-case scenario, the high-deductible plan will save you 360. This means that even if you have to cover up to 360 in renter property-related expenses out of your own pocket, it is still less expensive to go with the high-deductible plan, for this situation. However, this is not true in the worst-case scenario.

Calculate: How much money will the lower-deductible plan save you in the worst-case scenario (assuming you had to pay the annual maximum costs)? Write your answer below.

Answer: _____

Hint: (High-deductible plan annual maximum cost) – (Low-deductible plan annual maximum cost)

Read: In the worst-case scenario, where you had to pay out the maximum annual cost, you would save almost twice as much (over 1,000) by choosing the lower-deductible plan. As you try to decide between insurance plans and options, consider your situation or that of your family in order to choose the plan that best fits your needs.

Considering Other Benefits

Read: In the activity we just completed, we were evaluating one type of property insurance plan (renters insurance). We can use the same kind of process when comparing other types of insurance. However, there are often other factors to consider, beyond just the potential minimum and maximum costs. Here are some additional questions to ask when analyzing different insurance plans:

- What services or events are covered?
- What are the types and limits of the coverage?
- What is the reputation of the insurance provider?
- Are there discounts you might qualify for?
- How likely is it that you would pay close to only the minimum out-of-pocket expenses?
- How likely is it that you would have to pay the maximum out-of-pocket expenses?

DISCUSS THE EMERGENCY FUND AND INSURANCE IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: In your family council this week, discuss ways to build your one-month emergency fund. Also determine which insurance plans are important for your family, and investigate insurance policies. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- How are you doing on following your budget?
- Do you have adequate insurance? What insurance policies do you need in your circumstances?

Part 2: Plan

- If you don't have adequate insurance, which insurance coverage should you obtain? Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the plans available (see pages 97–98).
- What can you do to quickly build your one-month emergency fund?



ANNUAL CHECKUP

I used to sell insurance, and I know that rates rise over time. I don't sell insurance anymore, but I compare rates across insurance plans every year to make sure I am getting the best deal. Every November I review my plans and get quotes from other companies. This keeps my costs as low as possible.



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house” (Proverbs 24:27).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- Ⓑ I will begin building my one-month emergency fund and research applicable insurance options.

- Ⓒ I will discuss my emergency fund and insurance plans in my family council.

- Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES



CALCULATOR ACTIVITY ANSWERS

Calculate: Each person in the group should calculate the annual minimum and maximum costs for each plan. Write your answers below.

	ANNUAL MINIMUM COST	ANNUAL MAXIMUM COST
High-deductible plan	$12 \times 10 = 120$	$120 + 2,000 = 2,120$
Low-deductible plan	$12 \times 40 = 480$	$480 + 500 = 980$

Calculate: How much money will the high-deductible plan save you in the best-case scenario (assuming you pay only the annual minimum cost)? Write your answer below.

Answer: $480 - 120 = 360$

Hint: (Low-deductible plan annual minimum cost) – (High-deductible plan annual minimum cost)

Calculate: How much money will the lower-deductible plan save you in the worst-case scenario (assuming you had to pay the annual maximum costs)?

Answer: $2,120 - 980 = 1,140$

Hint: (High-deductible plan annual maximum cost) – (Low-deductible plan annual maximum cost)

NOTES



7

UNDERSTANDING DEBT

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Show Integrity

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Understand Debt
2. Understand Your Debt Realities
3. Desire to Get Out of Debt
4. Overcome the “Natural Man”



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Begin building my one-month emergency fund.
- Ⓒ Discuss emergency fund and insurance plans in family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.					KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort
Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials	
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	JH
Week 1 Self-reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 8 Work with responsibility and persistence ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 9 Communicate position and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 10 Seek learning, observe where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What have you done differently to save money for your one-month emergency fund?
 - How was your discussion about insurance plans and building your emergency fund in your family council?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: SHOW INTEGRITY

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: Why does the Lord love those with “integrity of heart”?

Watch: “What Shall a Man Give in Exchange for His Soul?” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 111.)

Discuss: What does it mean to have integrity? What are some small ways people give away their souls to get things in this life?

Read: Articles of Faith 1:13 and Job 27:5 (on the right)

ACTIVITY

On your own, rate yourself in the following areas.

PUT A NUMBER IN FRONT OF EACH ITEM TO SHOW HOW OFTEN YOU ACT THIS WAY.

1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always

- _____ 1. I keep all of my promises, commitments, and covenants.
- _____ 2. I am completely truthful in things I say and in the records I keep.
- _____ 3. I do not exaggerate to make things appear better than they are.
- _____ 4. I return everything I borrow and do not take things that do not belong to me.
- _____ 5. I am completely faithful to my spouse in my words and actions.
- _____ 6. I never cheat, even when I know I won't be caught.
- _____ 7. When I find something that isn't mine, I return it to the owner.
- _____ 8. I always pay back money I borrow.

Discuss: Read Mosiah 4:28 (on the right) and the quote by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (on page 111). Why is repaying a debt or business or student loan (like a PEF loan) a matter of personal integrity?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action:

- Improve one of the eight areas you rated above.
- Share what you've learned today about integrity with your family or friends.

“We believe in being honest.”

ARTICLES OF FAITH 1:13

“Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.”

JOB 27:5

“And I would that ye should remember, that whosoever among you borroweth of his neighbor should return the thing that he borroweth, according as he doth agree, or else thou shalt commit sin; and perhaps thou shalt cause thy neighbor to commit sin also.”

MOSIAH 4:28

WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL?

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



ELDER ROBERT C. GAY: The Savior once asked His disciples the following question: “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

This is a question that my father taught me to carefully consider years ago. As I was growing up, my parents assigned me chores around the house and paid me an allowance for that work. I often used that money, a little over 50 cents a week, to go to the movies. Back then a movie ticket cost 25 cents for an 11-year-old. This left me with 25 cents to spend on candy bars, which cost 5 cents apiece. A movie with five candy bars! It couldn't get much better than that.

All was well until I turned 12. Standing in line one afternoon, I realized that the ticket price for a 12-year-old was 35 cents, and that meant two less candy bars. Not quite prepared to make that sacrifice, I reasoned to myself, “You look the same as you did a week ago.” I then stepped up and asked for the 25-cent ticket. The cashier did not blink, and I bought my regular five candy bars instead of three.

Elated by my accomplishment, I later rushed home to tell my dad about my big coup. As I poured out the details, he said nothing. When I finished, he simply looked at me and said, “Son, would you sell your soul for a nickel?” His words pierced my 12-year-old heart. It is a lesson I have never forgotten.

(“What Shall a Man Give in Exchange for His Soul?” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 34)

Back to page 110.

“Integrity means always doing what is right and good, regardless of the immediate consequences. It means being righteous from the very depth of our soul, not only in our actions but, more importantly, in our thoughts and in our hearts. . . . A little lying, a little cheating, or taking a little unfair advantage are not acceptable to the Lord. . . . The consummate reward of integrity is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, . . . [who will] guide us in all we do.”

JOSEPH B. WIRTHLIN,
“Personal Integrity,”
***Ensign*, May 1990,**
30, 32, 33



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



3

ELIMINATE DEBT



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

1. UNDERSTAND DEBT

Read: Debt is borrowing money that is not yours. It typically comes with a cost, known as interest. Interest is a percentage of the amount owed. You end up paying more for what you borrowed, sometimes a lot more. Debts come with expected payments, and an overall expectation to repay all that you borrowed plus interest.

Discuss: Why do people borrow money?

Read: Prophets have always counseled us to avoid debt. President Heber J. Grant taught, “If there is any one thing that will bring peace and contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to live within our means. And if there is any one thing that is grinding and discouraging and disheartening, it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet” (*Gospel Standards: Sermons and Writings of Heber J. Grant*, comp. G. Homer Durham [1941], 111).

Throughout the next two chapters you will learn to follow the prophets’ counsel to get out of debt.

Ponder: Take two minutes to consider financial decisions you have made that went poorly. What were the consequences? How long did you feel the effects? How did it affect you, your marriage or family, and your ability to serve others?

Avoid Debt

Read: Prophets have counseled that there are very few justifiable reasons to go into debt and that when you do incur debt you should pay it off as quickly as possible. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that “reasonable debt for the purchase of an affordable home and perhaps for a few other necessary things is acceptable. But from where I sit, I see in a very vivid way the terrible tragedies of many who have unwisely borrowed for things they really do not need” (“I Believe,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1992, 6).

Depending on the circumstances, debt may be acceptable for the following expenses:

- A modest, affordable home
- Reasonable educational expenses that will lead to better work
- Modest, basic transportation (only if necessary)

You should likely avoid going into debt for items other than these. Instead, save up for expenses.

Ponder: Take two minutes to think about the following question and write your thoughts: How will it feel to be debt free?



SHRINKING OUR PAPER CHAIN

I went to an expensive graduate school. I got a good job afterward but was more than a hundred thousand dollars in debt. I was looking at a LONG time before I had that debt paid off. One Saturday, my wife and I made a paper chain with each chain link representing \$1,000. There were 100 links! We keep our chain in the family room and tear off one link every time we pay down another \$1,000. Even though it will take several years to be debt free, we enjoy watching our chain shrink, and it’s a great way to teach our kids about debt, and to involve the whole family in our quest.

Get out of Debt

Read: You can get out of debt! Aggressively paying down debt will require significant sacrifice, but you can do it. Below are five important principles for getting out of debt. We will cover the first three in this chapter.

1. Understand your debt realities
2. Desire to get out of debt
3. Overcome natural-man tendencies that lead to debt
4. Stop incurring debt
5. Pay off your debts

Discuss: What thoughts or impressions do you have from reading these five principles?

2. UNDERSTAND YOUR DEBT REALITIES

Read: How much debt do you have? What are the interest rates? What are the payments? How long will it take to pay off your debt, and how much interest will it cost you? It is important to know these things as you work to get out of debt. To do so, you will create a debt inventory. Below is a sample debt inventory table.

DESCRIPTION	BALANCE	INTEREST RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
Credit card #1	4,000	17%	97
Credit card #2	6,500	19%	168
Car	5,000	3.00%	145
Student loan	18,000	5.50%	300
Mortgage	170,000	4.50%	1,050

In your family council this week, you will create a similar table. Be sure to fill in all of the information for each debt.

3. DESIRE TO GET OUT OF DEBT

Read: In order to do anything difficult, including getting out of debt, your desire must be stronger than the obstacles. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught, “When we have a vision of what we can become, our desire and our power to act increase enormously” (“Desire,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 44). To find success, focus on your goal to get out of debt and visualize what life will be like when you are free from the burden of debt. Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “What we insistently desire, over time, is what we will eventually become” (“According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 21).

Discuss: Why do you desire to be debt free? What will you be able to do that you aren’t able to do now?

4. OVERCOME THE “NATURAL MAN”

Read: In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin taught, “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love” (Mosiah 3:19). To put off the natural man, we must remember the principles we learned from chapter 4 about maintaining a long-term perspective. Like the children in the marshmallow experiment, we need to learn to delay short-term pleasures in order to reach long-term goals.

“Natural man” tendencies include:

- Impulsive and emotional spending.
- Ignorance or carelessness about our financial reality.
- Coveting and comparing ourselves with others.

Yielding to the natural man will likely lead us to debt and financial stress. On the other hand, as we seek to follow the “enticings of the Holy Spirit,” we will be enabled by the power of the Atonement to become strong in the face of adversity.

Discuss: What does it mean to put off the natural man?

Read: Let's look more closely at some of these tendencies of the natural man in the context of self-reliance.

Impulsive and Emotional Spending

Ponder: Take a minute to think about the following questions and write your answers below: When was the last time you made an expensive, impulsive purchase? What was it? How could you have used that money more effectively for something else?

Read: We have all likely made an impulsive or emotional purchase. Sometimes we spend money when we feel discouraged or angry. Sometimes we spend money because we feel that we are entitled to reward ourselves. Sometimes a sale or promotion tempts us into believing we need something when we really don't. There are many reasons why we spend money on things we don't really need at the expense of paying for the things that matter most. The following activity will help us understand why we make impulsive purchases.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Take a few minutes to evaluate your emotional spending habits by responding to the questions below.

Step 2: After you have filled out the questionnaire, pair up with your spouse (if present) or action partner and discuss the following:

- What are some patterns you notice related to emotional or impulsive spending?
 - What can you do to protect you from yourself?
-

HOW DO I FEEL WHEN I SPEND IMPULSIVELY? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Mad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bored | <input type="checkbox"/> Sad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excited | <input type="checkbox"/> Stressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generous | <input type="checkbox"/> Tired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy | <input type="checkbox"/> Underappreciated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hungry | |
-

WHAT DO I SPEND ON WHEN I SPEND IMPULSIVELY? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Gifts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dining at restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Home furnishings or decorations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic devices or accessories | <input type="checkbox"/> Snacks or beverages |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel |
-

WHO AM I WITH WHEN I SPEND IMPULSIVELY?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Nobody; I am alone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coworkers | <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends | |
-

Discuss: How can we overcome tendencies to make impulsive purchases?
What have you done in the past to overcome such impulses?

Ignorance or Carelessness about Our Financial Situation

Read: In the Book of Mormon, Nephi chastises Laman and Lemuel for being “past feeling” and unable to feel the Spirit work within them (see 1 Nephi 17:45). Our choices can often harden our hearts, making it difficult to feel the promptings of the Spirit when we must change. Sometimes being “past feeling” may cause us to choose to ignore the reality of our situation. We may want to avoid tracking expenses or looking at our bank accounts. If we use credit cards or other consumer credit, this carelessness can quickly lead us into debt.

Sometimes one or both partners in a marriage will spend carelessly, assuming that the other partner is responsible for the family’s financial situation. Remember, both spouses are equally responsible for their family’s finances, and ignoring or transferring our responsibility will only push us further into financial trouble.

Discuss: Why are some inclined to ignore the reality of their situation? How can you overcome being “past feeling” about your financial situation, if you need to?

Coveting and Comparing Ourselves with Others

Read: It is natural for people to compare themselves with others, and we are bombarded with messages and advertisements encouraging us to purchase things we do not need. Sometimes we feel entitled to have things that we can’t afford or don’t really need. Giving in to coveting can quickly lead us to make unwise purchases.

Discuss: How can we overcome the tendency to compare ourselves with others?

DISCUSS FINANCIAL PRIORITIES IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: During your family council this week, you will discuss ways in which you can overcome and protect yourselves from “natural man” tendencies. Together, discuss your current debts and create a “debt inventory” (see the blank debt inventory sheet on page 123). You may consider using the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below to guide your council. As you identify your debts together, and as you develop ways to overcome “natural man” tendencies, you will receive the Lord’s help to eliminate your debts.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- What are some ways that you manifest natural man tendencies?
- When was your last big, impulsive purchase? What could you have done with that money instead?
- When you become debt free, what will you be able to do that you cannot do now?

Part 2: Plan

- Put together a debt inventory using the table on page 123.
- Ask yourself:
 - What can you do differently to eliminate your debts?
 - What practices can you put in place to overcome and prevent natural man tendencies?
 - How can you involve the Lord to help you put off the natural man?



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“And again, verily I say unto you, concerning your debts—behold it is my will that ye shall pay all your debts” (D&C 104:78).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- Ⓑ I will inventory my debt using the example in the workbook.

- Ⓒ I will discuss my debt inventory and ways to overcome and prevent "natural man" tendencies with my family or an accountability partner.

- Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

DEBT INVENTORY

DESCRIPTION	BALANCE	INTEREST RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT

NOTES



8

GETTING OUT OF DEBT

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Work: Take Responsibility and Persevere

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Stop Incurring Debt
2. Pay Off Your Debts



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Create a debt inventory.
- Ⓒ Discuss the debt inventory and ways to overcome "natural man" tendencies in my family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS				
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you make each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder why you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.				KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort
Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances	Ⓒ Hold a Family Council	Ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials
Example Be obedient ●●●	Track expenses ●●●	Counsel about obedience ●●●	●●●	<i>[Signature]</i>
Week 1 Self reliance is a principle of salvation ●●●	Track expenses ●●●	Counsel with the Lord ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ●●●	Track expenses ●●●	Counsel about income and expenses ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ●●●	Track expenses ●●●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ●●●	Build a budget ●●●	Counsel about budgeting ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 5 Solve problems ●●●	Choose a budgeting system ●●●	Counsel about budgeting ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about emergency funds, insurance ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 7 Show integrity ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about debt ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and persevere ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about debt ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 9 Communicate, petition and listen ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about crisis management ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve where you are going and how to get there ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ●●●	●●●	_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ●●●	Put money toward financial priority ●●●	Counsel about retirement planning ●●●	●●●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What did you learn from creating a debt inventory?
 - How does it feel to have a complete inventory of your debt?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND PERSEVERE—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: Why does Heavenly Father want me to take personal responsibility for my life?

Watch: “Sedrick’s Journey,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 129.)

Discuss: How do we learn to keep going, even when the work is difficult?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 42:42 and the quote by President James E. Faust (on the right)

Discuss: Read the quote by Elder D. Todd Christofferson (on page 129). Why does the Lord expect us to work for what we receive?

“Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 42:42

“Perseverance is demonstrated by those who . . . don’t give up even when others say, ‘It can’t be done.’”

JAMES E. FAUST, “Perseverance,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2005, 5

ACTIVITY

Step 1: Choose a partner and read together each step in the pattern below.

Step 2: Ask each other to talk about a very hard task or challenge the other currently faces.

Step 3: Help each other apply the four steps below to the difficult task or challenge.

1 KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE	2 REMEMBER TO WORK TOGETHER	3 REPLACE FEAR WITH FAITH	4 MOVE FORWARD WITH PATIENCE AND COURAGE
List your blessings.	Ask friends, peers, group members, and others for help.	Avoid doubt. Remember that the Lord has all power. Call upon Him and accept His will.	Never, never, never give up; endure with faith. Look for lessons the Lord might be teaching you.

Step 4: Write two or three ways you can move forward with faith, trusting that God will provide.

Ponder: Read the quote by President Thomas S. Monson (on the right). How do I react when I experience failure?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

Choose something that is hard or uncomfortable and finish the task. Write it below.

Share what you've learned today about work and perseverance with your family and friends.

SEDRICK'S JOURNEY

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



SEDRICK: My name is Sedrick Kambesabwe. I live in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I'm a member of the LDS Church.

I'm a branch missionary in the village of Kipusanga. I need to prepare to go on a foreign mission. In order to go on a mission, I need a passport, which now costs 250 U.S. dollars.

To earn money, my father and I buy bananas. Some villages produce a lot of bananas: Tishabobo, Lusuku, and Kamanda.

Tishabobo is about 9 miles from here. Lusuku is 18 miles. Kamanda is 18 as

well. We go there and buy bananas, and we bring them back here to sell.

To go to the villages we use a bicycle. We can take four or six bunches of bananas.

When I go by bike, it can take an hour and a half each way, if the bike is working and I have the strength. When it is midday and the heat is oppressive, I move slowly because of the heat and the sun.

I can do two trips per day if I wake up very early in the morning. It is a good way to help pay for my passport.

Now I'm earning money, little by little, so I'm saving for both school expenses and the mission. And now, after four years of work, I have enough money for my passport, plus 70 dollars saved.

"God has designed this mortal existence to require nearly constant exertion. . . . By work we sustain and enrich life. . . . Work builds and refines character, creates beauty, and is the instrument of our service to one another and to God. A consecrated life is filled with work, sometimes repetitive, . . . sometimes unappreciated but always work that improves, . . . lifts, [and] aspires."

D. TODD CHRISTOFFERSON,
"Reflections on a Consecrated Life,"
Ensign or Liahona,
Nov. 2010, 17

"Our responsibility is to rise from mediocrity to competence, from failure to achievement. Our task is to become our best selves. One of God's greatest gifts to us is the joy of trying again, for no failure ever need be final."

THOMAS S. MONSON,
"The Will Within,"
Ensign, May 1987, 68

Back to page 128.



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes



TODAY'S DISCUSSION:

3

ELIMINATE DEBT

Read: Last week we discussed three principles we identified for getting out of debt:

1. Understand your debt realities.
2. Desire to get out of debt.
3. Overcome the “natural man” tendencies that lead you into debt.

Today we will discuss two more principles:

1. Stop incurring debt.
2. Pay off your debts.

Discuss: What were some of the most meaningful things you learned last week?

1. STOP INCURRING DEBT

Read: You can't expect to get out of debt until you stop incurring more debt. There are two simple steps to stop incurring debt:

1. Build an emergency fund.
2. Quit using credit cards and consumer loans.

First, continue to build an emergency fund until you have three- to six-months' worth of expenses saved. Use this money when needed rather than credit. But remember to use it only for actual emergencies and to budget for everything else.

Second, stop relying on consumer debt and credit cards. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland suggested financial "plastic surgery." He said, "This is a very painless operation: Just cut up your credit cards. . . . No convenience known to modern man has so jeopardized the financial stability of families, especially young struggling families, like the credit card" (Jeffrey R. and Patricia T. Holland, "Things We Have Learned—Together," *Ensign*, June 1986, 30). Cutting up your credit cards will help you stop getting into more debt.

Discuss: What are you willing to do to stop incurring debt?

2. PAY OFF YOUR DEBTS

Read: We have been counseled to pay down our debts as quickly as we can: "If you do incur debt, . . . work to repay it as quickly as possible and free yourself from bondage" (*True to the Faith* [2004], 49).

Here are four steps that will help you make and follow a plan to get out of debt.

1. Decide to pay extra toward your debts.
2. Decide where to pay extra.
3. Use the rollover method.
4. Take additional steps as needed.

Decide to Pay Extra toward Your Debts

Read: One of the most expensive ways to get out of debt is making minimum payments. Often the minimum payment is a percentage of the balance. As the balance goes down, so does the minimum payment. This extends the time it takes to pay off the balance and costs you more in interest. To get out of debt much more quickly, you will need to pay more than the minimum payment.

DESCRIPTION	BALANCE	INTEREST RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
Credit card #1	4,000	17%	97
Credit card #2	6,500	19%	168
Car	5,000	3.00%	145
Student loan	18,000	5.50%	300
Mortgage	170,000	4.50%	1,050

For example, if we used our debt inventory (above) from the last chapter and made just the minimum payment on credit card #1, how long do you think it would take to get out of debt? How much interest do you think it would cost? By making only minimum payments:

- It would take 20 years and 9 months to pay it off!
- It would cost 5,107.62 in interest.

But what if you paid the current minimum payment of 97, plus an extra 100 a month?

- You would pay it off in 2½ years—that's 18 years sooner!
- You would save 4,357.49 in interest!

Discuss: Why do creditors want you to make only minimum payments?

Read: Paying more than the minimum payments will shorten the time it takes to get out of debt and will save you a lot of money in interest. You have been tracking your expenses and have developed a budget. How can you free up some money in your spending to make extra payments on your debts? One of your commitments this week

will be to determine how much extra money you can set aside to put toward paying down your debt. When considering your first debt to pay off, pick a fixed amount that includes extra above the minimum payment, and pay at least that until the debt is paid off.

ACTIVITY (15 minutes)

Step 1: Pair up with your action partner. Review your budget, and see if you can find 100 or more that you could apply to paying down your debts. Write your ideas below.

Step 2: As a group, share your ideas.

Decide Where to Pay Extra

Read: Here are a couple of options for deciding which debts should be paid first. You can:

- Pay extra toward the debt with the highest interest first.
- Pay extra toward the debt with the lowest balance first.

Both options have advantages and disadvantages, but they will both lead you to be debt free. One of your commitments this week will be to determine which debt you will pay down first.

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Highest interest first	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Eliminates most expensive debts earlier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Could take longer to reduce the number of creditors○ Delayed psychological wins
Lowest balance first	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Reduces number of creditors more quickly○ Reduces number of minimum payments more quickly○ Provides quicker psychological wins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Could be more expensive since you aren't paying off the debts with the highest interest first

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Use the example debt inventory below to do the following:

Step 1: Put a check next to the loan with the highest interest rate.

Step 2: Circle the loan with the smallest balance.

DESCRIPTION	BALANCE	INTEREST RATE	MONTHLY PAYMENT
Credit card #1	4,000	17%	97
Credit card #2	6,500	19%	168
Car	5,000	3%	145
Student loan	18,000	5.5%	300
Mortgage	170,000	4.5%	1,050

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Use your own debt inventory (page 123) to do the following:

Step 1: Put a check next to the loan with the highest interest rate.

Step 2: Circle the loan with the smallest balance.

Step 3: Decide which loan to pay extra to first, and indicate that on your debt inventory.

Use the Rollover Method

Read: The rollover method is a great way to pay off your debts. Let's say you can now pay an extra 100 a month toward your debts. When you pay off a debt, what should you do with the money that had been going to that loan? Roll it over to pay down other loans! This is where you really start to get out of debt more quickly.

For example, with the example debt inventory, if you paid an extra 100 a month to credit card #1, your monthly payment would be 197. After it was paid off, you would have an extra 197 you could

use to pay off another debt. If you used that 197 extra and put it toward the 6,500 balance for credit card #2, you would:

- Pay off that credit card more than 23 years sooner than if you paid minimum payments!
- Save over 8,500 in interest!

Once you paid that credit card off, you would have an extra 365 to pay toward other debts, and so on. The rollover method works well to eliminate debt quickly.

Discuss: How will the rollover method help you get out of debt faster?

Take Additional Steps

Read: If you are having a difficult time making minimum debt payments, then you may need to take additional measures (see below).

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Divide into groups of two to four people and discuss the additional measures below. Ponder whether any of these measures could help you.

Step 1: Find extra or better work: Remember the jar example? You may need a bigger jar! Additional income from a second job or side business can rapidly accelerate your debt elimination plan. You likely will not need a second job indefinitely. However, if you are struggling to accelerate paying off your debt, extra income can go a long way in helping you get your feet back under you.

Step 2: Sell some things that you can live without.

Step 3: Downsize: Sometimes your best move is to move—literally. A less expensive home, apartment, or car may be a good option.

Step 4: Refinance debt: In some circumstances it is possible to refinance your loans at a lower interest rate or to consolidate several of them to a single loan with a lower interest rate. There may be costs to refinancing or consolidating, so be sure to understand the expenses beforehand.

Step 5: Find help from mentors or financial counselors: In many areas of the world people can access financial counseling through local nonprofit services or financial institutions. Find and counsel with a trusted advisor.

DISCUSS DEBT ELIMINATION IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: In your family council this week, discuss how much money you can set aside each month to make extra payments toward your debts. Additionally, discuss which loan you would like to begin paying down first (highest interest or lowest balance). You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- Are you still incurring debt?
- How much money can you afford to put toward extra payments? (Review your income and expenses, and indicate the amount you could pay extra on your debt inventory sheet on page 123.)

Part 2: Plan

- What can you do to ensure you stop incurring debt? Together, consider cutting up your credit cards.
- What expenses can you reduce to make room for extra payments on your debt?
- What loan (or loans) should you pay off first? (Indicate the order on your debt inventory on page 123.)



MORE THAN TWO PERCENT

I used to love my credit card! Once a quarter I would get 2% back on all my purchases. But when my husband and I started budgeting seriously, it became too difficult for us to compare our credit card balance with our checking account balance. I realized that we were regularly spending just a little more than we actually had. We cut up our credit cards, just like Elder Holland suggested! I know that we are now saving more than 2% by having clear boundaries and by knowing exactly how much money we have in our account at any given time.



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Release thyself from bondage” (D&C 19:35).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- Ⓑ I will determine how much extra I can pay toward eliminating debt and which loan to begin paying off first and will create a debt elimination plan.

- Ⓒ I will discuss my debt elimination plan during my family council.

- Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature

NOTES

NOTES



9

MANAGING FINANCIAL CRISES

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Communicate: Petition and Listen

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Learn to Manage Financial Crises
2. Increase Your Emergency Preparations



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Create a plan to begin eliminating debt.
- Ⓒ Discuss my debt elimination plan during family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you made each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.					
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort					
Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials	
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	JW	
Week 1 Self reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and give ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 9 Communicate, partner and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 10 Seek learning: resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____	

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What did you learn from creating a debt elimination plan?
 - What are you now doing differently to eliminate debt in your family?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: COMMUNICATE

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: When has Heavenly Father answered my prayers?

Watch: “Creating Lift,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 145.)

Discuss: How can we recognize answers to our prayers? Why is listening an essential part of prayer?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 8:2 and the quote by President Russell M. Nelson (on the right)

Discuss: Why is listening an essential skill? How can careful listening help us in our work?

“I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 8:2

“Your soul will be blessed as you learn to listen, then listen to learn from children, parents, partners, neighbors, and Church leaders, all of which will heighten capacity to hear counsel from on high.”

RUSSELL M. NELSON,
“Listen to Learn,”
Ensign, May 1991, 24

ACTIVITY

Step 1: As a group, read the steps below and briefly discuss them.

Step 2: Ask one or two members of the group to tell the others about a challenge or question they have. Everyone else should try to listen, following these steps.

Step 3: When finished, ask the group members who spoke how they felt when the group really tried to listen.



Read: Quotes by President Henry B. Eyring and Elder Robert D. Hales (on the right)

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Pray individually and as a family each morning and night.
Spend time after each prayer reverently listening for guidance.
- Share what you've learned today about communication with your family or friends.

CREATING LIFT

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF:

In order to get an airplane off the ground, you must create lift. In aerodynamics, lift happens when air passes over the wings of an airplane in such a way that the pressure underneath the wing is greater than the pressure above the wing. When the upward lift exceeds the downward pull of gravity, the plane rises from the ground and achieves flight.

In a similar way, we can create lift in our spiritual life. When the force that is pushing us heavenward is greater than the temptations and distress that drag us downward, we can ascend and soar into the realm of the Spirit.

Though there are many gospel principles that help us to achieve lift, I would like to focus on one in particular.

Prayer!

Prayer is one of the principles of the gospel that provides lift. Prayer has the power to elevate us from our worldly cares. Prayer can lift us up through clouds of despair or darkness into a bright and clear horizon.

One of the greatest blessings and privileges and opportunities we have as children of our Heavenly Father is that we can communicate with Him through prayer. We can speak to Him of our life experiences, trials, and blessings. We can listen for and receive celestial guidance from the Holy Spirit at any time and at any place.

(See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Prayer and the Blue Horizon," *Ensign or Liahona*, June 2009, 5–6)

"Our Heavenly Father hears the prayers of His children across the earth pleading for food to eat, for clothes to cover their bodies, and for the dignity that would come from being able to provide for themselves."

HENRY B. EYRING,
"Opportunities to Do Good," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2011, 22

"We must ask for help from our Heavenly Father and seek strength through the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ. In both temporal and spiritual things, [this] enables us to become provident providers for ourselves and others."

ROBERT D. HALES,
"Becoming Provident Providers Temporally and Spiritually," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 7–8

Back to page 144.



LEARN — Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



2

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM
HARDSHIP



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

BUDGET AND SPENDING CHECKPOINT

Read: Review and update your budget. What is working well? What categories do you need to adjust, if any? Can you spend less in some categories to more quickly save up for your emergency fund, become debt free, or save for the future? One of your commitments this week will be to discuss the following activity during family council.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Consider each of the categories below, and answer honestly.

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT MY SPENDING?	I spend too little	I feel good about my spending	I spend too much
Eating out at restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Groceries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snacks and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rent or mortgage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cell phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ponder: What will you do if you encounter a financial crisis? What financial crises have you experienced in the past?

Read: In the Old Testament, Joseph forewarned Pharaoh of seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. Immediately, Pharaoh appointed officers to set aside extra from the good years to prepare for the bad (see Genesis 41:1–37). While we may not always have a clear prophecy of when the good and bad times will come, prophets today have encouraged us to prepare for crises, especially when things are going well.

In this chapter, we will learn what to do when we face a financial crisis and how to prepare for crises before they occur.

Discuss: What types of financial crises might you encounter? Write down the group's ideas below.



THERE IS ALWAYS A WAY

When we started learning about building an emergency fund, my husband and I didn't think we could actually come up with enough money. We prayed for guidance, and our answer was to sell one of our cars. Now my husband takes the bus to work, and we have a full emergency fund.

1. LEARN TO MANAGE FINANCIAL CRISES

Read: Like an emergency or fire escape plan, in the event of a financial crisis you should have a course of action that is simple to follow. About managing trials, Elder Marvin J. Ashton asked, “Can you quietly sit down, review the facts, and list all the possible courses of action? Can you identify causes and determine remedies? Quiet contemplation can solve problems more quickly than frantic force” (“Give with Wisdom That They May Receive with Dignity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 88). Determining how to handle financial crises beforehand will allow you to be emotionally and financially prepared when hardship strikes and can help you prevent some crises in the future. Managing a financial crisis requires two steps: assess the situation, and take appropriate action.

Discuss: Why is it important to decide now how to manage a financial crisis? How has the Spirit helped you handle crises in the past?

Assess the Situation

Read: To assess a potential financial crisis, you may want to ask the following questions:

- Are you faithful in paying your tithing and offerings? Are you living your life in such a way that you are worthy of God’s blessings?
- What emergency precautions have you already put in place that will help you face the current challenge? Do you have food and water storage? an emergency fund? proper insurance?
- Where do your emergency preparations fall short?
- What insurance policies do you have that may cover some or all of this challenge?
- How long will you be able to stretch out your emergency fund?
- Is there room in your budget and debt elimination plan for temporary adjustments, if needed?

Discuss: Why is it important to thoroughly assess a situation before you take action?

Take Action

Read: Depending on the type and severity of your financial crisis, there are different actions you might be able to take to help you overcome your financial challenges. While these actions may not make sense for all situations, the following steps should give you an idea of what can be done in the event of a financial crisis.

Call Your Insurance Company

Read: Some financial crises may involve a health emergency, an automobile accident, home repairs, or job loss. For such situations, before you panic or take other actions, call your insurance provider to check coverage. Asking them about coverage doesn't mean you are filing a claim. But if your situation is covered, you should be able to get a sense of what your personal expenses are going to be.

Discuss: What financial crises merit a call to your insurance company?

Use Your Emergency Fund

Read: The purpose of your emergency fund is to help you get through financial crises. Do not feel guilty for using it for these situations. You can use your emergency fund for whatever you need—from living expenses to insurance deductibles. Be wise about using it for the right things at the right times. Replenish your emergency fund as fast as possible if you have to use money from it.

Pay Your Most Important Expenses and Bills First

Read: Closely examine all of your expenses and bills and determine which must be taken care of immediately and which could be delayed for a short period without great penalty. It may be necessary to call your billers to see if they have temporary hardship grace periods, interest-free payment plan options, or due-date extensions. Be wise about which expenses you take care of first, and research the adverse effects of deferring the payment of other bills before doing so. You may need to cut unnecessary expenses for a time, if possible. Focus on food, shelter, utilities, and necessary transportation before paying other expenses.

Discuss: Why would it be most important to pay the expenses just listed first?

Call Your Creditors

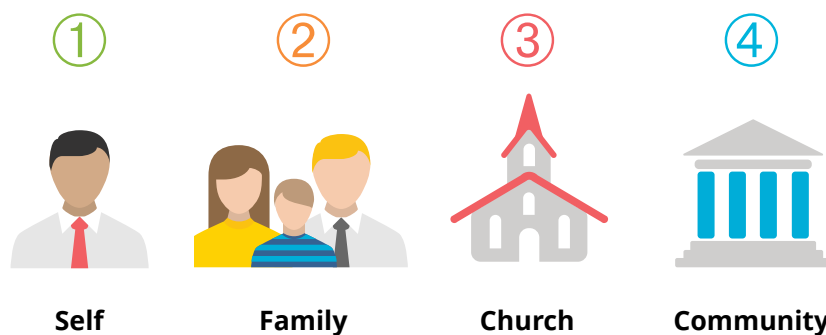
Read: In extreme circumstances, it may be wise to call your creditors and explain your current situation. Depending on the crisis, you may want to ask them to:

- Temporarily delay or reduce payments.
- Extend or permanently modify the terms of the loan.

While this may be the only viable option in extreme cases, beware that delaying payments or modifying the terms of your loan can trigger additional fees and make the loan more expensive in the long run.

Identify Other Resources That Can Help

Read: Our responsibility is to provide for ourselves and our families. However, there may be times when we must temporarily rely on others. As you seek other resources, be cautious of becoming dependent on assistance long-term—such dependence will stunt your spiritual and temporal progress. As we read in chapter 2, President Spencer W. Kimball taught that there are four tiers of temporal help we can turn to:



1. **Self:** You should first do all that you can yourself to provide for your family and alleviate immediate threat.
2. **Family:** If you are unable to meet basic financial needs yourself after doing all that you personally can, you should reach out to close or extended family if needed for temporary financial assistance, whether for housing, food, or other needs.

- 3. **Church:** After doing all you can yourself and then seeking assistance from family, you may need to meet with your Church leaders (bishop, branch president, or Relief Society president) to explore additional options. Remember that your Church leaders are wisely instructed to help people sustain life when necessary, not lifestyle.
- 4. **Community:** Various community or government support programs may be available to you that may offer aid in the form of financial or employment counseling, housing assistance, nutritional support for newborn and maternal health, and so forth. Remember that these programs are designed to provide short-term assistance. Do not rely on them long term.

Discuss: Why should we seek help from our family before seeking help from the Church and community? What resources that your group has identified are available in your area to help cope with crises?

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Answer the questions below individually, and consider what you would do to manage a financial crisis.

If I were to lose my source of income, how long could I currently live on my savings? (How many days, weeks, or months?)

Who are my creditors that I would need to call to explain my situation?

Which family members or friends could I look to if I needed help?

Step 2: Pair up with your action partner (or your spouse if present) and discuss your answers. Discuss ways that you could better prepare now for difficult times ahead. Record your ideas, and make plans to follow through.

2. INCREASE YOUR EMERGENCY PREPARATIONS

Read: You should have or should be working on building a one-month emergency fund. Your preparations should not end there! Work to become free from consumer debt and to then build a three- to six-month emergency fund and acquire insurance to protect your income.

Build a Three- to Six-Month Emergency Fund

Read: After you have paid off all of your consumer debt, the next step is to grow your one-month emergency fund into a three- to six-month emergency fund. Remember to keep the money for your emergency fund in a safe place that you can access without penalty. Grow this fund as quickly as you can so that you are better prepared for financial crises. One of your commitments this week will be to evaluate your emergency fund and to continue to pay off your consumer debts.

Acquire Appropriate Income Insurance

Note: This information may not apply to your region or area.

Read: One of your most important assets is your income. Research reputable disability and life insurance policies in your area, and obtain adequate coverage as quickly as possible.

DISCUSS PREPARING FOR FINANCIAL CRISES IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: One of your commitments this week will be to discuss your responses to “Budget and Spending Checkpoint” (see page 147) and your preparations for financial crises. Discuss emergencies that may occur in your family, how you can prepare for them, what insurance you may need to obtain to help protect yourself, and plans to call billers and creditors should the need arise. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below. Remember, if you are not married, your family council might include a roommate, friend, family member, or mentor.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- How are you doing on your budget? (Review answers to the “Budget and Spending Checkpoint” activity on page 147.)
 - How are you doing on your one-month emergency fund?
 - Are you living life righteously enough to be eligible for God’s help during a crisis? What can you improve?
-

Part 2: Plan

- What financial crises may occur in your family?
- How much do you need for a three- to six-month emergency fund? What can you do to save up for it?
- What does and does not merit the use of your emergency fund?
- What more can you do to be prepared for these crises?
- What insurance do you need to obtain to protect your income, health, and belongings?
- What can you do to improve or adjust your budget?



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them” (Ezekiel 38:7).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- Ⓑ I will continue to put money toward my emergency fund or unnecessary debt.

- Ⓒ I will discuss both my "Budget and Spending Checkpoint" (see page 147) and preparing for financial crises in my family council.

- Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature

NOTES

NOTES



10

INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE (PART 1)

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Seek Learning: Resolve Where You Are Going and How to Get There

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Save Money
2. Consider Home Ownership
3. Seek Education



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Continue to put money toward my financial priority.
- Ⓒ Discuss my "Budget and Spending Checkpoint" responses and preparing for financial crises during family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS				
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you made each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.				
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort				
Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances	Ⓒ Hold a Family Council	Ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	<i>JW</i>
Week 1 Self reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and giveback ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 9 Communicate, partner and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve issues and be going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - How was your discussion about your budget and spending?
 - What did you decide to do to better prepare for financial crises?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: SEEK LEARNING

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: How does learning create opportunity?

Watch: “Education for a Better Life,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 165.)

Discuss: What did Elder Joseph W. Sitati want when he was 13? What did he do about it?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 88:118–19 and the quote by President Gordon B. Hinckley (on the right)

Ponder: What thoughts and impressions have you had from the Holy Ghost about improving your life?

ACTIVITY—CREATING A “LIFE’S MISSION”

Step 1: Read the quote by President Henry B. Eyring (on page 163). The Lord has a plan for you. He has blessed you with special gifts and talents that will allow you to become anything He desires you to become. You can fulfill your mission here on earth if you are diligent in seeking to understand and obey His will for you.

Step 2: Answer the questions below to start creating your vision or “life’s mission.”

MY LIFE’S MISSION

Where do I want to be in five years?

Why?

What skills, knowledge, or experience do I need to get there?

“Seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith. . . . Establish a house . . . of learning.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 88:118–19

“We have a responsibility and a challenge to take our places in the world of business, science, government, medicine, education, and every other worthwhile and constructive vocation. We have an obligation to train our hands and minds to excel in the work of the world for the blessing of all mankind.”

GORDON B. HINCKLEY, “A City upon a Hill,” *Ensign*, July 1990, 5

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during this week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Complete the following goals and mentor activities.
- Finish writing your “life’s mission” plan and discuss it with your family.
- Ask someone to be your mentor and set a time to meet.

ACTIVITY—CREATING GOALS

Step 1: Read the quote from President Howard W. Hunter (on the right). Through goals, our hopes are transformed into action.

Goals should:

1. Be specific and measurable.
2. Be written down and placed where you can see them at least daily.
3. Have set completion times.
4. Have specific actions to take to accomplish the goal.
5. Be constantly reviewed, reported, and updated.

Step 2: On a separate sheet of paper, write two or three goals that will help you achieve your life’s mission. Follow the example below. Place the paper where you can see it daily.

GOAL	WHY?	SPECIFIC STEPS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	TIMELINE	WHO WILL I REPORT MY PROGRESS TO?
EXAMPLE: Read the Book of Mormon 30 minutes each day.	So I can receive daily direction from the Holy Ghost.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wake up at 6:30 a.m. every day. 2. Read before breakfast. 3. Record my progress on a chart. 	I will evaluate my progress every night before I go to bed.	I will share my progress chart with a family member each Sunday.

“Plead that the Spirit will show you what the Lord wants you to do. Plan to do it. Promise Him to obey. Act with determination until you have done what He asked. And then pray . . . to know what you might do next.”

HENRY B. EYRING,
“Act in All Diligence,”
Ensign or Liahona,
May 2010, 63

“This is a gospel of repentance, and we need to be repenting and resolving. Indeed, the process of repenting, making commitments, and setting goals should be a continuous one. . . . I commend the practice to you.”

HOWARD W. HUNTER,
“The Dauntless
Spirit of Resolution”
(Brigham Young
University devo-
tional, Jan. 5, 1992), 2,
speeches.byu.edu

ACTIVITY—FINDING A MENTOR

Step 1: Read the quote from Elder Robert D. Hales (on the right). There are different kinds of mentors. You may need someone with a lot of experience to answer your questions—someone who has done what you want to do. Other mentors can be righteous friends or family members. These are people willing to spend more time encouraging you to make changes in your life and holding you accountable to progress.

Step 2: Think about the kind of help you need. Write a list of people who could be your mentors. Ponder and pray about your list of names.

Step 3: Answer the questions below to start a mentor relationship. To invite someone to be your mentor, you could simply ask, “I’m trying to make a change in my life. Would you be willing to help me?”

MY MENTOR
Who would you like to be your mentor?
When will you ask him or her to be your mentor?
When could you meet to share your “life’s mission” and goals?
How frequently would you like to meet with your mentor?

Step 4: Remember that you are responsible for your “life’s mission.”

When you meet with your mentor:

- Review your progress.
- Review the roadblocks to your progress and what you are doing to overcome them.
- Review specifically what you plan to do before you meet with your mentor again.

“In my young adult years, I sought counsel from my parents and from faithful, trusted advisers. One was a priesthood leader; another was a teacher who believed in me. . . . Prayerfully select mentors who have your spiritual well-being at heart.”

ROBERT D. HALES,
“Meeting the Challenges of Today’s World,”
Ensign or Liahona,
 Nov. 2015, 46

EDUCATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



ELDER JOSEPH W. SITATI: At 13 I lived in a very rural part of Kenya. People had very little. But those who seemed to afford the things that others admired were those who had a good education. I came to see that education was a key to a better life.

The thought kept coming to me to go and speak to the principal of one of the schools that I really desired to attend. I needed my father's bicycle to make this journey that took half a day. I had never been out of my village. I did not know how to speak English very well, and this principal was a white man. I had never before met or spoken directly to a white man, so this was an intimidating thought.

Something inside me kept pushing me along and telling me that I should do this, so I set off to visit the principal. As I looked at him I could see that he was quite surprised to see this young boy standing like a soldier in front of him. He had kind eyes, so that gave me courage. I told him that I really wanted to join his school and I would be very happy if he could take me. Then he said, "Well, we'll see when the test results are out." I said, "Thank you, sir." In less than four minutes I was out of the office.

Those four minutes I spent in that office really were the defining moments in my life. I was the only student from my primary school who was selected to one of the best schools in our area. The fact that this good man had given me this opportunity made me grateful, and it inspired me to strive to be the best student in my class.

That opened new opportunities for me to go to another good school and then to prepare for university. My education enabled me to find my wife at university. It enabled me to find a job in the city. While living in Nairobi, we came across a missionary couple that invited us to their home, where they were having meetings with those who are members of the Church. If I had not been in Nairobi at that time, I would never have found the gospel. The fact that I was in a secure job enabled me to serve in the Church.

I testify that education is a key to self-reliance. It will open many avenues for you to be able to provide for yourself temporally and to become spiritually self-reliant as well.

Back to page 162.



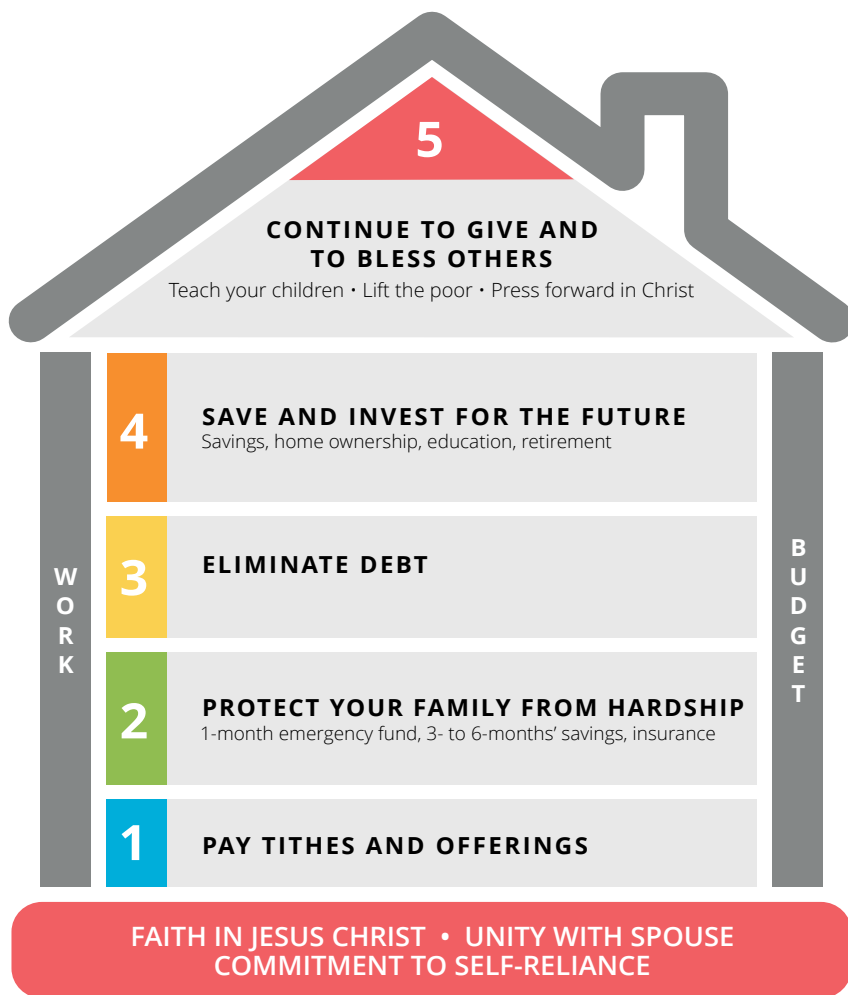
LEARN — Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



4

SAVE AND INVEST FOR THE FUTURE



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

Read: When people hear the term *investing*, they may think of a loud and chaotic trading floor with people selling stocks and bonds. While that may be part of investing, **investing** is also the act of putting time, effort, or money into something and expecting some type of a return. In this sense, investing is an element of self-reliance.

In this chapter, you will explore three ways to invest:

1. Save money
2. Pursue home ownership
3. Seek education

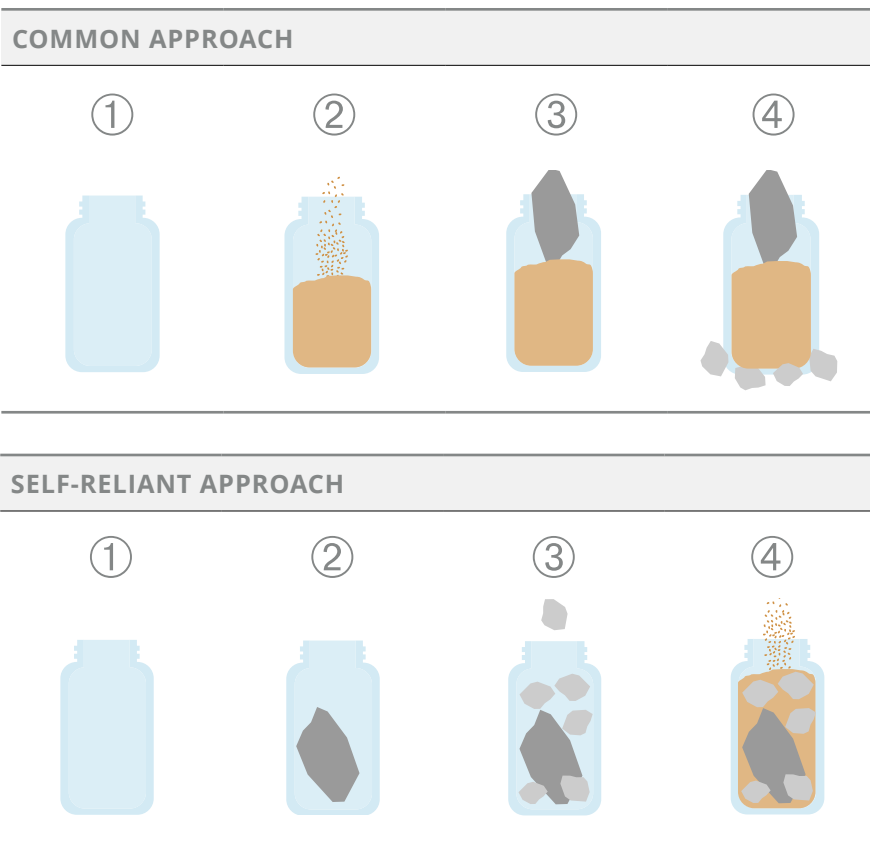
1. SAVE MONEY

Ponder: Take two minutes to think about the following question and write down your thoughts: What would I most like to save up for?

Read: One of the easiest ways to invest is to save money. You have been working to build an emergency fund, starting with one month's worth of expenses and then building up to having three to six months' worth of expenses. Imagine the possibilities if you continue to save even after establishing a strong emergency fund.

Elder L. Tom Perry taught, "Pay yourself a predetermined amount directly into savings. . . . It is amazing to me that so many people work all of their lives for the grocer, the landlord, the power company, the automobile salesman, and the bank, and yet think so little of their own efforts that they pay themselves nothing" ("Becoming Self-Reliant," *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 66).

As illustrated earlier with the jar example, it is critical to "pay yourself" first by putting money into savings. This will help you build financial security.



Discuss: Take a minute to review the jar example again. What is most meaningful to you about this example? How are you demonstrating faith by taking the self-reliant approach?

2. CONSIDER HOME OWNERSHIP

Read: Buying a home could be another way to invest. Home ownership is not for everyone, however, and often renting may be a better option.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Divide into groups of two to three people and spend a few minutes reviewing the positives and negatives listed below of owning versus renting an apartment or home. Also add some of your own ideas to the lists below.

Step 2: Then come back together and discuss the following questions: What did you learn? What additional positives and negatives did you write down?

POSITIVES OF RENTING	NEGATIVES OF RENTING
Lower maintenance costs Easier to move	Do not "own" Rent may increase
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

POSITIVES OF OWNING	NEGATIVES OF OWNING
House may increase in value (appreciation) You begin to own the home	Maintenance costs May be difficult to sell and move
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Read: For those considering home ownership, remember these two principles:

- Buy a home only when and where it makes sense for you.
- Buy only what you can comfortably afford.

Now let's discuss some factors that can influence these principles.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Individually answer the questions below. If you cannot answer yes to these questions, renting in your current situation may be a better option than buying.

DOES IT MAKE MORE SENSE FOR ME TO BUY RATHER THAN RENT?

- Am I free from consumer debt?

- Do I have a 3- to 6-month emergency fund?

- Am I living on a budget and do I know how much of a payment I could comfortably afford?

- Have I saved enough money for a down payment?

- Do I have stable employment?

- Do I plan to own the home for at least 5 years?

- Can I afford the additional costs of maintaining and insuring my home and paying property taxes?

Discuss: Why are these questions important to ask yourself before purchasing a home?

Read: Most people buy a home using a loan called a *mortgage*. This mortgage is debt, and it will cost you interest. You are expected to make the monthly payments and pay back the loan.

For long-term financial stability, your monthly mortgage payment should not exceed 25 percent of your monthly income. Use this as a guide for what you can afford to pay, rather than what a lender is willing to let you borrow.



CALCULATOR ACTIVITY

In the United States, the median household income in 2013 was around \$52,000. What is the most money a family making \$52,000 a year should spend each month on their mortgage payment?

As a group, enter the following information into your calculators. Stop after each step to be sure everyone receives the same answer before moving on to the next step.

STEPS	CALCULATIONS
25% of 52,000 = annual mortgage expense	$.25 \times 52,000 = 13,000$
13,000 divided by 12 months = monthly mortgage expense	$13,000 \div 12 = 1,083$

A family with this income would be wise to ensure that their monthly house payment not exceed \$1,100.

Now, individually or with your spouse (if possible), calculate 25 percent of your monthly income following the steps above. You do not need to share this number with anyone else in the group if you prefer not to. Write your answer here _____.

Discuss: What does it mean to you to purchase a home that you can comfortably afford?

Read: Keep in mind that there are other expenses of home ownership beyond the mortgage. When you own a home, you are responsible for the maintenance. Things break, wear out, and sometimes need updating. Financial advisors generally recommend saving at least 1 percent of the value of your home each year for maintenance.



BONUS CHECKS

Right when we first started learning about financial stewardship, I got a new job that paid quarterly bonuses. With that extra money, we decided to use some of it for savings and the rest for an extra mortgage payment. We did the math, and this extra payment each quarter will save us thousands of dollars in interest!

Get out of Mortgage Debt

Read: As explained previously, a mortgage is a loan—it is debt—and it costs you interest. Reiterating President J. Reuben Clark’s teachings, President Ezra Taft Benson said, “Let every head of household aim to own his [or her] home, free from mortgage” (“Prepare for the Days of Tribulation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 33). Paying off a mortgage earlier might require some sacrifice, but the faster you pay it off, the more money paid out in interest you save. There are two ways to pay down your mortgage:

- Pay extra
- Structure a shorter-term loan with a lower interest rate

Paying extra toward the principal can save you many years of payments and tens of thousands in interest. For example, if you had a 150,000, 30-year mortgage with a 4.5 percent interest rate, you would pay 123,610 in interest over the life of the loan. Look at the chart below to see how much time and money you can save by paying 100 or 200 extra per month.

	100 EXTRA PER MONTH	200 EXTRA PER MONTH
Time saved	Almost 7 years	Almost 11 years
Money saved	29,715	47,462

Another option to pay off a mortgage more quickly is to get a mortgage with a shorter term. Shorter-term mortgages typically come with lower interest rates. Your monthly payment is higher, but you will save years of payments and thousands in interest.

Let’s compare the same mortgage as before, but this time with a 15-year loan. The original example was a 150,000, 30-year mortgage with a 4.5 percent interest rate. Let’s compare that with a 15-year mortgage with a 3.5 percent rate.

	30-YEAR MORTGAGE	15-YEAR MORTGAGE
Interest rate	4.5%	3.5%
Monthly payment	760	1,072
Total interest paid	123,610	43,018
Time to pay off	30 years	15 years

In this case, a 15-year mortgage means a monthly payment of about 312 more, but it would save you:

- o 15 years of mortgage payments.
- o Over 80,000 in interest.

Discuss: What would you be willing to give up in order to pay extra on your mortgage or get a shorter-term mortgage to be free from debt sooner?

3. SEEK EDUCATION

Read: Education is another form of investing. Typically, additional training or education will have a cost. If you are going to invest in education, ensure that it will lead to better work so there is a good return on your investment. President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled that the “world will in large measure pay you what it thinks you are worth, and your worth will increase as you gain education and proficiency in your chosen field” (“A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 4).

Sometimes it may be appropriate to incur debt to gain education, but there are also many other ways to pay for school. Explore all other options before turning to debt. If you do go into debt for education, strive to pay it off as quickly as possible.

The Education for Better Work self-reliance group may be a great option for you when considering investing in education.

Discuss: How is education an investment in yourself?

DISCUSS SAVING MONEY, PURSUING HOME OWNERSHIP, AND INVESTING IN YOURSELF THROUGH EDUCATION IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: One of your commitments this week will be to discuss saving, home ownership, and investing in your education during family council. Discuss things you would like to save up for, whether you should rent or buy a home (or how you can begin paying down your mortgage), and what educational goals, if any, you should work toward. You may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline below.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- What would you like to save up for someday? Review your answer to the ponder question on page 167.
 - What are some of the positives and negatives of owning a home versus renting? Review the activity on page 169.
-

Part 2: Plan

- How can you save for your future wants?
- If you don't currently own a home, should you consider buying a home? Or should you continue renting for the time being?
- If you currently own a home, how can you work to pay down your mortgage faster? Would selling your home and renting for a time be a better fit for your current situation?
- What type of education or additional education, if any, should you invest in for better work?



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Matthew 7:24–25).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- Ⓐ I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- Ⓑ I will continue to put money toward my financial priority.

- Ⓒ I will discuss saving money, renting versus purchasing a home, and investing in education during family council.

- Ⓓ I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature

NOTES



11

INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE (PART 2)

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Become One, Serve Together

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Set a Retirement Goal
2. Understand Compound Interest
3. Understand the Relationship between Risk and Return
4. Consider Potential Investments
5. Research Potential Retirement Accounts
6. Begin Saving for Retirement as Soon as Possible



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Continue to put money toward my financial priority.
- Ⓒ Discuss saving money, purchasing versus renting a home, and investing in education during family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS				
INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you made each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.				
KEY: ● Minimal Effort ● Moderate Effort ● Significant Effort				
Ⓐ Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Ⓑ Plan and Manage My Finances	Ⓒ Hold a Family Council	Ⓓ Contact and Support My Action Partner	Action Partner's Initials
Example Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	<i>JW</i>
Week 1 Self reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 2 Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 3 Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 4 Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 5 Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 6 Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 7 Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 8 Work, take responsibility and giveback ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 9 Communicate, partner and love ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 10 Seek learning, resolve issues and be going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 11 Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned from striving to keep your commitments during the week.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - How is working toward your financial priority going?
 - How was your discussion during family council about home ownership and possibly pursuing additional education?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner's name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: BECOME ONE, SERVE TOGETHER—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: How does losing myself in the service of others actually save me?

Watch: “In the Lord’s Way,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read page 183.)

Discuss: How can serving others open the windows of heaven in your life?

Read: Some feel that they deserve what others already have, which can cause resentment. Others feel entitled to things they have not earned. These two traps blind people from seeing an essential truth: all things belong to God. Resentment and entitlement can be overcome by focusing on the needs of others. Read Mosiah 2:17, Mosiah 4:26, and the quote by President Gordon B. Hinckley (on the right).

ACTIVITY

Step 1: As a group, think of someone who needs help.

Step 2: Discuss the talents, contacts, and resources you have to offer.

Step 3: Make a plan to serve that person. For example, you could:



- Perform a service project in your community.
 - Prepare your family history using the booklet *My Family: Stories That Bring Us Together*. Then go to the temple and perform sacred ordinances for family members who have died.
 - Help someone on his or her path to self-reliance.
-

“When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”

MOSIAH 2:17

“And now, for the sake of . . . retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, . . . I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.”

MOSIAH 4:26

“When you are united, your power is limitless. You can accomplish anything you wish to accomplish.”

GORDON B. HINCKLEY, “Your Greatest Challenge, Mother,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 97

Read: Quotes by Elder Robert D. Hales and President Thomas S. Monson (on the right)

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action.

- Act on the plan you made to serve someone.
- Share what you've learned today about service with your family or friends.

IN THE LORD'S WAY

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



PRESIDENT HENRY B. EYRING: The principles at the foundation of the Church welfare program are not for only one time or one place. They are for all times and all places. . . .

. . . The way it is to be done is clear. Those who have accumulated more are to humble themselves to help those in need. Those in abundance are to voluntarily sacrifice some of their comfort, time, skills, and resources to relieve the suffering of those in need. And the help is to be given in a way that increases the power of the recipients to care for themselves and then care for others. Done in this, the Lord's way, something remarkable can happen. Both the giver and the receiver are blessed.

(Adapted from an address given by President Eyring at the dedication of the Sugarhouse Utah Welfare Services Center, June 2011, LDS.org)

PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF:

Brothers and sisters, we each have a covenant responsibility to be sensitive to the needs of others and serve as the Savior did—to reach out, bless, and uplift those around us.

Often, the answer to our prayer does not come while we're on our knees but while we're on our feet serving the Lord and serving those around us. Selfless acts of service and consecration refine our spirits, remove the scales from our spiritual eyes, and open the windows of heaven. By becoming the answer to someone's prayer, we often find the answer to our own.

(“Waiting on the Road to Damascus,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 76)

Back to page 182.

“The purpose of both temporal and spiritual self-reliance is to get ourselves on higher ground so that we can lift others in need.”

ROBERT D. HALES,
“Coming to Ourselves: The Sacrament, the Temple, and Sacrifice in Service,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 36

“When we work together cooperatively, . . . we can accomplish anything. When we do so, we eliminate the weakness of one person standing alone and substitute the strength of many serving together.”

THOMAS S. MONSON,
“Church Leaders Speak Out on Gospel Values,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 118



LEARN—Maximum Time: 45 Minutes



TODAY'S DISCUSSION:

4

SAVE AND INVEST FOR THE FUTURE

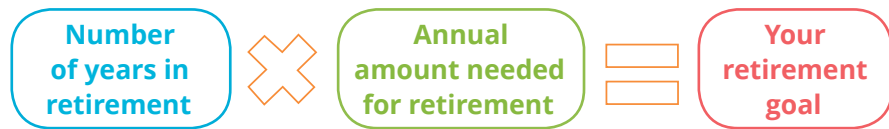
Read: In the previous chapter, we learned that investing is putting time, effort, or money into something and expecting some type of return. One of the reasons we may invest money is to have enough when we retire.

President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “As you move through life toward retirement and the decades which follow, we invite all . . . to plan frugally for the years following full-time employment” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 208). There may be government or social programs available to help you during retirement, but you will likely need to supplement the money available from these programs with your own savings or investments. If you fail to plan now, you may not have enough income or savings to be self-reliant after you retire.

Discuss: What will happen if you don't have enough money to live comfortably during retirement?

1. SET A RETIREMENT GOAL

Read: Before you begin saving for retirement, it is helpful to estimate how much you will need. This simple formula can get you started:



You cannot predict exactly how long you will live, but you can predict when you would like to retire, and you can project how long you will likely live beyond that time. Around the world, most people retire between the ages of 60 and 70. You may live an additional 20 to 30 years after retiring.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to put together an estimate for your retirement goal using the following formula.

	x	=	
Number of years in retirement			Your retirement goal
	Annual amount needed for retirement		

Note: You may not need this full amount when you retire, as your investments can continue to grow through retirement, but considering this number is a good place to start.

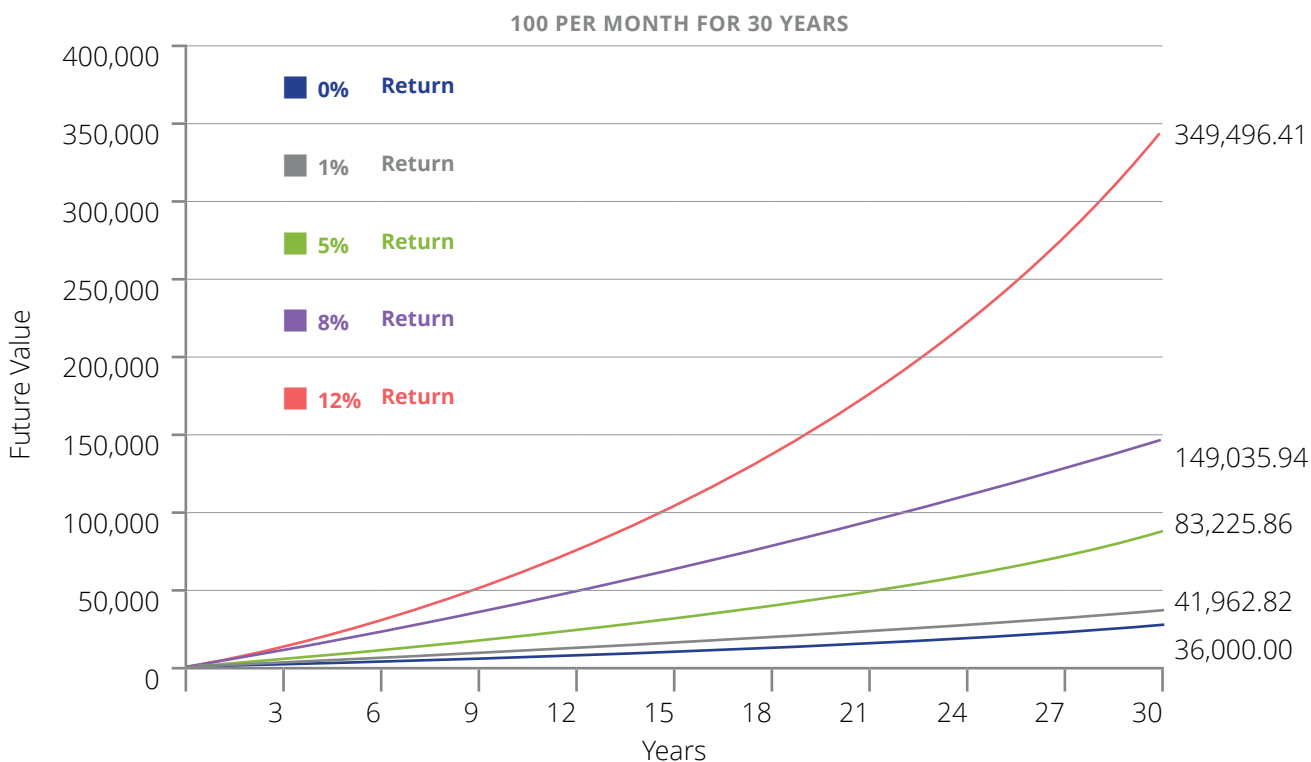
2. UNDERSTAND COMPOUND INTEREST

Read: Compound interest can be one of the keys to having enough money for retirement. **Compound interest** is earning additional interest on interest, and it is typically represented as a percentage

or rate of return. Once you earn your first interest payment, it is added to the principal balance. Then that larger balance continues to grow.



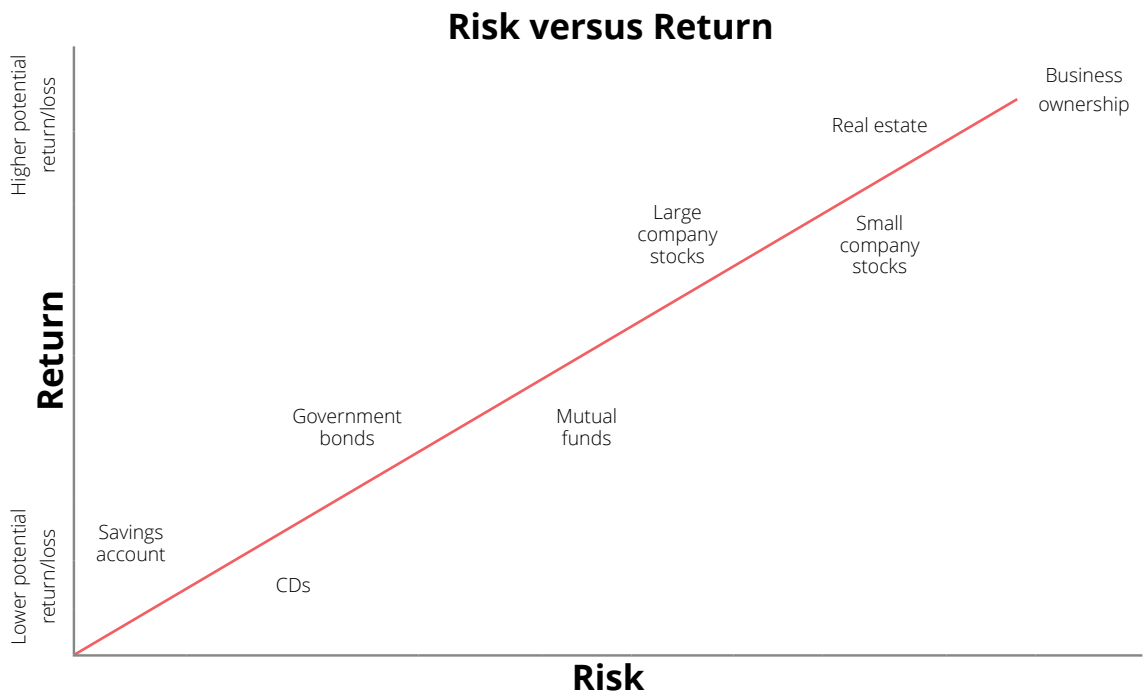
Read: Investing in ways that provide a good rate of return often helps people have enough money saved for retirement. Most people find it easier to invest smaller amounts of money consistently over time, such as a certain amount each month or from each paycheck, rather than large periodic sums. The example below demonstrates the total value of investing 100 per month for 30 years, with different rates of return. This is the power of compound interest.



Discuss: How can time and the rate of return affect the total value of an investment?

3. UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RISK AND RETURN

Read: As we have seen, the rate of return can be very powerful. It might seem pretty straightforward that all we would need to do, then, is to invest our money in something with the highest rate of return. But it isn't that simple. As the following graphic shows, all investments carry a risk-and-return relationship. Typically, the lower the rate of return, the less risk that you will lose money on that investment. Conversely, the higher the potential return, the higher the potential risk that you will lose money.



ACTIVITY (3 minutes)

Pair up with your spouse or action partner, and discuss your personal level of comfort with investment risk.

4. CONSIDER POTENTIAL INVESTMENTS

Read: When considering potential investments, it is helpful to know some fundamentals. Almost all investments can be divided into two categories: those with a fixed rate of return and those with a variable rate of return.

A **fixed rate** means your rate won't go up or down but remains constant or fixed. Examples of savings or investments with fixed rates include savings accounts, certificates of deposit (CDs), and bonds. Fixed-rate investments often have a lower rate of return and could be considered less risky than variable-rate investments.

A **variable rate** means that your return could go up or down, meaning you could make or lose money. Examples of variable-rate investments include stocks, many mutual funds, businesses, and real estate. Typically, variable-rate investments are considered riskier than fixed-rate investments, but they can also carry the potential for higher returns.

Diversification means spreading your money across multiple investments. Investing in multiple investments or multiple types of investments can help reduce your risk.

For more information on different types of investments, read the "Resources" section at the end of this chapter on your own this week.

Discuss: As a group, review the following concepts until everyone feels comfortable that they understand them.

- Compound interest
- Risk versus return
- Fixed rate of return
- Variable rate of return
- Diversification

5. RESEARCH POTENTIAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

Read: You will typically have to pay some type of taxes on your investments. In fact, taxes can be one of the largest expenses to consider when investing. Fortunately, many governments allow retirement accounts that have special tax benefits you will want to understand. These investment accounts may be employer sponsored or individual, and within these accounts you can invest in stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and more. The accounts go by different names depending on where you live, but the basic tax advantages are similar and generally fall into two categories: tax deferred and tax free.

Tax deferred: Contributions to tax-deferred accounts are typically tax-deductible in the year of the contribution, while withdrawals during retirement are taxed at whatever tax rate your income puts you at at that time. If your investment is not likely to grow substantially, either due to a lower rate of return or because it has less time to grow, you may save more in taxes by deferring paying income taxes on that money until retirement, when the money may be taxed at a lower rate.

Tax free: Contributions to tax-free accounts provide no initial tax advantages. For these accounts, the money you contribute is taxed in the year it was earned. However, all future earnings and withdrawals are tax free. If your investment is likely to grow substantially, either due to a higher rate of return or because it has more time to grow, you would probably pay less in taxes using a tax-free account.

As you can see, based on the type of account you choose, you will either pay taxes up front or at withdrawal. Depending on your circumstances, one type may be more beneficial to you than the other.

ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Look over the following three examples. These examples assume someone invested 100 a month and earned an 8 percent return for 10, 20, and 30 years respectively. The same amount of money was invested and grew to the same value in both the tax-deferred and the tax-free account. However, look at the difference in the amount paid in taxes.

Step 1: Divide into small groups of two to four people, including your action partner.

Step 2: For each scenario, circle the lower total amount paid in taxes, and note which type of account costs less in total taxes.

Step 3: Discuss the following questions:

- What are the differences between the tax-deferred and the tax-free accounts?
- When would the tax-deferred account likely be the best option?
- When would the tax-free account likely be the best option?

INVESTMENT		TAXES		
10 YEARS		Taxes up front	Taxes at withdrawal	Total taxes paid
<p>12,000 Total invested</p> <p>8% return</p> <p>18,294 Money for retirement</p>	<p>15% tax rate</p> <p>TAX DEFERRED</p> <p>TAX FREE</p> <p>25% tax rate</p>	0	+ 2,744	= 2,744
		3,000	+ 0	= 3,000

INVESTMENT		TAXES		
20 YEARS		Taxes up front	Taxes at withdrawal	Total taxes paid
<p>24,000 Total invested</p> <p>8% return</p> <p>58,902 Money for retirement</p>	<p>15% tax rate</p> <p>TAX DEFERRED</p> <p>TAX FREE</p> <p>25% tax rate</p>	0	+ 8,835	= 8,835
		6,000	+ 0	= 6,000

INVESTMENT	TAXES		
<p>30 YEARS</p> <p>36,000 Total invested</p> <p>8% return</p> <p>149,035 Money for retirement</p> <p>25% tax rate</p> <p>15% tax rate</p> <p>TAX DEFERRED</p> <p>TAX FREE</p>	Taxes up front	Taxes at withdrawal	Total taxes paid
	0	+ 22,335	= 22,335
	9,000	+ 0	= 9,000

6. BEGIN SAVING FOR RETIREMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Read: Once you have established an emergency fund and paid off your consumer debt, you should begin saving for retirement as soon as possible. The sooner you begin saving for retirement, the longer your money has to grow and the more money you are likely to have available for retirement.

One great way to begin saving for retirement is through an employer-sponsored retirement plan. If your employer offers some type of retirement account where they match some of what you contribute, take advantage of it! Their match is like a bonus or raise for you, just for contributing to your own savings.

The following activity helps to illustrate the power of investing regularly for a longer period of time.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Step 1: Divide into small groups of two to four people, including your action partner.

Step 2: Discuss the investment strategies of the three people described below. Who invests the most? Who invests the least? Assuming they each earn 8 percent compound interest on their investments, who do you think will make the most? Who do you think will make the least?

JULIA

- Invests 300 each month beginning at age 25.
- In total she invests 147,600.

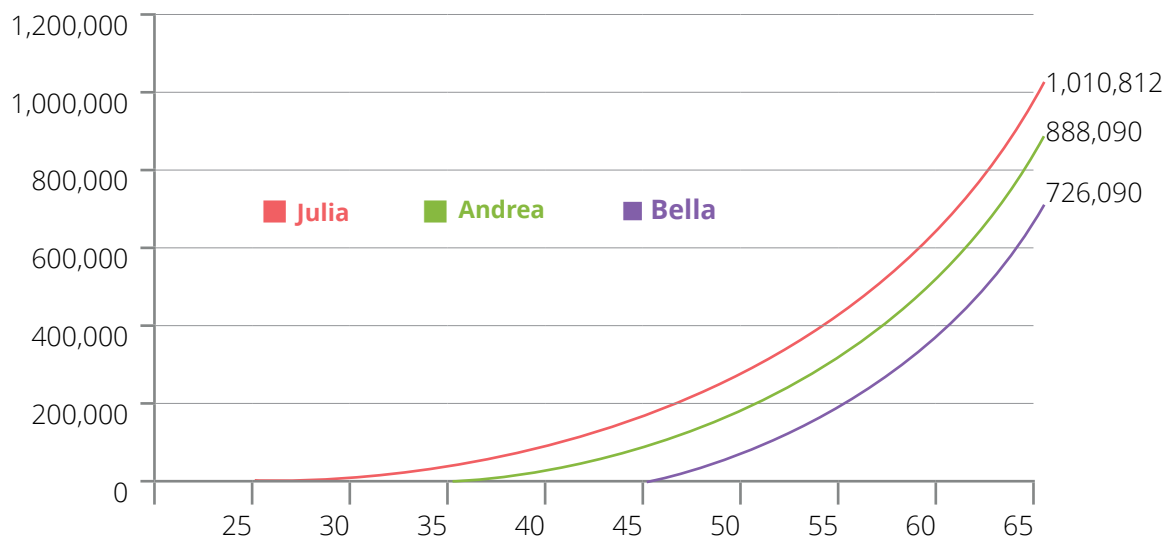
ANDREA

- Invests 600 each month beginning at age 35.
- In total she invests 223,200.

BELLA

- Invests 1,200 each month beginning at age 45.
- In total she invests 302,400.

Step 3: Now review the chart below that shows how their investments grow over time. Who made the most? Who made the least? What is the impact of time on investments?



Note: Assumes 8% compound interest rate.

DISCUSS PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT IN YOUR FAMILY COUNCIL

Read: During your family council this week, discuss your plans for retirement. Estimate how much you will need, when you would like to retire, and what your financial situation might be at that time. Write down the amount you would like to save, and determine an amount you can afford to set aside each month for retirement. Remember, while it is important to start saving for retirement as soon as possible, it is more urgent to build your emergency fund and to eliminate consumer debt first. During your discussion, you may want to use the “Sample Family Council Discussion” outline that follows.

SAMPLE FAMILY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Be sure to begin and end with a prayer to invite the Spirit.

Part 1: Review

- How are you doing on your current financial priority?
- How are you currently preparing for retirement?

Part 2: Plan

- When would you like to retire?
- How much will you need each year to provide for your needs?
- How much do you need to save?
- What will your financial situation likely be like when you retire? Will you own a home? Will you still have a mortgage? Will you be preparing to serve a senior mission? Will you need to support any family members? Will your living expenses likely be more or less than what they are now?



INVESTING

The most important thing we ever did was to just start. Long before we had any “extra” income at all, I picked a conservative index mutual fund and set up an automatic deposit of 1 percent of our paycheck, then mostly forgot about it. When I changed employers about eight years later, I was setting up my new retirement fund and rediscovered this old fund . . . now worth nearly 7,500.



PONDER—Maximum Time: 5 Minutes

Individually think about what you have learned today and consider what the Lord would have you do. Read the scripture or quote below and write responses to the questions.

“Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more” (Matthew 25:20).

What are the most meaningful things I learned today?

What will I do as a result of what I learned today?



COMMIT—Maximum Time: 10 Minutes

Read each commitment aloud to your action partner. Promise to keep your commitments and then sign below.

MY COMMITMENTS

- (A) I will practice and share this week's My Foundation principle.

- (B) I will continue to put money toward my financial priority.

- (C) I will discuss preparing for retirement during family council.

- (D) I will contact and support my action partner.

My signature

Action partner's signature



RESOURCES

TYPE OF INVESTMENT	DEFINITION	FIXED OR VARIABLE
Savings Account	A deposit account, typically at a bank or other financial institution, with generally low rates of return. Account owners can make withdrawals and deposits without penalty.	Fixed
Certificate of Deposit (CD)	An account where you deposit a specific amount of money for a set period of time; if you withdraw the money before the time is up, you may incur a penalty (lose some of the money invested). While the money is invested, it generates a modest fixed rate of return. When the allotted time has passed, you get your original investment back, plus the interest earned.	Fixed
Bond	A debt investment where you essentially lend your money to an entity or organization for a set amount of time in order to receive an expected rate of return. When the allotted time has passed, you get your original investment back, plus the interest earned. Bonds can be issued by governments and corporations. Depending on the issuing organization, bonds can be considered low risk or high risk.	Fixed
Stock	This represents a portion of ownership in a company, sold as shares. Each share represents a piece of ownership, so if a company has issued 100,000 shares and you own one share, you own 1/100,000th of that company. The rate of return depends on company performance.	Variable
Mutual Fund	These are typically made up of a group of assorted stocks and bonds. The fund is managed by a professional. Mutual funds provide a simple way to diversify investments. If the mutual fund performs well, the value of your investment increases. If it performs poorly, the value of your investment decreases.	Variable
Real Estate	An ownership investment in real property such as houses, apartments, or commercial buildings. Returns come in the form of income, an increase in the value of the property, or both. Losses may also occur for many reasons, including a decrease in the value of the property or tenants not paying the rent or damaging the property.	Variable
Business Ownership	This investment represents having an ownership portion in a privately owned business. Returns depend on business performance.	Variable



12

CONTINUING TO GIVE AND TO BLESS OTHERS

MY FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

- Receive Temple Ordinances

FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS

1. Share the Principle of Self-Reliance with Your Family and Friends
2. Press Forward with Faith



REPORT—Maximum Time: 25 Minutes

LAST WEEK'S COMMITMENTS:

- Ⓐ Practice and share last week's My Foundation principle.
- Ⓑ Continue to put money toward my financial priority.
- Ⓒ Discuss planning for retirement during family council.
- Ⓓ Contact and support my action partner.

STEP 1: EVALUATE WITH ACTION PARTNER (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes to evaluate your efforts to keep your commitments this week. Use the "Evaluating My Efforts" chart at the beginning of this workbook. Share your evaluation with your partner and discuss with him or her the question below. He or she will then initial where indicated.

Discuss: What challenges did you have with keeping your commitments this week?

EVALUATING MY EFFORTS					
<small>INSTRUCTIONS: Evaluate your effort to keep the commitments you made each week. Share your evaluation with your action partner. Ponder ways you can continue to improve as you practice forming these important habits.</small>					
	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Action Partner's Initials
	Practice and share the My Foundation principle	Plan and Manage My Finances	Hold a Family Council	Contact and Support My Action Partner	
Example	Be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about obedience ● ● ●	● ● ●	JW
Week 1	Self reliance is a principle of salvation ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel with the Lord ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 2	Exercise faith in Jesus Christ ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about income and expenses ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 3	Repent and be obedient ● ● ●	Track expenses ● ● ●	Counsel about tithes and offerings ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 4	Live a balanced life ● ● ●	Build a budget ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 5	Solve problems ● ● ●	Choose a budgeting system ● ● ●	Counsel about budgeting ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 6	Use time wisely ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about emergency fund, insurance ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 7	Show integrity ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 8	Work, take responsibility and give ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about debt ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 9	Communicate, partner and listen ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about crisis management ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 10	Seek learning, resolve where you are going and how to get there ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about saving, home ownership, education ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____
Week 11	Become one, serve together ● ● ●	Put money toward financial priority ● ● ●	Counsel about retirement planning ● ● ●	● ● ●	_____

STEP 2: REPORT TO THE GROUP (8 minutes)

After evaluating your efforts, come back together and report your results. Go around the group and each state whether you rated yourself “red,” “yellow,” or “green” for each of last week’s commitments.

STEP 3: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES (10 minutes)

Now share as a group the things you learned during the week from your commitments.

- Discuss:**
- What experiences did you have practicing or sharing the My Foundation principle?
 - What challenges have you had putting money toward your financial priority?
 - What did you learn from discussing your retirement plan?

STEP 4: CHOOSE ACTION PARTNERS (2 minutes)

Choose an action partner from the group for this coming week. Generally, action partners are the same gender and are not family members.

Take a couple of minutes now to meet with your action partner. Introduce yourselves and discuss how you will contact each other throughout the week.

Action partner’s name

Contact information

Write how and when you will contact each other this week.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT



MY FOUNDATION: RECEIVE TEMPLE ORDINANCES

—Maximum Time: 20 Minutes

Ponder: What are some of the things that matter most to you?

Watch: “Doing What Matters Most,” available at srs.lds.org/videos.
(No video? Read page 201.)

Discuss: What insignificant things distract us from progressing? How can gospel ordinances help us?

Read: Doctrine and Covenants 84:20 and the quote by President Boyd K. Packer (on the right)

Discuss: As we seek self-reliance, why is it important to be temple worthy?

ACTIVITY

Step 1: With a partner, read the quote by Elder Quentin L. Cook (on the right) and the following scriptures. Underline the promised blessings for those who worship in the temple.

“Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest”
(D&C 84:20).

“And that they may grow up in thee, and receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing”
(D&C 109:15).

“And when thy people transgress, any of them, they may speedily repent and return unto thee, and find favor in thy sight, and be restored to the blessings which thou hast ordained to be poured out upon those who shall reverence thee in thy house”
(D&C 109:21).

“And we ask thee, Holy Father, that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them, and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them” (D&C 109:22).

“We ask thee, Holy Father, . . . that no weapon formed against them shall prosper”
(D&C 109:24–25).

Step 2: Individually ponder, “What do I need to change in my life to participate in temple ordinances more often?”

“In the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.”

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 84:20

“The Lord will bless us as we attend to the sacred ordinance work of the temples. Blessings there will not be limited to our temple service. We will be blessed in all of our affairs. We will be eligible to have the Lord take an interest in our affairs both spiritual and temporal.”

BOYD K. PACKER,
The Holy Temple
(1980), 82

“We would do well to study the 109th section of the Doctrine and Covenants and to follow President [Howard W.] Hunter’s admonition ‘to establish the temple of the Lord as the great symbol of [our] membership.’”

QUENTIN L. COOK,
“See Yourself in the Temple,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2016, 99; quoting *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter* (2015), 178

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the week. Check the box when you complete each action:

- If you have a temple recommend, set a date to attend the temple.
- If you don't have a temple recommend, meet with your bishop or branch president to discuss how you can prepare to receive your temple ordinances.
- Share what you've learned about temple ordinances with your family or friends.

DOING WHAT MATTERS MOST

If you are unable to watch the video, read this script.



Of course, the malfunctioning lightbulb didn't cause the accident; it happened because the crew placed its focus on something that seemed to matter at the moment while losing sight of what mattered most.

NARRATOR: A plane crashed in Florida one dark night in December. Over 100 people were killed. It was just 20 miles from safety.

PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF: After the accident, investigators tried to determine the cause. The landing gear had indeed lowered properly. The plane was in perfect mechanical condition. Everything was working properly—all except one thing: a single burned-out lightbulb. That tiny bulb—worth about 20 cents—started the chain of events that ultimately led to the tragic death of over 100 people.

The tendency to focus on the insignificant at the expense of the profound happens not only to pilots but to everyone. We are all at risk. . . . Are your thoughts and heart focused on those short-lived fleeting things that matter only in the moment or on things that matter most?

("We Are Doing a Great Work and Cannot Come Down," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 59, 60)

Back to page 200.



LEARN — Maximum Time: 45 Minutes

TODAY'S DISCUSSION:



5

CONTINUE TO GIVE AND TO BLESS OTHERS



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

1. SHARE THE PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Share the Principles of Spiritual Self-Reliance

Read: When we become spiritually self-reliant, it is our duty to help others also become spiritually self-reliant. In the Doctrine and Covenants, we read, “And if any man among you be strong in the Spirit, let him take with him him that is weak, that he may be edified in all meekness, that he may become strong also” (D&C 84:106). Similarly, in the New Testament, Peter writes, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

Discuss: How do these scriptures apply to you? How have the principles of self-reliance in *My Foundation* blessed your life? What does it mean to be spiritually self-reliant?

Share the Principles of Temporal Self-Reliance

Read: When we become temporally self-reliant, it is our duty to help others also become temporally self-reliant. One of the best ways to help others become self-reliant is serving and giving to others. President Marion G. Romney taught: “There is an interdependence between those who have and those who have not. The process of giving exalts the poor and humbles the rich. In the process, both are sanctified. The poor, released from the bondage and limitations of poverty, are enabled as free men to rise to their full potential, both temporally and spiritually. [Those who have more], by imparting of their surplus, participate in the eternal principle of giving. Once a person has been made whole, or self-reliant, he reaches out to aid others, and the cycle repeats itself” (“The Celestial Nature of Self-Reliance,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 93).

Discuss: How does this quote apply to you? Who are the poor? How can you help the poor or those in need in your life?

Ponder: Take a minute to ponder the following question: Who do I know who needs *Personal Finances for Self-Reliance*? How will I share it with them? Write down names and plans to share below.

2. PRESS FORWARD WITH FAITH

Read: Congratulations! You have completed the Personal Finances for Self-Reliance group meetings. To assess your progress, write down where you are and how you plan to continue to progress in the table below.

ACTIVITY (10 minutes)

Individually review the Financial Stewardship Success Map, and ponder the progress you have made over the last 12 weeks. Think about the next steps in your journey, and fill out the table below.

OBJECTIVE	YES OR NO	PROGRESS TO DATE/NEXT STEPS
I feel unified with my spouse and the Lord about my finances.		
I am committed to being self-reliant.		
I have faith in Jesus Christ.		
I pay a full tithe and contribute fast offerings.		

OBJECTIVE	YES OR NO	PROGRESS TO DATE/NEXT STEPS
I am free of dependence on family, church, and government support.		
I regularly review and follow my budget.		
I have a one-month emergency fund.		
I am debt free or am actively paying down debt.		
I have a three- to six-month emergency fund.		
I have adequate insurance (such as health, life, auto, and disability insurance).		
I am regularly saving and investing for the future.		

Discuss: How have you improved over the last 12 weeks to become a wise and faithful steward of your finances?

Read: Many of the things we have discussed cannot be accomplished in 12 weeks. However, you should have developed the habits necessary to continue your progress toward successful financial stewardship. Continue to hold regular family councils. Continue to review the chapters in this workbook. And continue to work toward your financial priorities. Commit to follow the “Next Steps” you wrote down in the last column of the assessment on the previous pages.

Ponder: Take five minutes to think about the following question and write down your thoughts below: What are the most meaningful things I have learned over the last 12 weeks?

ACTIVITY (20–30 minutes)

As a group, voluntarily share testimonies, experiences, things you have learned, and ways in which the Lord has blessed you over the last 12 weeks.



CONTINUE ON YOUR PATH TO SELF-RELIANCE

Read: Congratulations! During the past 12 weeks you have established new habits and become more self-reliant. The Lord wants you to continue building on these abilities and developing new ones. As we pray and listen, the Holy Ghost can help us know what things in our life we need to improve.

Discuss: What can we do to continue along our path to self-reliance? How can we continue to help one another?

Commit: Commit to do the following actions during the next 12 weeks. Check the box when you complete each action:

- Review and continue to live all 12 My Foundation principles and habits of self-reliance.
- Share what you have learned about self-reliance with others. Continue helping members of your group, or offer to facilitate a new self-reliance group.
- Build on your abilities by participating in another self-reliance group.
- Study the doctrinal principles of self-reliance below.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES OF SELF-RELIANCE

SELF-RELIANCE IS A COMMANDMENT	THE LORD'S PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE FOR HIS SAINTS, AND HE HAS ALL POWER TO DO SO	THE TEMPORAL AND THE SPIRITUAL ARE ONE
Doctrine and Covenants 78:13–14; Moses 2:27–28	Doctrine and Covenants 104:15; John 10:10; Matthew 28:18; Colossians 2:6–10	Doctrine and Covenants 29:34; Alma 34:20–25

“And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this . . . path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save. . . . Ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ.”

2 NEPHI 31:19–20

“The Lord cares enough about us to give us direction for serving and the opportunity for developing self-reliance. His principles are consistent and never changing.”

MARVIN J. ASHTON,
“Give with Wisdom That They May Receive with Dignity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 91

LETTER OF COMPLETION

I, _____, have participated in a self-reliance group provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and have fulfilled the requirements necessary for completion as follows:

I attended at least 10 of the 12 meetings.

I completed all 12 principles and taught them to my family.

I completed a service activity.

I have practiced and built a foundation of skills, principles, and habits for self-reliance. I will continue to use these throughout my life.

Participant's name

Participant's signature

Date

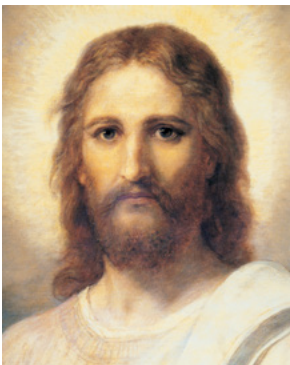
I certify that this participant has completed the requirements listed above.

Facilitator's name

Facilitator's signature

Date

Note: A certificate from LDS Business College may be issued at a later date by the stake or district self-reliance committee.



WILL YOU CONTINUE YOUR PATH TO SELF-RELIANCE?

“Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?
Verily I say unto you, even as I am.”

3 Nephi 27:27



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Self-Reliance Services
PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND

