



strengthening
our home
and family

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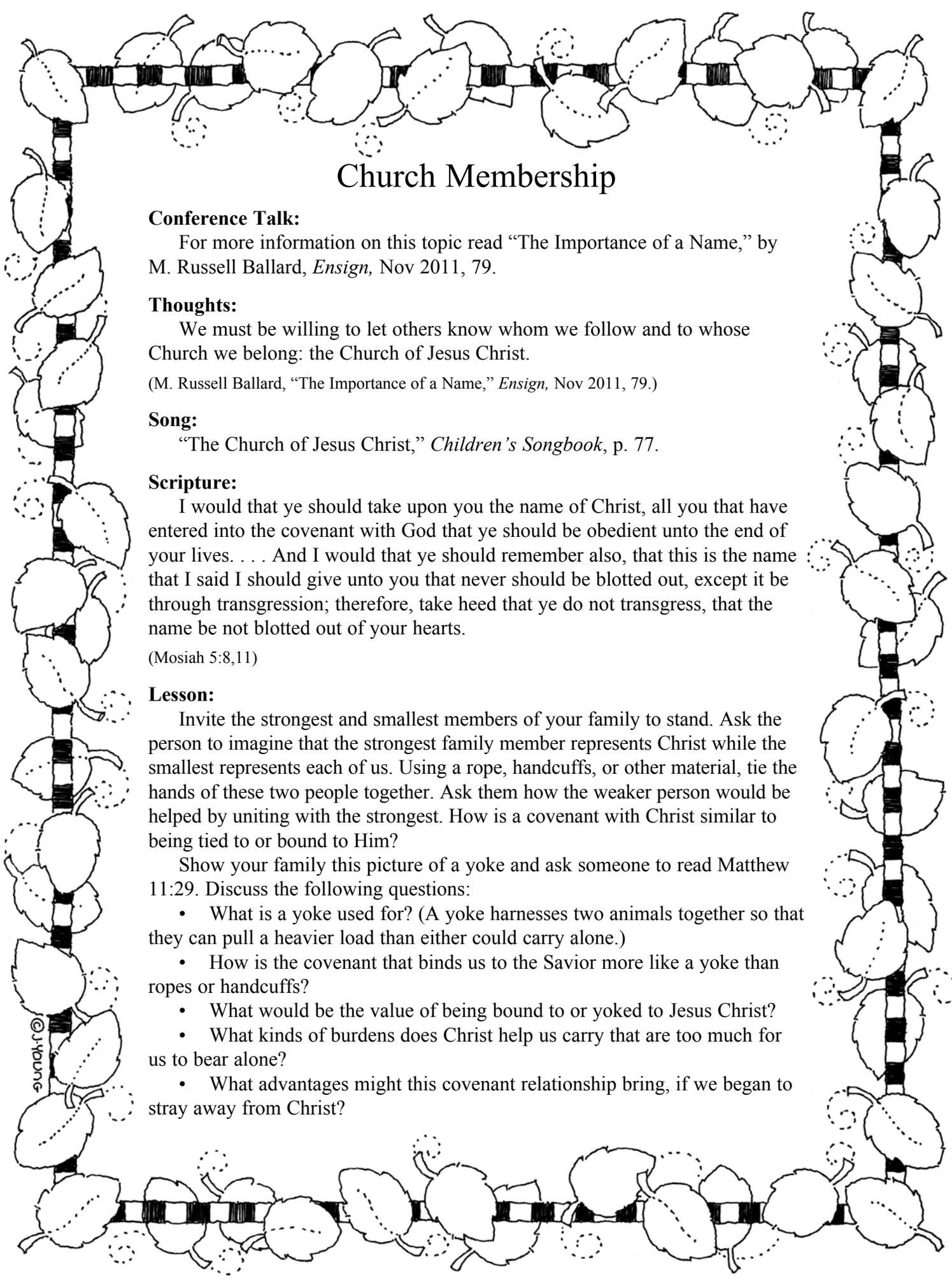
Family Home Evening Materials

Theme: Church Membership

Packet #040212

5 tips for successful Family Home Evenings

- 1. Pray.** Pray about the needs of your family as you consider topics for home evenings, and pray as you prepare.
- 2. Prioritize.** Make Family Home Evening a priority; learn to say no to other activities.
- 3. Involvement.** Involve everyone in the family; help little children take part.
- 4. Commitment.** Be committed and be consistent. Set a designated time and stick to it. Holding Family Home Evening on a weekly basis takes dedication and planning on the part of all family members.
- 5. Relax** and enjoy it. The most important thing your children will remember is the spirit they feel in your family home evenings and activities. Be sure the atmosphere is one of love, understanding, and enjoyment.



Church Membership

Conference Talk:

For more information on this topic read “The Importance of a Name,” by M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, Nov 2011, 79.

Thoughts:

We must be willing to let others know whom we follow and to whose Church we belong: the Church of Jesus Christ.

(M. Russell Ballard, “The Importance of a Name,” *Ensign*, Nov 2011, 79.)

Song:

“The Church of Jesus Christ,” *Children’s Songbook*, p. 77.

Scripture:

I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives. . . . And I would that ye should remember also, that this is the name that I said I should give unto you that never should be blotted out, except it be through transgression; therefore, take heed that ye do not transgress, that the name be not blotted out of your hearts.

(Mosiah 5:8,11)

Lesson:

Invite the strongest and smallest members of your family to stand. Ask the person to imagine that the strongest family member represents Christ while the smallest represents each of us. Using a rope, handcuffs, or other material, tie the hands of these two people together. Ask them how the weaker person would be helped by uniting with the strongest. How is a covenant with Christ similar to being tied to or bound to Him?

Show your family this picture of a yoke and ask someone to read Matthew 11:29. Discuss the following questions:

- What is a yoke used for? (A yoke harnesses two animals together so that they can pull a heavier load than either could carry alone.)
- How is the covenant that binds us to the Savior more like a yoke than ropes or handcuffs?
- What would be the value of being bound to or yoked to Jesus Christ?
- What kinds of burdens does Christ help us carry that are too much for us to bear alone?
- What advantages might this covenant relationship bring, if we began to stray away from Christ?

- According to Mosiah 5:15, what is the ultimate blessing to those who choose to be bound to Jesus Christ?

(Dennis H. Leavitt and Richard O. Christensen, *Scripture Study for Latter-day Saint Families: The Book of Mormon*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], p. 121.)

Story:

The morning I left for Ha'apai [Tonga] the [mission] president said, "We have one hundred membership cards of lost and unknown people from Ha'apai that have been in the office for a long time, so we are going to send them to Salt Lake City."

I asked, "What do you mean lost and unknown? There isn't anyone lost and unknown in Ha'apai."

He replied, "Well, here are one hundred membership cards that no one seems to know about. Do you know any of them?"

I looked and could identify no one. I asked if, before sending them to Salt Lake City, he could give me a couple of months to see if I could find them. He agreed.

I returned to Ha'apai. Even though my back was still hurting some, I was feeling much better, especially knowing there wasn't anything seriously wrong.

Over the next few months we asked everyone we could about the people whose names were on the "lost and unknown" cards. One of the problems at that time with records in Tonga was that people often changed their names. I used to get after them for changing their names, and they would always come back to me and say, "Do you palangis die with the same name you are born with?"

"Yes," I said. Then I explained how for the records of the Church that is the best thing. They looked at me in disbelief and said, "Then you don't progress at all through life?"

At first I did not understand, but they explained that in their culture, when they changed their attitude or position or proved themselves in life, they changed their name as a sign of their new situation. They would quote from the Old Testament and show how Abram's name was changed to Abraham, Sariah to Sarah, and Jacob to Israel. They used many examples in the Old Testament and explained that when you do something, proving yourself in a certain way, then you change your name accordingly. They seemed to feel that was the pattern God followed.

They pointed out that our wives take on them the family name of their husbands and that all the faithful will take on them the name of Christ. I couldn't answer much. They continued explaining that according to their custom, if you die with the same name you were given at birth, it is a sign of failure in life. Their arguments reinforced my feeling that to understand Tonga, you must understand the Old Testament.

Most of their examples came from the Old Testament, but they also used examples from the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, such as Saul becoming Paul, the Lamanites becoming Anti-Nephi-Lehis, and King Benjamin giving his people a new name when they changed their hearts.

They used other more obscure references that I had never heard of before, but that to them were significant. This may be one of the reasons Tongans take to temple work so naturally. Their kings are given new names when they become king (as is often done with English and other kings). There is so much similarity between the Old Testament, the temple, and the Tongan culture that I am convinced they are of the blood of Israel, their forefathers had the truth and had temples, and at one time they understood correct gospel principles. An outsider may not think so, but I have no question.

We continued searching and asking questions about the "lost and unknown people" everywhere we went. Even though there were more than fifteen thousand people in Ha'apai, everyone knew everyone or at least could make a connection very quickly. When there are not a lot of material things to take your time and attention, you tend to concentrate more on what you do have, such as families, friends, and relationships. All we had to do was talk to enough people and before long we found, or accounted

for, ninety-nine out of those one hundred. Most of them were still in Ha'apai. Several had died or had moved, and many had changed names, but they were all real people and they were there. It was one of the most fascinating detective adventures I had ever had.

We found many people to teach as we contacted them asking about these cards. We finally got down to the last membership card, which seemed to be the biggest puzzle of all. We thought ninety-nine out of one hundred was pretty good, but still felt like trying to make it a perfect job and find all one hundred.

One day we were on a boat that we seldom used to go to another island. Most of the time we used our own sailboat, but often it was in such bad shape that we could not use it and had to take passage on other boats. As we traveled, we talked about the person on that last card. The membership cards at that time gave a lot of information, such as who baptized them, who their father and mother were, and the like. When I mentioned the name of the Elder who had baptized this "missing" person, I noticed out of the corner of my eye the captain sort of ducking his head. I went back by the rudder and talked to him—sure enough, he was the man. He had been baptized long ago, which was the last he had to do with the Church. But when the Elder's name who baptized him was mentioned, it brought back a distant memory of that baptism and he responded. The captain had changed his name since then, and no one had any idea he was a member.

Things are gradually changing in Tonga now, as they realize the need to consistently use the same name in issuing birth certificates and passports for international travel, among other reasons. I'm sure this is more convenient, but I'm not sure that it indicates progress.

Most of the people we located came back into activity, but some did not. I was convinced then, and still am now, that there is no such thing as a lost and unknown person in the Church, especially in Tonga. There are only "unidentified people," and with effort they can all be found.

(John H. Groberg, *The Other Side of Heaven*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993].)

Activity:

Fold a paper into thirds, with the folds running horizontally across the paper. The first player draws a head and neck in the first section without permitting the others to see what he has drawn. He then folds the paper and passes it to the next person. They draw the body and trunk. The paper is again folded and passed for the next player to draw the legs and feet. After the "work of art" has been completed, the paper is unfolded and the creation is put on display.

Explain that when the church is not organized properly it might "go all to pieces."

(Alma Heaton, *The LDS Game Book*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1968], p.52.)

Refreshment

Popcorn Nut Crunch

Makes 12 servings

3 quarts popped corn

1 1/3 cups pecan halves

2/3 cup whole almonds (blanched or raw)

1/2 cup light corn syrup

1 1/3 cups sugar

1 cup butter

1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar

1 tablespoon vanilla

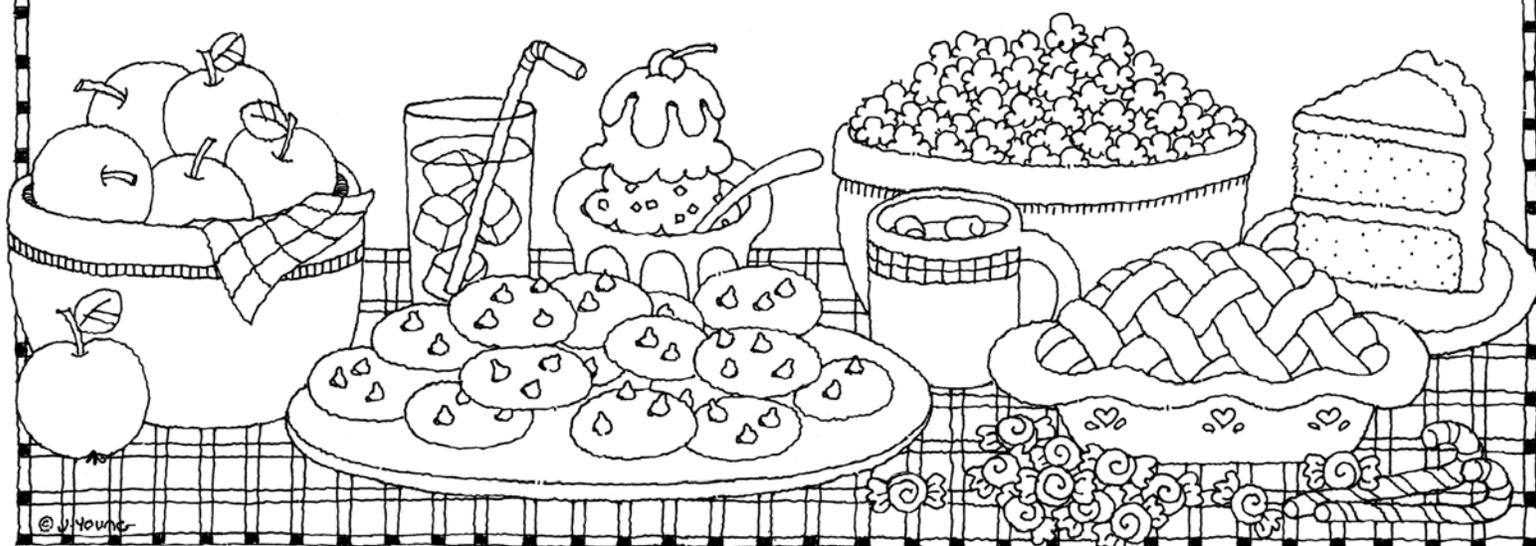
1 teaspoon baking soda

4 cups miniature marshmallows, frozen

Butter 2 cookie sheets.

Mix popcorn, pecans, and almonds in a large bowl or pan; set aside. Combine corn syrup, sugar, butter, and cream of tartar in a heavy saucepan. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and maintain a steady boil for 10 minutes, until mixture reaches hard-ball stage, 260 degrees F. (when dropped in cold water, mixture forms a hard ball that is difficult to mold when removed from water); remove from heat. Stir in vanilla and baking soda. Pour over popcorn and nuts, stirring to coat evenly. Add frozen marshmallows and continue stirring until mixture is evenly coated with syrup. Spread on buttered cookie sheets to cool. Break into chunks and store in an airtight container.

(*Lion House Cookies and Sweets*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011], p. 122.)



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