

## **An Invitation to the Rising Generation from Elder Bednar (Oct 2011)**

I now invite the attention of the young women, young men, and children of the rising generation as I emphasize the importance of the Spirit of Elijah in your lives today. My message is intended for the entire Church in general—but for you in particular.

Many of you may think family history work is to be performed primarily by older people. But I know of no age limit described in the scriptures or guidelines announced by Church leaders restricting this important service to mature adults. You are sons and daughters of God, children of the covenant, and builders of the kingdom. You need not wait until you reach an arbitrary age to fulfill your responsibility to assist in the work of salvation for the human family.

The Lord has made available in our day remarkable resources that enable you to learn about and love this work that is sparked by the Spirit of Elijah. For example, FamilySearch is a collection of records, resources, and services easily accessible with personal computers and a variety of handheld devices, designed to help people discover and document their family history. These resources also are available in the family history centers located in many of our Church buildings throughout the world.

It is no coincidence that FamilySearch and other tools have come forth at a time when young people are so familiar with a wide range of information and communication technologies. Your fingers have been trained to text and tweet to accelerate and advance the work of the Lord—not just to communicate quickly with your friends. The skills and aptitude evident among many young people today are a preparation to contribute to the work of salvation.

I invite the young people of the Church to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. I encourage you to study, to search out your ancestors, and to prepare yourselves to perform proxy baptisms in the house of the Lord for *your* kindred dead (see D&C 124:28–36). And I urge you to help other people identify their family histories.

As you respond in faith to this invitation, your hearts shall turn to the fathers. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be implanted in your hearts. Your patriarchal blessing, with its declaration of lineage, will link you to these fathers and be more meaningful to you. Your love and gratitude for your ancestors will increase. Your testimony of and conversion to the Savior will become deep and abiding. And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary. As you

participate in and love this holy work, you will be safeguarded in your youth and throughout your lives.

Parents and leaders, please help your children and youth to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. But do not overly program this endeavor or provide too much detailed information or training. Invite young people to explore, to experiment, and to learn for themselves (see Joseph Smith—History 1:20). Any young person can do what I am suggesting, using the modules available at [lds.org/familyhistoryyouth](https://lds.org/familyhistoryyouth). Aaronic Priesthood quorum and Young Women class presidencies can play an important role in helping all youth become acquainted with these basic resources. Young people increasingly need to be learners who act and thereby receive additional light and knowledge by the power of the Holy Ghost—and not merely passive students who primarily are acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:26).

Parents and leaders, you will stand all amazed at how rapidly your children and the youth of the Church become highly skilled with these tools. In fact, you will learn valuable lessons from these young people about effectively using these resources. The youth can offer much to older individuals who are uncomfortable with or intimidated by technology or are unfamiliar with FamilySearch. You also will count your many blessings as young people devote more time to family history work and temple service and less time to video games, surfing the Internet, and Facebooking.

D&C 128:

22 Brethren, shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. <sup>a</sup>[Courage](#), brethren; and on, on to the victory!

24 Behold, the great <sup>a</sup>[day](#) of the Lord is at hand; and who can <sup>b</sup>[abide](#) the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appeareth? For he is like a <sup>c</sup>[refiner's](#)<sup>d</sup>[fire](#), and like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a <sup>e</sup>[refiner](#) and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of <sup>f</sup>[Levi](#), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an <sup>g</sup>[offering](#) in righteousness. Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the <sup>h</sup>[records](#) of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptation.