

"The Family is Central to the Father's Plan"

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

followHIM: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Wednesday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions

Part 1:

Can the Family Proclamation become a lifeline in seasons of loneliness, trauma, or family struggle? Sister Carol Costley shares how its doctrines shaped her journey from Jamaican-London immigrant roots to addiction-recovery therapist, showing how divine identity and Christ's healing can transform any family story.

Part 2:

Sister Carol Costley continues to show how the Family Proclamation isn't a blueprint for the perfect family but a lifeline for real ones, where God works through rebellious children, humbled parents, and a covenant community that refuses to give up on each other.

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Part 1 -

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Part 2 -

- 00:00 Part 2 - Sister Carol Costley
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Biographical Information:



Carol Costley is a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother whose faith as a daughter of God guides her life. She has a strong passion for family and enjoys connecting with loved ones around the world. A former member of the General Young Women's Advisory Council, she currently works as a therapist specializing in addiction recovery. In her free time, Carol loves to travel, garden, cook, and host holiday gatherings.

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:00:03	He said that that was the worst thing that could have ever happened, and he got why his mom wanted to support him to do what he wanted because he was doing so much for her, but it turned out to be detrimental.
Hank Smith:	00:00:19	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my co-host John Bytheway, who loves wholesome recreational activities. John, you and your family, you love recreation.
John Bytheway:	00:00:35	Yeah. And look at the word. To recreate. I think it's a great word.
Hank Smith:	00:00:40	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:00:40	We like to recreate.
Hank Smith:	00:00:42	Recreate family relationships. Right?
John Bytheway:	00:00:45	Yeah, it's a good way to put it.
Hank Smith:	00:00:47	John. We are privileged to be joined today by Sister Carol Costley. Carol, welcome to followHIM. Thanks for being here.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:00:54	Thank you for having me. I'm excited to be here.
Hank Smith:	00:00:58	John, when I asked Carol to come on the show, her first response was, I am doubting my abilities, and I said, oh, welcome to the club. You'll fit right in with John and I. We doubt our abilities frequently. John, we are coming to a close for our Doctrine and Covenants Come, Follow Me year. We're gonna look at the Proclamation to the World on the Family today. I know you love it. Tell me what thoughts have been on your mind.

John Bytheway:	00:01:24	I didn't intend for this to be a pun, but my first thought was this really hits home. It affects all of us, and it's about all of us. It's so applicable and so important, and it's not long. It's some beautiful and some powerful paragraphs. Really hits home.
Hank Smith:	00:01:43	We are at a special time this year because we hit the 30th anniversary of the proclamation. Time goes by pretty fast. I remember I was in high school. I was just beginning a senior year of high school when this proclamation, President Hinckley read this proclamation, and I remember not being overly shocked by anything in the proclamation and I looked around I think and went, okay, that's what proclamations are that say things that are obvious to everyone. Since then, the world has changed, and the proclamation has held steady. Carol, as you've been preparing for today, what are you hoping to do? Where are we gonna go?
Sister Carol Costley:	00:02:24	What excites me about the Family Proclamation to the World is the privilege, share my testimony and celebrate the power of the doctrine that's within that. When President Hinckley first read that proclamation, I was listening to the meeting, it deeply resonated with me because it took me back to a time when I was investigating the church in the seventies. I remember hearing marriage is ordained of God and family is central to his plan, and I thought about my family. I had a large family. There were seven kids. That was very unusual for London, where I was born and raised. Really resonated with me, but at the time I was 35 years old. I was single. Yearning to be a wife and a mother. I wanted to be that so bad, but I had watched my twenties go by. I had watched my thirties start slipping by.
	00:03:21	I felt little hope that I would find a companion. I often felt invisible. Yet it was in those moments of doubt that I really came to understand. Within that proclamation, there were some things that really stood out, was that heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were aware of me. That knowledge anchored me. I was their child. I was the sister to Jesus Christ. I was a part of a heavenly family. The proclamation then became my compass. It was restorative to me in terms of my confidence and the promises that were made to me in my patriarchal blessing. It was a truly sweet experience. To hear that and to have that confirmed from the pulpit from a prophet of God.
Hank Smith:	00:04:14	1995, oh, life goes by in a blink. I rarely comment on things like this John, Carol does not look like she could have even been alive in the seventies, let alone been investigating the church. It must have been in the premortal life. She was investigating the church.

Sister Carol Costley:	00:04:34	Well, thank you. Yeah, I was premortal at the time.
Hank Smith:	00:04:38	Yes. John, tell us about Carol. You and she have worked together before.
John Bytheway:	00:04:44	Yes. Carol Costley was a member of the Young Women General Advisory Council. We've explained this before, but they used to call it the General Board. We have a council system in the church, which is beautiful, and I think they got closer to what it really is. The Young Women General Advisory Council, would that have been with Sister Cordon at the time?
Sister Carol Costley:	00:05:05	With Sister Cordon, yes.
Hank Smith:	00:05:07	Wow.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:05:08	Great experience.
Hank Smith:	00:05:09	She is our guest next week, so that's
Sister Carol Costley:	00:05:13	Oh, wonderful.
Hank Smith:	00:05:13	That'll be fun.
John Bytheway:	00:05:14	Yeah. We'll tell her you said hi.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:05:16	Please do.
John Bytheway:	00:05:18	Sister Costley is a wife, mother, grandmother. She's a grandmother Hank.
Hank Smith:	00:05:23	No way.
John Bytheway:	00:05:24	Whose faith as a daughter of God guides her life. She has a strong passion for family, enjoys connecting with loved ones around the world. We've already heard about London, former member of the General Young Women Advisory Council. She currently works as a therapist specializing in addiction recovery. In her free time she loves to travel, garden, cook, host holiday gatherings and jump on the podcast with John and Hank. That's our favorite part. Thank you so much for being with us. We did a training together. Where was that out in...
Sister Carol Costley:	00:05:59	Taylorsville. I think it was Taylorsville.
John Bytheway:	00:06:00	Yeah. Yeah, so we go way back, so we're old friends. The way that you received the proclamation, the way you described that

		is beautiful. I had been engaged for 22 days when that was given. I got engaged on September 1st of '95. I was like phew. You said you were into your thirties when you got married. Tell us more about that.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:06:26	I was actually 40 when I got married. Was truly a celebration, not just for me but for my parents. I remember I took my husband Jerry home to meet my parents. They were now living in Florida in Orlando. My dad didn't even ask a simple question of him. He was just great. Good. I'm happy.
Hank Smith:	00:06:51	Well. We're blessed that your story led you here. Let's read from the Come, Follow Me manual, and then John and I are ready to learn from you. The lesson this week is called, The Family is Central to the Creator's Plan and the manual starts out like this: Even before we were born, we were part of a family. The family of our heavenly parents. That pattern continues on earth. Families here at their best are meant to echo the perfect pattern in heaven. Of course, there are no guarantees that earthly families will be ideal or even functional, but as President Henry B. Eyring taught, families give God's children the best chance to be welcomed to the world with the only love on earth that comes close to what we felt in heaven, parental love. Knowing that families are imperfect and subject to attacks from the adversary, God sent his Beloved Son to redeem us and heal our families, and he sent us latter-day prophets with a proclamation to defend and strengthen families. If we follow the prophets and put faith in the Savior, even though mortal families fall short of the divine ideal, there's hope for families on earth and in heaven. Wonderful. Okay, Carol, where do we wanna go first?
Sister Carol Costley:	00:08:04	A big part of it is just embracing your identity as a child of God. That made the proclamation so much more palatable to me. When I recognized that I was a daughter of God, I needed a proclamation in my life. I realized that I possessed the strength to conquer the fear that I was feeling at that time in my life. I also realized that even though I felt like my life was passing by, that God had a plan for me. Knowing that this family pattern was established before we came here, it really solidified to me that I am a part of this plan. I belong to both a heavenly family and I belong to an earthly family as well. I was surrounded by loving parents. I had siblings and nieces and nephews at the time. I knew that I could invest in those relationships even though I didn't have a family of my own.
	00:09:03	I was a permanent member of my Heavenly Father's family. Nothing could ever change that. I was cherished by him. I'm

cherished by him today. Having that understanding about identity really was foundational for me. As I tried to receive the plan, the Family Proclamation and I tried to receive this plan for living even though I couldn't see myself having my own family here, I knew that Heavenly Father had a design for my life and I was willing to accept it knowing that I was his daughter, that he would care for me and make sure that I was okay.

John Bytheway: 00:09:45 Beautiful. I love that you're starting maybe where President Nelson would've started. Identity, child of God, child of the covenant, disciple of Christ. Remember Elder Neal A. Maxwell once said, we are not an accidental arrangement of atoms.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:10:04 My hope for those who are listening today is that they'll feel inspired by the truth. That your unique circumstances are essential part of your personal journey to come to know the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I didn't really think that a personal journey should be so different than anyone else's. As I read through the Proclamation that I came to understand, my journey will never look like anyone else's because it is designed for me. I hope that people feel their journey is designed for them. As a person of color, as I navigated our church world, there were some hurtful things that happened, some things that I felt pain over. The beauty of it was recognizing I was a child of God. He cared about me and that's what sustained me when things like that happened is to have that firm knowledge that I was his daughter.

00:11:07 I felt a lot of strength from that. None of us are left overlooked. Each of us make courageous and eternally significant choices because we have bodies. We made that choice to come to earth so we have bodies. I am a child of God. I am a child of the covenant and I am his disciple. When President Nelson made those statements, it really echoed in my heart. No one is outside looking in. We are all his spirit children and all essential members of his plan. In my patriarchal blessing, it reminds me that I'm part of this and I do belong. That was also another place where I went to confirm that identity was my patriarchal blessing because it communicated to me where I fit. I hope those listening will understand that no matter what their circumstances are, they fit. I work every day with people who are suffering with addiction and they feel the shame of their habit or their disease. They feel like they don't fit. I wish many times that I could testify to them of their divine nature. When I have the opportunity to do that, when that's what someone's asking for, it changes lives. It helps people.

Hank Smith:	00:12:35	To know who they are, who you really are. Carol, I recently was asked to come on a sister podcast of ours called The Come Back Podcast with Ashly Stone. They're doing a great job over there and Ashly said, Hey, why don't you tell us a little bit about your childhood? So I did. I did not think that it would get the reaction that it did. I had a different childhood than what I thought was a typical Latter-day Saint childhood. We just had a quite a bit of abuse and problems and the police came to our house multiple times. I told some of those stories and I was amazed at how many people sent messages saying, I had a similar childhood. Thank you for validating that. I'm really grateful you started out this way, which is, look, we all want the ideal. Wouldn't it be great if we all had this really ideal situation and some people have it and you shouldn't feel bad if you have an an ideal situation.
	00:13:35	If you don't have an ideal situation, the Lord is making something of that. He's going to use that. I told Ashly about some of the coping strategies that I developed to deal with my childhood home and how those have become both strengths and weaknesses in my adult life. Things I've had to learn to manage, get those things to stand down or even use them in my career. I think I can testify to what you're saying that the Lord designs and allows our lives to play out the way they do for specific reasons. Tailored you said to us.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:14:15	Yeah. What's really interesting was one of the things that I prayed for more than anything else is to be sealed in the temple. I remember when I was investigating the church, I became interested because of the Osmond family. They did a royal command performance in London. I saw this group of singing boys. They were kind of cute. I just fell in love with how they looked, went on to read articles. In one of the articles it said that they were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They had eternal families and eternal relationships, and because they were from a large family, I really felt like my family fit and I thought it would be a great way to bring my family together. At the time my father was working in the United States. He had left our home when I was 10 years of age and we were not united as a family until I was 16.
	00:15:09	From age 10 to 16, my father worked in the United States. He wanted to move here because he felt like we would have a better life, better opportunity and able to have our kids go to college. All of those things that he wanted for us. He moved here and he had to work and establish himself so he could then send for his family, sent for us in 1976. The reason why I share

that story is because I really wanted my family together. I wanted to feel the love and the support of having both parents in the home and to have my father gone it's very, very difficult. And I remember, especially from my brothers and my one brother would cry himself to sleep at night. He was just a little boy and I remember the difficulty that he had in that struggle missing our dad, they loved us and they thought that this was the best plan for our family was to immigrate to the United States so that we could have more opportunities.

Hank Smith: 00:16:14 That must have been heart wrenching to have that absence.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:16:18 My mother was a nurse at the time and so she did a lot of shift work. We spent a lot of time with the neighbors when we got home from school and when the older kids came, then us little kids could come home. It was a very difficult time. As we study the Family Proclamation, we need to center our thoughts on Jesus Christ because families are a part of the design and a pattern established before we were born. Because Christ is the heart of the plan, it's critical that we know who He is and how we can change and grow with his help, especially when we need healing. That time in my life I needed healing and the church fell into my lap. I remember going to my very first meeting, walking around and we met in an old hall. We had to clean out the beer bottles and the cigarettes and everything before we met, so there was that smell of alcoholic beverages that were consumed the night before and the cigarette smoke. That's where we met and had church. I remember looking around seeing this multicultural crowd sitting learning about Savior, and my heart was so full, I just felt like I was home. I really couldn't explain why I had that feeling, but I was just 11 years old and I felt like I was home. It was just a sweet experience. Whether a family is in an ideal situation or a family that's adapting as we strive to follow Jesus Christ, our families can become sanctuaries and places where we can experience growth, healing and lasting joy.

John Bytheway: 00:18:11 I love what you're saying here. Isn't it wonderful that the Book of Mormon starts out with a family that really struggled to the point where Lehi has to say, oh, Jacob, my firstborn that I'm sorry about the rudeness of your brother and there's opposition. You can have a Nephi, you can have a Laman. Was it Elder Stevenson that talked about the photo that's on Facebook and then you could say, now let me stop and tell the backstory to every one of these and what they're going through and what their struggles have been and what their crises have been.

Hank Smith: 00:18:47 In about a month or two, John, we're gonna be in the book of Genesis. You want to talk about a family that struggles, right?

		And this is God's chosen family to bless all the families of the earth and they can't get their act together. They can't bless their own family, and yet he's committed to using them.
John Bytheway:	00:19:02	I love what Carol said there. She found that center of Christ in there. That's what any struggling family and even families that are doing well, they're gonna need it someday. We're all gonna need that. The healing, you called it teaching, preaching, we know that part about Jesus, and healing. A lot of people taught and preached and had philosophies throughout history, but one of 'em was an amazing healer.
Hank Smith:	00:19:29	Was it President Hunter said, whatever Jesus lays his hands upon will live. Let him lay his hands on your family. It will live. Carol, I'd be interested to hear just a little bit more of your background. How did London become to United States to Utah?
Sister Carol Costley:	00:19:47	My parents were born in Jamaica. At the time that they were living there, it was very difficult to find employment. Jamaica was British rule and there was a lot of people that came from a lot of the Caribbean islands to England and there was a place in Essex where there was a house that a lot of the Jamaicans would go and they would try and find work and I remember my mom's sister came first and she was working as a seamstress in a factory and my mom came over to England to do that same work. Then ended up going to school and becoming a nurse by working at this job and getting the money to do that. She did secretarial first and after secretarial she became a nurse. Coming to England just seemed like it was great chance to change lives and that's when my parents met.
	00:20:45	They met in this apartment house where they were staying and married and my sister was born. Dad had four children that he left in Jamaica. We were not raised with all of my siblings, so they were my half siblings. Two of those half siblings came to live with us. After we got established in England, there were seven kids in that family. Later on I met my other two siblings, so our family situation was not ideal either. There were a lot of struggles and challenges that my parents faced when we were in England in bringing two new children into a family of five children who were already established as siblings. We had some challenges with children feeling like they didn't fit or that they missed their birth moms that were in another country, and so we had some challenges around those trying to help those kids feel like they belonged in our family.
	00:21:51	I felt like my mom did a terrific job as she tried to work with those children and that's how we started. And then my father

had a trip to America, ended up working in engineering firm that they would service the huge heating systems that were part of those big skyscrapers and they were trying to figure out a part or a piece of equipment to fix this one boiler and my dad was able to create that piece and they offered him a job. That's how I understand he got a job working for this firm and then came home and told my mom that he was moving to the United States. She was not very happy about it, but went through with him doing that. That was a challenge for our family when my dad moved. Goal was to bring us there with him at some point, but it took six years for us to be back together again.

Hank Smith: 00:22:51 What happened in New York? Tell us a little bit about that. How old were you?

Sister Carol Costley: 00:22:55 I was 16, so not a great time to move. I remember going to high school and I had to take the bus in, remember trying to get on the bus. I was trying to get the coinage right to drop in the fair and I had to come up with 35 cents. It wasn't making sense to me. I had to flip the coin over to look to see what the amount was. I remember I was taking a very long time and the bus driver looked at me and he says, what are you some kind of idiot? I was, I'm just not from your country. There were a lot of things that were new to me that I didn't understand. Every morning now I counted out 35 cents before I got on that bus. And New York when I went to high school, I don't think that the kids had ever heard a person with an English accent who was Black.

00:23:53 I will never forget I was walking down the hall, how we say excuse me, we don't say, excuse me in England, we say, I beg your pardon, at the time. And so I said to this one girl, beg your pardon, could you tell me where room such and such is? And she looked at me and she goes, girl, what is your problem? And I was like, um, I just need to find the room. And she just looked at me and thought I was putting on airs or acting or that wasn't my real voice. So I got a lot of harassment from the kids and I remember walking home from school with a group of kids following behind me threatening to beat me up. This happened for about six months. Finally, one day, they were calling me names saying that they were gonna beat me up, so I stopped, dropped my backpack on the floor and I said, okay, let's go.

00:24:51 And they all ran away and I thought, why didn't I do that six months ago? After I did that, they stopped bothering me and didn't follow me home anymore and I started making friends and I think I joined the all culture club and it represented 70 different countries that kids had come from. I got involved in

		the drama club and I think that I finally found a place to be. I was desperate for Sundays and weekdays when I could go to the youth program, desperate for Sundays. I would count the day to Sunday so I could go to church and be with my friends. They were my lifeline. That ward embraced me, my siblings, we just loved it there. I came alive. I was me when I was in that ward. I made some dear friends and we're still friends to this day. The Watkins family used to take me to church every Sunday and every activity.
	00:25:53	I don't think that we ever missed a Sunday. They were diligent in their efforts bringing my sister and I on board. It was because of that that my testimony strengthened. I still go to lunch once a year with Allison in January. She was one of the kids that was closest to my age. I always remind her that if it were not for them, I just don't think I would be here. I really don't think that I would've survived without the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you don't have a family, sometimes your ward family can be that family, can be that example, can offer you the healing and the comfort that you need when times are hard. It was a joy being in that ward. It was the Westchester Ward. I still have a picture of my youth group in my office that I wish I would've brought today because we had some incredible youth in that ward that helped me to feel like I belonged to God's family.
Hank Smith:	00:27:00	That's how it's designed to be, isn't it? Wow.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:27:03	It is. All wards should be like this ward that I experienced as a youth.
John Bytheway:	00:27:08	Isn't it amazing how three hours or however many on a Sunday can help you get through the other 140 or whatever?
Hank Smith:	00:27:18	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:27:19	Knowing that's coming and being with those people, that core ward family, that's beautiful and a little heartbreaking to hear of your...
Hank Smith:	00:27:28	Yeah, man.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:27:30	As I look back on it, there is something that is really special and sacred about that time because that was the time that brought me closer to Jesus Christ. That's what makes it sacred and I hear people talking about their missions all the time. It was on my mission that I came to know Jesus Christ. Well, it was in this Westchester Ward that I came to know Jesus Christ and his

personal love and desire for me to succeed. Doors were opened, people were kind. I was able to work a job, babysit, make money and really have an experience that, I learned and watched families have family home evening and different things that my family were not having and sometimes I got to participate in those experiences. Had friends and I would go spend the night at their house and really have a good time. I really felt like the youth, all of them were an integral part of my life and what I was able to become. Cool thing was is that some of their families too were not perfect and were going through struggles and having hard times while others had what appeared to be the ideal situation.

00:28:48 What I would ask for those families who have the ideal situation is to have sensitivity and seek to understand what other people are going through and validate that and not act like it's something that's peculiar or not true because it didn't happen for you. That was something that was really sweet about this ward was that they were so accepting and embraced my sister and I, and I know that my accent probably had a good deal to do with it. We were quite the novelty at the time, but it was a very sweet experience to have that ward family really embrace us and take us under their wings. It was very, very special. Very special experience. I would never change it for the world. I think that my parents as parents didn't anticipate some of the challenges that we were going to encounter. My parents were driven by the deep love for us and they wanted to move us to another country.

00:29:52 However, they were not aware of some of the challenges that were in the community that they moved us to. The community that we moved in had a high rate of drug abuse, which I don't think that they had looked into or found out about. It was a place that we could afford at the time because our money was tied up in another country and you just can't take large sums of money out of the country like that. Our money was tied up, so it was difficult for us. We lived in this little apartment building. We had a beautiful home in London that was all left behind. How people saw us was not what we were used to. They saw us as a family that was struggling and that didn't have much in terms of material goods. Where in London we were a lot better off and so I was so confused about why my parents wanted to move here, but they did their best and the one thing that I knew about my parents, which is why I love to always start reading the Book of Mormon, is when Nephi says, I was born of goodly parents and I really felt like I was born of goodly parents and that they loved me and that they tried their very best with what they had.

	00:31:01	A blessing that I got in my life was having an understanding that my parents against the odds raised us and raised us well. They had struggled in Jamaica and came to the United States and did whatever they could to do the best for us and that was the love that I felt. So in many ways I felt like I was in an ideal situation because I felt love and I felt support even though sometimes the way that my dad would handle things were not always the greatest. He had some habits that made me really sad and one was drinking. He would on the weekends drink. He wasn't always in a good frame of mind. That was very, very difficult to watch my dad succumb to drink and I think that that was his way of coping and dealing with some of the challenges that we were facing as a family.
Hank Smith:	00:31:58	And now you work with those in addiction.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:32:02	I do, and I see some of those challenges and this morning as I was doing a group, we were talking about some of the challenges, some of the shame, some of the guilt that they feel. One of the things that they feel is not being validated, having their circumstances overlooked and not being validated and not getting a second chance once they recover. That is a very big challenge for them. I remember feeling a great deal of compassion for my father as a young girl. I will say I did pour his vodka in the toilet a few times and then played dumb for fear that I'd be killed. I did do that a few times in the hopes that he would quit and he did eventually quit. I think that it was my involvement in the church that fascinated both my parents because they could see how it changed me and my favorite was when my parents sent my little sister who was not a member to BYU.
	00:33:08	They made her move from University of Massachusetts to BYU because they felt like it would be a better option for her, and she did move to Utah. She was baptized. Unfortunately died prematurely while she was in school after experiencing a toxic reaction to medication that she was on and passed away. That was another challenge for our family. When I got the call from the hospital, I remember calling my mother and saying, Pauline is in trouble. She's at the hospital. She was driving in her car and the people behind her said that she clutched her chest and then she was at a traffic light and she was driving in her car. She clutched her chest and fell forward over the steering wheel, so they called 911 and they took her to the hospital. By the time I got there that evening, I found her to be in a very bad situation.
	00:34:11	I felt like she had gone without oxygen for a while because I could see signs of brain damage. It was devastating and I

		remember my family all flew in from London and my parents were in Florida at the time to be by her side, things were gonna change for her. We could tell just by looking at her, we knew that the brain damage was pretty significant. I remember saying to my parents, I'll take care of her. I'll have her move in with me. I'll take care of her. The night that my parents left she passed. I always thought that she didn't wanna pass because my parents were there and when they flew home that night she passed. And it was a priesthood blessing that she received and I remember thinking that she was not gonna make it even though she had the blessing and I remember those that were giving her the blessing stood back and shook their head. We all knew at that moment that it was her time.
Hank Smith:	00:35:18	Oh wow.
John Bytheway:	00:35:19	Everyone's story is so different. You're so full of faith having gone through all of this.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:35:26	When she passed, we were able to do her work. This is why the Family Proclamation has so much significance for my family because we've been able to do the work now for my grandparents, at least my grandmother's, still trying to figure out my grandfathers, but we did the work for my grandfathers and I have two brothers that we are working on doing the work for right now who recently passed as well. It is a document that really inspires me to advocate and defend the family because this is where the nurturing comes, the love comes for many of us. There's always one person when I'm interviewing a client that's coming in for treatment, we do a social assessment and there is always one family member that they talk about that was their lifeline, that was a person that supported and loved them through a particular situation.
	00:36:28	A family is the ideal unit for people to feel that love that they felt in the premortal existence from our heavenly parents. Without a doubt, there is always one person and often it's a grandmother or a single mother or an aunt, whatever our role is in a family, we can have a significant impact on a member. It doesn't matter if it's an ideal situation. The family unit is a pattern that was established before and even if one person keeps that promise or that lifeline with another person, healing can come from those relationships. Like I said, many of my clients, they talk about the one person in their family unit that helped pull them through.
Hank Smith:	00:37:22	Hmm, Carol, wow, you tell us that not all families are the same, and then you tell us your extraordinary story. I think we have

many listeners who will say, oh, she gets it. She gets not having the ideal situation.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:37:43 I highlighted that very first paragraph that says, we the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the creator's plan for the eternal destiny of his children. I love that promise. I love it with all my heart. It lets me know the family that I was born into was my avenue of getting toward the Savior.

John Bytheway: 00:38:17 I remember back in 2017, then Elder Dallin H. Oaks gave a talk called the Plan and the Proclamation. He talked about this. My sense was every word of this, every syllable has been prayed over and pondered. This rises to the level of like a section of the Doctrine and Covenants. When you read it slowly, solemnly proclaim marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. You read it slowly. This is powerful stuff.

Hank Smith: 00:38:52 Just this last general conference, this is Elder Rasband. When I was called to the holy apostleship in 2015, I was advised, it's in quotations, but he doesn't tell us where it comes from. This proclamation is now yours, your name, and then he says pointing to the words Council of the Twelve Apostles is right here. Feel it and teach it like you own it.

John Bytheway: 00:39:21 Here's part of that talk that Elder Dallin H. Oaks gave in October 2017. We felt confirmation and we went to work about this idea for the Proclamation to the World and the Family. He said subjects were identified and discussed by members of the Quorum of the Twelve for nearly a year, language was proposed, reviewed and revised prayerfully. We continually pleaded with the Lord for his inspiration on what we should say and how we should say it. We all learned line upon line, precept upon precept as the Lord has promised. These words are important, the order in which they come is important, and I love the solemnity that that comes with in that first paragraph.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:40:09 I wanna read part of a quote that Dallin H. Oaks from the Quorum of the Twelve said. Parentage defines our eternal potential. That powerful idea is a potent antidepressant. It can strengthen each of us to make righteous choices and to seek the best that is within us. Establish in the mind of a person the powerful idea that he or she is a child of God and you have given self-respect and motivation to move against the problems of life. When I think about the Family Proclamation and it talks about marriage being ordained of God, what incredible things

		can come from that union because of the power that we have to make changes and to motivate our families to help and serve and support them, to teach them. I love the whole idea of the sanctity of a union between a husband and a wife. It is so diminished these days. In Europe so many people live together. I know my family back in England, a lot of them live together. It makes me really nervous for them and for their young families. I love that this is supporting marriage between a man and a woman. How it is a safety net for the children that are born in that union in terms of love and support and their ability to thrive.
Hank Smith:	00:41:42	In fact, later, doesn't the Proclamation say children are entitled. That's not a word you get from the church very often. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony and to be reared by a father and mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. When do you ever really hear that word someone is entitled to something.
Sister Carol Costley:	00:42:06	Very rarely, and so it must be important if it's an entitlement for our children.
Hank Smith:	00:42:12	Carol, I know we want to keep going on the Proclamation here, but I'm interested in your work as a counselor. What effect the family has on a person with an addiction, a problem like that. What have you seen?
Sister Carol Costley:	00:42:29	When they're in a situation that's more ideal and fits with the traditional dynamic that we're talking about here it is one of the most significant and impactful sources of support that a person can have that a family really can be the change agent that that person needs. However, when the family is dysfunctional and there are no individuals that can be identified to offer this child support, then often they derail. They gravitate to tools that are not effective, that are not helpful. They want to drown out their experiences. Sometimes families even use the drugs, introduce their children to the drugs. I've had many situations where people have said, for my 16th birthday, my father took me out and got me some marijuana and we smoked together. I've had people say, my parents said that they would rather that I get high and use drugs in their home so that they can keep me safe.
	00:43:52	Ironically, the safety is not from an external predator. The safety is keeping your child safe from that internal addiction that happens when their lives fall apart and they start overusing that substance. There is an actual physical addiction that comes, that safety that they think that they're providing for the child is false because the problem is the actual drug, so I think that that's

what can happen when things go awry or even when we use our agency to make choices that hurt our families. There's infidelity. There's all kinds of things. Later I have a story from a great friend of mine who went through a situation with infidelity with her husband and him stepping outside of their marriage and the damage that it did. Her family started off in an ideal setting where they met, they fell in love. They got married in the temple and then things fell apart after 28 years. Later on in the Proclamation it actually mentions here the fidelity and the importance of that union.

00:45:04 Our agency can sometimes disrupt lives in ways that we never thought possible. Bringing emotional insecurity and anxiety to our children when we do things that step outside of the bounds of that union that can break hearts and cause significant harm. How we use our agency is critical. We're created in the image of God. We are each beloved spirit sons and daughters of heavenly parents. As such, each of us have a divine nature and destiny and that destiny is eternal. It calls to mind a time that I was working on the Young Women's Advisory Council. We were given the charge to create a new theme. All of us concluded that we wanted the acknowledgement of having heavenly parents. We felt like it was really important for this generation to recognize that they had heavenly parents. If they could understand that identity, then they would have the potential to overcome a lot that might ail them in this life. We really felt like that was an important part of that and as we prayed about it, we felt very strongly that that needed to be a part of that theme for the young women of the church to recognize that they are created in the image of Heavenly Father, that they had parents in the premortal life that love them and cherish them.

John Bytheway: 00:46:38 Carol, why don't you say that first line of the Young Women theme.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:46:44 I am a beloved daughter of heavenly parents with a divine nature and eternal destiny.

John Bytheway: 00:46:50 Yeah, there it is right there.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:46:52 That is key to who we are and to what we can become.

John Bytheway: 00:46:58 I love them both. I love the Aaronic Priesthood Quorum theme. I'm a beloved son of God and he has a work for me to do. It is so empowering. It's not I'm a beloved son of God and he is wondering if I might make any contribution at some point, but it's, I'm a beloved son of God and he has a work for me to do. That's huge. I'm a beloved daughter of heavenly parents with a

divine nature and eternal destiny. I love our youth, I love my kids who have recited these and sometimes don't we all watch them and say, is this going inside? Are you hearing how empowering this is? When you say those words?

Sister Carol Costley: 00:47:40 It actually goes inside and I can attest for that with my own children, hearing them recite a theme that I was a part of. I remember the very first time when I stood in my ward and I heard the young women recite that theme, knowing some of the struggles and some of the situations that they have come from and that they were in, including my own daughter. I knew that the theme was inspired and I knew that God worked through us to develop this theme and I can take no credit for it because I had beautiful sisters working alongside of me as well, helping with that. I really feel like this was the message that the Lord needed the youth to hear. President Nelson has also shared this message, not just with the youth but with the young adults as well. It's pretty incredible that this is repeating itself so frequently for our youth today, and I often looked at the proclamation and thought that this was for the women and the men of the church, but it really is for everybody to understand and to know and to implement in their lives.

Hank Smith: 00:48:55 Carol, you talk about those you work with and how their situation can either really be a blessing to them or really, really harm them. There's an old talk that I like to read. It's called Jesus the Perfect Leader by Spencer W. Kimball. It's not very long, but I've always remembered this piece. I think you show this kind of compassion because you work with those who are struggling with addiction. This is what President Kimball said. Jesus saw sin as wrong, but also was able to see sin as springing from deep and unmet needs on the part of the sinner. Oftentimes we see sin and we think, oh, that's terrible. How could they do that? And here President Kimball says no. Jesus saw deep and unmet needs on the part of the sinner. Carol, that seems to be similar to what you were saying. There's a lot going on in this person's life.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:50:02 There is an awful lot going on in most of our lives and there are things that we don't see. I tell you that I was talking to a young man one time. He had mentioned that growing up he was raised by a single mother and she did the best that she could. One of the challenges that he experienced with his mom was that her reward for him because he watched the kids, he did a lot of the house cleaning, while she was at work and when she came home, he had free reign to do whatever he wanted. He talked about the fact that having that free reign to do whatever I wanted was something that was harmful to me in the long run

because she was so appreciative of what I was doing at home that she gave me latitude to come and go as I pleased and wasn't always worried about where I was because I was doing so well in other aspects, not understanding or realizing some of the dangers that he was facing on the outside.

00:51:07 He said, I wish there were times that my mother would say no. I remember having this conversation with my children that if they were ever in a situation where they felt uncomfortable or they needed to get out of, they can call me on the phone and I will tell them no, that they have to come home. I've had my kids do that a couple of times where they've called me and I've said, no, this is your mom. You have to come home and I have been an escape for them to come home. It's really important that we recognize as parents, and this is something that my parents didn't recognize. They didn't have an understanding of what was happening. There is a book by a Chinese general. His name was Sun Tzu and it's the Art of War. He talks about how important it is to know your enemy.

00:52:04 A lot of times we don't wanna talk about Satan. We don't want to talk about some of the behaviors or the tricks that he can get up to, but I think our kids need to be wise to that. What protects them is also having a knowledge of what the enemy could potentially do to derail them. I think that we recognize as part of this proclamation that not everybody has an ideal situation. There are things that can happen that can derail them. I love the way that President Kimball talks about it because it really isn't something that this young man understood that would be detrimental to him in the future. He didn't understand the impact of the drugs and the alcohol and how it would change the trajectory of his life. Instead, he thought, I've got this freedom, but looking back as an adult, he said that that was the worst thing that could have ever happened, and he got why his mom wanted to support him to do what he wanted because he was doing so much for her, but it turned out to be detrimental. As parents we really need to have the big picture. This is what the proclamation is teaching us. We need to have the big picture. We need to know the ideal, but we also need to know what Satan can do to thwart the ideal.

Hank Smith: 00:53:28 John, I'm guessing you thought of the same thing I did. If we want our children to know the tactics of the adversary, we just need to read the Book of Mormon. They are laid out. If we'll just study, study them. There's seven or eight what you would call antichrists or apostates in the Book of Mormon. Walk through those, each one of those. In my classes, I call it the Antichrist

simulator. You can face an antichrist or the adversary right there in the Book of Mormon over and over as many times as you want, and then when you meet it in real life, it's not that difficult. You've seen it before, yet we don't take advantage of it as parents, of the Book of Mormon like we could.

John Bytheway: 00:54:13 I like to ask my students, why in the world would we give precious space on plates to Korihor? And it takes them a minute until they go, oh, so that we'll know the tactics of the adversary. Oh, and we'll recognize it. The arguments are not new. They have new sophisticated sounding names today or words. It's the same thing. President Benson used that phrase about one of the purposes of the Book of Mormon. He gave a list of them and one of them was it exposes the enemies of Christ. Hank finish that sentence for me.

Hank Smith: 00:54:58 Well, I, it's kind of embarrassing that I know this one so well. The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrine. It fortifies the humble followers of Christ against the evil designs, strategies, and doctrines of the devil in our day. The type of apostates found in the Book of Mormon are similar to the type we have today. God with his infinite foreknowledge so molded the Book of Mormon so that we might know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time. That's a great one.

John Bytheway: 00:55:31 Woo. Nice one.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:55:33 That was fantastic. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:55:35 You can do this Carol and John. You can look at Sherem and Nehor and Amlici and Korihor and Amalickiah and Giddianhi and the Gadianton Robbers and you can lay out the tactics of the adversary. Carol, I think you're right. Why don't we talk about what they're going to face?

Sister Carol Costley: 00:55:57 I think that people have a fear that if we know about those tactics, we'll either get involved in those tactics ourselves or that it's not uplifting, that it doesn't bring the spirit that we want. I think that there are a lot of reasons why parents sometimes gloss over that or read it, but really don't say this is a tactic that Satan will use. Sometimes we think, oh, our children are too young, or we might scare them, or we just wanna present what we feel is palatable. You know? That won't frighten them. I had an experience, I've shared this story before, with my daughter. I got really upset with her over something. I can't even remember why, but she was pretty little. She was

probably about three because I can see her face still. I probably had been doing something and she probably messed it up and probably made me really mad. I lost my temper. I was ugly, and I could tell by the look on her face that it was not a familiar face and it scared her. When I saw the look on her face, it jolted me back to reality to realize that I needed to talk to her about what had happened and I went in and I said, Emma, I am so, so sorry, and I tried to explain why I was frustrated. She looks at me and she goes, that's okay, mommy. I knew Satan had you.

Hank Smith: 00:57:26 Wow.

Sister Carol Costley: 00:57:28 I was hurt by her comment that she thought that I was Satan in that moment and I tried really hard moving forward not to go to that place and to really take a time out before I lost my temper again, we laugh about it now, but I really feel like I lost control. She equated me to Satan and it was because we had told her about Satan and some of the things that he did. I think that our kids really understand and can learn and know even from a young age. I was quite taken back by the comment, but that let me know that she was aware that there was good and that there were things that were not so good, that were evil. I think that we really need to teach the children so they really know how to manage his behavior when it's presented to them. They will face it. They will face some of his strategies. Some of them seem so benign, but they're not.

Hank Smith: 00:58:38 Yeah. Carol, you're so right. If anybody listening just takes away that one teaching from you, that one principle. I think we've been well served. We've had you for a while now and we've only been through a couple of paragraphs here. Do you wanna jump back in?

Sister Carol Costley: 00:58:53 Yes. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal and eternal identity and purpose. With the gender confusion that we're having right now, I think that it's important that this is reaffirmed that gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal and eternal identity and purpose. It's important for that to be stated. In the premortal realm spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan, which his children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experiences to progress towards perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal family life. Knowing those things about our gender, that it was assigned before we came, that it is a part of God's plan and that we came here to obtain this physical body. It is through this body and

through the work that we're gonna do here on this earth that we will return to our Father in heaven.

01:00:03 This is actually a plan of happiness. It's not a plan of sadness, it is a plan of happiness. I'm so disappointed that many people look at this proclamation as a plan of sadness because it is not unfolding in a way that they would like it to unfold. That's what makes it a struggle and I wish that we could gain a testimony of the beauty of this plan and the happiness that it will and does bring when we work towards achieving the ideal. I like it because it says that we are working toward perfection and that that's probably not gonna happen here and to take comfort in that.

Hank Smith: 01:00:49 Elder Rasband, like you did, just said, Carol, he was bold and so sensitive when he talked about this in the last general conference. He says, some of you may reflect on the proclamation and say, this isn't working for me. I don't fit. For those with concerns, instead of blasting someone, he said, you are a child of heavenly parents, part of your heavenly Father's family. No one knows you better or cares more deeply about you than he does. Turn to Him. Pour out your heart to Him, trust Him and His promises. You have family in your Savior, Jesus Christ who loves you. He came to earth to atone for our sins and bear the burden of our mistakes and our very bad days. He understands what you are facing and feeling. Turn to Him. Trust He will send the Holy Ghost to be with you, to lift you and guide you. Carol, I can't think of anyone in their career more than you who empathizes with someone who feels like they don't fit. Yet at the same time, we can be bold and say, you do fit. You don't have to listen to all the voices telling you that you have to do this or that or you can find your own truth. No, there is truth right over here.

Sister Carol Costley: 01:02:18 I like the concept of truth in terms of this proclamation and the plan of happiness because it is based on a foundation of truth. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. This is the unit that heavenly Father has established for us to get back to him. We are advised to defend it and just because my unit doesn't look exactly like that's being described in the proclamation, it doesn't matter because that is where the Savior comes in. That is where the healing comes or the redirection comes or how you can rely on Him to help you make those course corrections that will bring you closer to Him. Sacred ordinances and covenants are available in holy temples that make it possible for the individual to return to his presence. There are tools for us that will aid us to help return to His presence.

01:03:16 The perfection piece was never meant for this world. There is a scripture in Moses where God is talking to Moses. He tells Moses that he is His son. Then later on Satan comes, refers to him as the son of man. Moses questions him and he says, no, I've been told that I am the son of God, and then goes on to look at Satan and go, well wait a minute. I can actually see you and talk to you. You are not a God for me to worship because he wants to be worshiped by Moses. And he said, wait a minute. When I was with God, I had to go through some type of transformation to even be in his presence, otherwise I would've not been here. Where is your glory that I should worship you? It was really interesting.

01:04:11 I loved that they brought this out and I think it was Elder Rasband who had a talk. Moses, My Son, I think quite a ways back, I think in 2010, where he talks about this experience that Moses had with God, and then how Satan tried to come in and thwart that. Having the knowledge of who we are, the knowledge of our agenda, the knowledge of the sanctity of marriage and parenthood and how children are entitled to be born within that covenant, I think is really important for us to know as the children, also, as future husbands and wives and parents. It's critical for us to know this doctrine so that we can perpetuate it and defend it because it's not popular. It's important for us to share what we know in a kind and respectful way as Elder Rasband talked about.



John Bytheway: 00:00:01 Welcome to part two with Sister Carol Costley on the Family Proclamation. Several times we've talked about the real and the ideal. I hope people don't read this and use it as a club to beat themselves with like, my family's not perfect. This is showing us an ideal and look at that phrase that you mentioned as they progress toward perfection. It gives us an ideal, an aspiration, a place to go that's founded in truth. Boy, as you have so beautifully explained, Carol, your interesting background, this is inspiring to you and it's telling us of the possibility in the future, possibility that's grounded in truth through our, through the Savior. Please, if you're reading this and thinking, what did Elder Rasband say, this doesn't fit for me. This is truth for all of us. It gives us an aspiration, a place for our future to go, especially the young people that are listening that are going, I don't know what my future family's gonna be like. This gives me the principles I need to plan and set goals.

Hank Smith: 00:01:11 I think you're right on both of you. I don't know if you've ever gone here, but if you go to your Gospel Library app, just scroll down a little bit. For me it's the third column on the right hand side towards the bottom. There's a section called Life Help, and if you click on that, there's abuse, addiction, adoption, and it's in alphabetical order. You can come down to the bottom and there's transgender and a lot of questions about how does the church feel about this or see this are answered here. I was reading through this to prepare for today. There's a lot to read, but I wanted to read this paragraph. One of the questions it's asked is if I identify as transgender, do I belong as a member of the church? Yes, church members need you and want you. If you identify yourself as transgender, we know you face complex challenges. You are deserving of Christlike love just as much of any of God's children and you should be treated with sensitivity, kindness, and compassion. It says, not everyone around you will be perfect in expressing that love and compassion and sensitivity. I think we could all decide to be better. I know of a person who's been rejected entirely by their family, kicked out of their house for being transgender, cut off all communication

with that child. I can't think of our heavenly Father being or the Savior being pleased with that.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:02:54 Because the family is the source of healing. That's where we heal and it doesn't bode well for that person because then they're gonna go often and find other resources that may not be as helpful in connecting them with Jesus Christ. You can be transgender, gay, and be connected to Christ. I feel like as a family, when we cut people off, we're doing a great disservice to them. Kind of snuffing out a light that could really provide some direction, some love, some support so that whatever it is that they're experiencing, that they can get the comfort that they need. I am not a fan of tough love. I'm not a fan of cutting people off because I really feel like if this unit is by divine design, then everybody should have access to a loving and supportive unit to where they can get the comfort and healing that they need. I'm so disappointed when I hear these stories because one of the number one things that they say is that when a person has family support, their success in overcoming, it could be depression, it could be addiction, it could be a myriad of issues. Having that family support, that foundational unit to help them is key.

Hank Smith: 00:04:36 Yeah. There's another section under this same part of the gospel library that's called Supporting Others, and there's just a simple statement. There's a lot there, but one simple statement that I hope anybody listening who has decided to go the wrong direction and cut off a family member, it says, if you overreact, get angry or say things you regret, don't be discouraged. This may be hard for you as well. This is one moment in a lifetime of conversations you will have with your loved one. If you feel you should apologize for your actions, do it.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:05:14 That apology can begin the process for repair. I think apologies are great, but I think a critical piece that we miss is the repair of the relationship that's damaged or broken. That's where the work really needs to take place and in a family that's where the repair can happen is working on that relationship and taking commitments and saying, okay, I did this. I am really sorry. I'm gonna do something different. Then commit to what you can do to change or improve that relationship. Do you remember that family that I prayed to have at 40? I couldn't get pregnant. That was a big disappointment. I felt inspired to adopt, so I talked to my husband about it. He was a little nervous about how he would feel, if he could bond with a child that was born into another family, and I remember we went and visited a friend.

	00:06:12	They had just adopted a baby girl. My husband held her. I could tell that he had fallen in love with this baby. When we left he said, I can do it. We adopted two girls and added them to three boys that were my husbands. I'm in a second marriage for my husband. This is my first marriage, so we had these two girls and they were wonderful. My oldest was a little fireball, a very independent thinker, kind of did her own thing, marched her own tune. Well, by the time she turned about 10, we started having some problems with her. She was a struggle. In after sharing that she was depressed, really struggled in school in every situation, and it got to the point where our relationship became very adversarial and it was heartbreaking to me 'cause we were so close when she was little, it was at the time when there was a lot of arguing and yelling back and forth and her not respecting us as parents, leaving and going with friends and not coming back and I get a phone call from Salt Lake wanting me to come down for an interview and I thought, what would they be wanting with me coming down to Salt Lake?
	00:07:35	I remember going in and sitting down with my husband. At first I thought it was for him. Then when I got there it was clear that it was for me. I met with Elder Gong and he said, are you prepared to accept a call today? I had no clue about what that call was, but when they extended the call to me, I remember thinking, young women, people in my ward will really laugh because right now my home is a disaster. And I said, well, I have a daughter, and I said her name and he says, oh, we know all about your daughter. And I thought, okay, well, I guess yes.
Hank Smith:	00:08:15	Yeah.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:08:15	It really gave me a peace of mind because I felt like heavenly Father was saying, I know you're doing the best that you can. I remember accepting the call to serve on the General Young Women's Advisory Council. I thought, people are not gonna take me seriously if they know about my child who just stormed out of young women and cursed out everybody in the building. I was shocked that I would get this assignment. I went home and I told my girls what call had been extended to me. Believe it or not, they were both excited. It was the call, I believe, and the association with the women that changed the trajectory of my older daughter's life. This past Saturday we were in the temple with her. I am telling you that heavenly Father answers prayers. As a mother who begged and pleaded. I'm telling you the times that I spent in my closet on the floor crying because of a reaction that I made or a thing that I said that was mean and begging for forgiveness and asking to learn a different way of managing my daughter.

	00:09:35	We have funny stories, we have sad stories. The call changed my life and my husband said to me one day, he said, what if you had not accepted the calling because of all that was going on in our home because you feared the judgment of others. I really did fear the judgment of others. Something so sweet was a woman when I was in St. George came up to me and she said, I have just been put in a stake young women's president and I have a son. I said, you don't need to say much more. I have a daughter and we commiserated over some of the struggles that we had had with our children and I just said that you are the right person because you can understand some of those youth who are struggling. To think that things have to be perfect or that we have to be perfect to serve or that we have to be perfect to have a testimony, it is not true.
	00:10:35	We can have testimonies about lots of different things and together they'll build a very strong testimony. I really feel like watching my daughter change over the years is incredible. She's 22 now. She's the mother of two. She's married to a wonderful guy. Their plan is to get sealed in a few months. I had no idea that this would be my story. Now this is my story and I know that it sounds ideal and perfect for a parent who is struggling and their child is not coming around. It doesn't matter when they come around, it's that these seeds are planted and I had no idea that I was planting seeds. I had no comprehension whatsoever that I was even making a difference in this child's life, and I realized I was planting a seed when we were in the conference center. She was so happy to tell everybody that my mom is going to be sitting on the stand at the women's meeting. That's my mom. She had never shown that she was proud or that she had a love for me. One of her little friends from school came up to her and she said, Hannah, what are you doing here? And she said, my mom is a member of the General Young Women's Advisory Council, and she said to the little girl, why are you here? And the little girl looked at her and this had been a friend that had come over to our home to play. She goes, my grandfather's the prophet.
Hank Smith:	00:12:18	Okay.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:12:18	We laugh about that all the time, but Hannah took such great pride in the fact that I was there and I think that I watched her change because she was proud of my service and for what I was doing. She met some incredible sisters who loved on her, who cared about her and who showed support. It is about this heavenly family that we're talking about in the Proclamation on the Family, that people in ward, people that we serve with matter and can impact and make this document come to life

and have meaning for them. Now watching her, starting her family, this document is important to her as she mothers, as she serves with her husband in this marriage. It's just beautiful to see the respect and the love that they have for each other is so sweet to my soul, it is a balm for my soul that was really, really harrowed and wrecked for about four years, four years of watching the turmoil of this child.

00:13:30 I am appreciative to all the people, her counselors, all the people that jumped in and helped with her. It has changed the view of her relationship. I quit my job to stay home with my kids. It was a really good job too. I remember when I quit that job and wanted to stay home, someone came up to me and said, I can't believe you quit your job. You took up a space in graduate school that could have been given to someone else. If we would've known that you weren't going to work in the profession. I thought, wow. And that was someone that I had gone to school with that really surprised me at the time that they had that feeling. I needed to be home for these two girls. I was planting seeds. For anyone out there that thinks that they're not planting the seeds of the gospel and a child is not listening, it is not true.

00:14:26 I am quite surprised at some of the things that she tells me about the gospel, about our Book of Mormon readings when she was over there rolling her eyes and making noise and not reading properly and I would just get so frustrated. Yet there were things that stuck. She was involved, she was listening. The family is ordained of God. This sacred union of a marriage or the responsibility of a mother, even if she is by herself, it's sacred. They will have the support of Heavenly Father. I love that Elder Oaks talked about being raised by a single mom and to look at him and to know what he was able to accomplish in that situation. It is sweet to me to know that just because something is not ideal, it doesn't mean that it's not going to work or that we can't implement some of those teachings and recommendations of family scripture, prayer, going to the temple, all of those things, they can still help even if we are a parent by ourselves.

John Bytheway: 00:15:35 Hank, you remember our discussion of Section 137 and 138 about the spirit world and just this wonderful idea and impression that God's in this. He has the long game in mind. Our timing, Carol you suffered for four years. The Lord knew what he was doing. I think it was on a wonderful podcast called followHIM where I heard a guest quote a scripture and I just went, wow, how have I never seen that? Like four years ago Hank. You cannot behold for the present time with your natural

eyes, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter. He's got you. It might not be in our sequence or the time we want. We can trust a God who loves his children as this is teaching us who is our Father and who has the long game in mind, which I just think is a very comforting thought.

Hank Smith: 00:16:35 Yeah, I have a story that I thought was a couple of years old. Turns out it's 12 years old. Why do years go by so fast? This is President Eyring. Both of you'll remember this. Years ago a friend of mine spoke of his grandmother. She had lived a full life, always faithful to the Lord and to His church. Yet one of her grandsons chose a life of crime. He was finally sentenced to prison. My friend recalled that his grandmother, as she drove along a highway to visit her grandson in prison, had tears in her eyes as she prayed with anguish. I've tried to live a good life. Why? Why do I have this tragedy of a grandson who seems to have destroyed his life? The answer came to her mind in these words, I gave him to you because I knew you could and would love him no matter what he did.

00:17:35 President Eyring says there's a wonderful lesson for us all. The way for loving parents and grandparents and all of God's servants will not be easy in a decaying world. We cannot force God's children to choose the way to happiness. Heavenly Father and his beloved Son love all of God's children no matter what they choose to do or what they become. He says, we cannot force the Holy Ghost on others, but we can let them see it in our lives. We can always take courage from the assurance that we will, that we all once felt the joy of being together as a member of a beloved family of our Heavenly Father. With God's help, we can all feel that hope and that joy again. I knew you would love him no matter what he did.

John Bytheway: 00:18:25 And I love what Carol said about a daughter that didn't seem to be listening to scripture study. Yeah, this is an old story. Alma's just been knocked flat by an angel who says arise and then he says, if you wanna be destroyed, keep doing what you're doing, he falls down again. What does Alma say? Then I remember my father to have taught concerning a Son of God who could forgive sins and I cried within my soul. Oh Jesus thou son of God have mercy on me. And it came back, I think of Aminadab in prison, right, who had once belonged to the church but had dissented from among them. There's this dark cloud in the prison. All the prisoners are like, what are we supposed to do? And Aminadab who somewhere back there he remembered, oh, cry unto the voice until you shall have faith in Christ and repent. First principles, boom. Aminadab had it the whole time. Even

		though probably someone who's introduced as someone who was in the church who had dissented, it was in there. I love those kind of stories to give us hope.
Hank Smith:	00:19:36	One more, one more I think you guys will remember this one too. This is Elder Bednar. He said, when our sons were growing up, our family did what you have done.
John Bytheway:	00:19:45	He's breathing my air.
Hank Smith:	00:19:46	Yeah, that's it. Sometimes Sister Bednar and I wondered if our efforts to do these spiritual essential things were worthwhile. Now and then verses of scripture were read amid outbursts such as he's touching me. Make him stop looking at me. Mom he's breathing my air. Sincere prayers occasionally were interrupted with giggling and poking. Family Home Evening lessons did not always produce high levels of edification. At times, Sister Bednar and I were exasperated because the righteous habits we worked so hard to foster did not seem to yield immediately the spiritual results we wanted and expected. He goes on to talk about it takes time. He says, results like that do not occur each time we study or pray or learn together. It's the consistency of our intent. And those were long years sounds like Carol.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:20:42	It's really hard because they talk about the consistency, but man, when you've tried and you've tried and it's just not working, there is a temptation to give up. There is a temptation to give up on scripture reading 'cause you get the same old attitude every single time and it's just like why bother? But we're told right there that we bother. We keep with that consistency and we'll see the fruits of our labors. In the temple I just sat next to her and just held her hand and I thought, we're here. We made it. And she had a great experience. I think that that consistency and trusting in heavenly Father in Jesus Christ that they've got our backs, their plan supersedes any plan that we could have ever thought of for ourselves. This Saturday that plan did supersede what I had even hoped for, so it was a sweet, sweet day.
Hank Smith:	00:21:37	John frequently reminds our listeners that this is His work and His glory. His glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. And what does he say, John? Is it 2 Nephi?
John Bytheway:	00:21:49	I am able to do my work. Yeah. 2 Nephi 27. Yeah, it's not like,
	00:21:53	I just need you to be willing. Right?

	00:21:55	Why can't you guys do my work for me? He doesn't say that. He said, look, I got this. This is my job and I'm able to do my job. Be available. Do the best you can, but I got this.
Hank Smith:	00:22:07	Joseph Smith said he has made ample provision for everyone's redemption. He's not counting on us.
John Bytheway:	00:22:14	He's mighty to save. Not, he's somewhat average at saving. Yeah. On a good day. Nope. He's mighty to save.
Hank Smith:	00:22:22	I'm pretty good at this.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:22:24	My husband reminds me that the sacrament prayer emphasizes willingness. He always inserts that word willingness in many parts of that sacrament prayer to help us understand that heavenly Father just wants someone who is willing. You don't have to be good at something, you just need to be willing to learn or just willing to take the first step into the darkness. That has really hit me whenever he has mentioned that just the act of being willing.
Hank Smith:	00:22:57	Carol, can we keep going? What's next up on the proclamation?
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:23:01	John, could you read where we left off?
John Bytheway:	00:23:04	I numbered mine. So this is like paragraph six that starts with these words. Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. Children are an heritage of the Lord. From Psalm 127:3. Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs and to teach them to love and serve one another, observe the commandments of God and be law abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives, mothers and fathers will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:23:47	It talks about our obligations to teach and to be accountable for the protection and the physical and spiritual needs of our children. And I know as a social worker I see a lot of situations where some of those physical needs are not met, let alone even moving into the spiritual. When we teach our children to love and to serve one another, it really does go far in helping them to create relationships with others where they love and they serve. That was the one thing that I really enjoyed about my older daughter was that she loved other people. She would go up and talk to anyone. She would reach out. I think that we have an obligation to teach, to live in a manner that can help

our children develop attributes of Jesus Christ. Husbands and wives, mothers and fathers will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

00:24:49 I remember in rearing my children, I had to recognize that there is a season for certain things to happen. Sometimes I was really hard on myself. It wasn't the season, it wasn't the time for me to be doing what I thought I ought to be doing and that God was quite satisfied with where I was at. Just being able to understand that when we are trying to care for the spiritual needs of our children and we're praying over them daily. In Mosiah 27:14, we read about the power of a parent. It says, and again the angel said, behold the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is the Father, for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee that thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of truth. Therefore, for this purpose, have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith. When we as parents exercise faith and trust in heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we do get answers to our prayers, in his timetable. Not necessarily in ours.

Hank Smith: 00:26:12 Yeah, that angel's funny. I don't even want to be here, but I'm only here 'cause of your dad and his friends.

John Bytheway: 00:26:19 Can you dispute the power of God? Do you not behold me standing here before you? Can you feel the earth shaking under your feet there Buster? You gonna go out and destroy the church anymore tough guy? Okay. Hank as you know, we got an email from a wonderful sister who talked about her son who had left the church, left the family, and suddenly showed up at a siblings farewell. Do you remember this Hank? And texted that he was nearby, came in the chapel. He didn't look great, she said, well, she said he looked terrible. His hair was scraggly, his jeans were messed up and she said, touches me. A young men's leader came running across the back of the chapel and embraced this kid. Everyone greeting him as he came up and sat there, the son or daughter, I can't remember who was having their farewell texted and said, are you watching this? You know?

00:27:17 And this mom said, look at what that angel said, the prayers of many people. She said, people would call and say, is there anything I could do? And she would say, yeah, pray. Pray for my son or my daughter, whatever the case may be. In the scripture, that's exactly what you just said, Carol, the angel said because of the prayers, go back to Mosiah 27:14. Behold the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people and also the prayers of his

servant Alma, who is thy father, for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee that thou mightest be brought to a knowledge of the truth. The prayers of many people and thy father. This is a favorite verse of mine because I love specifically what the angel said, that they mightest be brought to a knowledge of the truth. It was that, Heavenly Father, I don't know how you're gonna do this, but will you help my loved one come to the knowledge of the truth?

00:28:12 It might be through a tough road. You have a better idea of how to do that than I do. Help them come to a knowledge of the truth and in this case an angel shows up. I don't know if there's an order form in Mosiah 27 for people to fill out for how they would like it, but I love that he left that to the Lord. Not to specifically come back to church but come to a knowledge of the truth, however the Lord wants to do that. That's a fascinating topic and an element of trust. This is heavenly Father's child as we've just been reading. He knows them too. He will have a plan to bring them to a knowledge of the truth.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:28:52 And I think that how he brings them and what knowledge they're going to gain is something that we just need to be satisfied with. Because there's timing and everything 'cause a lot of times we think, well, it's fine that that happened, but he really needed to do X, Y, and Z and I think I found myself as a mother sometimes doing that. My daughter, I don't think that she missed church very much. She would come. Maybe she wouldn't stay. I remember that one of her young women peers was trying to talk to her in the hallway and just trying to motivate her to participate and come back. It's been sweet to hear some of the people come forward and share some of the stories and some of the influence that they have had and some of the time they took with my daughter. This is the beauty of the family of our heavenly family, is that there are people that will step up when we have lost patience, when we feel worn out, when we feel like we've not been able to make it work. I have just been so appreciative of those who have stepped up in my ward family and my friends that have taken the reigns and they've filled in where we cannot.

John Bytheway: 00:30:14 And it's almost as if heavenly Father put them there to help answer your prayers.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:30:21 I had to give space for that because I didn't always. Something that we do need to highlight though is successful marriages and family are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work and wholesome recreation. I wanna emphasize the work

because honestly, when I got married and started my family, I really didn't understand the work part of it. It's important for us to recognize that there is going to be work. I mean, when Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden, they were told specifically that there would be some work. I didn't realize that this would apply within my home, within my family, within my relationships.

00:31:13 Just that the work would be perpetuated in every single relationship or situation that I was in, that we would need to do the work, that it would need to be supported with faith and prayer and repentance. That is one thing that I really struggled with. I didn't understand or cherish the gift of repentance like it says in that young women's theme. I into my adulthood thought that if I had to repent, it was not a good thing. It was in my calling actually, that I really came to know and understand that if I wasn't repenting, that wasn't a good thing. That was an aha moment for me, that it was okay to repent and to wanna change and make things right with God because that was the only way that I was gonna get back to him.

Hank Smith: 00:32:12 We've said this many times, John, but we celebrate faith, we celebrate baptism, we celebrate someone getting the gift of the Holy Ghost and for some reason repentance out of the four gets a bad rap.

John Bytheway: 00:32:29 We talked about this before too, the the Bible Dictionary definition of repentance. Maybe you showed me this Hank, a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world. It's easy to think of repentance as an event instead of as an ongoing daily process, an ongoing fresh view. The Lord working in us, Jesus working in us to change us and change our hearts and I want that to be a process, not just, oh, I knelt down and I said, Hey, sorry about that, therefore I repented. This is an ongoing work in progress and that way it becomes exciting that I can grow and repent.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:33:10 Do you think that if our fellow brothers and sisters really supported the whole idea of repentance as well? Because I know a lot of times there are those that if somebody has a problem that is visible to the world like getting pregnant or going to prison, it's a visible sin is what I always say. That a lot of times you have a tendency to back away instead of embrace and support and to show love. And I just wish as members, I include myself in that process, that we be more sensitive and be more willing to love, show love and support even when a situation is awkward or uncomfortable sometimes having the confidence to be there, not have to say much of anything, just

		to be there to be a support while this person is going through this anguish.
Hank Smith:	00:34:13	Now that's straight out of Peacemakers Needed. President Nelson. If there is anything virtuous, lovely or of good report or praiseworthy that we can say about another person whether to his face or behind her back, that should be our standard of communication. If a couple in your ward gets divorced or a young missionary returns home early or a teenager doubts his testimony, or all of those others that you just gave us, Carol, back to President Nelson, they do not need your judgment. They need to experience the pure love of Jesus Christ reflected in your words and actions. We can make it so much easier for people to change and repent.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:35:02	As we go through this process we can think about how can we make it easier for people by just adjusting our attitude about the repentance process and about sin. Going back to what President Kimball said, having that view of it so that we can help support people when they're going through that repentance process, avoiding the need to whisper and chat.
John Bytheway:	00:35:29	Jesus had such a way with just one sentence. I mean that's why it's so fun to read the New Testament 'cause Jesus would just say these mic drop moments. He that is without sin let him first cast a stone at her. Boy, you know? And I think that's one way I need forgiveness. I cherish repentance. How can I withhold that from someone else when I know I need it?
Hank Smith:	00:35:56	Yeah. Don't judge me because I sin differently than you. Right?
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:36:02	Or more loudly.
Hank Smith:	00:36:04	Yeah, more publicly maybe.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:36:06	Publicly. Yeah. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:36:10	It's interesting how we have to have this same message over and over and over. It keeps coming. It's almost like we're not learning it entirely. You talked about work earlier, Carol. That's not something my children love. That work is important.
John Bytheway:	00:36:31	Dad, can you give us some jobs today?
Hank Smith:	00:36:34	Yeah. Please. Please. Such a blessing.
John Bytheway:	00:36:35	Can we have some more chores?

Hank Smith:	00:36:38	I wrote a book on happiness that sold dozens of copies mostly to John and my sister. One thing I learned is that work is key to a happy life, that depriving children of work is not a blessing. One of the stories I tell in the book is my son Mason, he's out on his mission right now and he is such a kind gentle heart. We used to incubate chickens, so we'd put the eggs in the incubator and 28 days later you can hear the little chirps from the inside. Those little chicks are just struggling to get out of those shells and their little chirp sounds like they just are pleading for help. And Mason, as a little boy, he would go over and he'd wanna lift up the incubator lid and just help 'em out a little bit. And I'd tell him, he'd go over there, I'd say, don't do it.
	00:37:34	And he'd, why not? And I'd say, don't do it. Don't do it. And he'd say, you're mean. That's what he said to me. You're mean, why don't you wanna help them? I had to explain to him that that process of work that they go through is making them strong. And if they are strong, they'll be able to live. If we actually help them out of their shells, we're actually gonna end up hurting them. And it took a long time for him to comprehend that taking away someone's struggle is actually not helpful at times. I bet you've seen that as a counselor.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:38:13	Absolutely. That one gentleman that I told you about, he's now a father and he has a teenage daughter. He was struggling and doubting his ability to recover. He didn't wanna go into inpatient, he didn't wanna do the work. And I remember talking to him and saying, if you are not making it in an outpatient setting and you're still having struggles, then we need to kind of re-look at inpatient. No, I can't do that. I can't do that. He finally decided to go and go to an inpatient setting. I haven't heard back from him as yet, but I'm hopeful that this is the stay that he needed to get him out of the circumstances that he was in so he could clear his head. I think that once he realized I'm not gonna be able to be with my daughter unless I do the work, she was an age now where she was asking a lot of questions about what's going on? What are you doing? Why are you not doing this? Why am I not important? I think that he realized, hey, I need to put the work in. Sometimes just deciding on the work that we need to do can be a challenge. When working with couples or individuals I find that it's the work that's sometimes offputting and whether or not they value the work as much as they value the relationship.
Hank Smith:	00:39:40	John's story always makes me laugh. The day before he's going to the MTC, you'd think, hey, we're going to the MTC, let's have a celebration. Let's have our friends over. Let's take you to

		dinner. Not John Bytheway's dad. John Bytheway's dad had him loading manure. Right John? Did I get that right?
John Bytheway:	00:40:04	Yeah, absolutely right. As Jack is my witness, he's up in the spirit world right now on a mission. He had me hauling manure up the front lawn in a wheelbarrow. I can't wait to get to the MTC and get some rest.
Hank Smith:	00:40:20	He saw that, right? He saw the value.
John Bytheway:	00:40:23	So grateful for that work ethic my dad had. And then you're right Hank, thanks for remembering that. That makes me laugh, but that's what I was doing the day before. Hey, would you go up to Kmart and buy this manure and take it in the backyard? Sure Dad.
Hank Smith:	00:40:39	Sure Dad, you know I'm leaving tomorrow for a couple, for a little while.
John Bytheway:	00:40:44	Perhaps you've heard I'm off to the Philippines. Anyway.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:40:49	Perhaps that work was what you needed to get you started.
John Bytheway:	00:40:53	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:40:54	Yeah. Carol, we're getting close to the end here. What else do you want us to look at in the proclamation?
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:41:00	Two things. The idea that heavenly Father recognizes that we are not going to be in ideal situations. That was never the plan in the first place, I don't think, for us to be in ideal situations. He says in these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. And I like that equal partners. We might have different duties, but we're equal partners. Those duties can be switched around depending upon the makeup of your family, makeup of the education of the parents in the family. He says disability, death or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaption. He's giving us permission or understanding for those adaptions to occur if we don't have an ideal structure. That's important. Also calls upon extended families should lend support when needed. I know that that young man that I told you about earlier on, whose grandmother was an integral part of helping him. That's what's important is letting us know that if the parents can't do it, then there are other people that can do it. Always ending with that warning of what could happen if we as parents use our agency to not do the right thing, where we violate

covenants of chastity or if we abuse our spouse or offspring, or if we fail to fulfill family responsibilities. The impact of that choice will devastate a family.

Hank Smith: 00:42:49 Yeah. For generations.

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:42:53 For generations it can create extreme insecurity. My girlfriend, one of my dearest and closest friends was married for 28 years. There was infidelity and the impact on her family was significant. I remember her having to rely on the Savior. Her testimony of His support and help was so powerful to me. Not a nasty word came out of her mouth about her spouse. I was in awe 'cause I could have said a few things because I was so disappointed. I followed her lead. She was a great example to me. I just followed her lead. To those children she reflected on the good times and on the positive things that had happened in their union, and I was thinking about the union with my husband as a second spouse. It actually turned into a situation for us where when we would have family parties, his ex-spouse would come and participate in those family parties with us.

00:44:11 We were able to develop a great friendship and the grandchildren were able to have both the families there. It was just a really sweet experience. It was difficult initially because I just wasn't quite secure in the relationship. It was new. It was a beginning. It turned out to be a great blessing for us. She was always so sweet and so kind, would babysit our girls. We truly became a family and we could incorporate her and her husband. It was just a good experience for the grandchildren and the children to have that. I am grateful that she feels comfortable coming to our home and spending time with us and so I think that there is a provision for us to make adjustments when it is not the ideal and I love that that is spoken here, but I also love the warning that can come from when things get adversarial.

00:45:20 What my friend has tried to do now that she is remarried, she just got remarried a few months ago and it's been sweet to see her new partner be a support and a strength to her enough that she was able to go to a joint activity where her ex-spouse was going to be there after I think 10 years, I don't think she had seen him and was able to see him with the woman who is now his wife and for her to say, I am going to move forward with this because I have the support of this new spouse in my life. That unit that heavenly Father talks about whether it's ideal or not, when you have the support of that family member, it can really serve to strengthen and support and to start rebuilding a relationship with the Savior and to strengthen that. That is what

		is most important. To have a situation where you can continue that relationship with the Savior and have that support and it's been so sweet to see her have this back in her life to where she can go to the temple and be with her partner and start fresh again. It's just sweet. Those warnings are real. The effects are impactful and can change the lives of children, can cause them to doubt their faith, can cause them to step away. It's really critical that we use our agency wisely.
Hank Smith:	00:46:55	Yeah. Elder Holland has said before that the price to be paid for our choices sometimes gets paid by our children and our grandchildren in far more expensive ways than we ever intended them to be. I'm sure you both shed a tear, I did, when President Oaks talked about his grandfather, this recent general conference, seven years old. 7-year-old boy on a farm in Payson, Utah. He said, I will never forget the promise of my maternal grandfather Harris, we're living on his farm near Payson, Utah. He gave me the tragic news, this little 7-year-old that my father had died in faraway Denver, Colorado. I ran into the bedroom and knelt beside the bed crying my heart out. Grandpa followed me and went to his knees beside me and said, I will be your father. That tender promise is a powerful example of what grandparents can do to fill in the gaps when families lose or are missing a member. So we have a President of the Church right now who knows what it looks like to adapt to different situations.
John Bytheway:	00:48:17	When President Dallin H. Oaks was President Dallin H. Oaks of Brigham Young University, he gave a talk in about 1975, I think he talked about his father dying before he was ever able to repay his medical school debt. He said, I went through a period of school he said, where I could not do math. I was, his words, I was the dumbest boy in the room and I remember an occasion where others threw rocks at me and called me stupid. To think that church leaders have perfect families or perfect lives, that everything works out perfectly. No, we all go through things.
Hank Smith:	00:49:02	Imagine President Oaks. I'm the dumbest kid in the room.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:49:06	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:49:07	I don't think so.
Hank Smith:	00:49:08	Yeah, I don't think so.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:49:11	Well, it just speaks to the fact that we don't know the work heavenly Father can do and to see the presidents of the church

and to hear and know some of the challenges and struggles that they've gone through is truly a blessing. I'll never forget when President Holland talked about his depression, how life-changing it was for many of my clients that I see who are members of the church, that felt like they were finally seen. To hear subsequent talks about mental health has been a great blessing to a lot of the folks that I've worked with. It's really nice to hear some of the challenges that our general leaders do experience because it allows us to see ourselves and to see the potential that we could have to still continue in a relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ despite the roadblocks or the little excursions off this way that we didn't think that we would ever be at. I love that our general leaders share moments in their lives.

Hank Smith: 00:50:24 Yeah. Before we wrap up, Carol, I wanted to do a quick FYI, if anyone listening wants to know more about the history of the proclamation, the Y Religion podcast that I'm a part of and part of the religion faculty at BYU did two episodes on history of the proclamation. One is episode 121 with Dr. Michael Goodman, where he, some people might say, oh, this was written by a bunch of lawyers. I've heard that criticism of the proclamation and Brother Goodman goes through that history in a really beautiful, beautiful, very particular way. It's very detailed and also there's another criticism of the proclamation that women were not involved in it's formation. Well, Dr. Barbara Morgan Gardner, who's also been on our show, with Dr. Goodwin and her student, Olivia Osguthorpe, that's episode 115 of the Y Religion Podcast. If either of those topics interest you, those are fascinating interviews. Carol, this has been a wonderful day. We've walked through the proclamation and you've used your expertise. John and I are going to be better fathers. Here you are an educated counselor, you've dealt with, I'm sure countless clients who have had a myriad of difficulties. You're a woman of color and you're a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I think our listeners would love to know how that happened. Why do you believe?

Sis. Carol Costley: 00:52:08 Wow, first of all, I can't help think about the impassioned testimony of Kevin Brown, who is a fellow Jamaican. Parents were Jamaican, and so it was beautiful to hear him speak from the pulpit. He basically said, when you know, you know. I remember when I encountered the missionaries, I knew. Everything about the doctrine that I learned seemed to fit in. The one thing that threw a wrench in things was learning about the priesthood. I was devastated because everything that I held dear, marriage in the temple, being sealed, all of those things seemed to evaporate when I heard about the priesthood. I

remember telling them the night before my baptism when they told me about the priesthood ban was that I would not be baptized. I was so hurt by it, and one elder stood up, made a promise to me, and his promise was that by the time that I was ready to be married, every worthy male would have the priesthood, and I remember him standing and making me that promise.

00:53:23 It was May 29th, 1975. It was that promise that he made me, that hit my heart and I believed his promise. I said, okay, I will be baptized tomorrow. I remember also having a personal prayer about why, and Heavenly Father promised me that it would be revealed to me, but it's not what I'm being told. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have been involved in my life from the beginning of my investigation of the Church. Every time I've questioned, I've opened up the scriptures and the one scripture that I opened up to when I was having doubts was the one where it says, did I not speak peace to your mind? That has come up on many occasions. I have had many confirmations. I have seen the Lord's hand in my life getting me from London, England to Brigham Young University to where I was one of the first to graduate with my master's in my family.

00:54:36 I believe that he really helped me, and has been showing up in my life for many occasions, and I have felt his testimony. To be this obscure girl from London, England to be called to serve on his council, tells me that I am cherished and that I am loved, and he repeats it over and over again in every aspect of my life as I have lived this gospel. Even when some of my choices were questionable or caused me to have to repent, I really felt like he was with me. I struggled to pay my tithing. It was one of the hardest things for me to pay. I could not make sense of the math that if I am just barely making it, then how can I pay 10% and pay my rent and do the things that I needed to do, and he showed me over and over again that he would help me.

00:55:39 Sometimes it was monetary. Other times I must have made cuts that allowed me to pay my tithing and I remember I was overdrawn in my checking account by 300 and some odd dollars. I just was not sure how I was gonna make it work. I was a student at BYU at the time. I was working at FW Woolworth down on Center Street right by where the NuSkin building is, and I remember going to work that day thinking, I am in trouble 'cause I'm not gonna get paid for another couple of weeks. I'm overdrawn. I didn't know what to do and I remember going into work. My manager said, I need to talk to you, and she called me back. Apparently someone came in from the labor department and said that they needed to pay the part-time staff holiday pay

		and different things like that to bring them into compliance. They handed me a check and it was for $365, which was the amount that I was overdrawn in my account and I could not believe it.
	00:56:51	I know that that seems pretty crazy, but it happened and I was able to get out of debt with my bank, get my affairs in order. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have shown up for me on many occasions and have spoken peace to my mind or have given me a direction or something. I believe because I have seen the fruits of this gospel and what it can bring into my life, even when things have been hard, it's kind of like when you're swimming and you feel like you're drowning and you relax and then you become buoyant and you float to the top. That's what it feels like when heavenly Father grabs you in His arms and takes you through. You feel like you're floating and you're buoyant in water, and I have felt that many times. When my sister passed away, when I struggled with wanting to be married. I just felt his presence and his assurance that he has a plan and it's better than I thought. It has always worked out that way, which helps me to believe. I have chosen to trust Him. Most of the time, when I have it has brought great blessings to my life. That is why I believe. I believe in his promises because I have been privileged to some of those blessings that he has promised me.
Hank Smith:	00:58:28	Thank you. What a beautiful day, Carol. I want you to be in my family. Like, I'm glad we're all one family.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:58:40	Yes, we are. I am in your family.
Hank Smith:	00:58:42	Yeah. We can call each other family, brother and sister. There's a reason we
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:58:47	That's right.
John Bytheway:	00:58:47	That's right. There's a reason we do that.
Hank Smith:	00:58:49	John, one way I know I have an increase of the Spirit is my desire to do better, to be better, to be more kind, to be more gentle, to repent, to go and hug my little kids and they're not so little anymore, but kiss 'em on the head and say, dads mess up sometimes.
John Bytheway:	00:59:11	Yeah. I thought I knew Carol and some of her backstory. I didn't. And my respect for you is, I can't reach high enough to show you. So thankful that you came and talked to us today. I think

		people will feel like, Hank and me. Gonna do a little better. Gonna try a little harder. Gonna love my kids and tell them, Hey, dad's make mistakes. We're gonna keep trying. We're gonna do this together.
Hank Smith:	00:59:37	We're gonna keep going. We're a family. Yeah. Aunt Carol's gonna help us.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:59:43	I had many adopted kids for many, many years of my friends.
Hank Smith:	00:59:47	Well, don't worry, I have four boys I can drop off at your house very soon.
Sis. Carol Costley:	00:59:51	Okay, great.
Hank Smith:	00:59:54	With that, we want to thank Sister Carol Costley for joining us today. It has been such a treat. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and every episode we remember our founder Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. It's the last episode of this year's Come, Follow Me on followHIM. Thank you for joining us on today's episode. Do you or someone you know speak Spanish, Portuguese, or French? You can now watch and listen to our podcast in those languages. Links are in the description below. Today's show notes and transcript are on our website. Followhim.co. That's followhim.co. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, Heather Barlow, Amelia Kabwika, Sydney Smith and Annabelle Sorensen.
	01:00:54	Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to him. Follow him.



Hank Smith:	00:03	Hey welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I share a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we are studying the Family Proclamation this week, and I have a story for you. This comes from a good friend of mine named Keith. Keith was a teenager growing up in Alaska. He said he and his best friend were strong members of the church. They kept their standards. They had a lot of friends who weren't members of the church, who didn't have the same standards, but they were able to uphold each other when some of their friends would do things that, oh, that's, that's probably not what we are going to do, right? Hey, we're gonna go home now, goodbye. And they would always go together. And Keith said his friend was kind of the stronger one of the two he felt, when it came to the gospel. But one evening at one of these parties, his friend, who he said was the stronger of the two, he looked over and he was drinking alcohol. He was kind of shocked by it and didn't know what to think. And they ended up leaving the party later, and he thought about it all week, like, well, he did that. And he's, you know, he's the strong one. My friend Keith made the decision that week that he was going to break the word of wisdom.
John Bytheway:	01:25	Wow.
Hank Smith:	01:25	He was going to drink. So the night comes that they're gonna go out with their friends again, and he says goodbye to his parents and goes out. And he said, when we got to the house, we had been there not very long, just a few minutes when the phone rings. Now, John, this is back when the phone was attached to the house. If we have a listener out there who says, what, wait, why was the phone attached to the house? You have to ask your grandma. This was, this was a long time ago. It's not Keith's house, but the person there says, Hey, Keith, it's for you. And he's, for me? Why would the phone be for me at this house? I don't know. So he gets on the phone and it's his mom, and she said, Hey, Keith, I'm so sorry to bother you when you're with your friends, but I really need your help.

	02:15	Would you mind if I came and got you and you could come help me? He's like, well, yeah sure, sure mom. Of course. Yeah. He hangs up the phone, a few minutes later his mom pulls up and he goes out to the car and he gets in and they start to drive and he said, Hey, mom, well, what's going on? What do you need my help with? And she said, Keith, please, please, please don't be upset with me. I knew you were in trouble.
John Bytheway:	02:41	Wow.
Hank Smith:	02:41	And I had to come get you. And he said, in trouble, you know, in trouble? She said, I, I don't know. I don't know. Something told me you were in trouble and I had to come get you. Said he sat back kind of in that passenger seat and went, wow.
John Bytheway:	02:58	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	02:58	Wow. He made it very clear when he told this story, he said, I had talked to no one.
John Bytheway:	03:04	Somebody upstairs knew.
Hank Smith:	03:06	Yep. I asked my friend Keith about this recently. He's a boss of mine at BYU. He said, my mother has passed, and this story and other stories of her inspired influence in my life are some of my greatest treasures. She was a consecrated mother and was in tune with the Spirit to keep her son from falling too far from the covenant path. And I was thinking about that, John, with the Family Proclamation. Not every parent is like this, and not every story is like this. I knew we were studying the Family Proclamation this week, and I thought of this tiny portion of it, husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. And you can see that the Lord will help you.
John Bytheway:	03:56	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	03:57	As you, as you try to love and care for your spouse and children.
John Bytheway:	04:02	You remember, we talk about Elder Maxwell sometimes. There's that World War II story where he felt his parents were praying for him and found out a time on an attack on him and his, in his foxhole I think that his mother had said, we need to get outta bed and pray for Neal. Just think, man. That's amazing.
Hank Smith:	04:21	Yeah. There's parents out there. I remember Keith said to his mom, she said, please don't be mad at me. Right? For

		interrupting your evening. And I think then as a teenager and today he'd say, no mom. No. I'm I'm not mad. I love you. I love you.
John Bytheway:	04:40	Right.
Hank Smith:	04:41	Well, we hope you will text your mom right now, or your dad. Let 'em know how much you love them. Tell 'em. Say Hank and John told me to tell you that I love you. Then come join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get any podcast. We're with Sister Carol Costley this week who walks us through the proclamation. She is a counselor. She has a unique take on the proclamation and then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.