



“The greatest search of our time is the search for personal identity” (Elder Howard W. Hunter, In *Conference Report*, Apr. 1967, 115).

## Understanding the Role of Identity in Conversion

“All Human Beings— male and female— are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny” ---*The Family, A Proclamation to the World*




## The Problem

- Adolescence is a developmental time when our youth are trying to understand who they are, and what direction they should go.
- They are, put simply, in an identity crisis.
- The world would tell these youth that they need to be free, famous, sexy, wealthy, popular, etc.
- The world would also teach them that if they are not these things, then they are worthless and good for nothing.



## The Doctrine: Moses 1

1 THE words of God, which he **spake** unto Moses at a time when Moses was caught up into an exceedingly high **mountain**,  
 2 And he **saw** God **face** to face, and he **talked** with him, and the **glory** of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence.  
 3 And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I am the Lord God **Almighty**, and **Endless** is my **name**; for I am without beginning of days or end of years; and is not this endless?  
 4 And, behold, thou art my son; wherefore **look**, and I will show thee the **workmanship** of mine **hands**; but not all, for my **works** are without **end**, and also my **words**, for they never cease.  
 5 Wherefore, no man can behold all my **works**, except he behold all my **glory**; and no man can **behold** all my **glory**, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth.  
 6 And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the **similitude** of mine **Only Begotten**; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the **Savior**, for he is full of **grace** and **truth**; but there is **no** God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I **know** them all.



## Scriptures that Provide Insight

- Helaman 5:5-9
- Moses 1:1-6
- Mosiah 5:7
- I Peter 2:9
- Exodus 19:5-6

“In this world, we do not really grasp who we are until we know whose we are...”

Truman G. Madsen, *The Savior, the Sacrament, and Self Worth*



## Spiritual Identity Theft

“We know we are sons and daughters of God, with the potential to become like Him as described in His plan of happiness. We know this potential is achieved through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and through obedience to the eternal laws and principles embedded in His gospel. We also know that Satan is totally dedicated to thwarting and derailing this marvelous plan-of-happiness knowledge and process. We know that one of his primary tools is to entice us to forget who we really are—to fail to realize or to forget our divine potential. This is the cruelest form of identity theft.



## Spiritual Identity Theft

“How does Satan do it? He is quite straightforward and predictable. First, he attempts to prompt doubts in our minds about our divine potential. He even cultivates doctrine in the world implying we are much less than we really are. He undermines our faith—and thus our confidence—in our ability to achieve our potential. He strives to bring us to a mind-set in which we believe that we, individually, are not good enough to ever achieve our celestial goals.



## Spiritual Identity Theft

"In this same vein Satan seeks to convince us that we are so bad that even the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is not sufficient to reach down to our lowly depths and draw us up unto our Savior. He tempts us into paths that seem to verify his cynicism about our grand and glorious potential.

"He then hedges his bets by surrounding us with the gaudy, glitzy filth of pornography and other forms of immorality and thus precludes our being led by the Holy Spirit. He is a clever fellow with many tricks to make us forget who we really are: sons and daughters of God with divine potential" (Robert C. Oaks, "Your Divine Heritage," *Ensign*, Apr 2008, 46–50).



## We Are Sons and Daughters of Heavenly Father

"All over the world and in almost every language, young women ages 12 to 18 declare the same thing: "We are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves us, and we love Him" ("Young Women Theme," *Young Women Personal Progress* [booklet, 2001], 5). Yet as they grow up, they often grow away from the confident knowledge of three-year-old Eliza that they are very special. Youth often experience an identity crisis, wondering who they really are. The teenage years are also a time of what I describe as "identity theft," meaning that worldly ideas, philosophies, and deceits confuse us, buffet us, and seek to rob us of the knowledge of our true identity.

"One very good young woman said to me, "Sometimes I am not sure who I am. I don't feel Heavenly Father's love. My life seems hard. Things are not turning out the way I wanted, hoped, and dreamed they would." What I said to her I now say to young women everywhere: I know unequivocally that you are a daughter of God. He knows you, He loves you, and He has a plan for you. I know this is a message Heavenly Father wants me to share with you" (Susan W. Tanner, "Daughters of Heavenly Father," *Liahona*, May 2007, 106–9).



## You Are Second to None

"Latter-day prophets and apostles testify of our divine natures. The proclamation to the world on the family says, "Each [of us] is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny" (*Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102). And President Gordon B. Hinckley has also said:

"You are second to none. You are daughters of God.

"There has come to you as your birthright something beautiful and sacred and divine. Never forget that. Your Eternal Father is the great Master of the universe. He rules over all, but He also will listen to your prayers as His daughter and hear you as you speak with Him. He will answer your prayers. He will not leave you alone" ("Stay on the High Road," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2004, 112).



## God Has Held You In Reserve

"For nearly six thousand years, God has held you in reserve to make your appearance in the final days before the Second Coming of the Lord. . . . While our generation will be comparable in wickedness to the days of Noah, when the Lord cleansed the earth by flood, there is a major difference this time. It is that God has saved for the final inning some of his strongest children, who will help bear off the Kingdom triumphantly. And that is where you come in, for you are the generation that must be prepared to meet your God.



## You Are A Marked Generation

"All through the ages the prophets have looked down through the corridors of time to our day. Billions of the deceased and those yet to be born have their eyes on us. Make no mistake about it—you are a marked generation. There has never been more expected of the faithful in such a short period of time as there is of us. Never before on the face of this earth have the forces of evil and the forces of good been as well organized. Now is the great day of the devil's power, with the greatest mass murderers of all time living among us. But now is also the great day of the Lord's power, with the greatest number ever of priesthood holders on the earth. And the showdown is fast approaching" (President Ezra Taft Benson, "In His Steps," *Speeches of the Year*, 1979 [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1980], 59).



## Choice Spirits

President Wilford Woodruff said, "The Lord has chosen a small number of choice spirits of Sons and Daughters out of all the creations of God, who are to inherit the earth, and the company of choice spirits have been kept in the Spirit World for 6,000 years, to come forth in the last days, to stand in the flesh in the last dispensation of the fullness of times, to organize the Kingdom of God upon the earth, to build it up and to defend it" (Wilford Woodruff, *Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, edited by G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 238–240).



## A Choice Generation

President Joseph Fielding Smith observed that “our young people are among the most blessed and favored of our Father’s children. They are the nobility of heaven, a choice and chosen generation who have a divine destiny. Their spirits have been reserved to come forth in this day when the Gospel is on the earth, and when the Lord needs valiant servants to carry on His great latter-day work” (as cited in Brent L. Top, *The Life Before* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], 154 - 155.)



## You Have A Noble Heritage

President Harold B. Lee also reminded the youth of their foreordained place in the history of the world. “You our youth of today are among the most illustrious spirits to be born into mortality in any age of the world. Yours is a noble heritage and a wonderful opportunity” (as cited in Brent L. Top, *The Life Before* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], 154 - 155.)



## You Have Great Promise

Said President Gordon B. Hinckley with prophetic insight: “My dear young [people], the Lord has been very good to you. He has brought you forth in this, the greatest age in the history of the earth. He has made you the beneficiary of His glorious gospel, restored to the earth for your blessing. No other generation has been the beneficiary of so much knowledge, of so much experience, of so much affluence and opportunity. O God bless you.... of the noble birthright, you of the great promise.” (*Ensign*, May 1987, 48).



## You Are A Chosen Group

“It is not difficult to understand why the great God in heaven has reserved these special spirits for the final work of the kingdom prior to his millennial reign. . . . This generation will face trials and troubles that will exceed those of their pioneer forebears. Our generation has had some periods of respite from the foe. The future generation will have little or none. . . . This is a chosen generation. . . . I believe today’s [LDS youth] will lead the youth of the world through the most trying time in history” (Vaughn J. Featherstone, *Ensign*, November 1987, 27-29).



## You Were Born to Lead

“This is not new news. You have been told countless times that you are a chosen generation reserved for the latter part of the latter days. Just two months ago, in general conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley said once again: ‘You are the best generation we have ever had’ (‘An Ensign to the Nations, a Light to the World,’ *Ensign*, November 2003, 84). It’s akin to being chosen to run the last leg of a relay, where the coach always positions his strongest runner.

“You were recommended to help run the last leg of the relay that began with Adam and Eve because your premortal spiritual valor indicated you would have the courage and the determination to face the world at its worst, to do combat with the evil one during his heyday, and, in spite of it all, to be fearless in building the kingdom of God.

“You simply *must* understand this, because you were born to lead by virtue of who you are, the covenants you have made, and the fact that you are here now in the 11th hour.



## You Were Born to Lead

“You were born to lead as mothers and fathers, because now here is righteous leadership more crucial than in the family. You were born to lead as priesthood and auxiliary leaders; as heads of communities, companies, and even nations. You were born to lead as men and women willing ‘to stand as witnesses of God at *all times* and in *all things*, and in *all places*,’ because that’s what a true leader does (Mosiah 18:9; emphasis added).

*You were born to lead*, and, in the words of Isaiah, *you were born for glory* (see Isaiah 62:2-3).

“Now the glorious but sobering truth is that, in spite of your eons of premortal preparation, the days ahead will at times ‘wrench your very heart strings,’ as the Prophet Joseph told the Twelve (in John Taylor, *JD* 24:197). If you’ve hoped to passively, comfortably live out your lives, let me burst that little bubble once and for all. Now, please, do not misunderstand me: This is a magnificent time to live! It is a time, said President Spencer W. Kimball, when our influence ‘can be tenfold what it might be in more tranquil times’ (‘Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,’ *Ensign*, November 1978, 103). The strongest runner *wants* to run the last leg of the relay.



## You Were Born to Be Tough!

“But the last days are not for the faint of heart or the spiritually out of shape. There will be days when you feel defeated, exhausted, and plain old beat-up by life’s whiplash. People you love will disappoint you—and you will disappoint them. You’ll probably struggle with some kind of mortal appetite. Some days it will feel as though the veil between heaven and earth is made of reinforced concrete. And you may even face a crisis of faith. In fact, you can count on trials that test your testimony and your faith.

“Aren’t you glad I came bearing such optimistic news? Actually, I am nothing if not optimistic about you, for everything about your lives is an indicator of our Father’s remarkable respect for you. He recommended you for now, when the stakes are so high. Now is the day when His kingdom is being established once and for all, never again to be taken from the earth. This is the last leg of the relay. This is when He needs His strongest runners.



## You Were Born for Glory

“The simple fact is that our Father did not recommend Eve or Moses or Nephi or countless other magnificent exemplars for this dispensation—He recommended you and me. Do you think God would have left the last days to chance by sending men and women He couldn’t count on? A common theme of patriarchal blessings given to men and women your age is that you were sent now because our Father’s most trustworthy children would be needed in the final, decisive battle for righteousness. That is who you are, and it is who you have always been” (Sheri L. Dew, “You We’re Born to Lead, You We’re Born for Glory,” BYU Speeches, 9 December 2003).



## Wow!

“The special spirits who have been reserved to live in this time of challenges and who overcome will one day be praised for their stamina by those who pulled handcars” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Notwithstanding My Weakness*, 18).





## You Were Born to be a King

“Many years ago I heard the story of the son of King Louis XVI of France. King Louis had been taken from his throne and imprisoned. His young son, the prince, was taken by those who dethroned the king. They thought that inasmuch as the king’s son was heir to the throne, if they could destroy him morally, he would never realize the great and grand destiny that life had bestowed upon him.

“They took him to a community far away, and there they exposed the lad to every filthy and vile thing that life could offer. ... For over six months he had this treatment—but not once did the young lad buckle under pressure. Finally, after intensive temptation, they questioned him. Why had he not submitted himself to these things—why had he not partaken? These things would provide pleasure, satisfy his lusts, and were desirable; they were all his. The boy said, ‘I cannot do what you ask for I was born to be a king’ ” (“The King’s Son,” *New Era*, Nov. 1975, 35).

- Bishop Featherstone commented: “Our Father is a king, and just as the king’s son was exposed to every vile and perverted thing in this life, so you will be exposed to much of the filth and degradation of our generation. But you... are also born to be kings and queens, priests and priestesses” (*New Era*, Nov. 1975, 35).



## My Search for Identity







My Father,  
John K.  
Brower



## In His Image

“Man is in the image of his maker...he is His exact image, having eye for eye, forehead for forehead, eyebrows for eyebrows, nose for nose, cheekbones for cheekbones, mouth for mouth, chin for chin, ears for ears, precisely like our Father in Heaven” (Brigham Young, As cited in Ludlow, *Old Testament Commentary, Latter-day Prophets Speak*, 278).



## Role of Identity

"Confused youth needs identity with divine power. What alienated youth of today need most is a self-definition, a feeling of identity, and a sense of belonging—indeed, a sense of belonging to a universe which, at its core, is not hostile or indifferent to man's highest values, hopes, and longings. What youth need today is a faith and a confidence that the things that matter most are not at the mercy of the things that matter least; that man is not simply an 'accidental arrangement of atoms,' but a child of the living God who gives meaning and purpose to existence, not only in ultimate terms but also in terms of the problems of the here and now" (Elder Paul H. Dunn, *Conference Report*, October 1967, Third Day—Morning Meeting, 125).



## Find Yourself

"God bless you young women and young men who struggle through the worrisome teenage years. Some of you may not yet have found yourselves, but you are not lost, for Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, our Savior and Redeemer" (Elder Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1989, 59).



## Who Are They?

- Literal Children of God, a Heavenly Father
- Children with a Divine Nature (D&C 4)
- Children with a Divine Destiny
- Children saved for the very last days because of their valiance in the pre-mortal life (Abraham 3:24-25).
- Children who can change and influence the world



## If You Only Knew!!

- Steve James Music Here



## Teach them Who They Are

- Teach them who they can become!
- Teach them what they can do
- Elder Neal A. Maxwell, "Tell them youth we love them, we need them, and we pray for them each day."



## Daughter of a King

Do you wonder if He knows who you are?  
 Do you wonder if He knows the secret pleadings of your heart  
 He has numbered every sand of the sea  
 And he longs for you to know that He believes in you  
 Can you feel a quiet power from above?  
 Can you feel His strength surround you when your own is not enough?  
 He has blessed you with his spirit from on high  
 And He longs for you to know it lives inside of you  
 Oh, be true –



## Daughter of a King

Daughter of a king,  
 the Father's royalty  
 heir to His divinity  
 He's calling your name  
 to come and take your place before His throne  
 He has always known  
 what he created you to be  
 A daughter of a king



## Daughter of a King

You hold the promises of all eternity  
 Rise to claim the noble birthright you were sent here to receive  
 He has loved you since you lived with Him before  
 Let Him lead you to the gifts He has in store for you  
 Oh, be true –



## Daughter of a King

Daughter of a King,  
 the Father's royalty  
 heir to His divinity  
 He's calling your name  
 to come and take your place before His throne  
 He has always known  
 what he created you to be  
 Father's royalty  
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 He's calling our names  
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