

FAMILY *Council*

Having a family council at the beginning of the year to pray, listen, discuss, and plan your family scripture study for the year can have a huge impact on how the rest of the year goes. If your family enjoys these, you could do them each month to help you stay on track with your goals and modify anything that isn't working well. Elder Ballard shared this about family council, "When council members feel they are part of a decision, they become supporters and specific positive results can be accomplished." (April 2016 General Conference, *Family Council*)

If you want your family to be interested and supportive of family scripture study, you need to listen and involve them in the process. We always care more about the things we have an active part in creating.

Use the five steps below to help guide your council:

Pray. Start with a prayer and invite Heavenly Father to bless your efforts this year.

Welcome: Welcome everyone and share your purpose for the council. Something like, "I wanted us to meet together to figure out how we want to study the Book of Mormon this year. I am excited to hear everyone's ideas and figure out a good plan." If it feels appropriate, you can share your testimony of the importance of family scripture study.

Listen. Start off by listening! This signals that their ideas matter and have weight in this decision. Let everyone have the chance to speak and feel safe sharing their ideas and opinions. Elder Ballard says, "Children desperately need parents willing to listen to them, and the family council can provide a time during which family members can learn to understand and love one another." Here are a few questions you could consider with your family:

- How are you feeling about doing family scripture study? What are you excited about? What are your concerns?
- How do you feel about studying the Book of Mormon?
- What things did you love about family scripture study last year? How could we make family scripture study a better experience for you this year?
- What do you want to add or do differently?

Discuss. Once everyone has been heard (including you!), you can start discussing these questions:

- When and where do you want to do scriptures study?
- How do you want it to look? (how much reading, who is leading/teaching, formal/less formal, does your family enjoy longer discussion time or engagement activities)
- How will you gather?
- What will you need to bring?
- Brainstorm any problems you foresee and how you will work through those (kids who are disrupting, days that are extra busy, etc.)

Plan. As a family, write out a simple plan for what your family scripture study will look like based off your discussion. You can use the next page or create your own. If you have younger kids, you can add some pictures, or with older kids, let them do more of the writing so they can be involved.

Post this plan in a place where everyone can see it. You are ready to get started for the year!

