



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SUNDAY MORNING SESSION

Integrity and Virtue Lead to Happiness

Elder Quentin L. Cook · Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Words to remember

- *“The covenant path that will return us to our beloved Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, is not obscure; it is well marked.”*
- *“The ultimate reward of integrity and virtue is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.”*

In Elder Quentin L. Cook's own words, from the talk.

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve taught that lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ best reflect the Savior when they joyfully live lives of integrity and virtue. “The covenant path that will return us to our beloved Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, is not obscure; it is well marked.” A virtuous, Christlike life has never been more important.

He and his wife, Mary, recently met with missionaries in the Scotland Ireland Mission. On the grounds of one building is a replica of a message that influenced President David O. McKay as a young missionary in Scotland. He passed a building with this inscription carved above the doorway: “Whate’er thou art, act well thy part.” It inspired him for the rest of his life to do his very best in every responsibility. Elder Cook said President McKay was the prophet when he was young and has often referred to that message.

The Lord said of one servant in Nauvoo, “He may be trusted because of the integrity of his heart.” Preach My Gospel teaches that integrity includes being honest with God, ourselves, our leaders, and others. President Spencer W. Kimball taught that integrity, the willingness to live by our beliefs, is a foundation stone of good character.

In the Father’s plan, integrity, virtue, and happiness are linked. Virtue includes a strong moral compass, cleanliness, modesty, goodness, holiness, and reverence for the sacred. Elder Cook said that as the United States celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, some scholars note that the founders understood the pursuit of happiness as living a virtuous life. In Liberty Jail Joseph Smith was told, “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly.” President McKay taught that happiness is the purpose of our existence: “‘Men are that they might have joy’ [see 2 Nephi 2:25].”

In contrast, much of what we see in society and social media is coarse and crude and destroys civil discussion. “Any use of the internet to bully, destroy a reputation, or place a person in a bad light is

reprehensible” wrong, Elder Cook said, and if Latter-day Saints do it, it can hurt others who don’t know the Savior. We can’t control others, but we can be peacemakers, as President Russell M. Nelson and President Dallin H. Oaks have taught. Daily scripture study and spiritual renewal bless us.

Jesus said He had not come to condemn the world, but to save the world. He asked, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Paul taught, “If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” The ultimate reward of integrity and virtue is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. Part of integrity is admitting our faults and repenting every day.

As a young missionary in the British Mission, Elder Cook taught a man who had served on a battleship during World War II. When taught about repentance, he was overcome. He said it felt like when he got off the battleship back in England and felt the earth of his island home under his feet. He fell to his knees in gratitude. Before baptism he prayed that he could give others the same joy, “Especially my family.”

Elder Cook said, “Integrity, virtue, and ongoing repentance are the answer in a world where coarse language and serious challenges are so prevalent.”

Scripture to look up: Doctrine and Covenants 121:45. The Lord asks us to let virtue fill our thoughts all the time. Integrity and virtue lead to lasting happiness.

Let’s talk about it

What did this talk teach us about the Savior? What is one small thing our family can do this week?

Kid-friendly summary in our own words · Read or watch the full talk: [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/46cook](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/46cook)