



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SUNDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Teach Truth with Love

Elder Clark G. Gilbert · Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Words to remember

- *“It takes courage to stand for truth. It takes even more courage to stand for truth with love.”*
- *“For disciples of Jesus Christ, truth and love always walk together. I believe teaching truth with love will be the hallmark of Christ’s disciples in the last days.”*

In Elder Clark G. Gilbert’s own words, from the talk.

Elder Clark G. Gilbert of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles opened: “It takes courage to stand for truth. It takes even more courage to stand for truth with love.” President Dallin H. Oaks has repeatedly emphasized this, explaining that when we keep the commandments we are sometimes accused of having no love for those who don’t, and when we show love we are sometimes seen as supporting what contradicts our religious duties. Elder Gilbert worried that some would selectively anchor only on truth or others would only anchor on love, and that some would see only others’ shortcomings and forget their own.

When President Russell M. Nelson spoke on peacemaking, Elder Gilbert started a mental list of everyone I thought needed his message. Then President Nelson cautioned that we should look deeply into our own heart to see if there are shards of pride or jealousy in the way. “I extend that same invitation to all of us today.”

Years earlier, assigned to speak with President Oaks at an Ensign College devotional on challenging doctrinal topics, Elder Gilbert sheepishly suggested they write out what he would say, for the sake of the church. The devotional, *Standing Fast with Love and Proclaiming Truth*, contained five principles he amplified.

First, avoid overly contentious settings. Elder Neil L. Andersen taught that being a peacemaker sometimes means resisting the impulse to respond. Elder Gilbert cited Dostoevsky’s *Grand Inquisitor*, where the Savior answers repeated denunciation with silence and a kiss. When national academic leaders aggressively criticized faith in higher education, he chose to table the discussion despite strong disagreement. Tense moments can hide what is really happening; President Nelson taught that those who step away may have doubts fueled by things you cannot see. Sister Annette Dennis told of a wounded dog that would not respond to its owner, for hostility can be hidden pain. Elder Gilbert failed to see this with a once-faithful friend who was attacking the Church. Frustrated because he

knew his friend knew better, he shot back an angry retort. “I may have won the debate in the moment, but I lost the Spirit and I failed to help my struggling friend.” He stood for truth that day, but I did it without love and without charity.

Second, first find common ground. A stake president asked him to make several ministering visits; Elder Gilbert suggested only one home. Five people were waiting there, each with a different situation. Tempted to interject, he followed the Spirit and listened, nearly two hours, through their next meeting. When he invited them to stake conference that evening, each accepted. Building common ground first allowed me later to teach from a place of love. As with the Savior, “we love him, because he [loved us first].”

Third, be a light. President Nelson taught, “Let your skeptical friends see how much you love the Lord and His gospel.” “The best way to help someone else keep their covenants is to keep your covenants.” Sister Tamara W. Runia reminded us to stay at the tree and keep beckoning to those we love. After the tense meeting with academic leaders, a university chancellor later asked his counsel on a character course at a prestigious institution. “Being a light opens more doors than any pointed argument ever will.”

Fourth, hold to the truth even in our outreach. President Oaks has said love does not mean surrendering our values. President Jeffrey R. Holland noted the difference between the commandment to forgive sin and the warning against condoning it, and said, “As near as I can tell, Christ never once withheld His love from anyone, but He also never once said to anyone, ‘Because I love you, you are exempt from keeping my commandments.’” Some argue loving our neighbor supersedes loving God, but President D. Todd Christofferson taught, “Putting the first commandment first does not diminish or limit our ability to keep the second commandment. To the contrary, it amplifies and strengthens it.” Elder Gilbert said, “When we try to love others by minimizing God’s laws, we separate ourselves from the one person who loves them the very most.” The Savior loved the woman taken in adultery and charged her to go and sin no more. President Nelson noted that the adversary is loud while Heavenly Father speaks quietly and plainly.

Fifth, stay anchored in Jesus Christ. Elder Gilbert asked us to measure ourselves against charity, which suffereth long, and is kind, is not puffed up, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth in the truth. “For disciples of Jesus Christ, truth and love always walk together. I believe teaching truth with love will be the hallmark of Christ’s disciples in the last days.” For some it will require greater conviction, for others greater clarity, but “I know the Lord will help us as we strive to teach truth with love.”

Scripture to look up: Moroni 7:45. Charity suffereth long, and is kind and rejoices in the truth, so disciples teach truth with love.

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/2026/10/59gilbert](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/59gilbert)