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OBJECTIVE	Each young woman will understand the importance of the traditions she receives and passes on to future generations.
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PREPARATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review Lehi’s vision of the tree of life recorded in 1 Nephi 8.</li> <li>2. Provide pens and paper for the class members.</li> <li>3. Select one or more of the activities outlined in the first section of the lesson, and prepare accordingly. Gather all materials needed and make the necessary assignments to make sure that this part of the lesson will be enjoyable and beneficial to the class.</li> <li>4. Read the resource material at the end of the lesson. Use it to help you prepare the lesson. You may also want to share some parts of it with the young women.</li> <li>5. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.</li> </ol>
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SUGGESTED LESSON DEVELOPMENT	<b>Everyone Has a Unique Heritage</b>
Quotation	To open the musical <i>Fiddler on the Roof</i> , Tevye, a Russian dairyman of Jewish descent, speaks these lines:  “Here in Anatevka we have our traditions for everything—how to eat, how to sleep, how to work, even how to wear clothes. For instance, we always keep our heads covered; we wear these little prayer shawls. This shows our constant devotion to God. You may ask, how did this tradition get started? I’ll tell you—I don’t know! But it’s a tradition. Because of our traditions everyone here knows who he is and what God expects him to do.”
Discussion	Ask the young women to give some examples of traditions that come from their family, culture, and national background. Answers may include stories, beliefs, customs, and memorabilia handed down from generation to generation. Point out that we each have unique traditions because we come from different families, and our families come from different nations and cultures. Each tradition has a special meaning for the individual family.
Optional activities	<p>Select one or more of the following activities to demonstrate traditions. These activities should increase the young women’s knowledge about and interest in their individual heritages. Select the activity or activities best suited to your class members and their situations. Be sure that each young woman has an opportunity to demonstrate or discover a tradition that is part of her heritage.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find out what country the ancestors of some of your class members came from. Learn about a custom from one or more of these countries. Demonstrate or relate these customs to the class. Have the class members identify which countries the customs come from.</li> <li>2. Assign all class members to bring a treasure or heirloom such as lace, handiwork, or a picture that represents their unique heritage. They should be prepared to tell about the item—where it came from, who made it, and its significance to the family.</li> <li>3. Assign each young woman to explain or demonstrate a family tradition, such as the way she celebrates birthdays or holidays. Ask her to explain how the tradition developed and what it means to her.</li> </ol>

4. If circumstances allow, contact each young woman's mother or grandmother. Ask her to write a letter to her daughter or granddaughter telling about a unique tradition or aspect of her heritage that would be uplifting to the young woman. The letters should be a surprise for the class members and should be delivered during the class.

Teacher presentation

Emphasize that each of the young women has been blessed with a unique heritage filled with exciting possibilities. This heritage is hers because of her ancestors. She should be proud and excited about her culture.

Tell the young women that in order to tie together the past and future generations of their families, you will now focus on them.

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### Through Righteous Living, We Can Give a Worthy Heritage to Our Posterity

Scripture discussion

Write on the chalkboard: "What kind of ancestor will you be?"

Explain that although we are not able to control what kind of ancestors we have, we can each determine what kind of ancestor we will be for our posterity.

Have class members read 1 Nephi 1:1. Then have them quickly review 1 Nephi 2:1–15 and answer the following question:

- In what ways were Nephi's parents goodly?
  1. Faithful to commandments (see 1 Nephi 2:1)
  2. Obedient (see 1 Nephi 2:3)
  3. Blessed and taught children (see 1 Nephi 2:9–14)

Explain that we should desire righteousness for our children. Lehi felt strongly about this. Review the vision of the tree of life as recorded in 1 Nephi 8. Have the class members read 1 Nephi 8:12.

Emphasize that Lehi's greatest desire was for the members of his family to partake of the fruit, which represented the love of God. In our day as well, the greatest tradition we can give to our posterity is being a worthy member of the Church with a strong testimony of the gospel.

Ask the young women to read Mosiah 1:5.

- What effect did the traditions of their fathers have on the Nephites and the Lamanites?

Ask the young women to read Helaman 15:7–8.

• How can the influence of unrighteous traditions be changed? Emphasize that unrighteous traditions can be overcome by developing faith in the Lord, studying the scriptures, and experiencing the change of heart that is conversion to the gospel.

Quotation

To emphasize the importance of passing on a righteous heritage, read the following quotation:

"A heritage of Godliness is yours. . . . Born in the spirit a child of God and quickened now by his power, his love. For you he gave his Only Begotten Son. For you Christ lived and died and lives again.

"This Church provides you with a heritage in truth, in covenants, in motivation, in courage, in direction, in friendships and leadership, in strength to rise out of the dust of this life to a new level of being.

"Hold fast to your heritage. It is most valuable. Hold high your head.

"Be glad you are you—not another instead. With all that you're heir to, add some of your own. Contribute. Accomplish. Serve. Excel. Drink deeply of the good things in life and of the spirit. Live that you may one day hand to your children and your children's children the blessing of a heritage even more worthy than your own" (Elaine Cannon, "What of Your Heritage?" *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1964, p. 690).

Chalkboard discussion

- What can you do now to prepare to become a goodly parent with a heritage of righteous traditions to pass on to your children?

Record the class members' responses on the chalkboard as you discuss them. They may include the following:

To become a goodly parent—

1. Study the gospel.
2. Gain a testimony.
3. Keep the commandments.
4. Enlarge on good traditions.
5. Develop talents and gifts.
6. Learn from families with good traditions.
7. Serve others.
8. Contribute to the Lord's kingdom.

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### Conclusion

Writing activity

Distribute paper and pens to the young women. As the beginning of a heritage of righteous traditions for her posterity, ask each young woman to record her testimony or a personal spiritual experience. Where appropriate, she may write the story of her conversion to the gospel. This paper should be preserved and included in her book of remembrance or personal history.

Testimony

Bear your testimony that the young women must begin now to develop righteous traditions that they can pass on to their posterity. Testify that the gospel is the greatest treasure that can be given to future generations.

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RESOURCE  
MATERIAL

"Suppose you were going to teach a lesson or give a talk to a group of young Latter-day Saints on the theme of the very first words in the Book of Mormon: 'I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents. . . .' (1 Nephi 1:1.) This wouldn't be very difficult, would it? After all, there could scarcely be a more universally accepted fact—it is a marvelous advantage to be born to good parents and into a home where the child is wanted and will be loved and trained and taught and given good example.

"But suppose you were well acquainted with the group you were to teach and knew that among them were at least several young people to whom this lesson, taught in the usual way, would be a heartbreak and a cause of uneasiness and embarrassment? Here is John whose parents have provided an example of a very unexemplary home, who have separated or divorced after bitterness and disloyalty and tragic constant controversy. John is fighting his way to a good life, anxious and determined to make something of himself and to prepare for a happy home of his own. There sits Phyllis whose folks have chosen a course directly opposite from that which they once followed and which she wants to live. Across the room is Robert who loves his dad but is confused because Dad thinks hunting and fishing and ball games, and maybe tobacco and alcohol, are more important than his priesthood opportunities.

"How will you teach your lesson with these youngsters in the group?

"You will want to face the facts of your situation squarely as you begin, acknowledging that while each of us understands that the enjoyment of a desirable heritage is a great blessing, many parents and homes are not what they ought to be. Frequently and commendably, devoted, courageous young people exert a favorable influence on parents and homes, but it is often true that there is discouragingly little that can be done to change parents by sons or daughters who themselves are resolutely trying to improve upon their heritage.

"What can and should be taught is that though we may not be in a position to do much about improving our parents, *there is everything we can do about deciding what kind of parents our own children will have!* From the great scriptural affirmation 'I, Nephi, having been

born of goodly parents . . . ' we can teach with effective emphasis and sincerity, 'I, John, desiring earnestly one day to become a goodly parent. . . .'

"Someone has said, 'It is desirable to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors.'

"To become a goodly parent is a challenge and objective fit for the strongest and most determined young person, and the achieving of this goal lies squarely on the shoulders of the individual. One can become what he sincerely desires and wills to be. . . .

"The young have in them *now* the seeds of the future. Under normal circumstances and expectations there will one day be those who call them 'father' or 'mother,' and who will be greatly influenced by the kind of mother or father they are. As prospective parents they need to learn the wondrous importance of good heritage, but they can be taught this from the scriptures in a way that will be stimulating and inspiring and that will give them the challenge and incentive to become 'goodly parents' " (Marion D. Hanks, "I, Johnny, Parent-to-Be . . . , " *Improvement Era*, Feb. 1961, pp. 97, 113).



# *Being Involved in Missionary Work*