

special people that God has reserved to come forth in this day, may God bless you with an understanding of who you are and bless you with a knowledge and understanding of the mission that he has in store for you. May your lives reflect that you are disciples of Jesus Christ, and may you, like our elder brother, grow in "wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52), that you will be prepared for the awesome responsibilities that he has before you. I challenge you to do so, to honor your priesthood and to show these good brethren of ours, who are placing increased responsibility on you as bearers of the priesthood, that you are worthy of that honor.

I bear my witness to you that God is our Father, that he loves you. He has given you the opportunity to come to this life to gain a body and to experience the joys and the sorrows of life that you can return to him and be prepared for even greater service. May God bless all of us who render service to him. May we honor our priesthood and truly represent his cause, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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### President Harold B. Lee

Elder James E. Faust, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, and Managing Director of the Melchizedek Priesthood MIA, will now address us.

## Elder James E. Faust

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

My beloved brethren, I am humbled and honored by the transcending privilege of being able to speak to you in this great assemblage of the priesthood.

I express appreciation to the First Presidency for the assignment that I share with my choice colleagues, Elders Marion D. Hanks and L. Tom Perry, to have concern for the adult single members of the Church over 18 who have, on occasion, been referred to as the "forgotten ones." I am grateful to our advisers of the Twelve, Elders Thomas S. Monson, Boyd K. Packer, Marvin J. Ashton, and Bruce R. McConkie, for their constant interest and support, and to our director, Jeffrey R. Holland, as well as to the faithful and dedicated members of the general board.

### Single adult members

During the past few months, we

have spent many hours listening. Most of the single adult members are well adjusted to life and its problems, but they still need the loving attention from the Church and its members to reaffirm their usefulness and the love that God has for each of them. They are not problem people, but many have problems, often not of their own making. A choice friend reminds us, "If you don't have any problems, just wait awhile."

We have been deeply moved and sobered as we have heard a common thread running through the expressions of many of the single adults. Loneliness and discouragement are for some their most constant companions. One great soul who has a good bishop, a good home teacher, a good position, and comfortable circumstances said, "I don't need more to do; I just need someone to do it with." This becomes a matter of great concern when we

consider that approximately one-third of the adults in the United States are single.

### Being left out

The proper and rightful focus of the Church on the home and the family frequently causes the single members who have no companion and family to feel left out. One writes, "Many members of the Church treat a divorcee as if she had leprosy. I have lived in a certain LDS ward in Salt Lake for several years, where they had a widows' and widowers' party every year at Christmas time. I was never invited. I have always lived a good life and believe the Savior would have invited me. I am acquainted with some who have experienced both death and divorce, and they say that divorce is worse than death."

Still another writes, "Believe me, with the Church emphasis on families and children, we are already thoroughly aware that we are 'oddballs.' It has been a real pleasure to be accepted as a normal person."

### Reaching the one

We must begin by trying to reach the one—every single individual. We want all to feel that they belong to the Church in the context of Paul's message to the Ephesians: "... ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19.) In our minds we draw two circles: one for the Young Adults, who are of the ages 18 to 25 and include all, whether at home, away from home, on campus, on missions, or in the military, within the circle. We draw another circle and include all of those age 26 and over in the Special Interests, whether never married, widow, widower, or divorced. Everyone who is single belongs in one of these two circles. There are none who are outside the circles.

Brother Hanks recently reminded us of how the Lord directed Ananias to the one. Ananias was sent to the street called Straight to restore the sight of Saul of Tarsus, stricken blind at the time of his conversion. Ananias responded by reminding the Lord of how much evil Saul had done. The Lord said, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me. . . ." (Acts 9:15.) Paul states that Ananias "came unto me, . . . and said unto me, Brother Saul. . . ." (Acts 22:13.)

Somehow we must reach the one—every single one—for they are "chosen vessels" unto the Lord.

Speaking to the single members, President Lee recently said, "In your ranks are some of the noblest members of the Church—faithful, valiant, striving to live the Lord's commandments, to help build up the kingdom on earth, and to serve your fellowmen."

As we undertake to reach the one, we should remember the counsel of the Lord to Samuel, as he was sent to the house of Jesse to find the one who should reign over Israel. The Lord said to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature . . . , for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7.)

### Guiding principles

We believe that each single adult member of the Church may be reached through three fundamental principles: (1) priesthood direction and correlation, (2) individual involvement, and (3) flexibility.

All activities will function under the priesthood.

### Individual involvement

Under the principle of individual involvement, priesthood leaders will advise and direct, but should encourage the growth and develop-

ment of the single adults by delegating to them all appropriate responsibility in conceiving, planning, preparing, and executing their activities. This should be done within the context of the recent teaching of the General Authorities by President Lee, when he referred to the scripture, "Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty. . . ." (D&C 107:99.) President Lee placed the emphasis on *let*, in the sense of permitting or allowing those given responsibilities to function within their callings without unnecessary restrictions.

It is hoped that priesthood leaders will make things happen by letting or permitting single members to involve themselves in planning and carrying out their activities locally, directed toward service. Through service, wounds can be turned into muscles for living. Leaders from the single members' groups themselves must be sufficiently innovative and creative to involve each one.

### Flexibility in program

There may be complete flexibility in age groupings and in organizing according to their specific interests.

It is not intended that detailed programs will be sent out from Church headquarters. We hope to be sending principles, options, and models for local implementation into local programs and to stimulate other activities. Elder Packer suggests that you are being sent a cookbook, rather than a casserole. We will be asking the stake presidents to share their successful recipes with others.

There are limitless opportunities and possibilities within the concepts of the principles announced, which can be summed up in the statement of the Prophet Joseph Smith when asked how he governed his people.

His response was, "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves."

The First Presidency has recently authorized ward leaders to organize single adults not living at home for family home evening, with one designated as the leader. It was made clear that the group should not be called a family and the leader cannot appropriately be designated as a father. Monday evening will be the most convenient for these groups to meet.

There has been complete cooperation between Bishop Brown and his counselors directing Aaronic Priesthood MIA, Sister Spafford and her counselors in the Relief Society, and the managing directors of Melchizedek Priesthood MIA. We are all interested in having our combined efforts fit together with all other Church activities in the interest of all members of the Church.

### Additional instructions

Within the next few weeks, priesthood leaders throughout the Church will be receiving more detailed instructions from the First Presidency for the implementation of the adult single members' activities of the Church. All will wish to study these instructions carefully and to follow them. One stake president, who has been leading out in these activities, recently said, "This program is not more work for the priesthood leaders, but it is an aid to them, if they will let the single members themselves organize and plan their own activities."

What is proposed is a way to reach the one and have each feel that someone cares and that each has a place in the Lord's church. Too often we are thoughtless and insensitive to the feelings of these choice souls among us. One well-meaning priesthood leader, concerned about one of these choice single

women, whose heart was aching for companionship and a more fulfilling life, asked, "Why don't you get a husband?" She replied in good humor, "Brother, I would love to, but I can't go pick one off a tree."

Reaching the one will involve reaching out in many ways. Recent research indicates that 40 percent of the 18- to 22-year-olds feel that they do not have a single friend they can rely upon. Gerald A. Speedy, commenting on this problem, said, "Think what it would be like not to have a single friend. It is almost impossible to comprehend. Without a friend, a person is in a state of potential crisis."

### Personal testimony

I bear solemn witness to the divinity of this great and marvelous work and to the continuing inspiration that has come from the Lord through his chosen prophet, who has been far ahead of all of the thinking and the planning that has been done. Somehow, some way, we must reach the one, every single one, for they

are "chosen vessels" unto the Lord. President Lee's message to the single members is sublime: "To you, the words of the Master have a special meaning: 'He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.'" (Matt. 10:39.) That this may be so, I pray humbly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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### President Harold B. Lee

The congregation and chorus will now join in singing, "Israel, Israel, God Is Calling."

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The song, "Israel, Israel, God Is Calling," was sung by the congregation.

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### President Lee

We will now be pleased to hear from President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency.

## President Marion G. Romney

### *Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

My beloved brethren of the priesthood:

I encourage each of us and, if I had the power, I would inspire each of us to magnify our callings in the priesthood.

### Covenant of priesthood bearers

When we accepted ordination to the priesthood, we covenanted with the Lord that we would magnify our callings. At the same time, he covenanted with us that if we do so, we shall be "sanctified by the Spirit unto

the renewing of [our] bodies" and "become the sons of . . . Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God," and unto us shall be given all that the "Father hath." (See D&C 84:33-38.)

The specified penalty for breaking our covenant and "altogether [turning] therefrom" is that we "shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come." (D&C 84:41.)

The Lord further said to the brethren assembled at the time he revealed the covenant:

"And I now give unto you a