

serious intentions of so magnifying his calling as to merit the blessing of the "covenant which belongeth to the priesthood" should be conversant with all the instructions given to guide us in our personal conduct—both those recorded in the scriptures and those being received currently by the living prophets. One can scarcely hope to be fortified "against the wiles of the devil" by putting "on the whole armour of God" (see Eph. 6:11) unless he knows what that armor is.

Render dedicated service

But the commandments do not pertain alone to one's personal conduct. They put on every bearer of the priesthood the stimulating responsibility to render service—service in carrying the restored gospel, with all the blessings of the priesthood, to the peoples of the earth; and service in comforting, strengthening, and perfecting the lives of one another and all the Saints of God.

The nature of this service is spelled out in detail in the revelations and by the living prophets. The burden of it the Lord has laid upon his priesthood. It can be done properly only by men who are magnifying their priesthood—who know the gospel, conform their lives to its stan-

dards, and enthusiastically give dedicated service in the spirit of the divine proclamation that "men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them" (D&C 58:27-28).

Such men are magnifying their callings, and they shall obtain the rewards promised by the Lord in the "oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood." That each of us may be found in this choice group, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

President Spencer W. Kimball, our beloved leader, will be our concluding speaker.

Before President Kimball speaks, we note that the nationwide CBS Radio Tabernacle Choir broadcast will be from 9:30 to 10:00 Sunday morning. Those desiring to attend must be in their seats before 9:15 A.M.

Following President Kimball's address, the choir will close this meeting with "Beautiful Saviour," following which Elder G. Homer Durham, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the benediction.

President Spencer W. Kimball

My dear brethren, it is always a great joy for me to have the privilege of meeting with you in general priesthood meeting. We are gathered here in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City and in more than 2,000 other places around the world. Just think of the mighty and sacred power that is represented by this assemblage of men and boys. I rejoice with you, my brethren, in the manifold blessings which are ours in holding the priesthood of God!

Members urged to vote

Brethren, there is one matter I should like to mention at the very beginning of my remarks. To those of you who are citizens of the United States: I wish to urge you and your family members of voting age to go to the polls in large numbers next month on Tuesday, November 4, and vote for the strongest, finest people who are certain to do the most to safeguard the rights and freedoms of

this nation. We do not endorse any candidates, but we hope you will vote for good men and women of character, integrity, and ability. You are to be the judge. Further, we hope our Church buildings and our Church organizations will not be used to advance the candidacy or policies of any of the candidates.

Minister to needs of members

As we read and study the scriptures, we are made conscious of the fact that the Savior has always been concerned about the welfare of the members of his flock, both individually and collectively. It is about that principle of caring for and ministering to the needs of the Church membership in these troubled days that I desire to speak to you brethren tonight.

Bishops and branch presidents, please be ever alert to the needs of the precious individuals and families who make up the membership of your wards and branches. You are the nurturing shepherds of our people. To the greatest extent possible, let your counselors and others who serve and work under your direction be the managers of programs. If you will pursue this emphasis, you will often be able to detect very early some of those members who have serious difficulties, while their challenges and problems are still small and manageable. Be conscious of the little tensions and problems you may see in families so that you can give the required attention, counsel, and love when it is most needed. An hour with a troubled boy or girl now may save him or her, and is infinitely better than the hundreds of hours spent in their later lives in the reclamation of a boy or girl if they become inactive.

As we have said so many times, delegate those tasks which others can do so that you are free to do those

things which you, and you alone, can do. Home teachers are to help watch over the flock. Even though they don't counsel as bishops and branch presidents do, home teachers can render much appropriate and preventive help under the direction of the quorum leaders and bishoprics.

Improve quality of teaching

Stake presidents, bishops, and branch presidents, please take a particular interest in improving the quality of teaching in the Church. The Savior has told us to feed his sheep (see John 21:15-17). I fear that all too often many of our members come to church, sit through a class or meeting, and they then return home having been largely uninformed. It is especially unfortunate when this happens at a time when they may be entering a period of stress, temptation, or crisis. We all need to be touched and nurtured by the Spirit, and effective teaching is one of the most important ways this can happen. We often do vigorous enlistment work to get members to come to church but then do not adequately watch over what they receive when they do come.

Minorities

Yesterday while speaking to the Regional Representatives, I called attention to the challenge facing all of us as we fellowship and teach the gospel to cultural and minority groups living among us. When special attention of some kind is not provided for these good people, we lose them. In April of 1977, as I was speaking about the Lamanites, I said that we could "no longer merely teach and preach to them, but we must establish the Church among them" (Regional Representatives' seminar, 1 April 1977). This statement applies to all cultures.

Basic unit program

During the past few years, the basic unit program has been developed to assist where there are special language or cultural needs. Its guidebooks, manuals, and reports are much less complicated than those for the full Church program. They are wonderful and are now available in most languages. We have designed smaller, less expensive buildings to meet this need also. Couples can be trained in the basic unit program and can then assist in establishing the Church among all people in all lands. Where the program is being used as outlined, we are meeting with *great* success.

We encourage you priesthood leaders to become familiar with this program and use it to bless people. The Lord said, "For they cannot bear meat now, but milk they must receive" (D&C 19:22).

Be mindful of those who need special attention

One more very important thing, my brethren—especially you stake presidents, bishops, and branch presidents. Be mindful always of the members of your flock who are sad, lonely, bereaved, or bereft. There are always some among us who need our special care and attention. We must never forget or overlook them. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (James 1:27).

Do not neglect families

We are rightly known as a chapel-building people. I hope we will become even better known as a family-building people. Do not neglect your own families, brethren. The new consolidated schedule permits you, if you plan well, to hold all the meetings in the consolidated schedule along with the necessary administrative meetings and *still have several hours with your family every Sunday*. Please see to it that this is done, so that you priesthood brethren do not neglect your own families and so that our wonderful stake presidents, bishops, branch and quorum presidents, and others can do likewise.

Love and blessing

I love you, my brethren, my beloved brethren, and I am grateful for your faith, your devotion, and your love for the cause of truth, the cause of the Master. Brethren, I express my affection for you and all your people in the scattered portions of the world. May the Lord bless you, brethren, and know that you are much loved here at Church headquarters. God bless you; peace be with you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "Beautiful Saviour."

Elder G. Homer Durham offered the benediction.
