

Count your blessings;
See what God hath done.
Count your blessings;
Name them one by one.
Count you many blessings;
See what God hath done.

Are you ever burdened with a load
of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are
called to bear?
Count your many blessings; every
doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the
days go by.

So amid the conflict, whether great
or small,
Do not be discouraged; God is
over all.
Count your many blessings; angels
will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your
journey's end.
(“When Upon Life’s Billows,”
Hymns, no. 202.)

Let us not judge the Lord’s great
wisdom with our small minds.

The Savior is extending his loving hands

Are you unloved? Are you unhappy? Are you handicapped? Divorced? Are you paralyzed like my friend? Are you angry? Do you hate someone? Do you have bitterness toward someone? Are you a single mother because your husband just took off? Are you lonely because your husband passed away? The Savior said:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30.)

I bear you my testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. He himself testified of his great, sacred mission when he appeared to the Nephites: “Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world” (3 Nephi 11:14).

I know that he lives; I know that he loves us; and I bear you my witness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President Benson

Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing “Redeemer of Israel,” following which Elder John K. Carmack, who was sustained yesterday as a new member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will represent his associates in addressing us.

The Choir and congregation sang
“Redeemer of Israel.”

Elder John K. Carmack

Expressions of love, gratitude, and support

What makes it possible for me to stand here, I think, is that you are all great friends.

In the Lord’s special revelation on government in the Church, he says that the First Presidency is upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the Church. (See D&C 107:22.) On behalf of these six who have just been called,

I would like to express to the First Presidency our confidence, our faith, and our prayers. We love the First Presidency, and we appreciate the confidence they have in us. I would also like to thank those of you who have expressed your confidence to us. It's the only possible way we can do this work. We have felt a rich outpouring of your love, and that has been an outstanding experience.

I would like you also to know that we have felt the love of the Saints throughout the Church. And especially on behalf of myself, I feel the love of my fellow California Saints, who are here in such great number, and of those great Saints in Idaho—and if I could be allowed a point of personal privilege, of those great missionaries of the Idaho Boise Mission. I feel their strength. Of course, our families are the essential cornerstone of that sustaining love. It's tremendous to belong to this great church.

Qualification for the work

Now, as to the calling, the awesome calling which has come. The Seventy are called to preach the gospel and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and all the world. As I have searched my heart, I think the only qualification I can think of—and I believe I speak on behalf of my brethren—is that we have an especially strong witness of this work.

I testify to two things. One is that there is a real Jesus the Christ. He has a personal interest in each one of us. And secondly, if we seek him, he brings to us the peace which passeth all understanding.

Witness of First Vision

Last October I was on a trip across the mission. I was near a little town called Fairfield, Idaho, and I was reviewing the scriptures. I was reviewing the account of the First Vision, which I had asked all of our missionaries to memorize, found in the Pearl of Great

Price. And as I reviewed that beautiful account from memory, I had a singular experience.

There came to me a very, very special witness that what was recounted by Joseph Smith in those words which he wrote in the Pearl of Great Price was exactly what happened. In a sense, I experienced, as it were, the First Vision myself. And I became a witness to it, a personal witness, through the power of the Holy Ghost. I bear you that witness that the Father and the Son did appear to Joseph Smith the Prophet. I imagine that my experience was very similar to that which many of you have had.

When President Hinckley called Thursday afternoon (that's when we had the first inkling that some change was coming up in our lives), he said, "Brother John, I'd like to interview you and Sister Carmack. I'd like to have you take the first flight out tomorrow morning and meet me in my office." Then he added, "Don't worry about this." That was a big, big help.

Peace through early morning prayers

The medicine didn't work. We worried. But during the early morning hours, the Savior's Holy Spirit reached us and comforted us. We felt peace. It became possible to rest.

May I suggest to all of the Church, and particularly to you young people and you missionaries throughout the world, don't neglect those early morning prayers to our Heavenly Father. Through those prayers, you reach him, and through that, you can have peace.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Preparation for godhood

I think it was C. S. Lewis—I believe he was quoting George MacDonald—who said that we are like

a house. When Christ comes in, it hurts abominably. We knew the roof and the gutters needed fixing, Lewis said, but all of a sudden we find that he starts putting up a new story here, and he shoots out a new wing there. We knew that the cottage needed fixing and those things needed doing, but this? (See *Mere Christianity* [New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1943], p. 174.) Well, Christ's love can be tough. What is he trying to do with us? In his best seller, *The Road Less Traveled* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), Dr. M. Scott Peck said that no matter how much we may pussyfoot around it, all who ask the question "What is God's love leading to?" come to a single terrifying conclusion: God wants us to become like himself. We are being prepared for godhood, and it hurts; it hurts abominably, but there is peace.

In those early morning hours, there came to my mind the theme from Ralph Rodgers's play *III Nephi*:

I feel my Savior's love in all the
world around me. . . .
He knows I will follow him, give
all my life to him.
I feel the Savior's love, the love
He freely gives me.
(*"I Feel My Savior's Love," The
Choirbook*, pp. 36-37.)

On behalf of these brethren who have joined me, we pledge our energy, our love, our prayers, our faith, in humble obedience to a call we did not seek, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Benson

We have just listened to Elder John K. Carmack, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Sister Ardeth G. Kapp, general president of the Young Women, will now speak to us. She will be followed by Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Sister Ardeth G. Kapp

Desire to know and do Lord's will

My brothers and sisters, my heart is full of joy today, and I commend the great and noble leadership of those in the past who have done so much to put the foundation in place for the youth of today. My heart resounds to the heritage left us by those in years gone by, and now, on the threshold of today, I feel my heart saying, "O youth of the noble birthright, Carry on, carry on, carry on!" (Firm As the Mountains Around Us," *Hymns*, no. 42).

In times of great joy and struggle and disappointment, my great companion, Heber, and I have come to know the Lord and felt his Spirit in our home and in our lives. We have known that peace "which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7) in times of disappointment and in times of

great blessings. In our home, I think perhaps the phrase used most frequently by my husband is, "I want to know the Lord's will, and I want to carry it out." And I repeat that and add my commitment to what he has taught me by his example.

Heritage and parents' testament

Today I reflect on my early ancestor, John P. Greene, who received the Book of Mormon from Samuel Smith, the Prophet Joseph Smith's brother. John gave it to his wife, Rhoda Young, who then passed it on to her brothers, Phineas Young and Brigham Young. I remember that John was the marshal in Nauvoo, and I rejoice in the heritage of faithful Latter-day Saints down through the years.