

lems before God and receive spiritual strength and sustenance.

Spiritual power

Each of us has a right to revelation as far as it relates to our area of responsibility. I sincerely believe if we should ever lose the power of individual revelation in the Church we would have lost most everything. We could implement programs of the Church, but without that great spiritual ingredient we would fail to redeem the Saints, convert the nations, and accomplish the mission of the Church.

We can each have access to those great spiritual blessings and that great power used by David and Moses—but there is a price to pay. Let me quote: “There are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?”

“Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

“That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven” (D&C 121:34–36).

Now, brothers and sisters, what were the powers of heaven? They caused the lame to walk, the blind to see, the dead to rise. And through these same powers the earth was organized. But here is the key—the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. (See D&C 121:41–42.) The key, then, to the future and to the use of these spiritual blessings is personal righteousness.

As President Romney once said, “May we recognize that prayer is the instrument of miracles,” and may we

use the power and direction of the Holy Spirit and not rely wholly upon our own ability in the work of the Lord.

A yearning, a longing, a reaching up

I bear my witness that God lives, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true, that a prophet of God leads this Church today, that life is eternal. I believe that man was “overbuilt” for this world. Have you ever seen a man who was totally satisfied with what he has here? There seems to be a yearning, a longing, a reaching up for something not had here. I think a wise man of old described it best when he said, “Surely God has planted the seeds of eternity into the souls of men.”

I bear witness he has planted those seeds, and I pledge all that I have for the building of the kingdom of God in this work in these latter days, and I confirm this witness and this pledge in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Benson

Elder Devere Harris, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

The chorus and congregation will now join in singing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,” following which Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak to us.

The chorus and congregation sang “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”

Elder F. Enzo Busche

How wonderful to be in the presence of a living prophet!

Not an ordinary day

In one of the large cities of this world there is a man standing at the

window of his apartment, looking at the gray colors of a rainy day. "This is not an ordinary day," he reflects to himself as he watches the two young men, who have just paid him a visit, disappearing on their bicycles at the end of the road. He is becoming aware of how richly his life has been blessed since he began to listen to the spirit radiated by these two humble ambassadors of the Lord from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This truly is not an ordinary day, for on this day he was allowed, by invitation of the two young missionaries, to make a covenant with his Heavenly Father for the remission of his sins through baptism and to receive the Holy Ghost for himself.

"I always thought that I was not a big sinner," he reflects. "I have always provided for my family. I was a good father, and I was a good husband to my beloved late wife."

Understands true purpose

He remembers how his life was brought into a new perspective when he, for the first time in his life, learned from the two young men how to truly pray—not to say just a few nice words, but to open up his heart in sacred communication with his Heavenly Father. Oh, what great joy came into his heart as he learned from the missionaries that he is indeed literally a child of a loving Heavenly Father! With an ever-increasing light within himself, he now understands the true purpose of the pain, frustrations, and strugglings of his earlier life that became an instigating influence to make him think, to make him search, and to make him become an earnest seeker of the truth so that he was ready to listen as these two young men came knocking at his door.

Oh, how much he has learned since that first sacred experience of opening his heart and speaking to his Father! Suddenly he understands the deep, meaningful purpose of his life. He is now aware, in the depths of gratitude, of the many precious blessings of every day with its opportunities to serve

and help. With an ever-increasing awareness of the need for constant repentance, he is able to fill all the hours of his life with the presence of this Spirit and, therefore, with great joy. He feels with each new day as if the sun of a beautiful spring morning is quickening and refreshing his soul after a long, dark, Arctic night.

Blinded through traditions

In the light of this Spirit within him, he sees the people of this world as they are—running around in their vanity, in their vain ambitions, and in their lack of awareness of the greatness of God and His plan of salvation. He is learning to understand that the only burden, the only pain, and the only frustration of a human being is the burden of wrongdoing—the burden of sin. "Oh, what a sacred experience," he reflects, "to learn about myself and the majestic request by the Spirit to grow in the dimensions of honesty, to grow in the dimensions of exercising the pure love of Christ, to be able to forgive, to have patience, to understand, and to overcome laziness, procrastination, and other cravings of the carnal mind."

He understands that God was always there but that he himself was blinded—blinded through the traditions of his environment. He reflects on the truth of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1–2).

"Fit for the kingdom of God"

He can now see that no matter how numerous the sins of a human being can be, they all can be traced back to one single source or origin—the laziness, complacency and blindness that keeps us from looking and searching for our God and King in every phase of our

lives and becoming totally His disciples. For the first time he understands the words of the Lord, Jesus Christ, when He said:

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 16:24-25).

He understands that the Lord knew there could be no compromise made. When we are not fully dedicated, we cannot truly stand in His light and be His disciple.

"And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:61-62).

Joy of the penetrating light

In light of this Spirit within him, he is not afraid of what his friends and relatives might think of him now that he has taken upon himself Christ's name. Perhaps they will not understand, and maybe they will make fun of him. But he feels now how easy it will be to love them anyway, because he understands them better than ever before; and he will do everything that is in his heart to show real interest in them, that they might be filled with light to penetrate the darkness of their lives.

He understands, in the light and the power of the Holy Ghost, what a privilege it is that the Lord allows and commands us to pay a full tithe and invites us to give service, that we can show through our actions every day how much we love our Heavenly Father.

No, it is not difficult to say goodbye to the world with its craving for lust, its thirst for pleasure, and its quest for power, leaving the world groping in the mire of egoism. He understands that, as he is placing his life in the hand

of Heavenly Father, he has now become a disciple of Christ, and he has experienced the sweetness of the divine light in its fullness—the light and power of the Holy Ghost. No longer can he be satisfied by the light he can find in this world. No, he will not be able to forget his Savior and Master anymore!

He appreciates so much the special privilege of being invited every Sabbath day to renew his covenant in the sacred setting of the sacrament. The power of this light gives him the knowledge that he will always listen to that Spirit that teaches a man to pray, about which Nephi, the prophet of whom he has just learned, testified: "For if ye would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray ye would know that ye must pray" (2 Nephi 32:8).

He now understands that by the authority of this Spirit he was led to grow in reverence, that the words of his prayers became fewer and fewer until he became quiet and was changed from someone who was speaking to someone who was listening—listening to the still, soft, sweet voice whose word is quick and powerful, and "sharper than a two-edged sword" (D&C 6:2).

Are we allowing the Spirit to guide us?

My dear brothers and sisters in the covenant, how blessed are we that *our* eyes have been opened and *our* hearts have been touched with the awareness of this truth!

As we now leave this newly baptized member in his marvelous experience of a new life, I invite you, in the spirit of the love of God, to reflect: How much are you allowing the power of this voice to control your own life? Consider the words of the prophet Alma:

"And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the Church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts? . . .

"Have ye walked, keeping yourselves blameless before God? Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble? That your garments have been cleansed and made white through the blood of Christ, who will come to redeem his people from their sins? . . .

"Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you" (Alma 5:14, 27, 33).

My dear brothers and sisters, let us learn to be always enlightened with the powerful understanding of the need for a constant change of heart, that the light and power of the Holy Ghost can penetrate us always to make us better fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, more diligent

workers—with a dream and a vision to touch the lives of all of our Heavenly Father's children and to bring about the final revolution to all the people of this world—a revolution under the leadership of the only leader of truth, without whom there will be no peace and no salvation, even the Lord, Jesus Christ.

I say this humbly in His name, amen.

President Benson

Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Howard W. Hunter, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Russell M. Nelson

Misused power severs its source

One day while working around our home, trimming the hedges and vines, I had an interesting experience. I was at work with my electric clippers and long extension cord. I had done this often, each time reminding myself of the need to use these clippers with great care in order to avoid cutting things that I shouldn't.

Suddenly the blades became jammed. Caught between them was the power cord itself. Because I had not seen it in the thicket I was trimming, I had cut into the very line that was providing the power to work.

"Isn't that one of life's great lessons?" I thought. "*Power, if misused, can cut into the very source of that power.*"

Just as the careless use of electrical power can sever the source of that power, so is it possible to misuse spiritual power to sever our spiritual power line. We would then lose that which

enables us to generate success in our lives. Proper use of our spiritual power line allows us to learn, to labor, to be obedient to law, and to love. While these capabilities lead to fulfillment, at the same time they also carry risk.

Power to learn

Consider the power to learn. How essential it is for progress, whether one's career is professional or that of a salesman, a farmer, or a homemaker.

But learning can be misused! A sharp mind, misdirected, can cut into that line of spiritual power. Some "learned" souls delight in leading others astray, all in the so-called name of learning. Years later their victims may realize that they have climbed their ladder of learning, only to find it leaning against the wrong wall. A prophet of the Lord has counseled us on this point:

"O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they