

He asked them, "Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be?" And He answered, "Verily I say unto you, even as I am" (3 Nephi 27:27).

He is our Exemplar, our Redeemer, our Lord.

Testimony of Christ

I testify that 3 Nephi is a true account of the resurrected Christ's visit to ancient America and contains His teachings in their pristine truth.

I testify that Jesus is the Christ and that He stands at the head of His church today, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I testify that He will come again in power and great glory and that He will leave nothing undone for our eternal welfare.

May we daily be the manner of men He is and thus be prepared to meet and dwell with Him, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The chorus sang "Awake and Arise" without announcement.

President Monson

We appreciate the beautiful message about sharing the restored gospel as sung by the Mormon Youth Chorus in the hymn "Awake and Arise." Prior to the singing we were blessed to hear the opening address of our beloved prophet, President Ezra Taft Benson.

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will now speak to us.

Elder Russell M. Nelson

At this pulpit today, I am truly honored to follow the President of the Church, President Ezra Taft Benson. I sustain him as a living prophet of God. He was ordained an Apostle in 1943, before I entered medical school. Now he is the senior Apostle on earth, and I am privileged to add my gratitude for a prophet and for his message of instruction and inspiration.

He has taught us of the ministry of the resurrected Lord to the inhabitants of ancient America. This precious knowledge recorded in the Book of Mormon is of transcendent importance to all people. Truly, the Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ!

Evidences of life after life are carefully documented

As President Benson spoke, my thoughts momentarily flashed back some years ago to a conversation I had

with a book publisher. He was interested in the topic of possible continuation of life after what we know as death. The publisher asked if I could contribute stories from patients who had come close enough to death to experience the other side and yet had survived to share those accounts. Sensing public interest in that subject, he would entitle the book *Life after Life*.

When I considered that request, I remembered many such incidents which had been whispered in confidence to me over the years. But those seemed too sacred to share in a worldly way, especially to the benefit of a commercial venture. Besides, what would be the validity of isolated stories of life after life without supporting testimonies of witnesses?

To me, much more logical and convincing would be a study of well-documented and carefully witnessed evidences of life after life.

President Benson has spoken of one of these priceless records. The activities of the *living Christ in America* followed his own resurrection *from the dead*. Many witnesses in many places have seen the risen Lord, before, during, and after the account to which President Benson has referred.

Christ appeared to associates in the Holy Land

1. The first mortal person known to have seen the resurrected Savior was Mary Magdalene (see John 20:16–17).

2. Another recorded appearance of the risen Lord was to other women. Witnessing this event were Mary (mother of James), Salome (mother of James and John), Joanna, Susanna, and many others (see Mark 16:1, Luke 8:3).

3. Jesus appeared to Simon Peter (see 1 Corinthians 15:5), the senior Apostle, who held the keys of priesthood authority on earth then, as President Benson does now.

4. Later the same day, Cleopas and presumably Luke, while journeying on the road to Emmaus, were met by the resurrected Lord. The Savior partook of food with them (see Luke 24:30, 33).

5. He also revealed himself to the Apostles in an upper room. He showed them his hands and his feet. "They gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he . . . did eat before them" (Luke 24:42–43).

6. Eight days after he so appeared to the Apostles, Jesus came again to them. This time, skeptical Thomas was present (see John 20:26–28). Christ said unto Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

7. At the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus appeared to seven of the Twelve who had fished all night and caught nothing. The Master then caused their nets to be filled with fish. Later, Peter was com-

manded to feed the flock of God (see John 21:1–24).

8. Perhaps the greatest congregation in Palestine to witness the risen Lord occurred on the mount near Galilee's shore. Here he was seen by more than five hundred brethren at once (see 1 Corinthians 15:6).

9. Later the Master again took the eleven to "a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." There he gave that endless charge to his Apostles, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:16, 19).

10. Then Jesus was seen by his brother, James, who became one of his special disciples (see 1 Corinthians 15:7).

11. Paul added, "And last of all he was seen of me" (1 Corinthians 15:8; see also Acts 9:4–5).

12. Prior to his ascension from the Mount of Olives, Jesus bade farewell to the leaders of his church in Asia and foretold, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8; see also Mark 16:19, Luke 24:50–51).

13. When Stephen was stoned as a martyr at the gate of Jerusalem, he "looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55).

Christ appeared to the Nephites

14. The ministry of the resurrected Lord to the Nephites who lived on the American hemisphere has been spoken of so eloquently by President Benson. He told us that there at least twenty-five hundred souls heard his voice, felt the nail marks in his hands and feet, and thrust their hands into his side (see 3 Nephi 11:7–17, 17:25). I sense that many of them wet his feet with their tears of joyous adoration.

Christ's postmortal ministry

15. The postmortal ministry of the Lord continued in other realms. Jesus ministered unto the dead in the post-

earthly spirit world (see 3 Nephi 23:9–10). Peter testified that “the gospel [was] preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Peter 4:6; see also 1 Peter 3:19–21).

John taught of this as well: “The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live” (John 5:25). In our day, additional scriptures have been added which attest to the ministry of the living Lord among the dead (see D&C 138).

Christ’s visit to the lost tribes

16. From the Book of Mormon we read that Jesus was to visit the lost tribes of the house of Israel—to do for them, we presume, what he had done for others (see 2 Nephi 29:13; 3 Nephi 17:4, 21:26).

Christ appeared to those of this dispensation

After almost two thousand years, new witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus have added their testimonies of this transcendent truth.

17. The Prophet Joseph Smith was visited in 1820 by God the Father and his Son, the resurrected Lord (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17). Joseph saw them and heard their voices. He received a personal witness of the divine sonship of Jesus from the Father himself. Joseph learned that “the Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also” (D&C 130:22).

18. Twelve years later, the Savior again revealed himself to Joseph Smith and to Sidney Rigdon. “We saw him,” they exclaimed, “even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father” (D&C 76:23).

19. On April 3, 1836 (151 years ago yesterday), with Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph saw the Master once more:

“We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; . . .

“His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

“I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:2–4).

Redemption and resurrection extended to all

Yes, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most carefully documented events in history. I have mentioned many of those appearances, but additional instances have been recorded.

Even more remarkable is the fact that his mission among men—the Atonement, the Resurrection—extends privileges of redemption from sin and a glorious resurrection to each and every one of us! In some marvelous way, fully comprehended only by Deity, this is his work and his glory—“to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

Teachers in the Church so instruct the old and the young. Sometimes the results are humorous. One leader shared this story with me:

As a little boy came home from Primary one day, his mother asked him what he had learned, and he said, “My teacher told me that I used to be dust and I would be dust again once more. Is that true, Mommy?”

“Yes,” the mother replied. “A scripture tells us so: ‘For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return’ (Genesis 3:19).”

The little boy was amazed at this! The next morning, he was scurrying around getting ready for school, looking for his shoes. He crawled under the bed. Lo and behold, there he saw balls

of dust. He ran to his mother in wonder, saying, "Oh, Mommy, somebody's under my bed, and they're either coming or going."

Resurrected bodies are immortal

Yes, compounds derived from dust—elements of the earth—are combined to make each living cell in our bodies. The miracle of the Resurrection is matched only by the miracle of our creation in the first place.

No one knows precisely how two germ cells unite to make one. Nor do we know how that resulting cell multiplies and divides to make others—some to become eyes that see, ears that hear, or fingers that feel glorious things about us. Each cell contains chromosomes with thousands of genes, chemically insuring identity and independence of each individual. Our bodies undergo constant rebuilding according to genetic recipes that are uniquely ours. Each time we take a bath, we lose not only dirt, but cells dead and dying, as they are replaced by a newer crop. This process of regeneration and renewal is but prelude to the promised phenomenon and future fact of our resurrection.

"If a man die, shall he live again?" asked Job (Job 14:14). In faith, he answered his own question:

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25–26).

At the time of our resurrection, we shall take up our immortal tabernacles. Bodies that now age, deteriorate, and decay will no longer be subject to processes of degeneration: "This mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:53).

The keys of the Resurrection

This great priesthood power of resurrection is vested in the Lord of this

world. He taught that "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Though he supplicated his Father for aid at the eleventh hour, the final victory over death was earned by the Son. These are his words:

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17–18).

This power he subtly proclaimed when he said unto the Jews: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. . . .

"But he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:19–21).

The keys of the Resurrection repose securely with our Lord and Master. He said:

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25–26).

The universal nature of the Resurrection

But obedience to the commandments of God is requisite if one is to be resurrected with a celestial body. Laws leading to celestial glory will be discussed at this conference. Our challenge is to learn them and abide by them.

I thank God for his Son, Jesus Christ, for his mission in mortality, and for his ministry as the resurrected Lord. He brought about his own resurrection. Testimonies of thousands, from ancient and modern times, attest to the truth that the resurrected Jesus is the Savior of mankind. He brought about a universal resurrection: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22; see also Mosiah 3:16).

His sacrifice and his glory assure that "the spirit and the body shall be reunited again in its perfect form; both limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame, even as we now are at this time" (Alma 11:43).

Gratefully and positively, I affirm that there is life after life, first in the spirit world and then in the Resurrection, for each and every one of us. I know that God lives and that Jesus the Christ is his Son. He is "the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). He lives. He is my Master. I am his servant. With all my heart, I love him, and I testify of him, in his holy name—the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles has just spoken to us.

Upon the signal of Brother Bowden, the chorus and congregation will now join in singing "The Spirit of God," following which Elder William Grant Bangarter, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will speak.

The chorus and congregation sang "The Spirit of God."

Elder William Grant Bangarter

What it means to be a saint

I would like to speak about what it means to be a saint. Some people call us Mormons. Some call us a sect or a cult. We call ourselves Saints. What do these designations signify?

A Mormon could be any kind of a person who has membership in the Church.

A sect is a body of persons following certain principles or doctrines. The earliest followers of the Savior were called a sect.

A cult is described as a particular system of religious worship having a fixed veneration for a person.

A saint is one who follows Christ in holiness and devotion with a view fixed on *eternal* life.

With proper understanding, there is nothing wrong with any of these designations. When they are used to imply ridicule and slander, they can all be offensive.

What really matters

Many members of the Church become upset when those terms are used by name-callers. Calling people names to ridicule them or to offend them is an

old, childish practice. Children respond by chanting with some truth: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me."

It isn't very important what impolite people call this church and its people. Name-calling has been an age-old pastime among people who profess to be religious. The words *heretic*, *blasphemer*, *bigot*, *hypocrite*, and *heathen* have all had their day.

What really matters is what we ourselves believe, what we do, and most important, what we are. "Are you a born-again Christian?" Well, in the sense that some others think of it, perhaps not—that is, if the phrase means something like to have "confessed Christ" as the only requirement for salvation. On the other hand, if this question is considered in a literal and doctrinal sense, we might reflect on a positive answer.

Act accordingly

Brother Carmen Bria, a neighbor of ours converted from another church, was assisting prisoners as a social worker. A certain young prisoner became interested in the gospel. His