

I am deeply grateful that we bear the priesthood—each of us foreordained from the foundation of the world for that responsibility (see Alma 13:1–5).

As a symbol of gratitude, I have penned a few lines to be sung as the concluding portion of my message. A verse for each of three scenes of history may summarize my remarks. This song will be new to you. The words have been written to music from Wales.¹ For the gracious support of Brother Jerold D. Ottley and our male chorus I express my appreciation. To this song I have assigned an ancient title, “Hosanna,” the prayerful shout of fervent praise.

*Through time's immortal endless
stay
In love he guides our way.
Beyond the realms of heaven's
beam,
Our great God, Elohim.
Hosanna to his holy name—
Our fathers' God is still the same.*

*That holy night in Bethlehem
His Son was born among men.
To ransom from a timeless grave,
Each child of God to save.
Hosanna to his holy name—
Our fathers' God is still the same.*

*His priesthood power restored to
earth*

*To bless each soul given birth.
Our song of prayer to him we
raise
Proclaiming joy and praise.
Hosanna to his holy name—
Our fathers' God is still the same.
Amen, amen, amen, amen.*

May we be true to the trust he has given to us who bear the holy priesthood and hold its sacred keys, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

¹Lyrics by Russell M. Nelson, copyright 1987; “Tydi A Roddaist,” by Arwell Hughes, copyright 1938. Gratitude is expressed to Mr. Hughes for permission to use his music with these words, and to Barry D. R. Whittaker, president of the Cardiff Wales Stake, for his assistance.

President Hinckley

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles has spoken to us, and the combined choruses have sung his words in an old Welsh hymn setting.

We shall now be pleased to listen to Bishop Glenn L. Pace, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

Bishop Glenn L. Pace

What makes us happy?

It is my desire to have a heart-to-heart chat with you young men of the Aaronic Priesthood—especially those among you who came to this meeting reluctantly, or perhaps would not have come at all, were it not for a mild threat or a small bribe from your father or priesthood leaders.

When our children were younger and we would be on our way to Sunday Church meetings, occasionally we would pass a car pulling a boat. My children would become silent and press their noses against the windows and

ask, “Dad, why can’t we go waterskiing today instead of to church?”

Sometimes I would take the easy but cowardly way out and answer, “It’s simple; we don’t have a boat.” However, on my more conscientious days, I would muster up all the logic and spirituality available to a patriarch of a family and try to explain how much happier our family was because of our Church activity.

I first realized I wasn’t getting through when on a subsequent Sunday we saw a family laughing and excited as they loaded their snow skis onto their

car. One of my teenage sons said with a sly grin, "They're not really happy, huh, Dad?" That statement has become a family joke whenever we see someone doing something we cannot do. When I see a teenager driving a beautiful, expensive sports car, I say to my sons, "Now there's one miserable guy."

You young men are growing up in a most challenging and confusing world. Activities always forbidden by the Lord and for many years frowned upon by society are now accepted and promoted by that same society. The media serves up these activities in such a fashion as to make them look very desirable. Add to acceptability and desirability the power of peer pressure, and you have an extremely explosive situation.

Avoid the world's temptations

Lehi's vision of the tree of life is appropriate for our day. In that vision, he saw a great and spacious building, which represents the pride and temptations of the world:

"And I . . . beheld . . . a great and spacious building; . . .

"And it was filled with people, both old and young, . . . and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who . . . were partaking of the fruit" (1 Nephi 8:26-27).

Even though you have a testimony and want to do what is right, it is difficult not to be drawn to the great and spacious building. From all appearances, the people in the building seem to be having a great time. The music and laughter are deafening. You would say to me what my children have said, "They're not really happy, huh, Dad?" as you watch them party.

They look happy and free, but don't mistake celestial pleasure for celestial happiness and joy. Don't mistake lack of self-control for freedom. Complete freedom without appropriate

restraint makes us slaves to our appetites. Don't envy a lesser and lower life.

When I was in junior high school, I would get out of bed on cold winter mornings and head for the heat vent to get warm. The family cat would always beat me there, so I would gently shoo her away and sit down. Soon my mother would tell me it was time to leave for school. I would look out at the icicles on the house and dread going out into the cold, let alone begin another day of school.

As I kissed my mother good-bye and went out the door, I would look longingly at my comfortable spot in front of the heat vent and find that the cat had repossessed it. How I envied that cat! If that weren't enough, she would look up at me with heavy eyelids and an expression as if to laugh at me and say, "Have fun in school, Glenn. I'm sure glad I'm not a human!" I hated it when she did that!

However, an interesting thing would happen as the day went on. I would come home after experiencing the joys and sorrows of the school day and see that lazy cat still curled up in front of the vent, and I would smile and say to her, "I'm sure glad I'm not a cat."

Obey commandments to be happy

To those of you who are inching your way closer and closer to that great and spacious building, let me make it completely clear that the people in that building have absolutely nothing to offer except instant, short-term gratification inescapably connected to long-term sorrow and suffering. The commandments you observe were not given by a dispassionate God to prevent you from having fun, but by a loving Father in Heaven who wants you to be happy while you are living on this earth as well as in the hereafter.

Compare the blessings of living the Word of Wisdom to those available to you if you choose to party with those

in the great and spacious building. Compare the joy of intelligent humor and wit to drunken, silly, crude, loud laughter. Compare our faithful young women who still have a blush in their cheeks with those who, having long lost their blush, try to persuade you to join them in their loss. Compare lifting people up to putting people down. Compare the ability to receive personal revelation and direction in your life to being tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. Compare holding the priesthood of God with anything you see going on in that great and spacious building.

We cannot change absolute truths

The members of many churches in the world have been putting pressure on their leaders to change doctrine to fit the changing life-style of the members. Many have been successful, and more and more we see churches made up of the doctrines of men. There are absolute truths of eternity. They do not change as a society drifts from them. No popular vote can change an absolute, eternal truth. Legalizing an act does not make it moral. Don't be fooled by the argument "Everybody's doing it." Your spirit should be offended and your intelligence insulted by such reasoning.

When all of the evidence is in, the world's graduate school of hard knocks will teach what you young men were taught in the kindergarten of your spiritual training, "Wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). Why wait for finite man to prove what his infinite Creator has already revealed to his prophets?

Fighting for truth is exciting

I know how much you like thrills, adventure, and excitement. Do you want excitement? I'll give you excitement. Do you realize you are outnumbered in the world 1,000 to 1? The sons of Helaman didn't face those odds. As the winds of popular opinion

intensify and the mocking increases from those who are trying to justify their own unrighteous actions, you will be required to put on the full armor of God. You will need to fight with all of your strength to keep unspotted from the world. We plead with you to stay true—not for us, but for you.

With odds of 1,000 to 1, shall the youth of Zion falter? I give a firm testimony. No! Never! The youth of the kingdom will emerge victorious. Now that's exciting! What adventure in that great and spacious building would you trade for the thrill and excitement of building the very kingdom the Savior will come to the earth to govern?

Repentance offers hope

We love you, the youth of the Church, and we know you will collectively succeed. However, we have great anxiety for individuals we may lose along the way. Speaking as a father, I can tell you the loss of one of you is too many. We want each and every one of you to succeed, not just the majority.

To those of you who are struggling and losing ground, you who have been lured into that building through one of its many doors and now find no doors going out, you who feel trapped and defeated, we assure you there is hope, and all is not lost. Through his atonement, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has provided a way for you to escape that awful place. He knows you intimately. He knows your name, and he knows your pain. If you will approach your Father in Heaven with a broken heart and contrite spirit, you will find yourself miraculously lifted out of that great and spacious building and into the loving and comforting arms of the Savior of mankind.

At your earthly home, you will find your father's arms have always been open for you and that during your absence your mother never stopped setting your place at the table in front of your empty chair. You will see clearly the difference between telestial happiness and celestial happiness, and you

will experience and savor celestial joy through this life and throughout all eternity. I so testify and promise, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

He who has just spoken to us is Bishop Glenn L. Pace, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will now address us.

President Thomas S. Monson

The joy of missionary work

What an inspiring sight to see this historic tabernacle filled to capacity, then to realize that chapels and halls throughout the world are similarly filled by those who hold the priesthood of God. I pray for the inspiration of heaven to attend me and to direct the remarks I make.

My mind goes back in memory to a general priesthood meeting held in 1956. At that time I was serving in the stake presidency of the Temple View Stake here in Salt Lake City. Percy K. Fetzer, John R. Burt, and I, the stake presidency, had come to the Tabernacle early, that hopefully we might find a place to sit. We were among the first to enter the Tabernacle and had almost two hours to wait before the meeting would begin.

President Fetzer related to President Burt and me an experience from his missionary days in Germany. He described how one rainy night he and his companion were to present a gospel message to a group assembled in a school house. A protester had broadcast falsehoods concerning the Church, and a number of people threatened violence against the two missionaries. At a critical moment, a woman who was a widow stepped between the elders and the angry group and said, "These young men are my guests and are coming to my home now. Please make way for us to leave."

The crowd parted, and the missionaries walked through the rainy night with their benefactress, arriving

at length at her modest home. She placed their wet coats over the kitchen chairs and invited the missionaries to sit at the table while she prepared food for them. After eating, the elders presented a message to the kind lady who had befriended them. A young son of the woman was invited to come to the table, but he refused, preferring his position of solitude and warmth directly behind the kitchen stove.

President Fetzer concluded the account with the comment, "While I don't know if that woman ever joined the Church, I'll forever be grateful to her for her kindness that rain-drenched night thirty-three years ago."

The brethren sitting in front of us here in the Tabernacle had been speaking to one another also. After a while, we began listening to their conversation. One asked the friend sitting next to him, "Tell me how you came to be a member of the Church."

The brother responded, "One rainy night in Germany, my mother brought to our house two drenched missionaries whom she had rescued from a mob. Mother fed the elders, and they presented to her a message concerning the work of the Lord. They invited me to join the discussion, but I was shy and fearful, so I remained secure in my seat behind the stove. Later, when I once more heard about the Church, I remembered the courage and faith, as well as the message, of those two humble missionaries, and this led to my conversion. I suppose I'll never meet those two missionaries here in mortality, but I'll be forever grateful to them. I know