

Rather, it encourages study. We build bridges between the present and the past and bring relevance and interest to our study of history. When we celebrate, we remember. Sometimes we reenact that which has gone on before. When we honor tradition, we actually do what our ancestors did.

I hope as we continue to commemorate historical events and reclaim our traditions that we always celebrate with a purpose. I pray that we will make our celebrations more meaningful by reaffirming our spiritual, political, cultural, and social values. As members of this glorious church, we share a rich heritage. We literally stand on the shoulders of the giants of faith, vision, and spirit who preceded us.

When we honor them and their many sacrifices, we preserve their achievements and the principles and values for which they stood. And it provides us a wonderful way in which to praise God!

We learn from ancient Israel that there is a place for commemorative events. Let us build in our families,

communities, and nations, traditions of a lasting nature that will consistently remind us of the Lord's eternal truths and of our forebears who preserved them for our day.

God grant that we may ever keep alive the rich heritage which is ours, especially by building family traditions as constant reminders of our standards and our values.

This is the Lord's work in which we are engaged. I bear witness of that. He lives. Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. That we may be engaged in His work is my humble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve Apostles has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder L. Aldin Porter, who was sustained at the April conference as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder L. Aldin Porter

The Brethren will never lead us astray

Shortly after this call came to me, I was traveling by plane from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to Salt Lake City. A young businessman stepped to my seat in the plane and introduced himself as a Latter-day Saint. He asked if I was traveling to attend meetings, and I answered, "Yes."

"Will you see President Benson?"

"I think that is unlikely in view of the nature of the meetings."

"When you see him, will you tell him that though we have never met, I have a deep love for him?"

He returned to his seat.

It was late in the day; soon the lights were dimmed, giving me ample opportunity to think about that experience.

Brothers and sisters, there is great safety in having a love for the Brethren. As we traveled through the night, I remembered an experience that had come to me in this tabernacle some years ago. It was, I believe, the last time that President Joseph Fielding Smith spoke in a general priesthood meeting. He said:

"Now, brethren, I think there is one thing which we should have exceedingly clear in our minds. Neither the President of the Church, nor the First Presidency, nor the united voice of the First Presidency and the Twelve will ever lead the Saints astray or send forth counsel to the world that is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1972, p. 99; or *Ensign*, July 1972, p. 88).

When President Smith made that statement, the Spirit bore witness to me that it was true. That same Spirit bears witness anew today.

President Spencer W. Kimball told the experience of a man who "rebelled against the call of Brigham Young to go to southern valleys, saying: 'Nobody is going to tell me where to go and what to do.' Through his personal rebellion, he took his entire family out of the Church. How little he retarded the colonization program! The valleys were settled in spite of him. How little his disaffection injured the Church! It has grown steadily without him. But how *he* has suffered in *his* eternal progression! In contrast, there were many who pulled up stakes, moved to new worlds, and reared families of faith and devotion" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1955, p. 94).

What can we do to help develop a love for the prophets, seers, and revelators? Permit me to make three suggestions.

Read the scriptures

First, read the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon. Speaking of the scriptures, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, "He who reads it oftenest will like it best, and he who is acquainted with it, will know the hand wherever he can see it" (*History of the Church*, 2:14).

Let us read the scriptures, and we "will know the hand."

The same spirit that is felt while we read the word of the Lord in the scriptures accompanies the pronouncements of the Lord's prophets. As we learn to love the word of the Lord as written in the scriptures, we will love the word of the Lord as given through his prophets.

Obey the prophets

Second, let us do as the prophets request. Note the words of the Savior:

"And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:15-17).

President Benson, in April Conference, 1986, said, "The Book of Mormon has not been, nor is it yet, the center of our personal study, family teaching, preaching, and missionary work. Of this we must repent" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, p. 4; or *Ensign*, May 1986, pp. 5-6).

Brothers and sisters, let us do as the prophet asks, and in a little time we will know that he speaks the word of the Lord.

Pray for the prophets

Third, pray for them. Call down the blessings of heaven upon the heads of the prophets, seers, and revelators. Know that the Lord responds to the sustaining prayers of the Saints. In addition, as our hearts go out to the Brethren in sincere prayer, our hearts will be filled with love for them.

Love and follow the Brethren

There is safety in loving the Brethren. What kind of safety? The Master concluded the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in both Matthew and 3 Nephi with the following statement:

"Whoso heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock—

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand—

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it" (3 Nephi 14:24-27).

Did you note, brothers and sisters, that the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew upon *both* houses? Just because we follow the word of the Lord does not mean we will suffer no ill winds; it does mean that we will spiritually survive them!

The prophet Mormon counseled us in great power on the subject of prophets when he said, "Wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost!" (3 Nephi 29:6).

Priesthood leaders, do you want to raise the spiritual level of your stewardship? Follow the Brethren.

Husbands, do you want your wives to have more confidence in you and your leadership? Follow the Brethren.

Parents, do you want your children to feel your love and more

willingly accept your direction? Love the Brethren.

We have in this conference heard what the Lord would have us know. What has been said and what will yet be said should be studied and pondered and prayed over and followed. Leave no question in anyone's mind where you stand. Declare in quiet tones that you love the Brethren and that you are going to follow them. Add exclamation marks to your words as you quietly and faithfully follow the Brethren.

You will find that you will "enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come" (Moses 6:59). I am a witness that this is the work of God. There is a prophet in our midst, even President Ezra Taft Benson, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder L. Aldin Porter of the First Quorum of the Seventy has just addressed us.

It will now be our privilege to listen to Elder William R. Bradford, also a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder William R. Bradford

Some things are interesting; other things are important

The young people of a certain ward had worked to earn the large sum of money needed to go on an adventure trip.

I had had some acquaintance with their bishop. He called and asked if I would help him get some news publicity so these young people would be recognized for the fine things they were doing.

I said I would not help him. He was surprised and asked why. I answered that although it was commendable that the young people had worked hard to earn this money, some things are interesting while other things are

important, and that there may be a higher purpose for the funds they had obtained from all the energy they had expended.

He was even more surprised and asked what I meant. I explained that my ministry takes me into countries where the people are less privileged than where he lives. I know of their challenges and sacrifices. I told him of the struggles of young people in those areas to obtain the needed funds to support themselves on missions. For the family to have enough food is often a challenge. Clothing is shared and worn out. Fashion is whatever is available, and in many cases that is not much. I explained that the amount of money these