

live with Him in the celestial kingdom of God throughout all eternity? Then if you will remember, you will understand His love for all of us, and your love for Him will grow deeper and deeper forever.

Such is my humble testimony of the glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, which I proclaim to you along with my profound love for Him and each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Thank you, Elders Spencer J. Condie and F. Melvin Hammond, who have addressed us.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Elder Neal A. Maxwell, also of the Council of the Twelve.

## Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

In a revelation the Lord said, "Blessed is my servant Hyrum Smith; for I, the Lord, love him because of the integrity of his heart, and because he loveth that which is right" (D&C 124:15). I personally know of no higher praise that any man could receive.

### A definition of integrity

I have felt impressed to speak today about the need for integrity: old-fashioned, personal, practical integrity. To me, integrity means always doing what is right and good, regardless of the immediate consequences. It means being righteous from the very depth of our soul, not only in our actions but, more important, in our thoughts and in our hearts. Personal integrity implies such trustworthiness and incorruptibility that we are incapable of being false to a trust or covenant.

We all have within us the ability to know what is right and good. Speaking to the "peaceable followers of Christ" (Moroni 7:3), the prophet Mormon said:

"It is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

"For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by

the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

"But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him" (Moroni 7:15-17).

### How much do we value our integrity?

Having received the Spirit of Christ to know good from evil, we should always choose the good. We need not be misled, even though fraud, deception, deceit, and duplicity often seem to be acceptable in our world. Lying, stealing, and cheating are commonplace. Integrity, a firm adherence to the highest moral and ethical standards, is essential to the life of a true Latter-day Saint.

Like Job of old, we need to say, "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me" (Job 27:5). Though he had lost almost everything he valued—his family, his friends, his health, his wealth—he refused to give up his integrity. In sharp contrast, many today trade away their integrity for a very small price tag. A person who shoplifts for a candy bar, makeup, or jewelry trades priceless integrity for a meager gain. A person who falsifies a tax return by not reporting

income or claiming invalid deductions compromises valued integrity for a pittance of unpaid income tax. One who avoids paying bills promptly for goods or services received exchanges cherished integrity for a perceived temporary advantage. Husbands or wives who are unfaithful to their spouses trade their prized integrity for a fleeting moment of mirth. Integrity is so precious that it is beyond price; it is invaluable.

### The value of Joseph's integrity

Joseph, the son of Jacob, was a model of integrity. No doubt many of you have been reminded of him recently in a Sunday School class. Joseph's integrity placed him among the greatest of our Heavenly Father's sons. He did what was right and good; he was trustworthy and incorruptible, self-disciplined never to violate a trust.

Because of his integrity and righteousness, Joseph was favored and blessed of the Lord in every circumstance. His life is evidence that "all things work together for good to [those who] love God" (Romans 8:28). His example is especially pertinent to us because most members of the Church have descended from his loins.

His father, Jacob, loved Joseph even from his youth. The Lord revealed future events to Joseph in dreams. However, his brothers hated him, plotted to take his life, and then sold him as a slave. When he was carried captive to Egypt, the Lord was with him there. Joseph became overseer of the house of Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. When approached by Potiphar's wife, Joseph refused and fled from her improper advances because of his personal righteousness and because he would not violate Potiphar's trust.

This refusal and the accusations it prompted caused Joseph to be imprisoned. Again the Lord was with him. Joseph became overseer of the prison. The Lord enabled him to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker and, later, Pharaoh's dreams of seven fat and lean cows and of seven full and thin

ears of corn. Subsequently, Joseph became ruler over all Egypt, second in rank only to Pharaoh. He directed the storage of food during the years of plenty and the dispensing of it during the years of famine.

During the famine, Joseph's brothers, who had sold him as a slave twenty-two years earlier, came to Egypt to obtain food. Not recognizing him, they bowed down to him because of his high office.

In a tender, touching scene, Joseph identified himself to his brothers and forgave them. I suppose he could have retaliated for their mistreatment of him by making them slaves, having them imprisoned, or even having them put to death. But he did what was right and good. He said:

"I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither. . . .

"And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity . . . and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

"So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Genesis 45:4-5, 7-8).

Through Joseph, the Lord preserved the children of Israel and provided a place in Egypt for them to flourish and increase.

This story is well known, but I urge you to read it again, focusing your attention on the integrity of Joseph and on the blessings it brought to him. He became the birthright son in the house of Israel and received an inheritance in the lands of the Americas (see Ether 13:8). The Lord permitted him to prophesy of Moses, who would deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt (see JST, Genesis 50:27-29), and of Joseph Smith, the prophet of the restoration of the gospel in the latter days (see JST, Genesis 50:30-33; 2 Nephi 3:6-21).

### The integrity of great leaders

A more modern life of integrity is exemplified by George Washington, first

president of the United States of America. His integrity and character, more than the brilliance of his intellect, made him the choice of his countrymen as their leader. He loved the peace and tranquility of his Mount Vernon estate but responded when duty called him into the turmoil of public life. He refused any compensation, expecting the government to pay only his expenses, of which he kept an exact account. He gave forty-five years of his life in the service of his country (see David O. McKay, *Secrets of a Happy Life* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967], pp. 142-44). As I visited the Mount Vernon stake two weeks ago, I felt the spirit of George Washington, the father of his country. The noble deeds of this great man passed through my mind.

The Prophet Joseph Smith is another great example of integrity. He did not waver from doing as the Lord directed, even at the peril of his life. He "did not shirk life, nor did he try to avoid its experiences. . . . He marched, built, sawed, hewed, plowed, planted with everyone else. His muscular body was a result of physical exertion. His mind was 'an IDEAL' of unrelenting seeking" (Leon R. Hartshorn, *Joseph Smith: Prophet of the Restoration* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970], p. 67). "His greatness did not lie alone in prophesying, . . . speaking, or writing, but in what he was" (Hartshorn, p. 38).

President Ezra Taft Benson, our prophet, seer, and revelator, is an example of sublime integrity. His assignment to Europe by the First Presidency to relieve the sufferings of our Saints after World War II exemplified the nobility of his character.

"A man's true greatness is not in what he says he is, nor in what people say he is; his greatness lies in what he really is" (Hartshorn, p. 38). Our integrity determines what we really are.

### Those with integrity are saved

The Lord expects us to live lives of integrity and to be obedient to his commandments. He said, "And why call ye

me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). On another occasion, he said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

A little lying, a little cheating, or taking a little unfair advantage is not acceptable to the Lord (see 2 Nephi 28:8-9). The scriptures warn that these are Satan's ways to lead us "carefully down to [destruction]" (28:21).

To Saints of the Restoration, the Savior said, "For of him unto whom much is given much is required" (D&C 82:3). Church members have been given much, indeed: the gospel of Jesus Christ. That blessing carries a risk. We have been warned, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

### Deal righteously with neighbors

The world desperately needs men and women of integrity. Nearly every day we hear of fraud, misapplication of funds, false advertising, or other dealings designed to obtain gain by cheating or deception. The Lord abhors such practices. A proverb states, "A false balance [that is, a deceptive scale] is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight" (Proverbs 11:1). The Lord commanded, "If thou borrowest . . . thou shalt restore that which thou hast borrowed" (D&C 136:25). He commanded the ancient Israelites:

"Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. . . .

"Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him. . . .

"Ye shall do no [injustice] in judgment, . . . in weight, or in measure.

"Just balances, just weights . . . shall ye have" (Leviticus 19:11, 13, 35-36).

### Integrity overcomes selfishness

The Lord commanded the Israelites to be more than honest. If they came

upon a lost ox, they were to search out the owner so they could return the animal. Today, our intentions and dealings must be similarly pure and sound before the Lord. We must be fair with suppliers, customers, and employees; repay obligations and keep agreements; and never deceive by failing to disclose all the facts about an investment or business venture. If our selfish hearts "are set so much upon the things of this world" (D&C 121:35), we can easily lose our integrity. We must remember that "we believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men" (Articles of Faith 1:13).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell stated, "Oh, how we wish for more honesty and less corruption, more goodness instead of so much cleverness, and more wisdom in lieu of unanchored brilliance."

We must be honest with the Lord as we pay our tithes. Faithful Saints have learned that he will "open . . . the windows of heaven, and pour . . . out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10). The payment of tithing has less to do with money, but more to do with faith. Let us return one-tenth of our income to the Lord (see D&C 119:4) and never be guilty of robbing him by failing to pay our tithes. Then, we also should remember those in need and contribute generous fast-offerings for their assistance.

### Service is an act of integrity

We show our integrity by caring for and serving others. Let me cite an instance where family members, a Christ-like bishop, home teachers, visiting teachers, and ward members so lived.

A young mother of eight children was left without a husband. The oldest child was twelve, the youngest barely one, and one daughter was confined to a wheelchair. This mother moved to a ward that was close to her family and friends. Being single and divorced, she feared that she might be ignored or shunned. However, as she was moving in, ward members streamed in to welcome her, bring food, and offer assis-

tance. She hardly had time to direct those who were unloading the moving van.

After getting settled, she and her family received innumerable expressions of service and love. Her home teachers repaired her appliances and other household items. Her visiting teachers kept very close and made sure she never had to go alone to a Church activity. At Christmastime, she found money left anonymously on her porch or had it given to her in a handshake. She received hundreds of dollars toward the purchase of a wheelchair lift for her van. After being out of town briefly, she returned home and found that ward members had renovated her kitchen.

Her parents, brother, and sisters provided financial and emotional support. They helped take care of her children, accompanied her to the emergency room with a daughter who was very ill, built a ramp to the front door for the wheelchair, built shelves for food storage, and helped with yard work.

All of this kindness lifted her spirits and gave her courage to meet the trials and hardships of each day. Those who looked after this young mother practiced "pure religion" (James 1:27) because of their integrity. Let us "go, and do . . . likewise" (Luke 10:37), as the Savior taught in the parable of the good Samaritan.

### The rewards of integrity

The rewards of integrity are immeasurable. One is the indescribable inner peace and serenity that come from knowing we are doing what is right; another is an absence of the guilt and anxiety that accompany sin.

Another reward of integrity is the confidence it can give us in approaching God. When virtue garnishes our thoughts unceasingly, our confidence is strong in the presence of God (see D&C 121:45). When we are doing what is right, we will not feel timid and hesitant about seeking divine direction. We will know the Lord will answer our prayers and help us in our need.

The consummate reward of integrity is the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost (see D&C 121:46). The Holy Ghost does not attend us when we do evil. But when we do what is right, he can dwell with us and guide us in all we do.

My brothers and sisters, let us live true to the trust the Lord has placed in us. Let us strive for personal, practical integrity in every endeavor, regardless of how mundane or inconsequential it may seem. The small matters accumulate to shape the direction of our lives.

I bear my witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and is our Lord

and Savior. This is his church. Joseph Smith is a true prophet of God, as is President Ezra Taft Benson. I bear this testimony humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, also of the Council of the Twelve, will be our concluding speaker for this session.

## Elder Neal A. Maxwell

May I add my personal welcome to those brethren and sisters newly sustained today. What has happened today would not have occurred had you not married so well spiritually so many years ago.

### We must endure our mortal tests

On one of those rare occasions when His very voice was heard, the Father testified, "Yea, the words of my Beloved are true and faithful. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (2 Nephi 31:15). Of all that the Father might have said, He stressed endurance. Why?

First, because God has repeatedly said He would structure mortality to be a proving and testing experience (see Abraham 3:25; Mosiah 23:21). Brothers and sisters, he has certainly kept His promise. He has carried out His divine intent, hasn't He? Thus, even our fiery trials, said Peter, should not be thought of as "some strange thing" (1 Peter 4:12). Hence, enduring is vital, and those who so last will be first spiritually!

By taking Jesus' yoke upon us and enduring, we learn most deeply of Him and especially how to be like Him (see Matthew 11:29). Even though our experiences are micro compared to His, the process is the same.

There are so many things to be endured: illness, injustice, insensitivity, poverty, aloneness, unresponsiveness,

being misrepresented and misunderstood, and, sometimes, even enemies. Paul reminds us that meek and lowly Jesus, though the Lord of the universe, "endured . . . contradiction of sinners against himself" (Hebrews 12:3). Smaller variations of these contradictions or hostilities will be felt by His disciples.

### God is long-suffering with us

We tend to think only in terms of our endurance, but it is God's patient long-suffering which provides us with our chances to improve, affording us urgently needed developmental space or time (see Alma 42:4-5).

Paul observed, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11). Such "peaceable fruit" comes only in the appointed season thereof, after the blossoms and the buds.

Otherwise, if certain mortal experiences were cut short, it would be like pulling up a flower to see how the roots are doing. Put another way, too many anxious openings of the oven door, and the cake falls instead of rising. Moreover, enforced change usually does not last, while productive enduring can ingrain permanent change (see Alma 32:13-16).