

Norway, and Sweden Area Conference 1974, p. 70).

I know the meaning of repentance and forgiveness as part of the process of conversion through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I have partaken of the blessings stated in Moroni, chapter 6, verses 1 to 4:

“And now I speak concerning baptism. Behold, elders, priests, and teachers were baptized; and they were not baptized save they brought forth fruit meet that they were worthy of it.

“Neither did they receive any unto baptism save they came forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and witnessed unto the church that they truly repented of all their sins.

“And none were received unto baptism save they took upon them the name of Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end.

“And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the

people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith.”

Brothers and sisters, I testify to you that God lives and loves us; that he sent to the world his Son, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer; that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God who was foreordained and raised up for the restoration of all things in this dispensation; that President Ezra Taft Benson is our living prophet, appointed by the Lord to guide us in the true Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and that the Book of Mormon and the Bible are testaments of Christ, the Messiah. That we may see, hear, and understand these things and practice them, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## Elder Graham W. Doxey

My brothers and sisters, I am humbled as I face this new responsibility. However, I am encouraged with the warm and strong brotherhood I feel from these Brethren seated here.

My experiences include, like Nephi, “having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught” (1 Nephi 1:1). Next I was blessed to marry a beautiful wife, a queenly saint; therefore, I am receiving some secondary education. My internship training started as we were blessed with children. And our wonderful grandchildren have become our postgraduate education. It is my prayer and my trust in this regard that, once gained, “whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection” (D&C 130:18).

### The voice is still small

President Spencer W. Kimball, a man with unique experience in all levels of Church leadership, described the subject that has been on my mind since this speaking assignment came. I apologize to Elder Packer. I realize that I was prompted by the Spirit—I know that he is—and I have found my thoughts going in much the same direction that his went. President Kimball said:

“The burning bushes, the smoking mountains, . . . the Cumorahs, and the Kirtlands were realities; but they were the exceptions. The great volume of revelation came to Moses and to Joseph and comes to today’s prophet in

the less spectacular way—that of deep impressions, without spectacle or glamor or dramatic events.

“Always expecting the spectacular, many will miss entirely the constant flow of revealed communication” (in Conference Report, Munich Germany Area Conference 1973, p. 77).

Dramatic and miraculous answers to prayer may come, but they are the exceptions. Even at the highest levels of responsibility in this kingdom of God which is being built up upon the earth, *the voice is still small*.

In the Bible we read of the account of an earlier prophet who was rejected and discouraged. The word of the Lord came to Elijah when the children of Israel had forsaken their covenant and thrown down altars and slain prophets. He was told to “go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

“And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice” (1 Kings 19:11–12).

### Listening is a challenge today

My testimony is that the Lord *is* speaking to you! But with the deafening decibels of today’s environment, all too often we fail to hear him. I remember as a youth having the experience of being in company with an older man who had lost much of his hearing ability. He had no hearing aid and was continually asking that we speak louder so that he could be part of the conversation. He would say, “Talk louder; speak up; I can’t hear you.”

That was before the days of television and CDs and boomers and

blasters. I was interested in someone’s observation: “With TV and radio and tapes, what young person has time to listen to reason?” Listening is a challenge for us all today.

*Time to listen. The ability to listen. The desire to listen.* On religious matters, too many of us are saying, “What did you say? Speak up; I can’t hear you.” And when he doesn’t *shout* back, or cause the bush to burn, or write us a message in stone with his finger, we are inclined to think he doesn’t listen, doesn’t care about us. Some even conclude there is no God.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote, “Every common bush [is] afire with God; But only he who sees, takes off his shoes” (*Aurora Leigh*, book 7, lines 822–23).

The questions are not “Does God live? Does God love me? Does God speak to me?” The critical question is, “Are you listening to him?” Have you removed your shoes? It is the same for you as it was for Elijah, as it is with the modern-day prophets: *The still, small voice is still small*.

Aids to our hearing are available. How can we filter out the heavy decibels of darkness that surround us? Let me mention three of the more obvious ones.

### Revitalize your weekly worship

Number 1: Revitalize your weekly worship. When you sing the hymns, for instance, ponder the meaning of the words, enjoy the spirit of the music. Sing with enthusiasm without regard to your tones. You will have a good feeling, and your spirit will be enlivened; and as you join with the Saints in the songs of the heart, the Lord promises to answer this with blessings upon your head (see D&C 25:12).

Next, *partake* of the sacrament. Don’t merely *take* the sacrament.

Think of the covenants you are re-making. Truly witness unto the Father that you will take upon yourself the name of his Son, even Jesus Christ. Recommit yourself to always remember him, to keep the commandments which he has given you. Your obedience will entitle you to have his Spirit to be with you. If this sacred ordinance has become commonplace in your worship, if you let your mind wander elsewhere during this weekly opportunity for spiritual renewal, if you just *take* the bread and water as it passes with no thought or recommitment in your life, then you have turned off a significant aid to your hearing.

### Pray to know God's will

Number 2: Pray to know God's will, not to "get things." Too often, because of our selfish desires, after a cursory "Thank you, Lord," we consume our prayer time in the listing of things we want, even of things we think we need. We must be willing to release the death grip which we have on things, which have become as a security blanket in our lives. Count the many hundreds of needed missionary couples who would be serving in the field if that firm grip on the familiarities of home and of children and grandchildren could be loosened. The Lord is prepared to perform the miracle that will follow, which miracle is that both they and you will survive, even grow, with an eighteen-month separation.

We must learn to pray with meaning, "Not my will, but Thy will be done." When you are able to do this, his whisperings to you will be loud and clear. The Prophet Joseph Smith, after five months of extreme suffering in the dungeon of Liberty Jail, experienced it, and he said, "When the heart is *sufficiently contrite*, then the voice of inspiration steals along and whispers, My

son, peace be unto thy soul" (*History of the Church*, 3:293; italics added).

### Immerse yourself in the scriptures

Hearing aid number 3 has to do with the scriptures. In the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord tells us that he speaks to us through the scriptures. Of course, just reading words without our minds being centered on the message is not really listening. In section 18 we read:

"And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it.

"These words are not of man nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man:

"For it is my voice which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, . . .

"Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words" (18:33-36).

And thus, what to many seems to be the monologue of prayer actually becomes a dialogue with God as we immerse ourselves in the scriptures.

### The Lord is speaking to you

As it was with Elijah, so it is today. God is not in the earthquake nor in the winds and fires of war, but he speaks to us in a voice that is small. With President Kimball, I, too, testify that it is this constant flow of revealed communication which continues to direct this Church through our prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, and through his Counselors, and through the Twelve Apostles. It comes to the Seventy and to the Presiding Bishop. It comes to the stake presidents, and to the bishops and to the quorum and Church officers throughout the world. It speaks to our missionaries; it comes to heads of families. I further witness that this still, small voice is speaking personally to you.

Please be *still* and *listen!* The Psalmist said, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

I know that he lives. He loves you. He wants you to follow him, and to follow him not because of any spectacular showmanship on his part, but simply because you love him—simply! I bear my solemn witness that he lives and is near you and that we are being led by his living prophet in these last days. All of which I do in the holy name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Monson

We have just listened to Elders Julio E. Dávila and Graham W. Doxey of the Seventy.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing that favorite hymn "Redeemer of Israel."

Elder Cree-L Kofford, who was also sustained as a Seventy at April conference, will then address us.

---

The choir and congregation sang "Redeemer of Israel."

---

## Elder Cree-L Kofford

Standing at this historic pulpit with memories of those men and women who have stood here before me filling my thoughts, I am reminded of the admonition given to Moses when he was told, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5).

I pray that as I stand upon this holy ground I may do so with my shoes from off my feet.

### Trial to receive your inheritance

I desire to teach you concerning matters of eternal significance. In doing so I shall speak allegorically, which simply means that I will teach by using a story which has symbolic meanings.

In an allegorical sense, I am here today as a member of the trial team assembled by your chief advocate. We have now received the legal action in which each of you has been named as a party defendant. I and others of the trial team have reviewed the pleadings carefully and have confirmed that the real purpose of opposing counsel is to prove that you are *not* eligible to receive your ultimate inheritance. Our

adversary's trial team is even now working tirelessly to assemble the facts necessary to bring about your defeat.

By virtue of motions made, heard, and previously decided, we have been compelled to produce on behalf of each of you all records relating to your business and personal transactions. These include a schedule of your neighbors, friends, and business acquaintances. Additionally, full disclosure concerning your spouse, your children, your parents, and members of your extended family has been made.

You should know that our adversary is prepared to spend such time, effort, and money as is necessary to deprive you of your inheritance. They have already expended untold millions of dollars in preparing their case against each of you. They have hired gifted, talented, and experienced people to work for them. They intend to win!

Fortunately, you are represented by the *most* skilled, capable, and diligent counsel I have ever seen. It's amazing to watch him as he argues on your behalf before the Supreme Judge.