

tion 124 of the Doctrine and Covenants that his "name [shall] be had in honorable remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever."<sup>15</sup> His name most certainly will be honorably revered as we follow his example and "pattern after [his] works." May the memory of Hyrum Smith and all of our faithful forefathers never fade from our minds, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### NOTES

1. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), p. 309.
2. *History of the Church*, 5:107-8.
3. *History of the Church*, 2:338.
4. Quoted in Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981), p. 159.
5. Quoted in Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983), p. 21.
6. *History of Joseph Smith*, p. 246.
7. See *History of the Church*, 5:108.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 11:21-22.
9. *History of Joseph Smith*, p. 82.
10. Doctrine and Covenants 124:15.
11. *History of Joseph Smith*, p. 55.
12. Osborne J. P. Widtsoe, "Hyrum Smith, Patriarch," *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Apr. 1911, p. 56.
13. Hyrum Smith letter to Mary Fielding Smith, 16 Mar. 1839, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
14. *History of the Church*, 5:108.
15. Doctrine and Covenants 124:96.

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The chorus sang "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

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#### President Hinckley

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve has just spoken to us, followed by the Mormon Youth Chorus singing "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

Elder Jack H Goaslind of the Presidency of the Seventy will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Sister Janette Hales Beckham, general president of the Young Women.

## Elder Jack H Goaslind

### Spiritual mountaintops

Recently I had the opportunity to attend meetings at Jackson Lake in the majestic Teton Mountains of Wyoming in the western part of the United States. The rugged mountain peaks and the breathtakingly beautiful scenery and the cool, crisp autumn air combined to lift and restore the spirits of almost every visitor. I must admit that the work I'd been sent there to do seemed a lot less like work than what most of us experience every day. The peaceful mountain setting had a restorative effect on me and others in attendance. The world's

problems seemed less insurmountable. The challenges I faced seemed much less threatening. I came away with a heightened outlook and a spirit brightened by new hope and enthusiasm.

Those mountain heights also stirred in me other reflections. I'd like to share some of those with you this morning.

The Lord has often used mountaintops as sanctuaries. In Old Testament times, when temples were not available the Lord used mountaintops as sacred places in which to reveal truths to His prophets. Likewise the New Testament and the Book of Mormon describe sacred mountaintops where God revealed

truths to His servants. Joseph Smith, kneeling in the Sacred Grove, was figuratively kneeling at the top of a great spiritual mountain.

Today the Lord provides us with ample space which, in a personal way, becomes our own spiritual mountaintop where we receive truth and inspiration. Searching the scriptures, for example, can answer many of the questions of our day by lifting our spirits to clarifying heights. Further, the world is dotted with holy temples which we may enter to receive instruction and inspiration and to perform sacred ordinances. Conferences such as this one, reports of the prophetic utterances of our beloved leaders, our own sacrament meetings and stake conferences—all provide rich, fulfilling opportunities to hear the truth and allow it to sink deep into our souls.

### **Testimony is a spiritual mountaintop**

In our own lives, in our daily workaday world, we can create our own “mountaintop experience” so unique and personal that I wonder why more of us do not readily do so. The spiritual mountaintop of which I speak is the development and refining of a testimony of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Just as we can stand on the top of any great mountain and experience an awe-inspiring panorama, I believe we can stand in our own places and experience overwhelming awe in knowing that the Savior, in an act of love which defies mortal understanding, gave His life in taking upon himself our pain and suffering.

It seems to me that the power of a testimony of Jesus Christ is one of the great untapped sources of direction in our lives today. I am convinced that each of us, however good, loyal, or dedicated we try to be in the gospel and in the Church, could do so much more if we did it with the power and influence of an unwavering faith in the Lord. Let me give you an example.

### **Link teaching to a testimony of Jesus**

I believe most parents within the sound of my voice try to teach their children right from wrong, to be honest, to respect others and their property, to live morally clean lives, and to love their families. They work hard to teach them the importance of the saving ordinances, such as baptism for the remission of sins. They want their sons to be ordained to the priesthood at the appropriate age. They teach their children to know that to be married in the right place to the right person at the right time by the right authority is critical to exaltation.

These important lessons, and others like them so crucial to every Latter-day Saint, are the hallmarks of everything we believe and hold dear. If these lessons are learned through the Spirit, taught under the strong influence of a strong testimony of the atonement of the Savior, they are taught and learned in an atmosphere of love and trust that goes a long way in ensuring they will be retained. As the scripture teaches, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). The belief, and finally conviction, that Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter’s son, the Redeemer of Israel—even our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ—gave His life in a selfless sacrifice so that we may have immortality and eternal life bring into focus every other teaching that we impart to our children and others for whom we have a stewardship.

Sometimes I think that we fear too much to link all of our teaching to the foundation of gospel truths. Too often, perhaps, we teach children to obey a law or a principle because our family expects that obedience. They might observe another truth in order to please a neighbor or a bishop, and another for yet some other reason. When we teach an eternal truth to our children and don’t explain it in the context of a firm testimony of the Savior, we miss the power of the ex-

ample of the greatest teacher the world has ever known.

### **Climb above comfortable plateaus**

Likewise many of us have attained a level of obedience in which we consistently keep the letter of the law; we commit no grievous sins. As we look about us, we see that we do no worse than the next family, and we feel satisfied, comfortable. We are compatible with others on our plateau partway up the mountain. We like this scenic ledge where we have all the "do's and don'ts" under control. We need to learn—and then teach—that we are obedient to the laws and principles of the gospel because of our belief, our knowledge, our testimony, and our faith in Jesus Christ. Nephi, who reports in the scriptures that his "soul delighteth in plainness" (2 Nephi 25:4), reminds us in the twenty-fifth chapter of 2 Nephi, "We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins" (v. 26).

Perhaps knowing that it would be difficult at times for us to place our faith so fully in our testimonies of the Savior, President Harold B. Lee admonished us, "Walk to the edge of the light, and perhaps a few steps into the darkness, and you will find that the light will appear and move ahead of you" (quoted in Lucile C. Tate, *Boyd K. Packer: A Watchman on the Tower* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995], p. 138).

It is in the development of our testimonies, in the moving even partway up the mountain and out of our comfort zones, that I think we begin to approach our own personal spiritual mountaintop where we can receive inspiration and truth as never before. It is there, just as I experienced in the tops of the Tetons, that we can think more clearly, see things more as they really are, and un-

derstand truth in a light that is pure and fresh. There, with the Holy Ghost to guide and influence us, we begin to understand, know how to teach, or bless the lives of others with new meaning and increased perception.

### **Know, remember, and serve Christ**

If I could have but just one wish fulfilled this morning, I would plant deep in your hearts the unwavering remembrance of Jesus Christ. In our day President Howard W. Hunter inspired all of us by saying, "We must know Christ better than we know him; we must remember him more often than we remember him; we must serve him more valiantly than we serve him" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, p. 84; or *Ensign*, May 1994, p. 64).

Perhaps what President Hunter asked us to do in those challenging words was the same thing that the prophet Alma taught us about finding a mighty change in our hearts. Alma taught the members of the Church in Zarahemla that they needed to lift their hearts to a higher spiritual plane. He spoke of the need to trust God, and he told them how important it was to exercise faith. And then he asked this critical question which we need to ask ourselves today: "And now behold, I say unto you, my brethren, if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?" (Alma 5:26).

### **Anchor goodness in faith in Christ**

Brothers and sisters, our goodness—our every righteous endeavor, our good works, our obedience, and our efforts to bless others—must be anchored in and driven by our faith in Christ, our testimonies of his mission and sacrifice, and our willingness to move off our comfortable plateaus. Until we find ways to strengthen, increase, and magnify our

testimonies of Jesus Christ and the effect of the Atonement in our lives, we will be unable to answer Alma's question in the affirmative.

Satan wants us to fail to reach that mountaintop that will allow us to develop a testimony so powerful that he will be unable to influence us. His work is to thwart our efforts, but the Lord has counseled us, "Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail" (D&C 6:34).

We have every confidence that earth and hell will not overtake you, but it will require that you move from your current plateaus and climb to higher ground.

### **Help children know and love the Savior**

May I close with the powerful words of our beloved prophet, Gordon B. Hinckley, and I quote:

"Go forward with your lives. The best lies ahead. . . . Bring into the lives of our young people something more of spirituality. . . . Cultivate in the heart of every boy [and girl] a sense of [their] re-

lationship to the Lord as [they become] acquainted with the Savior of the world by knowing some elements of the atonement of the Redeemer through which eternal life is made possible for each of us" (in *Church News*, 2 Sept. 1995, p. 2).

God bless you, parents. We love you. We know it is not easy to do what you are doing. We know that every new day brings challenges and trials that often seem insurmountable. May you find through increased faith and reliance upon the Lord renewed strength, vigor, and resilience in teaching and blessing the lives of those in your parental stewardship. May you find in the counsel given us by President Howard W. Hunter, President Gordon B. Hinckley, and all who have stood to bear unflinching testimony of Jesus Christ that only through love and devotion to the teachings of Him of whom we testify, and through the blessings of His atonement in our behalf, may we teach with the power to bless and save our families in the kingdom of God. Of this I testify in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## **Sister Janette Hales Beckham**

At one time a mother said, "I wish they would just lock all the youth in the temple until they turn twenty-one." A father said, "I feel totally powerless in my own home. We are out of control." What force or power could soften the human cry for greater security, orderliness, control, even peace?

### **Power to calm outside fears**

My first memories of a need for power came when my family moved the year I began third grade. I started figuring out more about friends and other people's families. As my new friends

talked to kids in the extended neighborhood, we sized up assets and numbers—who had shade trees you could sit in or chicken coops you could climb on. Besides whose dad was the strongest, I noticed many of the kids were older than I. Luckily I had two big sisters with lots of friends. In fact I once said I could call out the whole high school if needed. I felt I had the needed personal power for safety and self-preservation.

My eight-year-old world was enlarging. So was the need for the skills that help one cope in this civilized world. I started appreciating the safety one gets from size, numbers, resources. Our use