

In this conference you will hear inspired counsel, for instance, to reach out to the new members of the Church. Those with the faith of Reddick Newton Allred will keep offering friendship even when it seems not to be needed or to have no effect. They will persist. When some new member reaches the point of spiritual exhaustion, they will be there offering kind words and fellowship. They will then feel the same divine approval Brother Allred felt when he saw those handcart pioneers struggling toward him, knowing he could offer them safety because he had followed counsel when it was hard to do.

While the record does not prove it, I am confident that Brother Allred prayed while he waited. I am confident that his prayers were answered. He then knew that the counsel to stand fast was from God. We must pray to know that. I promise you answers to such prayers of faith.

#### **Be patient when counsel seems not to apply**

Sometimes we will receive counsel that we cannot understand or that seems

not to apply to us, even after careful prayer and thought. Don't discard the counsel, but hold it close. If someone you trusted handed you what appeared to be nothing more than sand with the promise that it contained gold, you might wisely hold it in your hand awhile, shaking it gently. Every time I have done that with counsel from a prophet, after a time the gold flakes have begun to appear and I have been grateful.

We are blessed to live in a time when the priesthood keys are on the earth. We are blessed to know where to look and how to listen for the voice that will fulfill the promise of the Lord that He will gather us to safety. I pray for you and for me that we will have humble hearts, that we will listen, that we will pray, that we will wait for the deliverance of the Lord, which is sure to come as we are faithful. I testify that God, our Heavenly Father, lives and loves us. This is the Church of Jesus Christ. He lives and loves us. He is the head of the Church, and He is our Savior. I testify that Gordon B. Hinckley holds all the keys of the priesthood of God. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## Elder Monte J. Brough

### **“How come we ‘got choosed’?”**

A few years ago, I was privileged to be assigned to the Asia Area Presidency, with the area office being in Hong Kong. Our four youngest children accompanied Sister Brough and me to that fascinating city, where we lived for three very interesting years. Our children were accustomed to the wide-open spaces of western America, and Hong Kong required each child to make some very large personal and emotional adjustments. Many nights we sat around our dining room table in our modest 13th-

floor apartment, trying to help them with school and cultural challenges.

One night, after anxiously working for several hours to complete school assignments, our youngest child, Kami (then eight years old), asked, “Daddy, how come we ‘got choosed’ to come to Hong Kong?” My first reaction was to be somewhat flippant and say, “Just lucky, I guess.” However, I could tell from the very sincere look on this little girl's face that she wanted a grown-up answer to her question. At that moment, as I surveyed the challenges placed on our little family because of my priesthood calling,

I needed to review the answer again for myself.

### The divine nature of our callings

I recalled the day some years earlier when I picked up the telephone to hear the familiar voice of President Spencer W. Kimball, who carefully extended a call to me to serve as a mission president.

After the telephone call, I was troubled with great feelings of inadequacy. My wife and I were yet in our thirties, with a young family of six children. I remembered the deep love and respect that I felt and still feel for my mission president. Could President Kimball have made a mistake? Did they really understand who I was?

A few days later, we were granted an appointment with Elder Rex D. Pinegar. We explained to him our feelings. I will always remember Elder Pinegar's answer: "Brother Brough, have you a testimony as to the divine calling of our prophets and other Church leaders?"

"Yes, I do," I answered. "From my earliest childhood, I have believed in the sacred callings of our Church leaders. From the deepest part of my soul, I believe President Spencer W. Kimball to be a prophet."

Elder Pinegar then said, "Now you must gain a testimony as to the divine nature of your own calling. You must come to know that *you* also have been called of God."

Paul the Apostle had gained a personal testimony of his own "holy calling" and also that of Timothy. He declared that God "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Timothy 1:9).

This powerful personal witness would require Timothy to "be [a] partaker of the afflictions of the gospel

according to the power of God" (2 Timothy 1:8).

As Kami and I read this scripture together, I could see that she very much wanted to understand. I wanted her to know that there can be some "afflictions" associated with our callings in the Church. We talked about being away from our home and family members. I understood it was difficult for her to adjust to these new surroundings.

It was obvious, however, that I was *still* short of my objective when she asked, "But, Daddy, why did we 'get choosed' and not someone else?" Now that is a much more difficult question. Why do these callings and responsibilities come to some and not to others? I was reminded of the charge President Hinckley gave me upon my ordination as a Seventy. He said: "Brother Brough, now a lot of people are going to say a lot of nice things about you. Don't believe them!"

It is very dangerous for any of us to think we have earned the right to a Church calling. However, every member must come to know the sacred nature of his or her own service in the Church. I remember my Primary teacher, Sister Mildred Jacobson, who I believe was divinely called to her position of responsibility. Two bishops, Bishop Lynn McKinnon and Bishop Ross Jackson, who served during my youth, played significant roles in the lives of many. I believe they were called of God in the same process of revelation as were Paul and Timothy.

### "I have chosen you"

We must each prepare ourselves for every good work that might come to us and then accept the principle that revelation, not aspiration, is the basis for our respective callings. We can learn much from the following New Testament story:

"Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

"... She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom" (Matthew 20:20-21).

I explained to Kami that Zebedee's children were the Apostles James and John, who would later sit with Peter, one on his right hand and the other on his left. Then we read together how Jesus answered the devoted mother: "To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Matthew 20:23).

The Apostles also were taught concerning their important calling when Jesus reminded them, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you" (John 15:16).

### A taxi ride in New Delhi

I explained to Kami that we definitely had been chosen because we would not seek such a challenging assignment. This was reinforced just a few days later when Sister Brough and I were assigned to travel to India for a missionary conference. The flight from Hong Kong to New Delhi, India, was a late-night flight that arrived in New Delhi at about two o'clock in the morning. Even at that late hour, there were hundreds of taxi drivers who wanted to provide our transportation. After selecting a driver, we began our journey of about 40 kilometers to the hotel. Even though it was late, the roads were crowded with animals, people, and other vehicles. As we were going through an intersection, the taxi's motor quit. I watched with increasing anxiety as the driver fruitlessly attempted to start the motor. Finally, in obvious frustration, the driver turned to me and in his very best English said, "Push taxi!" It was three o'clock in the

morning, and my wife and I were very tired. I got out of the taxi and tried to push it across the intersection but was not able to do so. The driver then said to my wife, "Push taxi." Lanette got out of the car and began to help me push the taxi through the intersection. As we were struggling to get the taxi through the traffic, I said to my wife, "There were a few things we didn't understand when we were given this assignment."

### Divine calling of missionaries

I shall never forget the experience we had in June of 1993 at a special meeting in Beijing, China, with couples who were then teaching English in North Vietnam and Mongolia. After two days of training and inspiration, we closed with this familiar song:

It may not be on the mountain  
height  
Or over the stormy sea,  
It may not be at the battle's front  
My Lord will have need of me.  
("I'll Go Where You Want Me to  
Go," *Hymns*, no. 270)

As we were singing, my wife leaned over and whispered in my ear: "But it might be 'on the mountain height,' or it might be 'over the stormy sea,' or it might be 'at the battle's front.'" The Lord surely had need for these beautiful people serving in this interesting area of the world. These wonderful missionary couples did not choose to come to these countries. Yet as we now look at the results of their service, I know that they were chosen by the Lord for their special calling.

On four different occasions, Sister Brough and I and our family have excitedly opened the envelope containing the mission call and assignment for one of our children. Each time, we have contemplated with excitement the various possibilities for their service. While pref-

erences were expressed, the moment their eyes saw the words "You are hereby assigned to serve in the (blank) mission," without exception a wonderful feeling of good and right came over each family member. We each knew that a prophet had guided a divine selection process to which four of our children have gladly responded. Tens of thousands of returned missionaries can also testify of this process and the divine inspiration of their own missionary calling.

### Church service is based on revelation

I never completely satisfied little Kami's question that night. Over the years, we have recalled that challenging evening when a small child was a bit overwhelmed with life. We have explored other scriptures and many other stories since that time. We have received the wonderful promise to those the Savior had chosen "that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it [to] you" (John 15:16).

That promise—of answer to our prayers—is directed even to a small

child. This was reaffirmed recently when I heard Kami, now 15 years old, respond to a question directed to her by an adult friend: "How come you were so lucky to live in Hong Kong when you were a child?" She looked directly at me as she gave her answer to our friend: "It wasn't luck; we 'were chosen.'"

That personal and prophetic revelation is the foundation upon which our Church service is firmly based is my witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Faust

We have just listened to Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, followed by Elder Monte J. Brough of the Presidency of the Seventy.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." Elder Sheldon F. Child of the Seventy will then speak to us.

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The choir and congregation sang "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

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## Elder Sheldon F. Child

### His word was as good as his bond

I was raised on a small farm in northern Utah. We were blessed to have enough land—not enough to make a living, but enough to make work for a young boy. My parents were good, hard-working, industrious people. In order to make ends meet, my father took outside employment. Each morning before he left for work, he would make a list of chores he wanted me to accomplish before he came home that evening.

I remember on one occasion one of the items on the list was to take a small broken part from our hay rake to the blacksmith shop to have it repaired. I

was uncomfortable about going. My father hadn't left any money, and I wondered what I should do. I put off going as long as I could. When all my other chores were finished, I knew I couldn't avoid it any longer. Father expected the broken part to be repaired when he came home, and it was my responsibility to see that it was done.

I can still remember walking the mile or so to the blacksmith shop. I even remember how uncomfortable I was as I watched him weld the part. As he finished, I nervously told him that I had no money, but that my father would pay him later. I'm sure he sensed my anxiety. He patted me on the shoulder and said,