

8. Doctrine and Covenants 98:14.
9. Alma 23:6.
10. Alma 27:27.
11. Alma 24:18.
12. Alma 24:21.
13. *Finding Peace in Our Lives* (1995), 193–94.

### President Faust

Elder Sheldon F. Child of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

Elder Dennis E. Simmons of the Seventy will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Jerald L. Taylor of the Seventy.

## Elder Dennis E. Simmons

### “My peace I give unto you”

During the last few days of the Savior’s mortal ministry, He finalized His instruction to His Apostles. They had been with Him during His three-year ministry, but now He completed His teaching that had come line upon line and precept upon precept as rapidly as they had been able to receive it.

Knowing the end of His ministry was near, He told them of His impending departure: “Yet a little while I am with you. . . . Whither I go, ye cannot come” (John 13:33).

Fear, frustration, and concern must have gripped these humble disciples. Jesus had been their security, their help, their light. What could they do without His direction, His instruction, His example, His comfort?

In love and compassion, the Master assured them:

“I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:18).

“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

“Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

“ . . . He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:16–17, 26).

To His apostolic friends and for the benefit of all believers, Jesus added a significant benediction: “Peace I leave with you, *my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*” (John 14:27; italics added).

The scriptures testify that the promise was fulfilled in the lives of His servants in the meridian of time. We testify that the fulfillment continues in this dispensation of the fulness of times.

### Peace in the midst of tribulation

It should be noted that Jesus promised *His* peace—not the peace that the world gives. The world cries out for freedom from war, from violence, from oppression, from injustice, from contention, from disease and distress. That the Savior did not expect such worldly peace is clear from His concluding remark as He finished His special teaching to His Apostles: “These things I have spoken unto you, that *in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*” (John 16:33; italics added).

In mortality tribulation would continue. But in the midst of that tribulation His followers would have peace in Him. In other words, even if all the world is crumbling around us, the promised Comforter will provide His peace as a result of true discipleship. Ultimate total

peace will come, of course, because He overcame the world. But we can have His peace with us irrespective of the troubles of the world. His peace is that peace, that serenity, that comfort spoken to our hearts and minds by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, as we strive to follow *Him* and keep *His* commandments.

“Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me” (D&C 19:23).

“He who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

### Peace through the still, small voice

Just as Helaman discovered in the midst of battle that “he did speak peace to our souls” (Alma 58:11) and Oliver Cowdery had peace spoken to his mind when he cried unto the Lord in his heart that he might know concerning the truth of the Book of Mormon (see D&C 6:22–23), all sincere seekers can have that same peace spoken to them. That peace comes from the assurances spoken by a still, small voice. The Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit who generally communicates not through physical senses but by touching the heart and mind; in other words, He speaks through thoughts, impressions, and feelings and does so softly.

As Elder Packer has stated: “The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all” (“The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53).

### Surrender to the power of the Spirit

Accordingly, many do not hear the voice. In fact, many do not *want* to hear the voice. Many men desire to be, and

are determined to be self-sufficient, rejecting and scoffing at anything which would potentially call into question their own power or ability. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

But although the Spirit is gentle, it speaks with great power. To receive the Spirit, a type of surrender is necessary. A few years before the first advent of Jesus Christ, the Nephite prophets “Nephi and Lehi were encircled about as if by fire” while confined in prison (Helaman 5:23). Their would-be slayers heard “a voice as if it were above the cloud of darkness” which had gripped the crowd of unbelievers, calling them to repentance as the earth shook (Helaman 5:29).

“When they heard this voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper, and it did *pierce even to the very soul*—And notwithstanding the mildness of the voice, behold the earth shook exceedingly,” they were motivated to repent and have faith in Christ (Helaman 5:30–31; italics added).

“And behold, the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words. And it came to pass that there came a voice unto them, yea, a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying: Peace, peace be unto you” (Helaman 5:45–47).

They surrendered—surrendered to a power unseen, but capable of penetrating any willing heart.

### Fruits of the Spirit

Paul described the fruit of the Spirit—that is, what the Spirit produces: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

longsuffering, gentleness"; and he observed, "Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). In other words, the Spirit can penetrate anything. No law can be passed which will preclude the Spirit from doing His work with an obedient follower of Christ. The scriptures teach us that the Spirit:

- Enlightens the mind (see D&C 6:15).
- "Leadeth to do good— . . . to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously" (D&C 11:12).
- Fills the soul with joy (see D&C 11:13; Mosiah 4:20).
- Reveals the "truth of all things" (Moroni 10:5).
- Bears record of Father and Son (see D&C 20:27).
- Knows all things (see D&C 42:17).
- Convinces (see D&C 100:8).
- Gives knowledge (see D&C 121:26).
- Speaks in a "still small voice" (1 Nephi 17:45).
- Teaches a man to pray (see 2 Nephi 32:8).
- Brings about mighty change (see Mosiah 5:2).
- Gives assurances (see Alma 58:11).

- Fills with "hope and perfect love" (Moroni 8:26).
- Gives liberty (see 2 Corinthians 3:17).
- Comforts (see John 14:16).
- Speaks peace (Alma 58:11).
- Is available (see D&C 6:14).

#### **Comfort is available to all**

Just as Jesus' anxious Apostles were given peace by "another Comforter," so today can all men and women receive the same marvelous blessing each day of their lives: the teenager challenged by peer pressure, the person torn by seemingly overwhelming passions or emotions, the person encircled about by loneliness and despair, the hungry, the oppressed, the forgotten, the frightened, the abused, the abuser, the liar, the thief—all who will surrender, follow the Master, and do His works are entitled to the same peace.

Jesus' invitation is extended to all: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). I so testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## **Elder Jerald L. Taylor**

My dear brothers and sisters, this afternoon I would like to speak about gratitude: first, for a loving family; second, for a living prophet; and third, for the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Gratitude for a loving family**

Nephi stated that he had "been born of goodly parents" (1 Nephi 1:1). I echo his same words, for I too was born of goodly parents—a father who was a faithful Latter-day Saint who honored his priesthood and a loving mother who

died when I was a young child, leaving my father with six children. My father remarried a widow with nine children, thus giving me in all five brothers and nine sisters. I am grateful for my second mother, who loved me as one of her own and who was an example to me. I thank my Father in Heaven for all of my brothers and sisters, who have loved and supported me and who also love the gospel and the Lord. It has now been 54 years since the Lunt-Taylor family was joined together, and even though our parents are gone, we feel unity and love for each