

Church—make a commitment, carry it out, and report to someone. One of the miracles of the Restoration of the gospel and the organization of the Church in these latter days is that the plan allows growth and change to come to the members. We each have available to us the experience that will help us change, to become spiritually mature. Through our own repeated efforts, our faith can become a reality.

### Expressions of appreciation

May I, in concluding my service, express my love and appreciation to the many who have counseled and supported me—the First Presidency, priesthood leaders, and the other auxiliary leaders. My counselors, past and present, the Young Women general board, and the Young Women office staff are magnificent women, women of faith. Wherever they serve, their names will be

known for good. I express gratitude to my Heavenly Father for my experience here, in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Faust

Elder Dallin H. Oaks, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has spoken to us, followed by Sister Janette Hales Beckham, former Young Women general president.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing “High on the Mountain Top.”

Elder Duane B. Gerrard of the Seventy will then speak to us, followed by Elders Wayne M. Hancock and J. Kent Jolley, also of the Seventy.

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The choir and congregation sang “High on the Mountain Top.”

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## Elder Duane B. Gerrard

### The plan of salvation compared to flight plans

The Lord has carefully provided a plan of life called the plan of salvation. It comprises all of the laws, ordinances, principles, and doctrines required to complete our mortal journey and progress to a state of exaltation enjoyed by our Father in Heaven. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”<sup>1</sup> Through His divine work—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement—He makes this plan available to all.

As a recently retired airline pilot, I’ve filed many flight plans in my years of flying—flight plans that led me safely to my destination. Airlines also have laws, procedures, principles, and regulations.

We carefully follow these strict procedures and checklists that are grouped into three specific areas. First, we have normal procedures; these we do regularly and consistently, every flight, to ensure safety. Next, we have abnormal procedures; these are used when something out of the ordinary takes place, like the loss of a hydraulic or electrical system. Abnormal procedures must be done precisely and in proper sequence and order to “restore all systems to normal.” Finally, we have emergency procedures used only in the most dire and critical of circumstances, like a flameout, rapid depressurization, or severe turbulence.

### Parents teach us normal procedures

In these procedures I find close parallels to the plan of salvation. First, the

Lord has created a beautiful earth for His children to live on and mortal bodies that are temples for our spirits. Our bodies are truly a joy and a pleasure in our flight through life. The Book of Mormon tells us “men are, that they might have joy.”<sup>2</sup> We must not corrupt nor misuse our wonderful bodies; they are God-given, sacred, and designed by the Lord—a perfect example of the beauty of His creations.

We are raised by mortal parents, whose kind and loving care teach us correct principles or normal procedures that, if followed daily, will surely help us continue life’s flight plan. We are taught principles such as love, honesty, kindness, patience, trust, sharing, repentance, obedience, faith, baptism, prayer, and a host of other eternal principles. These are taught in a family setting by diligent and loving parents and reinforced by kind brothers, sisters, and friends. These normal procedures come as basic training in the Lord’s plan of salvation.

The Lord tells us to “honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”<sup>3</sup> Show your parents love and respect, for they, in partnership with the Lord, are responsible for your mortal bodies and basic training. How grateful I am for kind and loving parents, who taught me these true principles of life.

#### **Use repentance to deal with abnormal occurrences**

Next there are abnormal procedures, which I liken to the abnormal happenings in our daily lives, like the disappointment of failing a class in school due to laziness or apathy, carelessness leading to injury or accident, or disobedience leading to serious sin—sin that requires complete repentance followed by forgiveness. These abnormals sometimes are part of our lives and must be overcome. I once asked a retiring chief pilot

how he managed to fly nearly 40 years without an accident or even incident.

He replied, “Good decisions.”

“And how do you always make good decisions?” I asked.

He replied, “Experience.”

“And how do you gain experience?” I persisted.

“Bad decisions,” was his response.

But my pilot friend was wrong; there is no need to make bad decisions. Elder Marion G. Romney once stated, “Now, I tell you that you can make every decision in your life correctly if you can learn to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> This, plus frequent reference to the scriptures, allow us to learn much from the experiences of others. If, however, we do make mistakes, the Lord expects us to learn from our bad decisions, and our normal and abnormal procedures require us to confess, repent, and seek forgiveness. And thus, by so doing, even failure can become success. The Lord’s plan has given us those who care and comfort us in times of failure and sin: our parents, bishops, quorum leaders, and advisers. I am grateful for a plan that provides these wonderful parents, leaders, and teachers who really care! I’m especially grateful for our Savior, whose Atonement makes repentance and forgiveness possible.

Although our abnormal procedures must occasionally be used, if we are humble and wise and use good judgment, we will always repent and return all systems to normal. In flying, they say a superior pilot is one who uses superior judgment to avoid situations that require superior skill and tremendous effort to overcome. The repentance process should become a frequent normal procedure to teach us to deal with the infrequent abnormal occurrences of life—oh, the difference between *nearly right* and *exactly right!*

#### **Emergency procedures in times of peril**

Fortunately, in my flying career I’ve rarely needed to use emergency proce-

dures, even though I frequently trained and prepared for them. Emergency procedures provide help and direction in the most dire of circumstances. Some of these we all must face as we experience the severe turbulence of life, such as the loss of a loved one, the discovery of a serious disease, estrangement, or financial disaster. Emergency procedures are used in times of utmost peril when one's testimony is tested and tried. We then must rely on our inner strength, a knowledge of the gospel which reminds us of the principles we hold dear, and the comfort that comes when we endure all things and rely on the Savior and allow His Spirit to warm us with His cloak of love. We find solace by searching the scriptures, pondering messages of prophets, and feeling the deep love and devotion of our spouse, family, and friends. With the use of emergency procedures, we carefully but surely maintain our flight plan to our eternal destination.

### Continued preparation

Are you familiar with your flight plan of life—the Lord's plan of salvation? Can you effectively use the normal, abnormal, and emergency procedures, or principles the Lord has provided? Do you study, practice, train, and rehearse these divine principles? Are you prepared in every respect to follow this great plan of salvation?

If not, then do as we do in the airlines—enroll yourself in a refresher course, the Lord's recurrent training:

- Become more actively involved in Christ's teachings.

- Always attend sacrament meeting, and keep the Sabbath day holy.

- Pay tithes and offerings more faithfully.

- Be morally clean.

- Pray regularly and with more purity of purpose.

- Hold family home evening.

- Study the scriptures.

- Give more of yourself to others.

- Show more love to family and friends.

- Be an example of goodness, compassion, and charity.

The Prophet Joseph Smith told us, "A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race."<sup>5</sup> We should all do likewise.

### Testimony of the plan of salvation

What a great and wonderful plan is the plan of salvation, which, like the many flight plans I've filed, teaches true principles to allow completion of our journey through life.

I know God lives, and I testify of Jesus Christ; He is God's Only Begotten Son, our Savior and Redeemer, who loves us all. I'm grateful for His marvelous plan of salvation, our flight plan of life. In Jesus' name, amen.

### NOTES

1. Moses 1:39.

2. 2 Nephi 2:25.

3. Exodus 20:12.

4. In Conference Report, Oct. 1961, 60.

5. *History of the Church*, 4:227.

## Elder Wayne M. Hancock

### Faithful sisters who go about doing good

The wide-bodied airliner began its takeoff roll, returning us to the United

States after a four-year business assignment in Switzerland. As we accelerated past the B Concourse at the Zürich International Airport, I strained to see if the