

Tomorrow the Lord Will Do Wonders among You

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Keep loving. Keep trying. Keep trusting. Keep believing. Keep growing.
Heaven is cheering you on today, tomorrow, and forever.

Brothers and sisters, do you have any idea—do you have any notion or inkling whatsoever—of how much we love you? For 10 hours you watch, fixed on one face at this pulpit sequentially, but for those same 10 hours, we seated behind this pulpit watch, fixed on you. You thrill us to the center of our soul, whether that be the 21,000 here in the Conference Center, or multitudes in meetinghouses and chapels, or finally millions in homes around the globe, perhaps huddled around a family computer screen. Here you are, there you are, hour after hour, in your Sunday best, being your best. You sing and you pray. You listen and you believe. You are the miracle of this Church. And we love you..

What another remarkable general conference we have had. We have been especially blessed by President Thomas S. Monson's presence and prophetic messages. President, we love you, we pray for you, we thank you, and above all, we sustain you. We are grateful to have been taught by you and your marvelous counselors and so many of our other great men and women leaders. We have heard incomparable music. We have been urgently prayed for and pleaded with. Truly the Spirit of the Lord has been here in rich abundance. What an inspirational weekend it has been in every way.

Now, I do see a couple of problems. One is the fact that I am the only person standing between you and the ice cream you always have ready at the close of general conference. The other potential problem is captured in this photo I saw recently on the Internet.

My apologies to all the children who are now hiding under the sofa, but the fact of the matter is none of us want tomorrow, or the day after that, to destroy the wonderful feelings we have had this weekend. We want to hold fast to the spiritual impressions we have had and the inspired teachings we have heard. But

spiritual impressions we have had and the inspired teachings we have heard. But it is inevitable that after heavenly moments in our lives, we, of necessity, return to earth, so to speak, where sometimes less-than-ideal circumstances again face us.

The author of Hebrews warned us of this when he wrote, “Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.”¹ That post-illumination affliction can come in many ways, and it can come to all of us. Surely every missionary who has ever served soon realized that life in the field wasn’t going to be quite like the rarefied atmosphere of the missionary training center. So too for all of us upon leaving a sweet session in the temple or concluding a particularly spiritual sacrament meeting.

Remember that when Moses came down from his singular experience on Mount Sinai, he found that his people had “corrupted themselves” and had “turned aside quickly.”² There they were at the foot of the mountain, busily fashioning a golden calf to worship, in the very hour that Jehovah, at the summit of the mountain, had been telling Moses, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” and “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.”³ Moses was *not* happy with his flock of wandering Israelites that day!

During His earthly ministry, Jesus took Peter, James, and John to the Mount of Transfiguration, where, the scriptures say, “his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.”⁴ The heavens opened, ancient prophets came, and God the Father spoke.

After such a celestial experience, what does Jesus come down the mountain to find? Well, first He found an argument between His disciples and their

antagonists over a failed blessing administered to a young boy. Then He tried to convince the Twelve—unsuccessfully, it turns out—that He would soon be delivered up to local rulers who would kill Him. Then someone mentioned that a tax was due, which was forthrightly paid. Then He had to rebuke some of the brethren because they were arguing about who would be the greatest in His kingdom. All of this led Him at one point to say, “O faithless generation, ... how long shall I suffer you?”⁵ He had occasion to ask that question more than once during His ministry. No wonder He longed for the prayerful solitude of mountaintops!

Realizing that we *all* have to come down from peak experiences to deal with the regular vicissitudes of life, may I offer this encouragement as general conference concludes.

First of all, if in the days ahead you not only see limitations in those around you but also find elements in your own life that don’t yet measure up to the messages you have heard this weekend, please don’t be cast down in spirit and

messages you have heard this weekend, please don't be cast down in spirit and don't give up. The gospel, the Church, and these wonderful semiannual gatherings are intended to give hope and inspiration. They are not intended to discourage you. Only the adversary, the enemy of us all, would try to convince us that the ideals outlined in general conference are depressing and unrealistic, that people don't really improve, that no one really progresses. And why does Lucifer give that speech? Because he knows *he* can't improve, *he* can't progress, that worlds without end *he* will never have a bright tomorrow. He is a miserable man bound by eternal limitations, and he wants you to be miserable too. Well, don't fall for that. With the gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the strength of heaven to help us, we *can* improve, and the great thing about the gospel is we get credit for *trying*, even if we don't always succeed.

When there was a controversy in the early Church regarding who was entitled to heaven's blessings and who wasn't, the Lord declared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Verily I say unto you, [the gifts of God] are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep ... my commandments, and [for them] that *seeketh* so to do."⁶ Boy, aren't we *all* thankful for that added provision "and ... seeketh so to do"! That has been a lifesaver because sometimes that is all we can offer! We take some solace in the fact that if God were to reward only the perfectly faithful, He wouldn't have much of a distribution list.

Please remember tomorrow, and all the days after that, that the Lord blesses those who *want* to improve, who accept the need for commandments and *try* to keep them, who cherish Christlike virtues and *strive* to the best of their ability to acquire them. If you stumble in that pursuit, so does everyone; the Savior is

there to help you keep going. If you fall, summon His strength. Call out like Alma, "O Jesus, ... have mercy on me."⁷ He will help you get back up. He will help you repent, repair, fix whatever you have to fix, and keep going. Soon enough you will have the success you seek.

"As you desire of me so it shall be done unto you," the Lord has declared.

"... Put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously. ...

"... [Then] *whatsoever you desire of me [in] righteousness, ... you shall receive.*"⁸

I love that doctrine! It says again and again that we are going to be blessed for our *desire* to do good, even as we actually strive to be so. And it reminds us that to qualify for those blessings, we must make certain we do not deny them to others: we are to deal justly, never unjustly, never unfairly; we are to walk humbly, never arrogantly, never pridefully; we are to judge righteously, never

self-righteously, never unrighteously.

My brothers and sisters, the first great *commandment* of all eternity is to love God with all of *our* heart, might, mind, and strength—that's the first great commandment. But the first great *truth* of all eternity is that God loves *us* with all of *His* heart, might, mind, and strength. That love is the foundation stone of eternity, and it should be the foundation stone of our daily life. Indeed it is only with that reassurance burning in our soul that we can have the confidence to keep trying to improve, keep seeking forgiveness for our sins, and keep extending that grace to our neighbor.

President George Q. Cannon once taught: "No matter how serious the trial, how deep the distress, how great the affliction, [God] will never desert us. He never has, and He never will. He cannot do it. It is not His character [to do so]. ... He will [always] stand by us. We may pass through the fiery furnace; we may pass through deep waters; but we shall not be consumed nor overwhelmed. We shall emerge from all these trials and difficulties the better and purer for them."⁹

Now, with that majestic devotion ringing from heaven as the great constant in our lives, manifested most purely and perfectly in the life, death, and Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can escape the consequences of both sin and stupidity—our own or that of others—in whatever form they may come to us in the course of daily living. If we give our heart to God, if we love the Lord Jesus Christ, if we do the best we can to live the gospel, then tomorrow—and every other day—is ultimately going to be magnificent, even if we don't always recognize it as such. Why? Because our Heavenly Father wants it to be! He wants

to bless us. A rewarding, abundant, and eternal life is the very object of His merciful plan for His children! It is a plan predicated on the truth "that all things work together for good to them that love God."¹⁰ So keep loving. Keep trying. Keep trusting. Keep believing. Keep growing. Heaven is cheering you on today, tomorrow, and forever.

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard?" Isaiah cried.

"[God] giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. ...

"... They that wait upon [Him] shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles. ...

"For ... the Lord ... God will hold [their] right hand, saying unto [them], Fear not; I will help thee."¹¹

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BROTHERS AND SISTERS, may a loving Father in Heaven bless us tomorrow to remember how we felt today. May He bless us to strive with patience and persistence toward the ideals we have heard proclaimed this conference weekend, knowing that His divine love and unfailing help will be with us even when we struggle—no, will be with us *especially* when we struggle.

If gospel standards seem high and the personal improvement needed in the days ahead seems out of reach, remember Joshua's encouragement to his people when they faced a daunting future. "Sanctify yourselves," he said, "for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."¹² I declare that same promise. It is the promise of this conference. It is the promise of this Church. It is the promise of Him who performs those wonders, who is Himself "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, ... The Prince of Peace."¹³ Of Him I bear witness. Of Him I am a witness. And to Him this conference stands as a testament of His ongoing work in this great latter day. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.