

Closing Remarks

By President Russell M. Nelson

Individual worthiness requires a total conversion of mind and heart to be more like the Lord.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we come to the end of this historic conference, we thank the Lord for inspiring the messages and the music that have edified us. We have truly enjoyed a spiritual feast.

We know the restored gospel of Jesus Christ will bring hope and joy to people who will hear and heed His doctrine. We also know that each home can become a true sanctuary of faith, where peace, love, and the Spirit of the Lord may dwell.

Of course, the crowning jewel of the Restoration is the holy temple. Its sacred ordinances and covenants are pivotal to preparing a people who are ready to welcome the Savior at His Second Coming. Presently we have 166 dedicated temples, and more are coming.

An open house will be held prior to the dedication of each new and renovated temple. Many friends not of our faith will participate in tours of those temples and will learn something about temple blessings. And some of those visitors will be moved upon to know more. Some will sincerely ask how they might qualify for the blessings of the temple.

As members of the Church, we need to be prepared to answer their questions. We can explain that the blessings of the temple are available to any and all people who will prepare themselves. But before they can enter a dedicated temple, they need to qualify. The Lord wants all His children to partake of the eternal blessings available in His temple. He has directed what each person must do to qualify to enter His holy house.

A good place for us to begin such a teaching opportunity is to call attention to the words etched on the temple's exterior: "Holiness to the Lord: The House of the Lord." President Henry B. Eyring's message today and many others have inspired us to become more holy. Each temple is a holy place; each temple patron strives to become more holy.

All requirements to enter the temple relate to personal holiness. To assess that readiness, each person who wants to enjoy the blessings of the temple will have two interviews: first with a bishop, bishopric counselor, or branch president; second with a stake or mission president or one of his counselors. In those interviews, several questions will be asked.

Some of those questions have recently been edited for clarity. I would like to review them for you now:

1. Do you have faith in and a testimony of God, the Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost?
2. Do you have a testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and of His role as your Savior and Redeemer?
3. Do you have a testimony of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ?
4. Do you sustain the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the prophet, seer, and revelator and as the only person on the earth authorized to exercise all priesthood keys?

Do you sustain the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators?

Do you sustain the other General Authorities and local leaders of the Church?

5. The Lord has said that all things are to be “done in cleanliness” before Him (Doctrine and Covenants 42:41).

Do you strive for moral cleanliness in your thoughts and behavior?

Do you obey the law of chastity?

6. Do you follow the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ in your private and public behavior with members of your family and others?
7. Do you support or promote any teachings, practices, or doctrine contrary to those of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?
8. Do you strive to keep the Sabbath day holy, both at home and at church; attend your meetings; prepare for and worthily partake of the sacrament; and live your life in harmony with the laws and commandments of the gospel?
9. Do you strive to be honest in all that you do?
10. Are you a full-tithe payer?
11. Do you understand and obey the Word of Wisdom?
12. Do you have any financial or other obligations to a former spouse or to children?

If yes, are you current in meeting those obligations?

13. Do you keep the covenants that you made in the temple, including wearing the temple garment as instructed in the endowment?
14. Are there serious sins in your life that need to be resolved with priesthood authorities as part of your repentance?
15. Do you consider yourself worthy to enter the Lord’s house and participate in temple ordinances?

Tomorrow, these revised temple recommend questions will be distributed to Church leaders throughout the world.

In addition to their answering those questions honestly, it is understood that each adult temple patron will wear the sacred garment of the priesthood under their regular clothing. This is symbolic of an inner commitment to strive each day to become more like the Lord. It also reminds us to remain faithful each day to covenants made and to walk on the covenant path each day in a higher and holier way.

Now, for just a moment, I would like to speak to our youth. We encourage you to qualify for limited-use temple recommends. You will be asked only those questions applicable to you in your preparation for the ordinances of proxy baptism and confirmation. We are very grateful for your worthiness and willingness to participate in that sacred temple work. We thank you!

Individual worthiness to enter the Lord's house requires much individual spiritual preparation. But with the Lord's help, nothing is impossible. In some respects, it is easier to build a temple than it is to build a people prepared for a temple. Individual worthiness requires a total conversion of mind and heart to be more like the Lord, to be an honest citizen, to be a better example, and to be a holier person.

I testify that such preparatory work brings innumerable blessings in this life and inconceivable blessings for the life to come, including the perpetuation of your family unit throughout all eternity "in a state of never-ending happiness."¹

Now I would like to turn to another topic: plans for the coming year. In the springtime of the year 2020, it will be exactly 200 years since Joseph Smith experienced the theophany that we know as the First Vision. God the Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph, a 14-year-old youth. That event marked the onset of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness, precisely as foretold in the Holy Bible.²

Then came a succession of visits from heavenly messengers, including Moroni, John the Baptist, and the early Apostles Peter, James, and John. Others followed, including Moses, Elias, and Elijah. Each brought divine authority to bless God's children on the earth once again.

Miraculously, we have also received the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ, a companion scripture to the Holy Bible. The revelations published in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price have also greatly enriched our understanding of God's commandments and eternal truth.

The keys and offices of the priesthood have been restored, including the offices of Apostle, Seventy, patriarch, high priest, elder, bishop, priest, teacher, and deacon. And women who love the Lord serve valiantly in the Relief Society, Primary, Young Women, Sunday School, and other Church callings—all vital parts of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness.

Thus, the year 2020 will be designated as a bicentennial year. General conference next April will be different from any previous conference. In the next six months, I hope that every member and every family will prepare for a unique conference that will commemorate the very foundations of the restored gospel.

You may wish to begin your preparation by reading afresh Joseph Smith's account of the First Vision as recorded in the Pearl of Great Price. Our course of study for next year in *Come, Follow Me* is the Book of Mormon. You may wish to ponder important questions such as, "How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?" or "How have the events that followed the First Vision made a difference for me and my loved ones?" Also, with the Book of Mormon videos now becoming available, you may wish to incorporate them in your individual and family study.

Select your own questions. Design your own plan. Immerse yourself in the glorious light of the Restoration. As you do, general conference next April will be not only memorable; it will be unforgettable.

Now in closing, I leave with you my love and my blessing that each of you may become happier and holier with each passing day. Meanwhile, please be assured that revelation continues in the Church and will continue under the Lord's direction until "the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done."³

I so bless you, reaffirming my love for you, with my testimony that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church and we are His people. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.