

and despair" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1980, p. 57; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, p. 39).

If you have tried and have given up, I plead with you to try again and again and again. Our Heavenly Father will not forsake your efforts if you persist.

The second step in this plan of attack is to gain an added measure of spiritual strength through a daily study of the scriptures. Your study need not be long, but it should be every day. If I were you, I would read the scriptures tonight and never let a day pass without reading in them, even if only for a few minutes. There is an added measure of inspiration promised to those who read the scriptures regularly (see Conference Report, Oct. 1980, p. 57; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, p. 39).

The scriptures will assist us to overpower darkness with light.

The third step that I would counsel is, when necessary, to receive the blessing that comes in the confession process. Too many are harboring the inner feeling of guilt resulting from unrepented mistakes. Part of the repentance process is confession. If you happen to be one of those who has this need, I plead with you to go see your bishop before the sun sets tomorrow.

Come unto Christ

I testify that the Savior is at the head of this work. May I echo the words that the great prophet Moroni offered in his farewell address:

"Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God" (Moroni 10:32).

Of him I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

We've heard from Elders Hugh W. Pinnock and H. Burke Peterson.

We'll now all stand and sing "Ye Elders of Israel," following which we shall hear from Elder Carlos H. Amado of the Seventy.

The choir and congregation sang "Ye Elders of Israel."

Elder Carlos H. Amado

Called to serve

Servant and *service* are common words in the restored church.

Someone said, "The one who doesn't live to serve doesn't serve to live"—wise words which are applied to each priesthood holder. Another word to describe the priesthood is *service*; literally, every man who receives the priesthood is "called to serve." The Apostle Peter said about you, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9). I will illustrate with one story.

María Coj gives the gift of sight

María Coj was a seventeen-year-old member of the Church, the oldest of eight children. She was sick with cysticercosis, a parasitic infection that comes from eating contaminated food, that with time spread to her brain, causing terrible headaches and then blindness. To give her relief from the pain, it was necessary to move her from her home in Sololá to Guatemala City. Because of convulsions caused by the advances of the illness, her condition worsened, and it was only with life-

support systems that she was kept alive. It was evident that she could not live long under those conditions.

At this same time, Erika Alonzo, a twelve-year-old and partially blind member of the Church, traveled twenty-two hours by bus from Honduras to Guatemala City to receive an eye operation. For two weeks she waited for an acceptable cornea from the United States to be transplanted to her eye, but none was available.

At this same time María died. Because her blindness was caused by pressure to her brain, her corneas were healthy. María's father and mother authorized the cornea donation. The operation was a success.

On the twelfth of July 1993, Erika traveled to Sololá to meet the Coj family for the first time. The surprised family asked her, "Can you see?" She answered, "I see everything clearly." It was a spiritual meeting. Sister Coj, who did not understand much Spanish because her native language is Cakchiquel, felt the love and the spirit of the conversation.

Because of the donation of María's eyes, Erika can now see and enjoy everything around her. The death of one person and the love of her parents blessed the life of another. The medical miracle of one person being able to look through eyes of another is a surprising reality.

Expand your vision

Spiritually speaking, as you Atonic Priesthood youth contemplate the blessings of this life and of eternity through the eyes of your faithful parents, teachers, bishops, Apostles, and prophets, you will discover that, through the small donations of daily time to ponder, pray, and study the scriptures, you will learn of the divine that is in you.

Expand your vision and recognize that you have ties with God; lift your sight and live worthy of the priesthood

that you hold. Learn in your youth to control your passions, desires, and appetites. Seriously prepare yourselves to fulfill your glorious responsibility to preach the truths of the Restoration, which are that Jesus is the Christ and that salvation comes only through Him, that Joseph Smith was a prophet who was instructed by divine messengers to restore with power and authority all covenants and ordinances that are found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Learn about Christ's mission

In each priesthood holder should burn the personal conviction that the mission of Jesus Christ was unique. The Son of the Eternal Heavenly Father and of a mortal mother, especially chosen, He became the Only Begotten Son of God, which qualified Him to be the Mediator, Savior, and Redeemer of mankind. Even though He was slandered, spit upon, slapped, whipped, and humiliated, "yet he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

He died at an early age; He was strong and young, of unlimited wisdom. When you are thirty-three, you will understand better. His sacrifice was painful but indispensable. He was the first to be resurrected, clothed in glory and eternal life.

The atonement of the Son of God opened the possibility that all mankind could return to the presence of the Father. Now He teaches us, "Follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do" (2 Nephi 31:12).

Serve as a missionary

It will be your privilege to serve two years as a missionary with an eye single to glorify God and build His kingdom (see D&C 4:5). During that time, Christ will refine your spirit. He will mold your character and plant in your heart the principles that will permit you to live in

righteousness and joy in this life and for eternity.

You might think that you will sacrifice much to leave your family, your education, and your comfortable life. Others might complain that missionary life is rigorous. The thousands who have served will testify to you that when you count your blessings, sacrifice does not exist.

Elder Hermelindo Coy's faith

I would like to share an experience of faith. Being the only child, Elder Hermelindo Coy said good-bye to his mother and left for the first time in his life his small village in the mountains of Senahú, Guatemala. He entered the Missionary Training Center the fourteenth of March, 1991. Although he had been a member of the Church for only two years and also very timid about talking to people, his determination to serve was great. His formal education was less than five years of elementary school in his native language of Kekchi. Spanish, the official language of Guatemala, was foreign to him.

During his mission he learned to live with pain in his leg. He rarely complained. In August 1992 he noticed that in addition to the increase in the pain, something was abnormal about his knee. He had a medical exam—the diagnosis: *bone cancer*. A more careful exam revealed cancer in the liver, lungs, and lymphatic system; in other words, his illness was terminal. He did not understand the nature of the illness nor its seriousness. With the help of a translator and using examples from the farm life with which he was familiar, he understood that he had little time to live.

He never asked, Why is this happening to me? He did not lament or express negative feelings. He was obedient to all that was required of him. He was asked if he would like to return home, but he asked to remain in the mission and serve as long as possible, even until his death.

By October of the same year, he walked with difficulty, requiring the use of a cane. He could work only a few hours each day. By December he was unable to walk. For the first time he was discouraged because he could not proselyte. His worry was always who would take care of his mother after he died.

In one of his visits, the mission president asked him to teach more of the basic doctrine to his mother, who, along with mission nurses, was providing twenty-four-hour care. When he taught the plan of salvation to his mother in his native tongue, his face radiated assurance and light. Elder Coy was understanding with power and conviction what he was teaching.

As his strength declined, he placed his complete trust in the Lord. On one occasion when the pain was very strong, he expressed in prayer, "Heavenly Father, I do not know the day or the hour that I will die, but I want to know soon from thee about my new assignment." He died in February 1993. His death blessed all the missionaries, leaders, members, and even nonmembers who learned of his courage to serve and endure to the end. His faith was so simple that it was contagious. He never feared death. He strengthened all who knew him.

My beloved youth, I promise you that as you serve with faith as did Elder Coy, and as you look through the eyes of your parents and leaders, who love you also, your testimony will be strengthened, your vision will expand, which will illuminate all who are spiritually blind and will help them return to Christ. Arise and shine; be like the over forty-nine thousand missionaries who today are taking the light, hope, and knowledge to those who need it. I add my own testimony of the divinity of this work in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder Carlos H. Amado of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

We are honored to have with us this evening Mr. Jere B. Ratcliffe, chief Scout executive; Mr. Eugene F. "Bud" Reid, member of the National Executive Board and International Committee of the Boy Scouts of America and immediate past president of the World Scout Committee; and Mr. C. Michael Hoover,

assistant chief Scout executive. It is my privilege to call on Mr. Ratcliffe and then Mr. Reid, who will make a special presentation to President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. President Monson will then address us.

Presentation of Scouting Award to President Thomas S. Monson

Mr. Jere B. Ratcliffe

It is indeed an honor for me to be at the general priesthood conference on this occasion of recognizing President Thomas Monson with International Scouting's Bronze Wolf Award. President Monson is one of the Boy Scouts of America's most distinguished friends and the longest-tenured member of our national executive board, having begun his service with election in 1969.

During that period of time, the Boy Scouts of America and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have enjoyed an unprecedented partnership in the development of young men. The partnership between the LDS Church and the BSA is, to me, a precious one. It is precious because of our organizations and what they embrace in terms of similar basic beliefs—beliefs that include a commitment to religious principles and to strong, traditional family values.

The leadership of the Boy Scouts of America recognizes that religious principles are the important part of life. When a young man begins to grow in his faith, he will begin to grow from within and thereby be better prepared to make a positive difference in our society.

Scouting also continues to emphasize the traditional family values. President David O. McKay, a great and supportive Scouter, often stated, and I quote, "No success can compensate for failure in the home." Together Scouting and the Church continue to encourage

the growth of family value and of family values.

President Monson has helped the Boy Scouts of America remain very much focused on our mutual basic beliefs. He is an exceptional Scouter. He has very much dedicated his life to upholding and to placing into practice the teachings of the Church and the mission of the Boy Scouts of America, a mission of teaching values to last a lifetime.

On behalf of all your Scouting colleagues, President Monson, I wish to congratulate you and to wish to you and your lovely wife, Frances, much continued happiness and success.

Mr. Eugene F. "Bud" Reid

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the World Scout Committee, I have the honor and the privilege to present the Bronze Wolf Award to Thomas S. Monson. This is the only award given by the World Organization of the Scout Movement. I would like to ask President Monson to please arise.

I shall now read the citation for the award of the Bronze Wolf:

"President Thomas S. Monson, USA, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

"Member, National Executive Board, Boy Scouts of America

"President Monson has been active in Scouting throughout his life. As a Scout in his youth, he achieved the rank