

unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers. . . .

“And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed; . . .

“And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge” (D&C 1:23, 26, 28).

And in the Book of Mormon we read:

“I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments . . . save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them” (1 Nephi 3:7).

And in the Old Testament we receive comfort:

“The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt . . . be turned into another man,” “God gave him another heart,” and “God is with thee” (1 Samuel 10:6, 9, 7).

I trust these wonderful promises. I therefore pledge to you, to these my Brethren, and to the Lord that I will live to be worthy to know the will of the Lord and to act accordingly.

### **These things I know**

God our Heavenly Father knows us by name. Jesus Christ lives; He is the Messiah; He loves us. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is real; it brings immortality to all and opens the door to eternal life.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is again on the earth. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true and living.

The Book of Mormon is a second witness of Jesus Christ and a manifestation of the truthfulness of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I love the Prophet Joseph. I love President Gordon B. Hinckley, who is the prophet of God and who holds all the keys of the kingdom at this time—keys which prophets have held in uninterrupted succession since Joseph Smith.

These things I know in my heart and in my mind. And of these things I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir and congregation sang  
“Redeemer of Israel.”

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## **Elder David A. Bednar**

### **Feelings as a newly called Apostle**

Brothers and sisters, my heart is filled to overflowing, my mind is spinning, my knees are weak and wobbly, and I find that words are totally inadequate to communicate effectively the feelings and thoughts I desire to share with you. I pray for and invite the companionship of the Holy Ghost for me and for you as I speak with you briefly this Sabbath morning.

In the hours since President Hinckley extended this new call to serve, I have heeded the admonition of Nephi to “liken all scriptures unto us” (1 Nephi 19:23) with a greater sense of purpose and intensity than I have ever done before.

I have reflected on the teaching of Paul that “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Corinthians 1:27). This morning I take great comfort in knowing that I am one of the truly weak things of the world.

### **Enabling, strengthening power of grace**

I have pondered the instruction of Jacob as contained in the Book of Mormon:

“Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the

spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith cometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.

“Nevertheless, the Lord God showeth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things” (Jacob 4:6–7).

Brothers and sisters, please pay particular attention to the word *grace* as it is used in the verse I just read. In the Bible Dictionary we learn that the word *grace* frequently is used in the scriptures to connote a strengthening or enabling power:

“The main idea of the word is divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ.

“. . . It is likewise through the grace of the Lord that individuals, through faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins, receive strength and assistance to do good works that they otherwise would not be able to maintain if left to their own means. This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts” (p. 697).

Thus, the enabling and strengthening aspect of the Atonement helps us to see and to do and to become good in ways that we could never recognize or accomplish with our limited mortal capacity. I testify and witness that the enabling power of the Savior’s Atonement is real. Without that strengthening power of the Atonement, I could not stand before you this morning.

### **In the strength of the Lord**

Can we sense the grace and strengthening power of Christ in the testimony of Ammon? “Yea, I know that I am nothing;

as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever” (Alma 26:12). Truly, brothers and sisters, in the strength of the Lord we can do and endure and overcome all things.

As I walked out of the Church Administration Building after my interview with President Hinckley on Friday afternoon, I recalled the words of Enoch:

“And when Enoch had heard these words, he bowed himself to the earth, before the Lord, and spake before the Lord, saying: Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant?

“And the Lord said unto Enoch: Go forth and do as I have commanded thee, and no man shall pierce thee. Open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance, for all flesh is in my hands, and I will do as seemeth me good” (Moses 6:31–32).

For all of us who feel unprepared and overwhelmed and unequal to a new calling or responsibility, the promise of the Lord to Enoch is equally applicable. The promise was true in Enoch’s day, and it is true today.

### **Help from heaven at BYU–Idaho**

On the night of June 20, 2000, several colleagues and I were working late in the executive offices of then Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. We were making final preparations for an unexpected and historic assembly on our campus the next morning and the announcement by President Hinckley that Ricks College would become a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution and take on the name of Brigham Young University–Idaho. As an administrative team we were just beginning

to realize the monumental nature of the responsibility and challenges that were before us.

As we walked out of the building that night, one of my colleagues asked, “President, are you scared?” As best as I can recall, I answered something like this: “If I thought we had to execute this transition relying exclusively upon our own experience and our own judgment, then I would be terrified. But we will have help from heaven. Because we know who is in charge and that we are not alone, then no, I am not scared.” And we who serve at BYU–Idaho unitedly testify that there has been help from heaven, miracles have occurred, revelations have been received, doors have been opened, and we have been greatly blessed as individuals and as an institution.

### **Expressions of gratitude**

Please permit me now to express gratitude and appreciation. I am thankful for my progenitors—for those faithful and steady men and women whom I respect and honor and to whom I owe everything. I love and appreciate my mother and father and my wife’s mother and father. I am grateful for their love and support and teaching and strength.

My wife, Susan, is a virtuous woman and a righteous mother. You will quickly see that purity and goodness are evident in her countenance. I love her and appreciate her more than words can express. I thank her for the woman she is, for the lessons she has taught me, and for the love we share.

Susan and I have been blessed with three stalwart sons. I love and thank them. And our growing little family now includes two righteous daughters-in-law and three brilliant and beautiful and charming granddaughters. As we have opportunities to be together, we are blessed to see just a glimpse of the family unit in eternity.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful for you. As I see you assembled here in the Conference Center and envision you in meetinghouses all over the earth, I am blessed by your faithfulness and devotion to the Savior. As your arms were raised to the square on Saturday, I felt a sustaining influence flow into my soul that was most remarkable. Few of you know who I am, yet you know from whom the call has come, and you are so willing to sustain and support. I express my thanks to you and pledge my whole soul and all of my energy to this sacred work.

I will go where the Lord and the leaders of His Church want me to go, I will do what they want me to do, I will teach what they want me to teach, and I will strive to become what I should and must become. In the strength of the Lord and through His grace, I know that you and I can be blessed to accomplish all things.

### **Of these things I testify**

As one of the weakest of the weak, I testify that God lives. I testify and witness that Jesus is the Christ. He is our Redeemer and our Savior, and He lives. And I testify that the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His true Church have been restored to the earth in these latter days through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Priesthood keys and authority and saving ordinances are again found on the earth. By the power of that priesthood, families truly can be together forever. The Book of Mormon is the word of God and the keystone of our religion. And, brothers and sisters, the heavens are not closed. God speaks—to us individually and to the leaders of His latter-day kingdom on earth. President Gordon B. Hinckley is the Lord’s prophet on the earth today. Of these things I testify and declare my witness in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.