

sionary Training Center, and in locations in many countries throughout the world.

The singing during this session will be furnished by a priesthood choir from the Orem and Salt Lake institutes, under the direction of Douglas Brenchley, Ryan Eggett, and Rick Decker, with Richard Elliott at the organ.

We shall begin this priesthood session with the choir singing “Awake, Ye Saints of God, Awake!” The invocation will then be offered by Elder Ronald T. Halverson of the Seventy.

The choir sang “Awake, Ye Saints of God, Awake!”

Elder Ronald T. Halverson offered the invocation.

President Monson

The choir will now sing “The Lord Is My Shepherd.” Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will then address us. He will be followed by Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy, after which we shall hear from Elder Richard G. Hinckley of the Seventy.

The choir sang “The Lord Is My Shepherd.”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

My dear brethren, it is wonderful and humbling to be with you in this worldwide assembly of priesthood holders. I love and admire you. I feel honored to be counted as one of you. I salute you who have the authority to act in the name of God and to perform ordinances which are a vital source of eternal strength and energy for the well-being of mankind.

See the end from the beginning

I will speak today to you wonderful young men who are preparing to make a difference in the world—you who have entered the ranks of the Aaronic Priesthood and you who have already received the sacred oath and covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The priesthood you bear is a wonderful force for good. You live in a time of great challenges and opportunities. As spirit sons of heavenly parents, you are free to make the right choices. This requires hard work, self-discipline, and an optimistic outlook, which will bring joy and freedom into your life now and in the future.

The Lord said to Abraham, “My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee” (Abraham 2:8). My young friends, today I say to you that if you trust the Lord and obey Him, His hand shall be over you, He will help you achieve the great potential He sees in you, and He will help you to see the end from the beginning.

Working as a laundry delivery boy

Allow me to share with you an experience from my own boyhood. When I was 11 years old, my family had to leave East Germany and begin a new life in West Germany overnight. Until my father could get back into his original profession as a government employee, my parents operated a small laundry business in our little town. I became the laundry delivery boy. To be able to do that effectively, I needed a bicycle to pull the heavy laundry cart. I had always dreamed of owning a nice, sleek, shiny, sporty red bicycle. But there had never been enough money to fulfill

this dream. What I got instead was a heavy, ugly, black, sturdy workhorse of a bicycle.

I delivered laundry on that bike before and after school for quite a few years. Most of the time, I was not overly excited about the bike, the cart, or my job. Sometimes the cart seemed so heavy and the work so tiring that I thought my lungs would burst, and I often had to stop to catch my breath. Nevertheless, I did my part because I knew we desperately needed the income as a family, and it was my way to contribute.

If I had only known back then what I learned many years later—if I had only been able to *see the end from the beginning*—I would have had a better appreciation of these experiences, and it would have made my job so much easier.

Many years later, when I was about to be drafted into the military, I decided to volunteer instead and join the air force to become a pilot. I loved flying and thought being a pilot would be my thing.

To be accepted for the program I had to pass a number of tests, including a strict physical exam. The doctors were slightly concerned by the results and did some additional medical tests. Then they announced, “You have scars on your lung which are an indication of a lung disease in your early teenage years, but obviously you are fine now.” The doctors wondered what kind of treatment I had gone through to heal the disease.

Until the day of that examination I had never known that I had any kind of lung disease. Then it became clear to me that my regular exercise in fresh air as a laundry boy had been a key factor in my healing from this illness. Without the extra effort of pedaling that heavy bicycle day in and day out, pulling the laundry cart up and down the streets of our town, I might never have become a jet fighter pilot and later a 747 airline captain.

We are taught by modern prophets

We don’t always know the details of our future. We do not know what lies

ahead. We live in a time of uncertainty. We are surrounded by challenges on all sides. Occasionally discouragement may sneak into our day; frustration may invite itself into our thinking; doubt might enter about the value of our work. In these dark moments Satan whispers in our ears that we will never be able to succeed, that the price isn’t worth the effort, and that our small part will never make a difference. He, the father of all lies, will try to prevent us from seeing the end from the beginning.

Fortunately, you young priesthood holders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are taught by prophets, seers, and revelators of our day. The First Presidency said:

“We have great confidence in you. You are choice spirits. . . . You are at the beginning of your journey through this mortal life. Your Heavenly Father wants your life to be joyful and to lead you back into His presence. The decisions you make now will determine much of what will follow during your life and throughout eternity” (*For the Strength of Youth* [2001], 2). “You have a responsibility to learn what Heavenly Father wants you to do and then to do your best to follow His will” (*Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* [2001], 4).

How deeply grateful I am for the inspired leadership of our dear President Gordon B. Hinckley, the prophet of God in our time, and his noble counselors. Their prophetic view helps you to see the end from the beginning.

***For the Strength of Youth* gives standards**

The Lord loves you; that is why He has given you commandments and the words of prophets to guide you on your journey through life. Some of the most important guidelines for your life are found in the pamphlet *For the Strength of Youth*. The physical appearance of this little paper booklet would qualify it for the scriptural description “Out of small things

proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33).

The pamphlet itself has little material value, perhaps just a few cents. But the doctrine and principles it presents are an invaluable treasure. You young men who are already 18 or older, if you don’t have this booklet anymore, make sure to get one, keep it, and use it. This little booklet is a gem for any age-group. It contains standards which are sacred symbols representing our membership in the Church.

Temples provide an eternal perspective

I call your attention to the fact that *For the Strength of Youth*, the accompanying *Guidebook for Parents and Leaders of Youth*, and the temple recommend of the Church all have a picture of the Salt Lake Temple imprinted on the front. The temple is the binding link between generations, in this life and for eternity. All the temples have been dedicated for the same purpose: to assist in accomplishing the divine work and glory of God, our Eternal Father, “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). These temples are sacred structures in which eternal questions are answered, truths are taught, and ordinances performed so that we can live with an understanding of our divine inheritance as children of God and with an awareness of our potential as eternal beings (see Gordon B. Hinckley, “Why These Temples?” in *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* [1999], 14). The house of the Lord helps you to see the end from the beginning.

Regard bodies as temples given by God

Just as the temples of God are sacred, so are your temporal bodies. The Apostle Paul said:

“Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

My dear fellow priesthood holders of all ages and in all places around this world, let us use our thoughts, our minds and hearts, and our bodies with the respect and dignity worthy of a sacred temple given to us by our Heavenly Father.

Promises for keeping standards

The prophets of our day have promised you, my friends, that as you keep the standards given in *For the Strength of Youth* and “live by the truths in the scriptures, you will be able to do your life’s work with greater wisdom and skill and bear trials with greater courage. You will have the help of the Holy Ghost. . . . You will be worthy to go to the temple to receive holy ordinances. These blessings and many more can be yours” (*For the Strength of Youth*, 2–3).

We know that God keeps His promises. We need to fulfill our part to receive His blessings. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:21).

Preparation for going to the temple

Every member who wants to go to the temple, regardless of age, needs to prepare for this sacred experience. Certain questions will be asked by your bishop and stake president, who hold keys of priesthood authority and are common judges in the Church. These vital questions will include: Are you honest? Are you morally clean? Do you keep the Word of Wisdom? Do you obey the law of tithing? And do you sustain the authorities of the Church? The answers to these key questions reflect your attitudes and actions.

You younger men might not be aware that the standards set by the Lord in the

temple recommend questions are very similar to the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. In times of calmness but also in times of greatest temptation, these standards and the guidance of the Holy Ghost will help you make the right choices about your education, friends, dress and appearance, entertainment, media and the Internet, your language, proper dating, sexual purity, honesty, Sabbath-day observance, and service to others. How you apply these standards will say much about who you are and what you seek to become.

A bright and wonderful future

The Lord wants you, my young friends, to desire with all your heart to keep these standards and live by the gospel truths found in the scriptures. As you do this, you will see beyond the moment, and you will see your bright and wonderful future with great opportunities and responsibilities. You will be willing to work hard and endure long, and you will have an optimistic outlook on life. You will see that your life's road will lead you to the house of the Lord first and then to serve a full-time mission, representing the Savior wherever He will send you. After your mission you will organize and plan your life based on the same standards. Therefore, in your mind's eye you will see yourself entering the house of the Lord for an eternal marriage and family. Your priorities in life will change to match the priorities given to us by the Savior. And God will bless you and open the eyes of your understanding so you can see the end from the beginning.

Living the standards set in *For the Strength of Youth* will make you feel good about yourself. Write those standards into your heart and mind, and live accordingly. Compare each of those standards with where you are today. Listen to the Spirit, who will teach you what you need to do to become more like Jesus. If you recognize a need for change, make the change; don't procrastinate. Use true repentance and

the gift and power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ to clear up those things that are keeping you from reaching your true potential. If this process appears tough, hang in there; it is worth it. The Lord has a promise for you as He had for the Prophet Joseph: "Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:7).

The need to teach youth by example

Now, my dear grandfathers, fathers, uncles, brothers, and friends of our young people, we can be of great help in this process. King Benjamin taught that when parents are truly converted, they "will teach [their children] to walk in the ways of truth and soberness [and] will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another" (Mosiah 4:15). It has been said, "Teaching by example is *one* way to teach." I would say, "Teaching by example is the *best* way to teach."

Please teach our young people by your example of being a temple-worthy priesthood holder. Your good life, your love for God and fellowmen, your applied testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ will be a convincing power to our youth, and it will help them to see the end from the beginning.

My dear young friends, please perfect your lives in living these standards given by the prophets of our day. As you do this, step-by-step, day after day, you will honor the priesthood and you will be prepared to make a difference in the world. You will also be on the right track to return with honor to our Heavenly Father.

My dear fellow servants of the priesthood, I promise you today that when you follow this pattern, the Lord will help you to make more out of your life than you ever can by yourself. He will help you always to see the end from the beginning!

Of this I testify as an Apostle of the Lord, our Savior, and in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.