

that line as he possibly can, knowing that he can only succeed in destroying you by keeping you away from the place where there is safety” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1945, 118).

The Mutual theme for 2007 provides a promise for those who heed this wise counsel: “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God . . . [and] the Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion” (D&C 121:45–46).

I testify to you that God lives. I know that we are His children, that He knows us by name, and that we are not alone as we make these important decisions. Each day of your life you will make choices, the result of which will land you either on one side of that line or on the other. And so I issue the challenge to all youth within the sound of my voice, to the youth of the noble birthright throughout the world: live

your life in such a way that when you are faced with a choice between good and evil and when deep inside you can hear the question “Who’s on the Lord’s side?”—you will be prepared to answer with all your strength, “*I am!*” In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

Thank you, brethren. The choir and congregation will now sing “Come, Ye Children of the Lord.” At the conclusion of the singing, Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi of the Seventy will address us, and he will be followed by Elders Dieter F. Uchtdorf and Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The choir and congregation sang
“Come, Ye Children of the Lord.”

Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi

Tithing is holy unto the Lord

I would like to discuss the law of tithing. In the book of Malachi, the Lord asks:

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

“Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”¹

Tithing is such an important commandment that when the Lord appeared on the American continent after His Resurrection, He repeated those same exact words.² And the Lord said in our day,

“Those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually.”³

In the book of Leviticus, the Lord stated three different times that tithing is “holy unto the Lord.”⁴

The Lord said, “Prove me now [or test me now] . . . , if I will not open you the windows of heaven.”⁵ Many of us test the Lord in the right way; however, some do not.

Consider, for example, ten apples. Now, all ten of these apples actually belong to the Lord, but He asks us to return to Him only one-tenth, or one apple.

Are you offering only a small bite of that apple and keeping 90 percent? Are you willing to offer the Lord such a small portion?

Are you ashamed, or do you try to patch up and hide the bitten portion of the apple and then offer that to the Lord?

We want our offerings to be full and clean. We have been taught: “Behold, the

Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.”⁶

Experience of a stake in Idaho

A few years ago I received the assignment to reorganize the Carey Idaho Stake. The plane landed at Twin Falls, and President Roy Hubert, who had served so well, met me there and drove me to his home. While we were driving, I asked him, “Is there anything I can do for you and your Saints?”

He said: “Oh, we have had a terrible drought for the last few years. This year it is particularly severe, and many farmers have left town to find employment elsewhere.”

I was so disturbed for our faithful members who love the Lord and the Church yet were losing their farms.

A young bishop, R. Spence Ellsworth, was called to serve as the new stake president. During the Sunday general session, results of the drought weighed heavily on my mind. As I was speaking, a strong prompting came. I asked them to do the following:

1. Faithfully pay an honest tithe, both young and old.
2. Humbly hold regular individual and family prayers.
3. Devotedly have daily personal and family scripture study.
4. Thankfully keep the Sabbath day holy.
5. Gratefully go to the temple often, there offering thanksgiving.
6. Willingly sustain and follow the new leaders.
7. Hold a stakewide fast, including everyone in the affected communities who would like to participate.

For the next couple of days following the stake conference, many members planted their crops with complete faith, even though there was no forecast of rain.

On Wednesday, under the direction of President Ellsworth, the whole stake fasted. That same week many members, the leaders, and their spouses went to the Boise Idaho Temple and offered their thanksgiving. While these faithful Saints were in the temple, rain began to fall on the entire community, though the weather forecast indicated no moisture for the next few weeks. The following Saturday, good rain fell again and continued for a few days. This happened late in the month of April. Significant snow fell in the mountains, providing enough moisture. In the Dietrich and Richfield communities, their reservoir had been under 30 percent, but after the people fasted, the reservoir was nearly full. The Carey water supply increased from about 44 percent to more than 100 percent of normal. Through the rest of the growing season, as members of the Carey stake increased their faith by fasting a few more times, paying honest tithes, and attending the temple more frequently, the Lord heard and answered their prayers. Frost came late that year, so the farmers were able to harvest grain, sugar beets, alfalfa, potatoes, and other crops. From that day, and each year since, they have offered their thanksgiving prayers, and “because of . . . his tender mercies,”⁷ the Lord continues to bless them.

In the book of Chronicles, the Lord said, “If my people, . . . called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”⁸

A matter of faith

Paying a full and honest tithe leads us to the temple. Tithing, I believe, is one of President Hinckley’s prophetic priorities.

Last week in the Young Women meeting, President Hinckley said, “While tithing is paid with money, more importantly it is paid with faith.”⁹

Another time he said: “This is not so much a matter of money as it is a matter of faith. . . . I urge you, . . . every one of you, to take the Lord at His word in this important matter.”¹⁰

It is a matter of commitment. The earth belongs to the Lord, and this includes our own lives. He allows us to use *everything* on this earth. He only asks us to return one-tenth. Tithing is a token of gratitude, obedience, and thanksgiving—a token of our willingness and dedication. Paying tithing, willingly, develops an honest and pure heart. Paying tithing increases our love for the Lord.

The Lord said, “It is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people.”¹¹

Brothers and sisters, let us demonstrate our faith. Let us show our willingness to obey. I promise you, in the name of Jesus Christ, when you and I pay honest, true tithes to the Lord, the Lord will open the windows of heaven.

I know that Heavenly Father lives. Therefore, He will bless you. Jesus Christ is our Savior. Joseph saw Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. This is His Church. President Gordon B. Hinckley is a living oracle of God. He asks you to come often to the temple. This is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. Malachi 3:8–10.
2. See 3 Nephi 24:8–10.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 119:4.
4. Leviticus 27:30; see also vv. 32–33.
5. 3 Nephi 24:10.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 64:34.
7. Ether 6:12.
8. 2 Chronicles 7:14.
9. “Let Virtue Garnish Thy Thoughts Unceasingly,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 117.
10. In Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 110; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 85.
11. Doctrine and Covenants 64:23.

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Point of no return

During my training to become an airline captain, I had to learn how to navigate an airplane over long distances. Flights over huge oceans, crossing extensive deserts, and connecting continents need careful planning to ensure a safe arrival at the planned destination. Some of these nonstop flights can last up to 14 hours and cover almost 9,000 miles.

There is an important decision point during such long flights commonly known as the *point of safe return*. Up to this point the aircraft has enough fuel to turn around and return safely to the airport of departure. Having passed the point of safe return, the captain has lost this option and has to continue on. That is why this point is often referred to as the *point of no return*.

Are there points of no return in our lives? Satan, “the father of all lies” (2 Nephi 2:18), “the father of contention” (3 Nephi 11:29), “the author of all sin” (Helaman 6:30), and the “enemy unto God” (Moroni 7:12), uses the forces of evil to convince us that this concept applies whenever we have sinned. The scriptures call him the “accuser” because he wants us to feel that we are beyond forgiveness (see Revelation 12:10). Satan wants us to think that when we have sinned we have gone past a “point of no return”—that it is too late to change our course. In our beautiful but also troubled world, it is a sad reality that this attitude is the source of great sorrow, grief, and distress to families, marriages, and individual lives.

Satan tries to counterfeit the work of God, and by doing this he may deceive many. To make us lose hope, feel miserable like himself, and believe that we are