

kissed His feet, “insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears.” Then He commanded them that their little children should be brought, and He blessed them one by one.<sup>5</sup> That is the model the Savior has given us. His love is for all, but He never loses sight of the one.

### Our responsibility to serve

I know that our Heavenly Father is loving, understanding, and patient. His Son, Jesus Christ, likewise loves us. They render help to us through Their prophets. I have learned that there is great safety in following the prophets. “The rescue” is still going on. President Monson said: “The Lord expects our thinking. He expects our action. He expects our labors. He expects our testimonies. He expects our devotion.”<sup>6</sup>

We have a responsibility and a great opportunity. There are many who need to once again experience the sweet savor of happiness and joy through activity in the Church. That happiness comes from receiving the ordinances, making sacred covenants, and keeping them. The Lord

needs us to help them. Let us do the right thing at the right time, without delay.

I testify that God lives and is our Father. Jesus Christ lives and has given His life so that we may return to the presence of our Heavenly Father. I know that He is our Savior. I know that Their infinite kindness is continually made manifest. I bear witness that President Thomas S. Monson is Their prophet and that this is the only true Church upon the face of the earth. I know that the Prophet Joseph Smith is the prophet of the Restoration. I testify that the Book of Mormon is the word of God. It gives us guidance and models to follow in order to become more like God and His Beloved Son. I so declare in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

### NOTES

1. Mosiah 2:17.
2. Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Apr. 2001, 63, 64; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 48, 49.
3. See 3 Nephi 17:1–3.
4. 3 Nephi 17:6–7; see also verse 5.
5. See 3 Nephi 17:9–12, 21.
6. Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Apr. 2001, 64; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 49.

## President Boyd K. Packer

### A message to the youth

I speak to the youth more personally than I usually do, comparing my youth with yours.

You are precious beyond measure. I have seen you in dozens of countries and on every continent. You are much better than we were when young. You know more about the gospel. You are more mature and more faithful.

I am now 87 years old. You may wonder, at my age, what I can contribute to

your lives. I have been where you are and know where you are going. But you have not yet been where I am. I quote a few lines of classic poetry:

The old crow is getting slow.  
The young crow is not.  
Of what the young crow does not know  
The old crow knows a lot.

At knowing things the old crow  
Is still the young crow’s master.  
What does the slow old crow not know?  
—How to go faster.

The young crow flies above, below,  
 And rings around the slow old crow.  
 What does the fast young crow not  
 know?  
 —Where to go.<sup>1</sup>

Not Wordsworth but classic poetry  
 nonetheless!

### **The earth is in commotion**

With all that is going on in the world,  
 with the lowering of moral standards, you  
 young people are being raised in enemy  
 territory.

We know from the scriptures that there  
 was a war in heaven and that Lucifer rebelled  
 and, with his followers, “was cast out into  
 the earth.”<sup>2</sup> He is determined to disrupt  
 our Heavenly Father’s plan and seeks to  
 control the minds and actions of all. This  
 influence is spiritual, and he “is abroad in  
 the land.”<sup>3</sup>

But despite the opposition, trials, and  
 temptations, you need not fail or fear.

When I was 17, about ready to graduate  
 from high school as a very average student  
 with some handicaps, as I thought, every-  
 thing around us came apart one Sunday  
 morning. The next day we were called to  
 the high school auditorium. On the stage  
 was a chair with a small radio. The principal  
 switched on the radio. We then heard the  
 voice of President Franklin Delano  
 Roosevelt as he announced that Pearl  
 Harbor had been bombed. The United  
 States was at war with Japan.

Later that scene was repeated. Again  
 the voice of President Roosevelt, this time  
 announcing that our country was at war  
 with Germany. World War II had exploded  
 across the world.

All at once our future was uncertain.  
 We did not know what was ahead. Would  
 we live to get married and have a family?

Today there are “wars and rumors of  
 wars, and the whole earth [is] in commo-  
 tion.”<sup>4</sup> You, our youth, may feel uncer-  
 tainty and insecurity in your lives. I want  
 to counsel you and teach you and give you

a warning about some things to do and  
 some things not to do.

### **The mortal body**

The gospel plan is “the great plan of  
 happiness.”<sup>5</sup> The family is the center of  
 that plan. The family depends on the wor-  
 thy use of those life-giving powers that are  
 in your body.

In “The Family: A Proclamation to the  
 World,” an inspired document issued by  
 the First Presidency and the Quorum of  
 the Twelve Apostles, we learn that in the  
 premortal existence “all human beings—  
 male and female—[were] created in the  
 image of God. Each is a beloved spirit  
 son or daughter of heavenly parents, and,  
 as such, each has a divine nature and des-  
 tiny. Gender is an essential characteristic  
 [and was established in that premortal  
 existence]. . . .

“. . . We further declare that God has  
 commanded that the sacred powers of pro-  
 creation are to be employed only between  
 man and woman, lawfully wedded as hus-  
 band and wife.”<sup>6</sup>

The great penalty Lucifer and his fol-  
 lowers brought upon themselves was that  
 they were to be denied a mortal body.

Many of the temptations you face, cer-  
 tainly the most serious ones, relate to your  
 body. You not only have power to create  
 bodies for a new generation, but you also  
 have agency.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “All  
 beings who have bodies have power over  
 those who have not.”<sup>7</sup> So every living  
 soul who has a physical body ultimately  
 has power over the adversary. You suffer  
 temptations because of your physical na-  
 ture, but you also have power over him  
 and his angels.

### **Listening to the Holy Ghost**

By the time we graduated from high  
 school, many of our classmates had  
 marched away to war, some of them never  
 to return. The rest of us were soon to enter

the military. We did not know about our future. Would we survive the war? Would there be enough of the world left when we returned?

Against the certainty that I would be drafted, I joined the air force. Soon I was in Santa Ana, California, for preflight training.

I did not then have a firm testimony that the gospel was true, but I knew that my seminary teachers, Abel S. Rich and John P. Lillywhite, knew it was true. I had heard them testify, and I believed them. I thought to myself, “I will lean on their testimonies until I gain one of my own.” And so it was.

I had heard about patriarchal blessings but had not received one. In each stake there is an ordained patriarch who has the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of revelation. He is authorized to give personal and private blessings to those who come recommended by their bishops. I wrote to my bishop for a recommend.

J. Roland Sandstrom was the ordained patriarch living in the Santa Ana stake. He knew nothing about me and had never seen me before, but he gave me my blessing. In it I found answers and instruction.

While patriarchal blessings are very private, I will share a short quote from mine: “You shall be guided through the whisperings of the Holy Spirit and you shall be warned of dangers. If you heed those warnings, our Heavenly Father will bless you so that you might again be united with your loved ones.”<sup>8</sup>

That word *if*, though small in print, loomed as big as the page. I would be blessed to return from the war *if* I kept the commandments and *if* I heeded the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Although that gift had been conferred upon me at baptism, I did not yet know what the Holy Ghost was or how the promptings work.

What I needed to know about the promptings I found in the Book of Mormon. I read that “angels speak by the

power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, . . . feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.”<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the single greatest thing I learned from reading the Book of Mormon is that the voice of the Spirit comes as a *feeling* rather than a sound. You will learn, as I have learned, to “listen” for that voice that is *felt* rather than *heard*.

Nephi scolded his older brothers, saying, “Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past *feeling*, that ye could not *feel* his words.”<sup>10</sup>

Some critics have said that these verses are in error because you *hear* words; you do not *feel* them. But if you know anything at all about spiritual communication, you know that the best word to describe what takes place is the word *feeling*.

The gift of the Holy Ghost, if you consent, will guide and protect you and even correct your actions. It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought or a feeling put into your heart. The prophet Enos said, “The voice of the Lord came into my mind.”<sup>11</sup> And the Lord told Oliver Cowdery, “Behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you.”<sup>12</sup>

## Repentance and the Atonement

It is not expected that you go through life without making mistakes, but you will not make a major mistake without first being warned by the promptings of the Spirit. This promise applies to all members of the Church.

Some will make critically serious mistakes, transgressing the laws of the gospel. Here it is time to remind you of the Atonement, repentance, and complete forgiveness to the point that you can become pure again. The Lord said, “Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is

forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.”<sup>13</sup>

If the adversary should take you prisoner due to misconduct, I remind you that you hold the key that will unlock the prison door from the inside. You can be washed clean through the atoning sacrifice of the Savior Jesus Christ.

You may in time of trouble think that you are not worth saving because you have made mistakes, big or little, and you think you are now lost. That is *never* true! Only repentance can heal what hurts. But repentance *can* heal what hurts, no matter what it is.

If you are slipping into things that you should not slip into or if you are associating with people who are pulling you away in the wrong direction, that is the time to assert your independence, your agency. Listen to the voice of the Spirit, and you will not be led astray.

I say again that youth today are being raised in enemy territory with a declining standard of morality. But as a servant of the Lord, I promise that you will be protected and shielded from the attacks of the adversary *if* you will heed the promptings that come from the Holy Spirit.

Dress modestly; talk reverently; listen to uplifting music. Avoid all immorality and personally degrading practices. Take hold of your life and order yourself to be valiant. Because we depend so much on you, you will be remarkably blessed. You are never far from the sight of your loving Heavenly Father.

### **Trust in the Lord**

The strength of my testimony has changed since I felt a need to lean on the testimonies of my seminary teachers. Today I lean on others when I walk due to age and childhood polio but not from doubts regarding spiritual matters. I have come to believe, to understand, and to know the precious truths of the gospel and of the Savior Jesus Christ.

As one of His special witnesses, I testify that the outcome of this battle that began in the premortal life is not in question. Lucifer will lose.

We spoke earlier of crows. You young crows need not fly aimlessly to and fro, unsure of the path ahead. There are those who know the way. “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”<sup>14</sup> The Lord organized His Church on the principle of keys and councils.

At the head of the Church sit 15 men sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators. Each of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles holds all of the priesthood keys necessary for directing the Church. The senior Apostle is prophet-President Thomas S. Monson, who is the only one authorized to exercise all of those keys.

The scriptures require that the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve work in councils and that the decisions of those councils be unanimous. And so it is. We trust the Lord to guide the way and seek only to do His will. We know that He has placed a great deal of trust in us, individually and collectively.

You must learn to “trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”<sup>15</sup> You must be trustworthy and surround yourself with friends who desire to be likewise.

Sometimes you might be tempted to think as I did from time to time in my youth: “The way things are going, the world’s going to be over with. The end of the world is going to come before I get to where I should be.” Not so! You can look forward to doing it right—getting married, having a family, seeing your children and grandchildren, maybe even great-grandchildren.

If you will follow these principles, you will be watched over and protected and you yourself will know by the promptings of the Holy Ghost which way to go, for “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may

know the truth of all things.”<sup>16</sup> I promise you that it will be so and invoke a blessing upon you, our precious youth, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### NOTES

1. John Ciardi, “Fast and Slow,” *Fast and Slow: Poems for Advanced Children and Beginning Parents* (1975), 1. © 1975 by John L. Ciardi. Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.
2. Revelation 12:9; see also Doctrine and Covenants 76:25–26.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 52:14.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 45:26.
5. Alma 42:8.
6. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
7. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 211.
8. Patriarchal blessing of Boyd K. Packer, given by J. Roland Sandstrom, Jan. 15, 1944.
9. 2 Nephi 32:3.
10. 1 Nephi 17:45; italics added.
11. Enos 1:10.

12. Doctrine and Covenants 8:2.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 58:42.
14. Amos 3:7.
15. Proverbs 3:5.
16. Moroni 10:5.

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The choir sang “I Am a Child of God.”

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#### President Eyring

We are grateful to the Tabernacle Choir and their conductors and organists for the beautiful music that has been provided this morning.

Our concluding speaker at this session will be President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. Following President Uchtdorf’s remarks, the choir will sing “Press Forward, Saints.” The benediction will then be offered by Elder Lowell M. Snow of the Seventy, and the conference will be adjourned until 2:00 this afternoon.

## President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

#### The vision of Moses

Moses, one of the greatest prophets the world has ever known, was raised by Pharaoh’s daughter and spent the first 40 years of his life in the royal halls of Egypt. He knew firsthand the glory and grandeur of that ancient kingdom.

Years later, on the top of a distant mountain, far removed from the splendor and magnificence of mighty Egypt, Moses stood in the presence of God and spoke to Him face to face as a man speaks with his friend.<sup>1</sup> During the course of that visitation, God showed Moses the workmanship of His hands, granting him a glimpse of His work and glory. When the vision ended, Moses fell to the earth for the space of many hours. When his strength finally

returned, he realized something that, in all his years in Pharaoh’s court, had never occurred to him before.

“I know,” he said, “that man is nothing.”<sup>2</sup>

#### We are less than we suppose

The more we learn about the universe, the more we understand—at least in a small part—what Moses knew. The universe is so large, mysterious, and glorious that it is incomprehensible to the human mind. “Worlds without number have I created,” God said to Moses.<sup>3</sup> The wonders of the night sky are a beautiful testimony of that truth.

There are few things that have filled me with such breathless awe as flying in