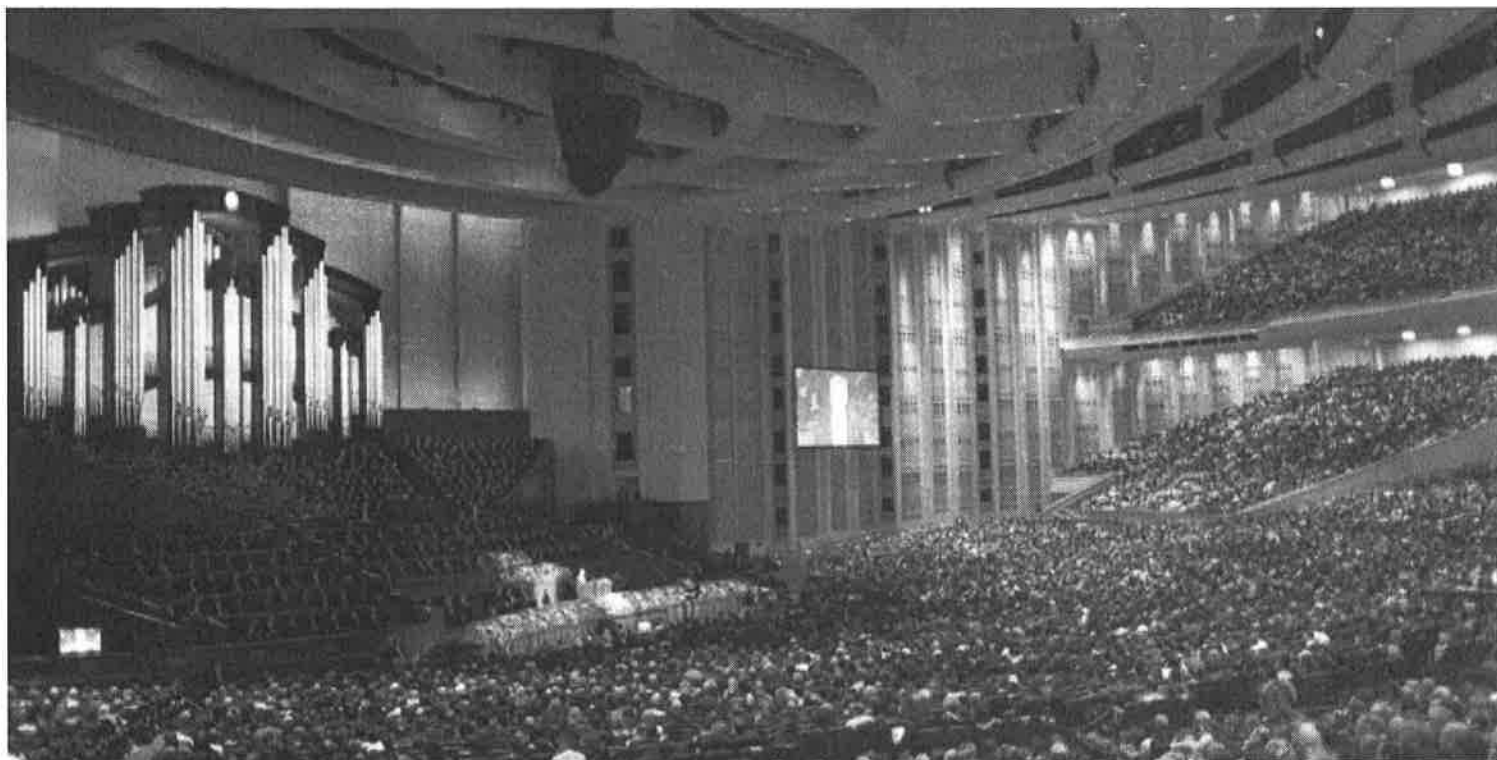


Come, Listen to a Prophet's Voice!



Due to requests from many members, the following is a transcript of the address I recently delivered at a Regional Conference:

My dearest brothers and sisters,

What a joy it is to be with you during this most marvelous and sacred Regional Conference. How humble, meek, and modest I feel to address you as we meet together to hear the Lord's will as expressed through His beloved and authorized representatives upon the earth. This immense and spacious Conference Center is filled to capacity with the Lord's chosen people, as are the many buildings overflowing with valiant Latter-day Saints who are participating via satellite transmission in various locations throughout the stakes of Zion.

Brothers and sisters, within a matter of days General Conference will be upon us. There is no greater time of the year for a General Authority than the dawning of a blessed new Conference, that we may gather together and hear the word of God as delivered through men—even His chosen prophets, seers, and revelators. May each and every member dutifully “obey with exactness” the inspired commandments set forth therein (Alma 57:21). As we prepare for this most sacred time of year, I invite members everywhere to fervently fast and pray, and to spiritually prepare themselves for the revelatory feast from which they will be most privileged to partake.

Now, my dear saints, I commend you for your faith and righteousness. As you know, I receive many hundreds of letters, emails, thank-you cards, and generous gifts from devoted and worshipful Latter-day Saints all around the world who wish to be in good standing with the Lord and thus desire to serve His chosen mouthpieces. Of such, I assure you the Lord is most pleased, and your contributions do not go unnoticed. Recently, I received a particularly poignant letter from one of our dear young people, who made the following inquiry:

Hi Elder Delaney,

My name is Kylee and I am 16 years old. My high school history teacher told me that our church used to discriminate against blacks. I looked this topic up in the scriptures and found that this discrimination is justified in the Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price as a "curse." I was relieved that the Church hadn't made a mistake, because our discrimination was obviously scriptural. However, when I told my high school teacher, he said that the Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price are fictitious, and that there is a lot of evidence that clearly shows this. Is this true, Elder Delaney? Did our prophets lead us astray? And if our sacred scriptures say that blacks are "cursed," then isn't it true? I asked my parents but they said I should ask you, as you are known to explain these things better. What should I tell my history teacher so that I can defend our beliefs?

Sincerely,

Kylee

I responded to Kylee that I would be most pleased to answer her question during this Regional Conference. In fact, I have invited Kylee and her family to sit with us here in the elite seats normally reserved only for families and special guests of the General Authorities, located right at the front of the Conference Center. Hello dear Kylee!

Now, dear Kylee, I will answer your questions and at the same time address my remarks to all in attendance. I have been asked similar questions by many of our dear members—especially recently—and fortunately I am in a good position to provide a reassuring response. So-called "science" makes a very good case against us, but these scientists are gravely mistaken. Simply ask yourself this question: "Should I trust the words of scientists, who go about studying stones and rocks from the ground, or should I place my trust in the prophets, who get their information directly from Source of all truth?" The answer is obvious. Why anyone would place their trust in someone who believes they can obtain truth by looking into stones and rocks from the ground is beyond me.

Just two weeks ago, in an address given to church historians, our beloved President Dieter F. Uchtdorf declared that *"the evidence of the world contradicts God's utterances" as given to us through our modern-day prophets and scriptures* (<https://www.lds.org/church/news/truth-is-complete-and-universal-president-uchtdorf-says> (<https://www.lds.org/church/news/truth-is-complete-and-universal-president-uchtdorf-says>)). Now, after hearing this, some might be tempted to ask: If the "evidence of the world" contradicts the words of our beloved prophets, isn't this a problem? Certainly not, dearest members. In order to understand why this so-called "evidence" has absolutely no validity, I faithfully turn to the instructive words of my beloved associate Elder Tad Callister as found within the inspired pages of this month's Ensign: "[God] needs to speak only once

... and that one declaration [through His prophets] trumps all the opinions of ... psychologists, counselors, politicians, friends, parents, or would-be moralists of the day."

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/2014/03/the-lords-standard-of-morality>

<https://www.lds.org/ensign/2014/03/the-lords-standard-of-morality>)

My dearest members, do you see the truth that Elder Callister is trying to convey? Every word that proceedeth forth from the mouths of the Lord's chosen representatives effectually "trumps" the words of any so-called intellectuals, scientists, archaeologists, historians, linguists, trusted friends, parents, and even our own personal revelation if somehow any of these ever contradict the Church's sacred doctrines. This is the true law of God as lovingly explained by Elder Callister and which I reiterate today. I counsel members everywhere to disregard the words of scientists or so-called experts if ever they contradict the teachings of our latter-day prophets. Let us not be deceived by the so-called "evidence of the world," lest we be drawn into Satan's clutches!

Some years ago, Sister Delaney and I lived next door to a so-called scientist who claimed that racial differences in skin color are the genetic result of thousands of years of gradually changing skin pigments over many generations. You see, dear members, how ridiculous some of these scientific theories can be? Fortunately Sister Delaney and I were able to lovingly testify to this misinformed man that all mankind started out white but that through unrighteousness certain people suddenly became cursed with skins of blackness (see for example 2 Nephi 5:21, Alma 3:6, 1 Nephi 12:23, Mormon 5:15, Moses 7:8, Moses 7:22). How grateful our neighbour must have felt to finally learn the truth after all his years of fruitless scientific study!

After this experience, Sister Delaney and I decided to print and frame the following proclamation to the world given by President Ezra Taft Benson, which we displayed in the entry area of our home for all to see, especially in the event that our scientific neighbour might visit: "The prophet is not required to have any particular earthly training or diplomas to speak on any subject or act on any matter at any time. Sometimes there are those who feel their earthly knowledge on a certain subject is superior to the heavenly knowledge which God gives to his prophet on the same subject. *[This certainly applies to our neighbour.]* They feel the prophet must have the same earthly credentials or training which they have had before they will accept anything the prophet has to say that might contradict their earthly schooling. How much earthly schooling did Joseph Smith have? Yet he gave revelations on all kinds of subjects. We haven't yet had a prophet who earned a doctorate degree in any subject. ... Remember *if there is ever a conflict between earthly knowledge and the words of the prophet, you stand with the prophet and ... you have done the right thing.*"

<https://www.lds.org/liahona/1981/06/fourteen-fundamentals-in-following-the-prophet>

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As we can clearly see, these so-called historians, scientists, and others who reject the truths of the Restored Gospel in search of unbiased truth and empirical evidence will be "ever learning, but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:7)

On one occasion I was asked by an otherwise intelligent but unfortunately misguided member: "Elder Delaney, what if all this evidence is actually a clue that we are being misled?"

To him, I lovingly replied: "O ye of little faith. Did you not know that faith is a belief in the unseen? I promise that the answers will come, perhaps only in the next life, but they will come. If you live faithfully with full obedience to the Lord's will as expressed through His chosen leaders who guide this Church, someday you will receive all the answers to your questions. For now, this so-called 'evidence' is irrelevant to your salvation."

He countered: "But what if this evidence is some indication that we are not on the right path toward salvation? What if we really have no foundation to build upon because Joseph Smith was not truly a prophet called of God, and that is why he fabricated the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham, and had a known track record for dishonesty and fraud? What if this is the reason that our scriptures teach that blacks are 'cursed' and our prophets have said so many other things that have turned out to be untrue?"

Of course, I was utterly astonished at this man's preposterous suggestions. As I urgently grappled for a response, there suddenly came into my mind the inspired counsel given by our beloved apostle, President Boyd K. Packer, who advised that we bear testimony anytime our faith comes into question. I boldly declared: "*I know the Church is true.*" This he simply could not refute. Dearest brothers and sisters, if anyone ever questions your sacred beliefs and there seem to be no viable answers, rather than resorting to the temptation to look at the logic and reason of the world, let us instead heed the counsel of President Packer and bear our unshakeable testimonies. If needed, we may also assure the person that their questions will be answered in the next life if they will but cling to their faith despite any evidence to the contrary. And do not forget to warn the person in question that even the very elect can be deceived. I cannot think of a better way to convince others of the truth than by this inspired method.

Oh, if I could teach you this one principle! Let us not underestimate the power of a personal testimony! Several years ago, I became acquainted with a young missionary at the Missionary Training Center who claimed he did not have a testimony. I suggested that he recall the words of President Packer, "*A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it,*" and encouraged him to bear his testimony as frequently as possible—even if he did not think he had one (see <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1983/01/the-candle-of-the-lord> (<https://www.lds.org/ensign/1983/01/the-candle-of-the-lord>)). Every morning, from that day forth he would repeat to himself in the mirror: "*I know the Church is true. I know the Church is true. I know the Church is true.*" He dutifully repeated this 5 times each morning and 5 times each night for the next two years without fail. He also repeated these words to every person whom he met on the street and every investigator whom he ever taught during his two-year term of missionary service, and he repeated these words in his mind every time someone expressed them during Sacrament Meetings and other church functions. Furthermore, anytime his faith was challenged by the "evidence of the world," he would continuously repeat this devout expression. "*I know the Church is true.*" Over time, this sacred and recurrent idea became firmly implanted in his young mind and reinforced through each repetition. At last, right before the conclusion of his mission, he gladly reported to me that he had successfully gained confidence in this repeated statement and had thus acquired an unfaltering testimony of the Lord's true Church. Yes, my brothers and sisters, a testimony truly is to be found in the bearing of it!

In conclusion, dearest members, how can we know that our prophets, seers, and revelators will never lead the Church astray? I will answer this question with the following words of truth:

- "I say to Israel, the Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the program. It is not in the mind of God." (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff*, 199.)
- "Keep your eye on the Prophet, for the Lord will never permit his Prophet to lead this Church astray." (Ezra Taft Benson, *Conference Report*, October 1966, 123.)
- "As we look to the prophets for guidance, we can be confident that they will not lead us astray." (L. Aldin Porter, "Search the Prophets," *Ensign*, April 2002, 31.)
- "Those who listen to and follow the counsel of living prophets and apostles will not go astray." (*Preach My Gospel*, 2004, 75).
- "You can always trust the living prophets." (*True to the Faith*, 2004, 129.)
- "You cannot, nor can any man, in righteousness, point to the time when any of [the Brethren] have wilfully stated anything that was contrary to the principles of righteousness, or that did not tend to make the people better in every way." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 3:297.)
- "Whatever comes from the voices of those who hold that authority is scripture, no matter of what they may speak." (J. Reuben Clark, Jr., *Conference Report*, April 1944, 112.)
- "Continuing revelation and leadership for the Church come through the President of the Church, and he will never mislead the Saints." (James E. Faust, "The Prophetic Voice," *Ensign* [Conference Edition], May 1996, 7.)
- "Follow your leaders who have been duly ordained and have been publicly sustained, and you will not be led astray." (Boyd K. Packer, "To Be Learned Is Good If ...", *Ensign* [Conference Edition], November 1992, 73.)

How do we know, then, that the prophets will never lead us astray? Because *the prophets have told us so*. I see no need to look for further reassurance than this, my dear members.

Dearest brothers and sisters, the scriptures plainly warn us: "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, *cursed is he that putteth his trust in man*." (2 Nephi 4:34; Nephi quoting from Jeremiah 17:5) "And many *false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many*. ... For there shall arise ... *false prophets*, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, *they shall deceive the very elect*." (Matthew 24:11,24) This is why I only put my trust in the prophets found in the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

May each and every soul within the sound of my voice make this same sacred pledge to place their unwavering trust in the men who lead this Church, even the Lord's chosen prophets upon the earth, I pray humbly, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.