

Given October 18th, 2015

Prophets and the Proclamation

In my talk today, I feel the need to convey and expound briefly upon three principles that I know to be true, and that bring joy into my life; they are:

Our Heavenly Father loves us.
Because of His love for us, our He sends us prophets and apostles.
To help us on our journey through this life, He has given us our families.

1. Our Heavenly Father loves us

a. He is concerned with our happiness and success in life

- i. PMG p. 31 – “God is our Heavenly Father. We are His children. He loves us. He weeps with us when we suffer and rejoices when we do what is right. He wants to communicate with us. We can communicate with Him through sincere prayer.

He has given us this experience on the earth so we can learn and grow. We can show our love for Him through our choices and our obedience to His commandments.

b. He knows us and cares for us perfectly

- i. Elder Maxwell – October 1987

A universal God is actually involved with our small, individual universes of experience! In the midst of His vast dominions, yet He numbers us, knows us, and loves us perfectly (see Moses 1:35; John 10:14).

Along with knowing that God is there, it is equally vital to know what He is like, including His perfected attributes of justice and mercy. ... Belief in the goodness and power of God is greatly facilitated by understanding His plan of salvation with its crucial allowance for mankind’s moral agency, real moral agency—with real mistakes and with real consequences! His plan includes real tests, real dilemmas, real anguish, and real joy.

2. Our Heavenly Father sent us prophets and apostles because He loves us

a. Amos 3:7

- i. Secrets like

1. Why are we here on the earth?
2. How can we be happy?
3. Is there life after death?
4. How can our families be strong enough to make it through this difficult life together, happily and intact?

- b. Just 2 weeks ago, Elder David A. Bednar reminded us of several things previous prophets and apostles taught in their last days. I would like to share some of those things with you.
 - i. President Faust – Apr, 2007
 - 1. “The Savior has offered to all of us a precious peace through His Atonement, but this can come only as we are willing to cast out negative feelings of anger, spite, or revenge. ...
“Let us remember that we need to forgive to be forgiven. ... With all my heart and soul, I believe in the healing power that can come to us as we follow the counsel of the Savior ‘to forgive all men’ [D&C 64:10]”
 - ii. Elder Wirthlin – Oct 2008
 - 1. “I still remember [my mother’s] advice to me given on that day long ago when my team lost a football game: ‘Come what may, and love it.’
... Adversity, if handled correctly, can be a blessing in our lives. ...
As we look for humor, seek for the eternal perspective, understand the principle of compensation, and draw near to our Heavenly Father, we can endure hardship and trial. We can say, as did my mother, ‘Come what may, and love it’” (“Come What May, and Love It,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2008, 28).
 - iii. President Packer – April 2015
 - 1. “I bear witness that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of the living God. He stands at the head of the Church. Through His Atonement and the power of the priesthood, families which are begun in mortality can be together through the eternities. ...
I am so grateful for ... the Atonement which can wash clean every stain no matter how difficult or how long or how many times repeated. The Atonement can put you free again to move forward, cleanly and worthily”
 - iv. Elder Scott – April 2015
 - 1. “We came to mortal life precisely to grow from trials and testing. Challenges help us become more like our Father in Heaven, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible to endure those challenges. I testify that as we actively come unto Him, we can endure every temptation, every heartache, every challenge we face”
 - v. Elder Perry – April 2015
 - 1. “Let me close by bearing witness (and my nine decades on this earth fully qualify me to say this) that the older I get, the more I realize that family is the center of life and is the key to eternal happiness.
I give thanks for my wife, for my children, for my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren, and for ... extended family who make my own life so rich and, yes, even eternal. Of this eternal truth I bear my strongest and most sacred witness”
- 3. To lead us safely home, He gave us the Proclamation to the world.

- a. PMG p.3 – “On earth, family associations can be the source of some of our greatest joy. Satan is attacking the family on many fronts, and too many families are being destroyed by his efforts. The message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ makes it possible for families to be united now and in eternity. By living the principles of the gospel, families can experience peace, joy, and a sense of belonging and identity in this life. Through the light of the gospel, families can resolve misunderstandings, contentions, and challenges. Families torn by discord can be healed through repentance, forgiveness, and faith in the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”
- b. Through prophets and apostles, our Heavenly Father gave us the answers to many of the great questions of life in The Family: A Proclamation to the World:
 - i. Who are we?
 - 1. ALL HUMAN BEINGS—male and female—are 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 destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.
 - ii. Why we are here on the earth? – where were we before?
 - 1. IN THE PREMORTAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize their divine destiny as heirs of eternal life.
 - iii. How can we be happy?
 - 1. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.
 - iv. How can families be strong enough to withstand the evils of the world?
 - 1. THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.
- 4. Do what matters most
 - Bednar once shared,
“At one point I asked Elder Hales, ‘You have been a successful husband, father, athlete, pilot, business executive, and Church leader. What lessons have you learned as you have grown older and been constrained by decreased physical capacity?’
Elder Hales paused for a moment and responded, ‘When you cannot do what you have always done, then you only do what matters most.’”

