Talk for Sunday: Following the Prophet

Good morning brothers and sisters. Amid the myriad philosophies of men and competing notions of truth and morality, I believe it to be a great act mercy on the part of Heavenly Father that, as part of an established pattern, He has today, as He has always done throughout time, provide His children with a person of refined character, someone He has prepared and tried and eventually called to act as a mouth-piece for His will for all of us, to guide us here in our probationary states. Such a man as this is a prophet and provides the rest of us with access to revealed truth and direction for our day that we would not otherwise have. Is it any wonder then the importance of following a modern prophet?

Let us take a moment to consider this question in the context of the days of the ancient prophet Noah. Of this, Ezra Taft Benson said, “Always the words of the living prophet took precedence, for it was God’s message to the people at that particular time. Had any man accepted the ancient scripture in the days of Noah but refused to follow the revelation that Noah received and failed to board the ark, he would have been drowned. Always the words of the living prophets are of the most vital concern to the people; and always, if a man would know of Christ and learn his commandments so that he can obey them, he must seek to find his authorized representatives.” (1) In the same talk, President Benson, then an apostle, revisits the example of Noah’s day by saying, “Let me ask, do we need a true prophet of the Lord on the earth today? Did the people in Noah’s day need a prophet to warn them spiritually and temporally? Had a man refused to follow Noah, would he have been saved from the flood? Yet the Bible tells us that in the last days in which we live, the wickedness of the people will become comparable to the wickedness of the people in Noah’s day when God cleansed the earth by flood. Do you think we need a prophet today to warn us and prepare us for the cleansing that God promised will come, this time by fire?”

Looking back on my own life, I distinctly recall specific councils given from the pulpit at general conference from the prophet that I failed to follow, and I can see the great destruction and spiritual calamity in my own life that could have been avoided, had I heeded the prophet’s instruction. I believe the words of the prophets will condemn us at the judgement day, if we knew them, but failed to follow them.

It is said in the D&C that in the last days, men’s hearts will fail them (D&C 45:26.)

Speaking to his prophets, the Lord said: ‘He that receiveth you receiveth me. …’ ([Matt. 10:40](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/matt/10.40?lang=eng#39).)

Sustain the new prophet, even if I don’t know who it is yet to succeed President Monson. Bear testimony of Joseph Smith. Bear testimony of chain of priesthood authority from current prophet to Joseph Smith to Peter, James, John to Jesus Christ.

**References:**

1. “Listen to a Prophet’s Voice,” Elder Ezra Taft Benson, January 1973.
2. Next reference…