



Are YOU Listening?

The words of the prophets and apostles can bring you incredible strength and protection.

By Mindy Raye Friedman

Church Magazines

Every six months, at general conference, you have the opportunity to hear from living prophets and apostles. This is an amazing blessing and can change your life—if you listen to and follow their counsel. How can their words bless you? Consider these four ways.

1. Safety

Prophets and apostles are watchmen on the tower, able to see danger from afar (see D&C 101:54). Many of their messages teach you how to find safety. They warn of dangers to your body and your spirit and offer counsel on how to find protection. For example, President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, recently reminded us that “the scriptures hold the keys to spiritual protection” (“The Key to Spiritual Protection,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 26). And there are many other examples.

Why is this safety so important? As Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “The world is moving away from the Lord faster and farther than ever before. The adversary has been loosed upon the earth. We watch, hear, read, study, and share the words of prophets to be forewarned

and protected. . . . I testify that those who put their trust in the Lord and heed this counsel [from general conference] in faith will gain great strength to bless themselves and their families for generations to come” (“General Conference: Strengthening Faith and Testimony,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 7).

2. Guidance

In addition to helping you find safety, prophets and apostles also offer guidance on many other topics. As they speak about subjects that are relevant to your life and situation right now, they teach you how to create happiness in this life and how to prepare for eternal life.

And those messages will be personalized just for you, as Elder Hales reminded us: “In conferences we can receive the word of the Lord meant just for us. . . . This is possible because the Holy Ghost carries the word of the Lord unto our hearts in terms we can understand” (“General Conference,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 6).

3. Strength

Listening to the words of prophets and apostles can also give you an added boost to overcome life’s



challenges. For example, they help us see the purposes of trials. President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “Our Heavenly Father, who gives us so much to delight in, also knows that we learn and grow and become stronger as we face and survive the trials through which we must pass. We know that there are times when we will experience heartbreaking sorrow, when we will grieve, and when we may be tested to our limits. However, such difficulties allow us to change for the better, to rebuild our lives in the way our Heavenly Father teaches us, and to become something different from what we were—better than we were” (“I Will Not Fail Thee, nor Forsake Thee,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 87).

Conference speakers also often tell

stories and share messages about how to remain faithful, and they remind you that you should never give up. For example, they could tell a story of someone who overcame a temptation, giving you strength to overcome your own. Or they may share a message of hope after you have experienced a disappointment. These messages can give you the strength to stay true to your beliefs and to overcome the challenges you face every day.

4. Answers

Many times you may have questions about life and about the gospel. You can find answers to these questions in the counsel from prophets and apostles. For examples from the most recent general conference, see pages 14–17 of this issue. **NE**

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Things to Ponder for Sunday

- How have I been blessed by following prophetic counsel?
- What messages do I remember from last general conference?
- What questions were answered in conference?

Things You Might Do

- In church and elsewhere, tell people how you have been blessed by listening to and following prophets and apostles.
- Go to lds.org/go/confNE5 and share what you learned from general conference.

TRY IT OUT

Now that you know some of the blessings you can receive by listening to the prophets, review the conference messages on pages 2–25 of this issue, and make some notes in the space provided. If you need more space, complete this activity in your journal or on a separate piece of paper. You can also study all of the conference messages in this month's *Ensign* or online at conference.lds.org.

Messages that teach me how to be safe: _____

Messages that offer me guidance: _____

Messages that give me strength: _____

Messages that answer my questions: _____
