



Preparing

FOR

PRIESTHOOD ORDINANCES

You can make your baptism, confirmation, priesthood ordination, and temple endowment and sealing experiences more meaningful.

By David L. Buckner

As a young man, I served a mission in Ecuador. Three months into my mission I was assigned to serve in the small city of Jipijapa. I soon met Grandpa Francisco Caicedo, an elderly gentleman who, along with his family, had been meeting with the missionaries. He was preparing for baptism and confirmation by embracing the teachings and keeping the commitments the missionaries had given him under the guidance of the Spirit.

During one visit we taught him about the Word of Wisdom. For more than 60 years, however, Grandpa Caicedo had begun his day with his morning coffee. His family farm grew and harvested coffee beans. I recognized the challenges he would face. I asked, “Can you commit to living the Word of Wisdom?” Without the slightest hesitation, he answered, “Yes.” To clarify, I asked, “Grandpa Caicedo, can you give up your coffee?” Again he simply stated, “If you say so, brother, I can do it.” He stopped drinking coffee that day and was baptized.

As Grandpa Caicedo grew in the gospel, he became an

elder. He and his family helped one another prepare to receive the temple ordinances. Grandpa Francisco Caicedo remained faithful until his passing a few years ago. His initial preparation led him to baptism. Additional preparation led him to receive the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods and eventually to receive the sacred temple ordinances. He believed the saving doctrines and shared his testimony with everyone he knew. His example and testimony helped convert more than 50 people—family and friends—to the gospel.

As a bishop and as the president of the New York New York Stake, I have had the honor of helping many adults like Grandpa Caicedo prepare to receive the essential, saving priesthood ordinances of baptism, confirmation, priesthood ordination where applicable, and the temple ordinances of endowment and sealing. In my experience, part of the preparation includes studying and increasing your understanding of the doctrines associated with each ordinance. I also suggest that you consider the following recommendations for enriching your experience with each ordinance.

Preparing for Baptism and Confirmation

When I was eight years old, I was baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As an adult, you are in a different position than I was. You can draw from a wider range of personal experience in choosing how to best prepare yourself.

Some of the things you can study and do to prepare for baptism and confirmation may include:

- **Learning about faith in Jesus Christ and what it means to repent of your sins.**
- **Prior to your baptism, prayerfully committing that you will strive to serve Heavenly Father and keep His commandments.**
- **Establishing a lifestyle that includes frequent, daily scripture study and meaningful prayer.**
- **Keeping the commitments—such as paying your tithes and offerings—that you made while studying with the missionaries.**
- **Attending Sabbath day meetings and applicable weekday meetings.**
- **Meeting your bishop or branch president and other members of your ward family. They can be a source of support, inspiration, and fellowship.**
- **Telling your family and friends about the changes you have made in your life and inviting them to support you in these changes.**
- **Sharing the gospel with others. You may want to share your testimony at your baptismal service. Discuss this with the missionaries.**



Preparing to Receive the Priesthood

As a 12-year-old, I met with my bishop to discuss being ordained a deacon in the Aaronic Priesthood. He taught me that the priesthood is the power and authority to act in God's name. He explained the role of a deacon to me. I learned that although the priesthood is bestowed only on worthy male members of the Church, priesthood blessings are available to all men, women, and children. He encouraged me to ask the Lord to strengthen me so I could fulfill my duties and live worthy of the blessings of the priesthood. I did and was greatly blessed.

Some of the things worthy male members can study and do to prepare to receive the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood may include:

- **Learning the duties of the priesthood by following the righteous example of other priesthood holders.**
- **Studying scriptures that teach about the priesthood (see D&C 20; 84; 107; 121).**
- **Meeting with your parents or family members, your bishop or branch president, the missionaries, or other experienced priesthood holders to discuss priesthood authority, responsibilities, and blessings.**
- **Praying to know how you can fulfill your priesthood duties, acting on the inspiration you receive, and expressing gratitude for the blessings that come through priesthood service.**
- **Participating in your quorum and fulfilling assignments, including home teaching, when asked.**
- **As soon as possible, receiving and using a personal limited-use temple recommend and performing baptisms and confirmations for the dead, if you live near a temple.**
- **If possible, conducting a family meeting and teaching a gospel-centered lesson in your home.**



Preparing to Receive Your Temple Ordinances

As a stake president, I interviewed a wonderful sister who had been a member for several years but had not yet received her temple endowment. She had taken the temple preparation course more than once, but she thought she needed to be perfect to enter the temple. I told her that the temple is the house of the Lord and a place where we learn through presentations and symbolism about Heavenly Father's eternal plan for His children. It is a holy place, and we must be worthy to enter, but we don't have to be perfect to go to the temple.

She felt encouraged when she realized that receiving her temple ordinances would help her on the pathway to perfection, and she embraced the opportunity to worship in the temple.

Some of the things you can study and do to prepare to receive your temple endowment may include:

- **Attending a temple preparation class.**
- **Studying scriptures that teach about the Creation of the earth, the Fall of Adam and Eve, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and the covenants you will make in the temple (see Moses 1–6; 2 Nephi 2; D&C 76).**
- **Studying *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (booklet, 2002) or the October 2010 special issue of the *Ensign*, which features temples. Discuss your questions with your bishop or branch president.**
- **Writing about your experiences and feelings before and after receiving your temple endowment and your temple sealing.**
- **Planning and saving for your trip to the temple, if necessary.**
- **Making temple worthiness and regular temple worship (where possible) a lifelong commitment.**





Learning Line upon Line

Grandpa Francisco Caicedo's preparation for each priesthood ordinance kept him on the path that led to an ever-increasing understanding of the gospel and a strengthened testimony. As with him, the Lord will instruct you from on high as you continue to believe in the gospel and to keep the commandments associated with these marvelous priesthood ordinances.

Be assured that your Heavenly Father knows and loves you. You may feel His love every day of your life. He has prepared a great plan of happiness for His children. You can trust in Him and His promises. Be patient and dedicated as you prepare to receive each of His sacred ordinances and you will learn line upon line, precept upon

precept (see Isaiah 28:10). Regular prayer, gospel study, and Church attendance provide a source of light and lay the foundation for you to progress on your path to eternal life in His presence.

Priesthood ordinances are designed to teach us about Jesus Christ, strengthen our resolve to follow Him, and provide us with opportunities to witness the power of godliness in our lives (see D&C 84:20–22). Baptism and confirmation, priesthood ordination for worthy male members, and the temple ordinances of endowment and sealing are essential steps in your journey to eternal happiness. ■

All are blessed by priesthood covenants. See November 2013 Ensign: L. Tom Perry, p. 46; Henry B. Eyring, p. 58; Neil L. Andersen, p. 92, Carole M. Stephens, p. 115.