



By President Thomas S. Monson

any call beyond what you have now. The oath and the covenant of the priesthood gives you power, authority, and direction. I pray you will go home and study carefully the oath and covenant of the priesthood, found in Doctrine and Covenants section 84.

All of us hope that more young men will have experiences like Wilford Woodruff, who as an Aaronic Priesthood holder taught the gospel of Jesus Christ with converting power.

I pray that we will rise to our call to lift others to prepare them for their glorious service. I thank with all my heart the wonderful people who have lifted me and shown me how to love and lift others.

I testify that President Thomas S. Monson holds all the keys of the priesthood on earth at this time. I bear witness that he, over a lifetime of service, has been an example for us all of reaching to lift others as a holder of the Melchizedek Priesthood. I am personally grateful for the way he has lifted me and shown me how to lift others.

God the Father lives. Jesus is the Christ. This is His Church and kingdom. This is His priesthood. I know this for myself by the power of the Holy Ghost. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Wilford Woodruff, "The Rights of the Priesthood," *Deseret Weekly*, Mar. 17, 1894, 381.
2. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:30; 107:14.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 84:17.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 107:18–19.
5. Alma 13:6–9 suggests that Book of Mormon prophets held the Melchizedek Priesthood.
6. Mosiah 4:29–30.
7. See Alma 56:47.
8. See Luke 22:32.
9. Doctrine and Covenants 84:106–8.

Principles and Promises

May we care for our bodies and our minds by observing the principles set forth in the Word of Wisdom, a divinely provided plan.

Tonight, brethren, I pray for the guidance of our Heavenly Father as I share my message with you.

In 1833 the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith a plan for healthy living. That plan is found in the 89th section of the Doctrine and Covenants and is known as the Word of Wisdom. It gives specific direction regarding the food we eat, and it prohibits the use of substances which are harmful to our bodies.

Those who are obedient to the Lord's commandments and who faithfully observe the Word of Wisdom are

promised particular blessings, among which are good health and added physical stamina.¹

Recently I read the true account of a dramatic manifestation concerning these promises. A faithful member of the Church, John A. Larsen, served during World War II in the United States Coast Guard on the ship *USS Cambria*. During a battle in the Philippines, word came of an approaching squadron of bombers and kamikaze fighter planes. Orders were given for immediate evacuation. Since the *USS Cambria* was already gone, John and three





companions gathered their gear and hurried to the beach, hoping for a lift out to one of the departing ships. Fortunately, a landing craft picked them up and sped toward the last ship leaving the bay. The men on that departing ship, in an effort to evacuate as quickly as possible, were busy on deck and had time only to throw ropes to the four men, that they might hopefully be able to climb to the deck.

John, with a heavy radio strapped to his back, found himself dangling at the end of a 40-foot (12 m) rope, at the side of a ship headed out to the open sea. He began pulling himself up, hand over hand, knowing that if he lost his grip, he would almost certainly perish. After climbing only a third of the way,

he felt his arms burning with pain. He had become so weak that he felt he could no longer hold on.

With his strength depleted, as he grimly contemplated his fate, John silently cried unto God, telling Him that he had always kept the Word of Wisdom and had lived a clean life—and he now desperately needed the promised blessings.

John later said that as he finished his prayer, he felt a great surge of strength. He began climbing once again and fairly flew up the rope. When he reached the deck, his breathing was normal and not the least bit labored. The blessings of added health and stamina promised in the Word of Wisdom had been his. He gave thanks

to his Heavenly Father then, and throughout the remainder of his life, for the answer to his desperate prayer for help.²

Brethren, may we care for our bodies and our minds by observing the principles set forth in the Word of Wisdom, a divinely provided plan. With all my heart and soul, I testify of the glorious blessings which await us as we do. That this may be so, I pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21.
2. See John A. Larsen, in Robert C. Freeman and Dennis A. Wright, comps., *Saints at War: Experiences of Latter-day Saints in World War II* (2001), 350–51; used by permission.