



**By President Henry B. Eyring**  
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# Where Two or Three Are Gathered

*If you listen with the Spirit, you will find your heart softened, your faith strengthened, and your capacity to love the Lord increased.*

**M**y beloved brothers and sisters, I welcome you to the 186th Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I rejoice to be with you, and I welcome you warmly.

I am grateful that you have come to the conference to feel inspiration from heaven and to feel closer to our Heavenly Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gathered in this meeting, which stretches across the world, are millions of disciples of Jesus Christ who are under covenant to always remember Him and serve Him. By the miracle of modern technology, the separation of time and of vast distances vanishes. We meet as if we are all together in one great hall.

But even more important than our gathering together is in whose name we do so. The Lord promised that even with the great number of His disciples on the earth today, He would be close to each of us. He said to His little band of disciples in 1829, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, . . . where two or three are gathered together in my name, . . . behold, there will I be in the midst of

them—even so am I in the midst of you” (D&C 6:32).

Now numbering more than one or two, a multitude of His disciples are gathered in this conference, and as promised, the Lord is in our midst. Because He is a resurrected and glorified being, He is not physically everywhere where Saints gather. But, by the power of the Spirit, we can feel that He is here with us today.

Where and when we feel the closeness of the Savior depend on each of us. He gave this instruction:

“And again, verily I say unto you, my friends, I leave these sayings with you to ponder in your hearts, with this commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall call upon me while I am near—

“Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (D&C 88:62–63).

I know of at least two people listening today who want that blessing with all their hearts. They will try earnestly to draw nearer to the Lord during this conference. They each wrote to me—their letters arriving at my office in the same week—pleading for the same kind of help.

Both of them are converts to the Church and have previously received clear testimonies of the love of God the Father and of His Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. They knew that the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the





Church by direct revelation from God and that the keys of the holy priesthood were restored. Each felt a witness that keys are in place in the Church today. They bore to me their solemn testimony in writing.

Yet both lamented that feelings of love for the Lord and His love for them were lessening. They both wanted, with full heart, for me to help them regain the joy and the feeling of being loved that was theirs as they came into the kingdom of God. Both expressed a fear that if they could not regain in full those feelings of love for the Savior and His Church, the trials and tests they faced would finally overcome their faith.

They are not alone in their concern, nor is their test a new one. During His mortal ministry, the Savior gave us the parable of the seed and the sower. The seed was the word of God. The sower was the Lord. The survival of the seed and its growth depended on the condition of the soil. You remember His words:

“And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

“Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

“And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

“And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

“But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

“Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matthew 13:4–9).

Again, the seed is the word of God. The soil is the heart of the person who receives the seed.

All of us have much in common with the wonderful people who wrote to me for help and reassurance. We all have had seeds, or the word of God, planted in our hearts at one time. For some, it was in childhood when our

parents invited us to be baptized and confirmed by those in authority. Others of us were taught by called servants of God. Each felt that the seed was good, even felt the swelling in our hearts, and experienced joy as our hearts and minds seemed to expand.

All of us have had our faith tested by precious blessings delayed, vicious attacks of those who wanted to destroy our faith, temptations to sin, and selfish interests that reduced our efforts to cultivate and soften the spiritual depths of our hearts.

Those who are saddened by the loss of the joy they once had are the blessed ones. Some do not see the withering of faith within themselves. *Satan is clever.* He tells those he wishes to be miserable that the joy they once felt was childish self-delusion.

Today my message to us all is that there will be a precious opportunity in the next few days to choose to have our hearts softened and to receive and nourish the seed. The seed is the word of God, and it will be poured out on

all of us who listen, watch, and read the proceedings of this conference. The music, the talks, and the testimonies have been prepared by servants of God who have sought diligently for the Holy Ghost to guide them in their preparation. They have prayed longer and more humbly as the days of the conference have approached.

They have prayed to have the power to encourage you to make the choices that will create in your heart a more fertile ground for the good word of God to grow and be fruitful. If you listen with the Spirit, you will find your heart softened, your faith strengthened, and your capacity to love the Lord increased.

Your choice to pray with full purpose of heart will transform your experience in the conference sessions and in the days and months that follow.

Many of you have already begun. At the start of this session, you more than listened to the prayer; you added your faith to the petition that we will enjoy the blessing of having the Holy Ghost poured out upon us. As you added your silent pleading in the name of Jesus Christ, you drew closer to Him. This is His conference. Only the Holy Ghost can bring the blessings the Lord desires for us. In His love for us, He has promised we can feel that:

“Whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

“Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants.

“Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall

bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come” (D&C 68:4–6).

You can pray and add your faith each time a servant of God approaches the pulpit that the promise of the Lord in Doctrine and Covenants section 50 will be fulfilled:

“Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

“And if it be by some other way it is not of God.

“And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?

“If it be some other way it is not of God.

“Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth?

“Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:17–22).

You can pray as the choir is about to sing. The choir director, the organists, and the choir members have prayed and practiced with a prayer in their hearts and with faith that the music and the words will soften hearts and magnify their power to build others’ faith. They will perform for the Lord as if they were before Him, and they will know that our Heavenly Father hears them as surely as He hears their personal prayers. Together they have labored with love to make the promise of the Savior to Emma Smith come true: “For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads” (D&C 25:12).

If you not only listen but also pray as they sing, your prayer and their prayers will be answered with a





blessing upon your head as well as theirs. You will feel the blessing of the Savior's love and approval. All who join in that praise will feel their love for Him grow.

You might choose to pray as a speaker seems to be coming to an end of his or her message. He or she will be praying inwardly to the Father that the Holy Ghost will give him or her the words of testimony that will lift the listeners' hearts, hopes, and determination to always remember the Savior and keep the commandments that He has given us.

The testimony will not be a recital of the message. It will be an affirmation of

some truth that the Spirit can carry into the hearts of those who will be praying for help, for divine direction, and to receive the pure love of Christ.

True testimony will be given to the speakers. Their words may be few, but they will be carried into the heart of the humble listener who has come to the conference hungry for the good word of God.

I know from experience what the faith of good people can do to bring words from the Spirit at the close of a sermon. More than once, someone has said to me after my testimony, "How did you know what I so needed to hear?" I have learned not to be

surprised when I cannot remember saying the words. I spoke the words of testimony, but the Lord was there, giving them to me in the moment. The promise that the Lord will give us words in the very moment applies especially to testimony (see D&C 24:6). Listen carefully to the testimonies borne in this conference—you will feel closer to the Lord.

You can sense that I am coming to the moment when I will cap the message I have tried to convey with a testimony of truth. Your prayers will help me to be given words of testimony that may help someone longing for an answer to his or her questions.

I leave you my sure witness that our Heavenly Father, the great Elohim, loves and knows us, every one. Under His direction, His Son, Jehovah, was the Creator. I testify that Jesus of Nazareth was born the Son of God. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead. He paid the price of all the sins of each of Heavenly Father's children born into mortality. He broke the bands of death for all as He rose from the tomb that first Easter Sunday. He lives today, a God—resurrected and glorious.

This is the only true Church, and He is its chief cornerstone. Thomas S. Monson is His prophet to all the world. The prophets and apostles you will hear in this conference speak for the Lord. They are His servants, authorized to act for Him. He goes before His servants in the world. This I know. And I so witness in His name, even the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



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