

POWERFULLY PREPARED

When both my quorum adviser and my bishop unexpectedly passed away, it made me stop and think.

BY BRENT ALAN FISHER

Although we did many enjoyable things in my Aaronic Priesthood quorums as I grew up, the most important lessons were the ones my leaders taught me about priesthood duties and mission preparation. This was especially true when I turned 16, was ordained a priest, and became a member of the priests quorum. I came to understand more than ever before that callings in the Aaronic Priesthood are not



just positions that need filling. My leaders let me learn my duty and helped me “act in the office in which [I was] appointed” (D&C 107:99).

They taught me how to be a worthy, covenant-keeping, servant of the Lord. Then, when I was still a priest, both my quorum adviser and my bishop unexpectedly passed away within a few months of each other. I was devastated. But as time passed, I realized I had gained confidence in the priesthood because they gave me opportunities to perform the ordinances and duties of the Aaronic Priesthood (see D&C 13:1; 20:46–60; 84:26–27).

I learned because I was given a chance to learn by doing, and I felt the Holy Ghost while doing my duty. For example, I:

- Baptized a young girl whose father did not hold the priesthood.

- Ordained a young man to the office of a teacher because his father was not involved in the Church.
 - Conducted quorum business, led presidency meetings, and followed up on assignments.
 - Served as a companion to a faithful home teacher. Being assigned to less-active members gave me insights into why they chose to not attend church. It taught me that good people sometimes don't attend meetings simply because they have bad habits. Being assigned to a faithful home teacher was probably one of the best experiences to prepare me to serve a mission.
- Collected fast offerings and learned the



people I least expected would make a donation. Later, I came to appreciate that providing everyone the opportunity to pay fast offerings gives them the opportunity to be blessed by the Lord and remain in contact with the Church.

- Came to understand as a teacher and priest that it was my duty to ensure that the sacrament table was properly prepared before the meeting started. I also learned it was an honor to serve in the roles of a deacon or teacher, even if I was a priest.

By being given opportunities to serve, I learned of the

organization of the Church and the order of the priesthood. I learned how to coordinate with youth leaders in Young Women and listen to their counsel. I came to appreciate planning as an important part of successfully fulfilling the work of the Lord. I found I needed to think about the purpose of each activity and organize it to fulfill some portion of the mission of the Church. I came to know that visiting quorum members, especially less-active ones, is an important duty that can create feelings of brotherhood that break down cliques so common among teenagers.

Most importantly, I learned the Lord answers the prayers of all those who seek to build His kingdom, even young Atonic Priesthood holders. I came to understand that all of these experiences prepared me to become a more effective Melchizedek Priesthood holder, a temple recommend holder, and a full-time missionary. And I learned the Atonic Priesthood is the Lord's inspired method for preparing young men to be valiant, worthy, and able to fulfill the higher duties of the Melchizedek Priesthood "to administer in spiritual things" (D&C 107:8). In priesthood quorums I learned all these things, and I am grateful to the leaders who gave so much to make it possible. **NE**

