

A Testimony of Christ

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I have come this morning to speak to you of holy things and of sacred happenings. Perhaps it may not be given to us to fully understand these occurrences, except through the intelligence of the Holy Spirit. I pray for that special spirit both for you and for myself, so that we may come to a perfect understanding concerning these sacred matters. I pray that we may worship together in spirit and truth. I will speak to you today concerning a testimony of Christ.

I can speak to you with some insight and feeling on this subject for two reasons. Firstly, I am the most newly called of the special witnesses. No one else in the world has more recently experienced the sacred happenings of coming to this sacred calling than I. Secondly, Sister Faust and I have recently walked in some of the pathways of the Savior. What I have to say to you, however, is more than feelings, but is rather fact and knowledge to me, the truth of which may be known to you by sacred whisperings.

The things of the spirit are most to be treasured because from these spiritual reassurances come the sacred inner peace and strength, as was the testimony of John the Baptist: “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven” (John 3:27). Each has to receive his own witness concerning Jesus as the Christ.

I wish this morning to set my seal upon this knowledge. Let me begin with Peter. No one was in a better position to know than was Peter. Peter’s story is credible—he was there. Said Peter, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:16).

Anyone who claims discipleship cannot help but have a special appreciation for the calling of the first apostles and for their authority.

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his

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brother, in a ship with Zebedee with their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. [Matthew 4:18–22]

These came early to a testimony of his divinity.

Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! . . .

One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me . . .

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! . . .

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.

And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. [John 1:35–36, 40–43, 45–47, 49–51]

The first recorded assignment to the Twelve recalls:

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. . . .

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.

Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

And when ye come into an house, salute it.

And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. [Matthew 10:1, 7–13]

Peter frequently testified of the divinity of the Savior.

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. [John 6:66–69]

Much training was necessary for the ancient disciples, as well as for the modern.

And being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.

And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them: [Mark 9:33–36]

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. [Matthew 18:3–5]

Others were given a testimony concerning his divinity in little Bethany. Many marvelous things happened, not the least of which was the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world . . .

And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. [John 11:21–27, 43–45]

Peter's personal testimony was strengthened by his experience of walking on the water to go to Jesus.

But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. [Matthew 14:30–33]

There were many who believed, but for social reasons lacked the faith to follow:

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. [John 12:42–43]

Now we approach the Easter season, and there is no greater testimony of Jesus Christ than that found in the story of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The end began in Bethany, which is on the far side of the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem. The Savior passed around the brow of the mount through little Bethphage. Of Wednesday we have no record. Thursday was the preparation for the Passover.

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. . .

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said: Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. [Luke 22:14, 17–18]

Following this, Jesus performed the great symbolic act of washing the disciples' feet. After having poured water into a basin, he

began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. . . .

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. [John 13:5, 8–9]

Jesus, at the Last Supper, announced the betrayal.

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. [John 13:23–28]

Then followed the sacrament:

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. [Mark 14:22–24]

The training of the apostles was continuing.

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. [Luke 22:31–32]

Peter and the other disciples professed complete loyalty:

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice. [John 13:36–38]

Then followed the great discourse found in John 14:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. . . .

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . .

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I said unto you. [That seems to be a great promise for the students of Brigham Young University.]

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

[John 14:1–2, 5–6, 15–16, 26–27]

After they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives, walking down through the Cedron Valley. The disciples were commanded again to love one another: “This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12–13). They were reminded that the world would hate them: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you” (John 15:18).

Then began the great intercessory prayer:

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. . . .

[With a prayer for unity and sanctification,] *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. . . .*

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. [John 17:3, 21,23]

Arriving at the first slope on the Mount of Olives, he took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

And he cometh unto [Peter, James, and John] and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What could ye not watch with me one hour?

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. [Matthew 26:38–42]

“And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44). This is further described in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink” (D&C 19:18). This suffering was described as “sore” and “exquisite” (see D&C 19:15).

And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. [Matthew 26:43–46]

Judas knew where to find the Savior. He had been there often with the disciples. The Savior could see the band of men and officers coming down through the gate with lanterns and torches and weapons. He could hear the armor clanking, and could perhaps follow every footstep as they came down the hill, crossed over the little brook at the bottom of the Cedron Valley, and entered the Garden.

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas, also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. [Without question, they were overpowered by the occasion.]

Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let those go their way. [John 18:4, 8]

Impulsive Simon Peter had a sword, which he could not resist using, and he cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus.

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. [Matthew 26:52–55]

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him. [John 18:12]

And they all forsook him, and fled.

And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. [Mark 14:50–52]

Jesus was first questioned by Annas. “Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing” (John 18:20). The pre-trial examination took place before Caiaphas and the

council at the house of Caiaphas, which is on the hill across from the Garden of Gethsemane, and at that time inside the city wall. At that hearing it is recorded, “For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together”—and that is not uncommon in tribunals (Mark 14:56).

But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. [Matthew 26:63]

And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. [Mark 14:62–65]

And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? [Luke 22:64]

Peter was also at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest; and one of the maids of Caiaphas noticed him.

And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.

But he began to curse and to swear, saying. I know not this man of whom ye speak.

And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crew twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.
[Mark 14:67–72]

The formal trial and condemnation is briefly recorded; the charge again was blasphemy.

Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.

Hereafter shall the son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.
[Luke 22:67–71]

Judas, it is recorded,

Repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.
[Matthew 27:3–5]

At the first appearance before Pilate was a different charge, that of sedition.

And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. [Mark 15:2]

Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. . . .

[Jesus was then taken before Herod,] *And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.*

Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

And the chiefs priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. [Luke 23:4, 8–12]

At the second appearance before Pilate, Pilate again found him innocent.

I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

I will therefore chastise him, and release him.
[Luke 23:14–16]

(The release of one prisoner was necessary before the Passover.) Jesus was then scourged—probably with forty lashes less one—and mocked.

And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. [Matthew 27:28–30]

Pilate pled for Jesus;

And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this

man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. [John 19:12]

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. [Matthew 27:24–26]

Simon—A Cyrenian, a country man, the father of Alexander and Rufus—was compelled to carry the cross. By this time the purple had been taken from him and his own clothes put back on, and he was led to Golgotha—“the place of the skull”—to be crucified. Two thieves were crucified with him, one on the right hand and one on the left, and over his head the accusation was written, “This is Jesus the King of the Jews” (Matthew 27:37).

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. [Luke 23:34]

And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

And sitting down they watched him there. [Matthew 27:35–36]

One of the thieves began to rail upon the Savior, saying,

If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me paradise. [Matthew 27:35–36]

Jesus then spoke to his mother, and his mother's sister Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene—the three Marys. John was there, and he was asked to care for the mother of Jesus. “And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home” (John 19:27).

There was darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour. Jesus cried in Aramaic,

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [Matthew 27:46]

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. [Luke 23:46]

[And the soldiers who were watching Jesus received something of a testimony:] *Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.* [Matthew 27:54]

John records the piercing of the side of Jesus—how the soldiers, having found that he was already dead, did not break his legs after the custom of inducing death before the Sabbath day. Joseph of Arimathea, also a disciple of Jesus went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus (see Matthew 27:57–58). Pilate assented. Nicodemus also came, and they brought about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes.

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. [John 19:40–42]

Guards were placed at the tomb.

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

His countenance was like lightening, and his raiment white as snow:

And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. [Matthew 28:2–4]

It was now Sunday; the Sabbath had ended. While it was still dark came Mary Magdalene to the sepulchre, and found the stone rolled away. “Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter; and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him” (John 20:2). The women came unto the sepulchre and found the body of the Lord Jesus gone.

And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee. [Luke 24:4–6]

The women then hurried and told all these things unto the eleven. They included Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James,

and the other women that were with them (see Luke 24:10). Peter and John came and witnessed the empty tomb and found the linen clothes, and the napkin that was about his head was in a separate place by itself (see John 20:3–7).

Jesus then appeared to Mary Magdalene.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? she, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. [John 20:15–17]

The chief priests were concerned when those who had been sent to watch reported what had happened. The guards were bribed by the chief priests: “Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while he slept” (Matthew 28:13). Jesus appeared to the two followers at Emmaus, to Simon Peter, to ten apostles and those with them, and again to all of the apostles—including Thomas, who had said,

Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. . . .

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that

have not seen, and yet have believed. [John 20:25, 27–29]

Before the Ascension, Jesus appeared to the eleven in Galilee:

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. [Matthew 28:16–20]

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endowed with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. [Luke 24:49–53]

I now wish to set my seal and testimony upon these events, and upon the divine calling of Jesus as our Lord, Savior, and Redeemer, in my capacity as the newest special witness. In my journal for September 28, 1978, it is noted, “Today I was called as a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I have prayed to make myself somehow worthy in a small measure and to be qualified, and I hope

that I come to this new calling with a pure heart and purged of all personal ambition.”

I will not chronicle further the details concerning this calling because they are so personal and so sacred that the smallest part which one feels cannot be said. I am certain that it is an experience like none other. It is a feeling of terrible aloneness, a feeling of wounds in the heart, a feeling of sweet agony. There are the buffetings of Satan, and the encircling warm comfort of the Spirit of the Master. There are the feelings of crushing burden, self-doubt, and unworthiness—the fleeting feeling of being alone, and then of being reinforced a hundred-fold. This special sacred feeling is a sustaining influence, and often a very close companion. I have prayed to be sustained in a work that I have come to appreciate more than life itself.

I testify that He lives, that He loves us, that this is His holy work. I testify that His are the words of eternal life. I testify that through this Church His work and His glory—to bring about the immortality and eternal life of the faithful and the obedient—is being accomplished.

I humbly ask the blessings of Almighty God to be upon us all, and especially upon you choice, wonderful young students and missionaries. I pray that you may be blessed in your hearts and in your minds to come to a knowledge of who you are and what your individual work in this life is to be. I pray that in this great University your spiritual batteries may be filled to overflowing, to sustain you all of the days of your life. I pray that you may be courageous and strong in your resolve to be obedient to what you have been taught and to what you know in your hearts to be right; and I invoke these blessings upon you and leave this testimony in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.