

Heighten Your Capacity

YOSHIHIKO KIKUCHI

“You, My Children of Zion”

I pray that the Spirit of the Lord will be with us today so we may be able to communicate by the Spirit. I want to share in the beginning a beautiful letter, a very special letter:

My Dear Children:

How well I remember the day you left my side and ventured forth on your mission to earth. That day I clothed your spirit with love and tenderly sent you off to school. My thoughts are with you now and always.

Oh, how I love you! I know the grief and pain as well as the joy and happiness you experience. I know your school is full of ugliness and temptations as well as beauty, but remember, all that I have is yours, if you come back to see me.

Each of you went into your new adventure with talent buried inside you. Bring forth these talents. Develop them and share them. Give what is yours to give with all your hearts. Covet not one another's gifts.

You, my children of Zion, have many blessings that my other children do not have. You share my Holy Priesthood. You may go to the temple to learn eternal truths.

You bear your children with the knowledge that they shall be yours forever — if you live worthy to

come back to me. But remember, “Where much is given, much is expected!”

There are many among you who hunger for food and need care. Give of yourselves until you are drained of strength and give more.

There are many among you who hunger for food and thirst for my word.

Go forth with your humble spirits. Give my message in their homes. Pour out my good tidings. Restore faith where it has been lost. Give them my spoken words.

And also, my beloved children in Zion, let charity and love be your constant companions. Come to me often in prayer. Be humble and faithful. Be diligent in my work, and my kingdom shall be yours forever. I love you and miss you so very much, and, oh, how I am looking forward to your return again to me and your mother.

With all my love, Your Father in Heaven
[Author unknown]

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The Lord Preserved the Noble Spirits

In the prophecy made by President John Taylor regarding the great future of the Latter-day Saints and their destiny, he said:

We believe that we shall rear splendid edifices, magnificent temples and beautiful cities that shall become the pride, praise and glory of the whole earth. We believe that this people will excel in literature, in science and the arts and in manufactures. In fact, there will be a concentration of wisdom, not only of the combined wisdom of the world as it now exists, but men will be inspired in regard to all these matters in a manner and to an extent that they never have been before. [JD, vol. 10, p. 147]

As I see a vast congregation of the youth of Zion today, you young people full of talent and potential for every walk of life, ready to take the strong leadership position of excellence that will draw the eyes of the people of the world upon us, I can see in you the greatest potential the Church has ever had—in mathematics, music, all sciences and arts, sports, politics, farms and agriculture, medical fields, oceanics, business, and every technological field. President Kimball once expressed his vision for the youth of the Church as follows:

*Members of the Church should be peers or superiors to any others in natural ability, extended training, plus the Holy Spirit which should bring them light and truth. With hundreds of “men of God” [and ladies of God] and their associates so blessed, we have the base for an increasingly efficient and worthy corps of talent. [“The Gospel Vision of the Arts,” *Ensign*, July 1977, p. 3]*

I also remember the wonderful pronouncement of President Wilford Woodruff when he said:

I am especially anxious that our young people should sense the great responsibility that must sooner or later rest upon them; and that they

should bear in mind the fact that they were kept in the spirit world thousands of years to come through the loins of the ancient patriarchs and prophets in our own age and generation for the very purpose of carrying on this great latter-day work. *God called upon us and He will call upon you and our posterity after us, to rise and warn the generations in which they live; to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the nations of the earth.* [Address to the Y.M.M.I.A. Annual Conference, *Contributor*, 16 August 1895, p. 635; emphasis added]

The Lord God Preserved for a Righteous People

As I see you beautiful people here today and stand before you, my mind traces back to when the prophet Moroni took the record of the Jaredites which consisted of twenty-four plates found by the people of Limhi in the days of King Mosiah. As Moroni was abridging the writings of Ether, he wrote how the people of the Jaredites were guided by the Lord to come to this promised land. And he wrote the following:

And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people. [Ether 2:7]

I want to note two phrases: “the land of promise which was choice above all other lands” and “the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people.” What a blessing, my brothers and sisters, that you can live in the land of promise which was and which is choice above all other lands! And this land was preserved by the Lord our God for the righteous people. How blessed you are that you were born in this land! You are among this righteous people.

They Shall Serve God

And then Moroni said in verse 9:

And now, we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity.

Therefore, Moroni is expressing his concern that whoever possesses or lives in this land “should serve him, the true and only God” (verse 8). And then he repeatedly emphasized, in verse 10, “For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God.” And he then also emphasized, in verse 12, “Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ.” The Lord Jesus himself, after his resurrection, when he appeared to the Nephites, made the most profound statement: “which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all” (3 Nephi 20:27). And he also repeated, “For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father” (3 Nephi 21:4).

What glorious promises! This is truly the land of promise, and you are the greatest chosen generation. It has been said that the greatest artist was once asked by his audience which of all his productions was the greatest. He said, “The next is going to be the best.” To me, the next is you, the wonderful young generation of this great Church.

Brothers and sisters, the best and the greatest and most powerful and most beautiful has not yet been composed or produced or come about. Who will be like Richard Wagner, the German composer? Who will be the

Wordsworth for the next generation? Or who will be like George Bernard Shaw, the Irish dramatist and critic? Who can exceed Shakespeare? Who will take the position of President Reagan for the tomorrow of this great nation? Who will be a great historian and archaeologist like Hugh Nibley, or a scientist like Dr. Henry Eyring, or a successful businessman like J. Willard Marriott, a successful cabinet member like Ezra Taft Benson or David Kennedy or Dr. T. H. Bell?

What Faith Their Mothers Taught Them

I firmly believe that equal to becoming the greatest artist or statesman would be to become mothers and fathers like those of Helaman’s two thousand stripling soldiers. You young ladies, you can be mothers like the mothers of these two thousand striplings. What faith these mothers taught to these young men and, I believe, to young ladies too! The scriptures record the tremendous teachings taught to them by their parents, especially by their mothers:

And now I say unto you, my beloved brother Moroni, that never had I seen so great courage, nay, not amongst all the Nephites.

For as I had ever called them my sons (for they were all of them very young) even so they said unto me: Father, behold our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we should fall; then let us go forth. . . .

Now they never had fought, yet they did not fear death; and they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they did upon their lives; yea, they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them. [Alma 56:45–47]

What faith their mothers had taught them, because they did not doubt God. I hope we can learn that. “And they rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers, saying: We do not doubt our mothers knew it” (Alma 56:8).

There is such miraculous strength and power, such mighty power and faith that we can cultivate and then pass on to the next generation. These young men were blessed to be preserved and they were valiant men of God. We need good statesmen like these stripling young men who have a firm faith and can raise this young generation for the future of this great Church and for this beautiful land of America and for the people of the world. We need young men and women with firm faith and testimonies who will write and compose and produce good motion pictures and novels because the world is moving in the wrong direction.

Cultivating Our Inner Power and Faith

My brothers and sisters, how can we accomplish these great, heavy, and awesome tasks, to please the Lord and glorify his holy name? In what way can we be the mediators to share this everlasting truth and knowledge so that people will believe as the Savior foretold: “They shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name” (3 Nephi 20:31)? In what way, brothers and sisters, should we cultivate our inner power and faith? Here are a few suggestions I want to present to you today.

First, be ye clean. The Savior, when he was visiting the Nephites, expressed his great concern and pleaded with us the following:

And then shall a cry go forth: Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not that which is unclean; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. [3 Nephi 20:41; emphasis added]

This is what I see. The greatest challenge to all of us is what the Savior said, “Depart ye, depart ye and *touch not that which is unclean*” because we are the vessels of the Lord. If we can do that we shall be exalted in every walk of life. When you pursue academic excellence and

intellectual excellence, I see the same thing, the voice of the Lord saying, “Do not touch the worldly teachings.”

Second, be sanctified. In another place the Savior expressed the following: “*Be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day*” (3 Nephi 27:20). In the Doctrine and Covenants the Savior said:

But no man is possessor of all things except he be purified and cleansed from all sin.

And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done. [D&C 50:28–29; emphasis added]

What a promise we have here! As we cleanse and purify our lives, the Savior said, “Ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done.” Why do we have to sanctify our lives, brothers and sisters? As we sanctify our lives, I firmly believe *our minds become single to the glory of God* (see D&C 88:68). And then, in section 88, verse 74, the Savior said, “and *sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me*” (emphasis added). As we cleanse our lives, our thoughts, our minds, our actions, the Savior promised that “*Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient for you*” (D&C 88:64; emphasis added).

The Savior promised a long time ago:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. [John 14:12–14; emphasis added]

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. [John 16:23–24; emphasis added; see also 3 Nephi 27:28]

Brothers and sisters, these are the great promises from the Lord as we sanctify and purify our thoughts, our actions, our bodies and minds. That is the promise.

Third, we must be taught from on high though we pursue academic excellence. May I share another powerful promise from the Lord in Doctrine and Covenants 43:16: “And ye are to be *taught* from on high. *Sanctify yourselves* and ye shall be *endowed with power*, that ye may give even as I have spoken” (emphasis added). What a mighty promise! In order to behave and to think and to meditate and to ponder and to invent and to find, to plan, to study and to cultivate, the Savior warns that we must be “taught from on high.” And then he said we must *sanctify ourselves*. Then we shall be *endowed with power*. And the promise of the Lord is that we may give, even as I have spoken. In other words, we may plan, we may study, we may act, we may behave, and then we may ponder, think, cultivate, move forward, and may pray. As we become cleansed and sanctified before the Lord, when we are “anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of [our] own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness” (D&C 58:27) for God’s glory, then, the Lord said, “the power is within us.” I do believe you wonderful people do have that power. As we become cleansed and purified before the Lord, the Savior’s promise is that power will come upon us. What a magnitude of endowment you can receive from the Lord!

Fourth, we must know our Savior. Brothers and sisters, how, then, can we become cleansed before the Lord? How can we cleanse our lives

in order to sanctify our lives? *We must know Jesus Christ.* “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

Brothers and sisters, in order to come close to him we must cultivate and feel his love, his feeling, his comforting voice, his peace and joy, his spirit, his glory, his order, and his great atoning power, mercy, and justice.

The Savior said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Keeping the will of the Father, and of the Son, Jesus Christ, we will continue to cleanse, and we can cultivate continually, pondering, learning, and studying, and, especially, listening to his voice each day. And I suggest every morning hour we write in our journals, and always put ourselves in a reverent attitude in our prayers, seeking for the revelation of the Lord and seeking for the spirit of prophecy as did the sons of Mosiah (see Alma 17:2–4). I believe that prayer is a divine fellowship with the Father. If we miss that communication every morning we are missing the greatest priority. We must maintain our trust in the Lord through prayer and fasting and by giving our commitment. Then, as we keep the covenants and doctrines and teachings, we must, with reverence before the Lord, take the sacred ordinances of the gospel and learn the doctrines each day, especially in the morning, and cultivate spiritual inner power and sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Then we will continue to cleanse our lives.

Fifth, we must cultivate our innermost sensitivities. We can walk toward the Savior each day and feel his spirit, feel his joy, feel his love and sensitivities toward us, his peace and comfort and sweet joy, his spirit and power and glory. The Savior promised us, “And now I go unto the Father. And verily I say unto you, whatsoever things ye shall ask the Father in my name shall be given unto you” (3 Nephi 27:28). Therefore, brothers and sisters, we

should ask and seek and feel and cultivate each day, each moment.

“Wherefore, he is possessor of all things; for all things are subject unto him, both in heaven and on the earth” (D&C 50:27). When we become clean, with pure hearts and holy minds, all things are subject unto us, both in heaven and on earth. Ordained of God, we can be “the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son” (D&C 50:27). What a blessing. As we cultivate these things we will become more like the Savior, and we can truly walk toward him and feel his great atoning power. And as we do so, the Spirit will prevail and permeate, and we can receive the light of the Savior. The Spirit and power will be sent by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ to each of us.

Sixth, “it shall be done” through faith commitment. I humbly believe that as we do these things Heavenly Father will bless us like he blessed Nephi, the son of Helaman.

Behold, I give unto you power that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among this people.

And thus, if ye shall say unto this temple it shall be rent in twain, it shall be done.

And if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast down and become smooth, it shall be done.

And behold, if ye shall say that God shall smite this people, it shall come to pass. [Helaman 10:7–10]

That power is faith. We can truly have faith like that of Nephi, son of Helaman, and really exercise it as we go forth into the world.

Seventh, we must search the scriptures. I pray that while you are studying on this great campus you study also the words of the Lord. While you are pursuing academic excellence I pray that you will also obtain a knowledge and

“a sound understanding” of the truth of the gospel by diligent study and the searching of the scriptures (Alma 17:2). I challenge you again to read one chapter a day. *Because you know the words of the Lord* you can be effective servants of the Lord.

I pray that, because of the cultivated power within you, you may be able to bring many to the knowledge of Heavenly Father’s truth. As you face the people of the world, you can teach by the power and authority of God and serve them with love and understanding.

Eighth, the secret of life is service. May you learn the secret of service and the secret of love, which will mean that you will have learned the secret of life. Let’s go from glory to glory, our journey ever onward and upward, until, brothers and sisters, we fill this earth with the joy of our tears and happiness because we have purified and sanctified our lives and our service for someone else’s happiness. Let us come out from the depths of grief, pain, sorrow, loneliness, selfishness, sickness, and discouragement by living the qualities of pure love of Christ. Love the Lord and give service to other people, to the other children of our Heavenly Father.

Brothers and sisters, *heighten your capacity* to give of yourself to the most worthwhile causes. The celestial criteria measures service, not status. Clothe yourselves with the most warm and spiritual and most delightful clothes—the love of the Savior.

I stand before you and bear my testimony that this is the work of the Lord. And I stand before you and say that I know Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. I stood where Jesus walked and I felt his spirit when I stood in the upper room where the Last Supper was held. As we went to the Garden of Gethsemane I felt his spirit. As I stood in the garden tomb I cried with the joy of his love. I know that he lives and that this is his work. I know that Jesus is our master. I testify to you that I know that he lives, in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.