

# *Principles from Prophets*

THOMAS S. MONSON

I have looked forward to the opportunity of accepting the assignment and the invitation to be with you today, for I realize you are the heart and soul of many of the parents of this Church, all over the world. What a glorious sight you are! I am also pleased to recognize the officers and faculty members of this fine institution.

My dear young brothers and sisters, you are in the prime of your lives. You are on the cutting edge of progress. You live in a time of extreme difficulties but also a time of exceptional opportunities. I think the nation and the world have never been beset with a greater variety of challenges to meet and problems to solve, and you and those similar to you are destined to meet those challenges and to solve those problems. I know you can, because the Lord will provide the help you need.

I love the passage from the book of Acts in the New Testament where we read of the confrontation between a man from Ethiopia, who was reading from scripture, and Philip of old. Philip asked the man if he understood the words he was reading. The man replied to Philip, "How can I, except some man should guide me?"<sup>1</sup> Of course Philip sat with him and guided him in his understanding.

Just last Thursday I was sitting in the room in the Salt Lake Temple where the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve meet once each week. I gazed up at the wall which faces the First Presidency, and there I observed a portrait of each President of the Church. As my gaze moved from the Prophet Joseph right down through President Hinckley, I thought, "We have had great Presidents of this Church. Each one has guided us; his writings have stimulated us; his messages have inspired us. To show us the way, we have those whom the Lord has provided."

Some years ago I spoke here of the Presidents of the Church I have known, giving brief personal glimpses. Today I would like to mention each one in greater depth.

The man who was President of the Church when I was born and who was president until I was nearly eighteen years old was the seventh President of the Church, Heber J. Grant. He was ordained and set apart as President on November 23, 1918, at the age of 62.

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*Thomas S. Monson was President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this devotional address was delivered on 15 September 2009.*

The Church was a little different when President Grant was President. His personal office was what we refer to now as the First Presidency Boardroom. He sat at a large, rather imposing desk in the enormous room, and just about anyone could drop in to see him. The Church was relatively small at the time. A friend of mine told me that he and another young man had been asked to visit President Grant to see if he would come to their ward and speak at the commemoration of the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood they were planning. He said they walked through the front door of the Church Administration Building, walked to the back of the building where President Grant's secretary sat, and said, "Is the President in?"

She replied, "Yes, would you like to see him?"

They answered in the affirmative and were shown into that beautiful boardroom. President Grant welcomed them and said, "What can I do for you two young men today?" They made their request, and President Grant responded, "Of course I'd be happy to come and speak to the young men. Give me the date and time, and I'll be there." He stood, and they thanked him and left. President Grant visited their ward on the appointed date.

This scenario probably took place in the early 1930s, and I can assure you that everything is handled *much* differently today.

President Grant presided during a time when there was tremendous change in the world, including the financial challenges of the Great Depression. He assisted in the development of the welfare program of the Church and helped the members cope with the tragedy of World War II.

He was a persistent person. As a boy he wanted to learn how to throw a baseball. He was not as good as he desired to be, so he practiced hour after hour throwing the ball at a target marked on the barn door. He became very proficient. He also was a poor penman,

but through extensive practice he developed beautiful penmanship.

President Grant loved to stand before the priesthood of the Church. Those were the days when everything was a little less structured, and he'd go to the microphone and say, "We're now in priesthood session. We're off the record. The press is not in attendance." Then he'd discuss any subject he chose.

On one occasion he stood in priesthood meeting and said, "I have a letter from a man who made a suggestion concerning what subject I should address at conference. This man said he felt I had spoken too many times concerning the Word of Wisdom and strongly urged me to speak on a different topic." President Grant continued, "That is one man who obviously needs to hear more about the Word of Wisdom, and therefore I shall address that topic tonight," and he did so.

President Grant's favorite song was "Do What Is Right." And let me add the words "let the consequence follow."<sup>2</sup> Think of that: Do what is right. President Grant lived by the words of that song. His favorite food was bread and milk—very common, simple fare. A favorite quotation of his is attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson: "That which we persist in doing becomes easier to do; not that the nature of the thing has changed, but that our capacity to do has increased."<sup>3</sup> What would be the trait of President Heber J. Grant that he would probably have you remember and incorporate in your life? I feel it would be *persistence*. Persist in all those things which are good and noble.

After 27 years as President of the Church, President Grant passed away on May 14, 1945, at the age of 88.

I move next to President George Albert Smith, the eighth President of the Church, ordained and set apart as President on May 21, 1945, at the age of 75. He was president of the Church when I served as a bishop, and he signed my bishop's certificate.

I believe one of President Smith's most noble accomplishments was after World War II. Starvation was rampant in Germany and in other nations of Europe. President Smith met with United States President Harry S. Truman and said, "We'd like to send welfare supplies to the starving people of Europe, but the bureaucracy and the red tape in postwar Europe are keeping us from doing so."

President Truman heard his plea and opened the way. He asked, "How many months will it take for you to assemble your supplies?"

President Smith replied, "President Truman, they're already assembled. All you need do is say go, and they'll be rolling within twenty-four hours."

President Truman was taken aback by this slender man who spoke rather softly—but oh, could he move things along. The supplies were sent, and Elder Ezra Taft Benson was also sent to oversee their distribution. Lives were saved as a result.

This great leader had such a compassionate heart. A personal friend of mine told me of an example of such compassion. He said his uncle Junius Burt worked on the street department crew for Salt Lake City, and on a very cold day many years ago, he and others on the crew were chipping ice with shovels and hand implements from South Temple Street between State Street and Main Street. President George Albert Smith said to one of the workers who had no coat, "You should wear a coat today. It's too cold to be out here in this very frigid weather working as you are working."

The man, who did not know President Smith, replied, "I have no coat to wear."

President Smith then removed his own coat, handed it to the man, and said, "Here, you take this coat and wear it. I work just across the street, and I can get there without a coat."

Received by that worker that day was more than an overcoat. Received was a gesture of kindness which the recipient of the coat and his coworkers never forgot.

President George Albert Smith's favorite song was "Let Us Oft Speak Kind Words,"<sup>4</sup> which he personified. His favorite food was apple pie with a little warm milk on it. What was one of his favorite statements? He always taught, "There is a great tug-of-war going on between the Lord and the adversary. Stay safely on the Lord's side of the line." Oh, how applicable it is today in our lives! A trait of President Smith's which he would no doubt encourage us to incorporate in our lives would be *compassion*. This great leader had a compassionate heart.

President George Albert Smith served as President of the Church for six years, passing away on his 81st birthday, April 4, 1951.

Now we move to David O. McKay, the ninth President of the Church. He was sustained as President on April 9, 1951. I remember sitting in the Tabernacle on that day. He was 77 years old.

Just over twelve years later, in October of 1963, President McKay extended to me a call to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As I sat there in his office, he had me pull my chair up very close to him, and he put his hand on my knee. His eyes penetrated to my very soul. I will simply say this much about a very sacred experience which I don't share often. He said, "Brother Monson, the Lord has called you to the apostleship. You will become the newest member of the Council of the Twelve." We both wept a little bit. I later wept a lot more when I realized the extent of my responsibilities.

President McKay was a man of many attributes, but one which stands out is that of consideration. He was always considerate of others. Let me illustrate. I was in his office on one occasion prior to my call to the Twelve. I did the printing of his books, as I did for many of the other Brethren. On that particular occasion I noticed a painting on the wall, and I said to him, "President McKay, that's a lovely painting. Is it a rendition of your childhood home in Huntsville, Utah?"

President McKay sat back in his chair, gave a familiar David O. McKay chuckle, and said, “Let me tell you about that picture. A sweet woman came in to see me one day and presented to me that beautiful painting, framed and ready to be placed on the wall. She said, ‘President McKay, I have spent the entire summer painting this picture of your ancestral home.’” He said he thanked her profusely and accepted the gift. “Do you know, Brother Monson,” he continued, “that sweet woman painted the wrong house. She painted the house next door! I didn’t have the heart to tell her. She may come back, so that’s why it’s hanging on the wall.” But then he made this comment, and here is a vital lesson for us. He said, “In reality, Brother Monson, she painted the right house, because when, as a young boy, I would lie on the bed which was on the front porch of my ancestral home, the view I had through that screened porch was of the very house she painted. She *did* paint the right house for me.”

President McKay’s favorite song was “Oh Say, What Is Truth?”<sup>5</sup> His favorite food: Cummings chocolates.

What would be an expression of his? From his own heart and soul he said, “True Christianity is love in action.”<sup>6</sup>

Again, the noble principle from President McKay that I would share with you today is *consideration*. May we ever be considerate.

President McKay served nineteen years as President, until his death January 18, 1970, at the age of 96.

Next I mention Joseph Fielding Smith, tenth President of the Church. He was ordained and set apart on January 23, 1970, at the age of 93.

On one occasion I was touring the missions in the South Pacific, having left my wife and family at home. I remember that when I arrived at Auckland, New Zealand, after four or five weeks of meetings in many countries, there was a letter for me from Joseph Fielding Smith, who at that time was my quorum president. He

wrote, “Dear Brother Monson, I’ve been thinking about you and thought you’d like to know that all is well here at home, and I am very pleased that you are in the South Pacific area of the world. My prayers have been with you. We are ready to welcome you home when you return. Sincerely, Joseph Fielding Smith.” What a kind and thoughtful thing to do.

As one of the Church’s most prolific writers, President Smith’s numerous books and articles helped educate generations of Latter-day Saints concerning the history and doctrine of the Church. He was direct in his teaching of adherence to gospel principles, and yet he was particularly tender in his attitude toward those who fell short.

His favorite song was “Prayer Is the Soul’s Sincere Desire.” And I’ll add the next thought: “uttered or unexpressed.”<sup>7</sup> And as for his favorite food, I observed him at our luncheon table in the temple on Thursdays, and he seemed to love sweet pickles. I hate them! I would see to it that he got the sweet pickles, and I’d take the dill pickles.

What would be a favorite quotation from President Smith? From the book of Alma in the Book of Mormon he emphasized the scripture “Wickedness never was happiness.”<sup>8</sup> I’ll repeat it: “Wickedness never was happiness.”

What would be his guiding principle for us? It would be gospel *scholarship*. He was truly a scholar. I believe we could say that he would leave for you and for me this advice: Be studious. I say that to you as student body members too: be studious. When it is test week, you’ll be grateful you were studious!

President Joseph Fielding Smith served as President of the Church for two and a half years, until his death on July 2, 1972, at the age of 95.

Harold B. Lee, eleventh President of the Church, was ordained and set apart as President on July 7, 1972, at the age of 73.

I was with President Lee on one occasion in New York City, where he had an interview

with George Cornell, the senior writer of religion for the Associated Press. As we sat there, George Cornell said to President Lee, "I'd like to talk to you about some of the controversial aspects of your Church."

As he mentioned one or two of them, Brother Lee said, "George, your readers do not want to hear about that. What your readers want to hear about is the great welfare program of the Church and the outstanding education program of the Church." Mr. Cornell began to take notes, and as a result an almost full-page story from the Associated Press described our educational effort and our welfare program. No mention whatsoever was made of the controversial subjects of that time. This was the persuasive ability of Harold B. Lee.

President Lee also took time to teach. A lesson I will recount is rather tender. On one occasion our oldest son had a tumor in his leg, and we were naturally very worried, as were the doctors. Our son was in the hospital to have surgery, which could possibly lead to the amputation of his leg. Brother Lee had been my stake president as a boy, so I asked him if he would join me in giving a blessing to our son. He consented, and as we met at the hospital one evening after work, he stopped me before we went up the stairway and said, "Tom, there is nowhere in the world I would rather be, and there is nothing that I would rather be doing than standing by your side in giving a priesthood blessing to your son." The operation was successful; the tumor was benign. I shall ever be indebted to Harold B. Lee for being where the Lord needed him to be at a particular time.

One of President Lee's favorite songs was "Praise to the Man"—"who communed with Jehovah!"<sup>9</sup> I'll pause for a moment and say that when I was first called to the Twelve, I noted that Brother Lee was playing the organ. And he said, "Brother Monson, as our newest apostle, would you choose the song you'd like for us to sing today?" And I chose his favorite, and we all sang it with gusto.

A favorite food of his was bread and milk, and a favorite quotation of his was "Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved."<sup>10</sup> Remember this. I will repeat it: "Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved." What would be a guiding principle from him? I would say he would encourage us to *be in tune with and to be responsive to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.*

Harold B. Lee served just one and a half years as President of the Church. He passed away on December 26, 1973, at the age of 74.

After President Lee came President Spencer W. Kimball, twelfth President of the Church, ordained and set apart as President on December 30, 1973, at the age of 78.

For President Kimball, obstacles became his opportunities. He was totally dedicated, a worker such as one seldom sees. He cared not at all about personal aggrandizement.

One day I was sitting in the temple near President Kimball. As I looked down, I noticed that he had a large hole in his shoe. And I mean large! His stocking showed through. After the meeting I said to Arthur Haycock, President Kimball's secretary, "Arthur, you can't let the President wear those shoes."

Arthur responded, "Has he got that pair out again? He has many pairs of shoes, and I frequently hide that pair, but he searches and finds that particular pair most of the time."

President Kimball was known for his statement showing his humility: "My life is like my shoes—to be worn out in service."<sup>11</sup>

President Kimball was totally, completely, unequivocally dedicated to the Lord. He was dedicated to living the gospel.

One of President Kimball's favorite songs was "I Need Thee Every Hour."<sup>12</sup> Let's remember that one particularly. That choice demonstrates his humility. Concerning his favorite food, I watched him for all the years I was in the Twelve while he was living. He would fill a glass with milk and take some date nut bread and crumble it into the glass until it was thick.

Then he would take a spoon and eat it! I did not follow his example.

What was a favorite quotation or a lesson from him? “Lengthen your stride.” We had to lengthen our stride in order to keep up with him! I asked President Kimball what would be a guiding principle from his life. And then I answered it: I believe it would be *dedication*.

Spencer W. Kimball served as President of the Church for twelve years until his death on November 5, 1985, at the age of 90.

Brother Hinckley and I served with President Kimball on the Missionary Executive Committee, so we were with him every Tuesday morning assigning missionaries, and the three of us had a very good camaraderie together.

One day he said to Brother Hinckley and me, “Is this the night where the parents are coming to visit with the mission presidents who are here for conference and we’re to have our offices ready for them?”

Brother Hinckley and I said, “Yes, it is, President.”

“Is your office ready, Tom?”

I said, “Yes, it is.”

“Is your office ready, Gordon?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Uh, will the two of you carry on with the meeting while I make my office ready?”

He carried a thick stack of papers and would thumb through them constantly until they were worn out on the edges, and he began to take care of cleaning up his office so it would be ready for the parents and missionaries. He emptied the files, put them in the closet, and then he moved everything off of his desk and moved it to his secretary’s desk. And then he picked up that big stack of papers he usually carried and threw it in his refrigerator. It was the only place left, so he refrigerated his notes! And then he said, “Now I’m ready!”

You had to love him. You had to love Spencer W. Kimball. You just had to.

I’ll introduce one little thought. He said to me one day, “Tom, could you come in and help me with a problem I have?”

I said, “Sure!”

So I went into his office, and he had a man sitting there. (I hope he’s not related to you.) But Brother Kimball in a sweet way said, “Brother Monson, this is Brother So-and-So, and he’s not happy with the assignment which we made for his son to go on a mission. Why don’t you tell Brother Monson why you’re not happy with the call the apostles made.”

He still didn’t catch on. He said, “Well, he’s assigned to the New England mission. I don’t want him to go to the New England mission; I want him to go to the old England mission.”

And then Brother Kimball with a smile said, “And which mission would you have him assigned to of those in Great Britain?”

“Oh, any of ‘em, any of ‘em.”

And Brother Kimball said, “Now let’s see. There’s Bristol, there’s London, there’s London South,” and he named them all. “Now which one?”

And the man said, “Oh no, you go ahead.”

“No, since you, as the father, rather than Brother Monson and I as apostles, are making your missionary son’s assignment, you name it.”

I’d never seen a man told off so adroitly, yet he didn’t recognize he was being told off.

He said, “Well, that one you mentioned, Bristol. That sounds good. Send him to Bristol.”

After he left, Brother Kimball said, “Aren’t some parents unusual?” He would not use a word I might have used, but then he wasn’t in the navy like I was! (That line is not in my prepared message!)

Now I come to Ezra Taft Benson, thirteenth President of the Church. He was ordained and set apart as President on November 10, 1985. I had the privilege of serving as his second counselor during the years he was President.

President Benson was a generous leader. I was in his office one day when I was a member of the Twelve, and we were chatting. I noticed that he had a beautiful hand-tooled riding saddle sitting on a display in his room. It had been given to him in honor of his service as Secretary of Agriculture.

I said, “My, Brother Benson, that’s the most beautiful saddle I’ve ever seen.”

He replied, “Do you want it? Why don’t you take it? You like to ride horses.”

I assured him that although I appreciated the gesture, I couldn’t take the saddle.

President Benson was the only President of the Church to have received the honor of “Most Preferred Man” at BYU when he was a student here. We’ll have a moment of silence for that one. I think the female student body were the only ones allowed to vote.

Early in his apostolic years President Benson was called by President George Albert Smith to leave home and family and fill a special mission to war-torn Europe. The magnitude of his call was overwhelming. For ten and a half months President Benson labored night and day, blessing the members of the Church in Europe who had suffered through years of war, giving them nourishment for their bodies and everlasting hope for their souls. From the chaos of war came Saints—scattered, battered, and very much in need. To them came Ezra Taft Benson, with his superb organizational skills and with the inspiration of Almighty God.

Through the inspired welfare program of the Church, hundreds of tons of lifesaving food and clothing were transported across the vast Atlantic Ocean and, under the direction of this gifted leader, distributed to the hungry, the cold, and the homeless.

What a personally satisfying and spiritually rewarding experience it was for me to serve as one of President Benson’s counselors in the First Presidency of the Church.

President Benson’s favorite song was “How Great Thou Art.”<sup>13</sup> His favorite food was fresh

raspberries, and we had them as often as possible at our temple luncheons when he was President of the Church. His favorite quotation was from the Book of Mormon, words spoken by the Lord. It’s in the form of a question, and I pose it to you: “What manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am.”<sup>14</sup> That would apply to every man and woman here today: “Even as I am,” said the Lord.

What is a guiding principle from President Benson? I’d have to say it is *love*. The manner in which he treated his sweet companion and, indeed, all with whom he came in contact provides an example for all of us. Let us love one another.

Ezra Taft Benson served as President of the Church for eight and a half years until his death on May 30, 1994, at the age of 94.

We come now to Howard W. Hunter, fourteenth President of the Church, who was ordained and set apart on June 5, 1994, at the age of 86. It was my privilege once again to serve as second counselor.

My most tender meeting with Howard W. Hunter took place on October 3, 1963, as I entered the outer office of President David O. McKay, who had invited me to come and visit with him that Thursday afternoon—for what purpose I knew not at that time. Howard W. Hunter had been checking some matters with President McKay’s secretary. Brother Hunter and I greeted each other and shook hands. I noted the tears in his eyes with yet a smile on his lips and a catch in his voice. I did not understand why he was so emotional. After visiting with President McKay, where he extended to me my call to the Twelve, I understood. Howard W. Hunter had known why I was there that afternoon. He had been where I was now going. He had felt the feelings I was soon to experience.

One of President Hunter’s hallmarks was that of courtesy. Whether in a moment of pleasant conversation or in times of constant pain, he was ever courteous. On one occasion a man

who had been painting in President Hunter’s home said to me, “President Hunter is so remarkable. He graciously thanked me and my crew for painting a room. He commented on the color match, the absence of brush or roller marks, and repeated a hearty thank-you as he shook my hand when we finished our work and departed his presence.”

President Hunter loved all the hymns, but one of his favorites was “Have I Done Any Good in the World Today?”<sup>15</sup> One of his favorite foods was Alaskan crab.

Before I move on: One day I was with him and a member of the welfare committee, and Brother Hunter had taken a long time setting people apart—you know, it was a division of a stake—and we hadn’t had anything to eat. And the man from the welfare committee said, “Could we go to this fish restaurant? They have Alaskan crab, and that’s my favorite.”

Brother Hunter said, “Fine choice, fine choice.” Then he went right through a red light. And he just smiled. Then he went through a second red light, and then he said, “Oh, by the way, I’m color-blind. I have to see where the light is, then I know which color it is.”

I said, “Brother Hunter, would you like me to drive?”

He said, “Well, I think you and the welfare man might be a little happier if you did.” So I drove the rest of the way.

What would be one of his favorite quotations? He loved the scripture found in Proverbs, chapter 27, verse 2: “Let another man praise thee . . . and not thine own lips.” Modesty, modesty, modesty.

What would be a guiding principle from President Hunter’s life? I believe it would be his ability *always to look for the best in people*—such an important quality to emulate.

President Hunter died March 3, 1995, at the age of 87.

Finally, brothers and sisters, I come to Gordon B. Hinckley, fifteenth President of the

Church, ordained and set apart on March 12, 1995, at the age of 84.

Two years after he was ordained a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1961, I joined him in that quorum, and we sat side by side for most of the next 44 years. We had known each other for many years prior to our calls to the Twelve. He was a choice and beloved friend, as well as a trusted and respected colleague.

President Hinckley is the President of the Church most of you will remember best, for he was President during much of the time you were growing to young adulthood. He was a kind man who taught and who lived tolerance, never disparaging another person’s beliefs.

President Hinckley was a wordsmith. I will repeat the word: *wordsmith*. He was well read and a scholar, and he could put words and phrases together in such a way that it was a pleasure to listen to his messages.

As many of you know, each Thursday morning the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have a meeting in the Salt Lake Temple. We are driven in carts underground from the Church Office Building parking lot to the temple. During the cold winter months, President Hinckley always wore a coat and a hat during the brief ride. As our cart passed under Main Street, President Hinckley knew when we were within the confines of the temple, rather than under the street. Without a word he would remove his hat and place it in his lap. He seemed to know instinctively when that moment arrived. It was such a simple yet profound expression of reverence and respect for the house of the Lord, and it made a deep impression on me.

All of you will recall that during the last few years of his life President Hinckley always had a cane with him. He would walk to his seat in the Conference Center while waving to the crowd with his cane or using it to tap someone on the shoulder. President Hinckley and I for years went to the same doctor, and during



one of my visits a few years ago, the doctor said to me, “Could you please do me a favor? President Hinckley should use his cane for walking because it steadies him. The last thing we want is for him to fall and break a hip, or worse. Instead, he waves it around and doesn’t use it when he walks. Tell him the cane has been prescribed by his doctor, and he needs to use it as it was meant to be used.”

I listened to the physician’s request and then replied, “Doctor, I am President Hinckley’s counselor. You are his doctor. *You tell him!*”

One of President Hinckley’s favorite hymns has words written by Rudyard Kipling—that’s the British in him. The hymn is “God of Our Fathers, Known of Old.”<sup>16</sup> One of his favorite desserts was pie and ice cream. He loved the Prophet Joseph Smith; he loved the Savior. A favorite quotation was taken from the words of the Prophet Joseph concerning the Savior:

*And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!*

*For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father.*<sup>17</sup>

What would be a guiding principle from President Hinckley’s life? It is one which we would all do well to follow: *Do your best.*

Gordon B. Hinckley served as President of the Church for nearly thirteen years until his death on January 27, 2008, at the age of 97.

What can we learn from the prophets whom I have known and about whom I have visited with you today? We can learn that they never wavered, never faltered, never failed; that they are men of God.

May we be persistent in those things which are good and noble. May we ever stay safely on the Lord’s side of the line. May we be considerate, studious, and responsive to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit. May we be dedicated to the gospel of Jesus Christ. May we love one

another and always look for the best in people. May we do our best in all that we do.

God bless you, my dear young friends. Remember that there is another whom you can follow—even the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, “Come, follow me.” Let us follow Him. He has sent Presidents of the Church, whom we can have as guides and whom we can follow. He Himself extended that kind, generous, personal invitation when He said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him.”<sup>18</sup>

As the sixteenth President of the Church, my story is yet to be summarized by those who will follow. In the meantime, I pledge my life, my strength—all that I have to offer—in serving the Lord and in directing the affairs of His Church in accordance with His will and by His inspiration.

I invoke His blessings upon you. I bless you that you may follow the teachings of prophets, that your lives may thereby be enriched. I bless you that you may have joy in your hearts, that you will have peace within your souls, that you will have contentment in seeing the influence for good that each one of you has upon the lives of others, and I do so in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

## Notes

1. Acts 8:30, 31.
2. “Do What Is Right,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 237.
3. See Grant, *GS*, 355.
4. See “Let Us Oft Speak Kind Words,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 232.
5. See “Oh Say, What Is Truth?” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 272.
6. McKay, *GI*, 129.
7. “Prayer Is the Soul’s Sincere Desire,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 145.
8. Alma 41:10.
9. “Praise to the Man,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 27.
10. D&C 87:8.
11. As recounted by Gordon B. Hinckley, “He Is at Peace,” *Ensign*, December 1985, 41.

12. See “I Need Thee Every Hour,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 98.

13. See “How Great Thou Art,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 86.

14. 3 Nephi 27:27.

15. “Have I Done Any Good?” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 223.

16. See “God of Our Fathers, Known of Old,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 80.

17. D&C 76:22–23.

18. Revelation 3:20.