

# *Living the Principles of the Proclamation*

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*This address was given at the 2001 Family Expo Conference*

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Follow carefully the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.

President Joseph Fielding Smith: “I think there is one thing which we should have exceedingly clear in our minds. Neither the president of the Church, nor the First Presidency, nor the united voice of the First Presidency and the Twelve will ever lead the Saints astray or send forth counsel to the world that is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord.

“I testify that if we shall look to the First Presidency and follow their counsel and direction, no power on earth can stay or change our course as a church, and as individuals we shall gain peace in this life and be inheritors of eternal glory in the world to come” (“Eternal Keys and the Right to Preside,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 88).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “Why do we have this proclamation on the family now? Because the family is under attack. All across the world families are falling apart. The place to begin to improve society is in the home. Children do, for the most part, what they are taught. We are trying to make the world better by making the family stronger” (Tokyo Press Conference, 18 May 1996).

D&C 1:38

D&C 107:27, 29

D&C 124:45–46

Examples of past First Presidency warnings that show us that they are prophets, seers, and revelators:

### The First Presidency Warns Against “Irreligion”

The Church . . . recognizes that a vital cornerstone of a free society is the principle of religious liberty. . . .

We, thus, deplore the growing efforts to establish irreligion, such as atheism or secularism, as the official position of the United States of America, thus obscuring and eroding the rich and diverse religious heritage of our nation. We refer here to attacks on time-honored religious symbols in our public life. Such symbols include:

1. The reference to “one nation under God” in our pledge of allegiance;
2. The motto “In God We Trust” on our coins and public buildings;
3. “Praise [for] the power that hath made and preserved us a nation” in our national anthem;
4. Use of the Bible to administer official oaths;
5. The words “God save the United States and this honorable court,” spoken at the convening of the United States Supreme Court;
6. Prayers at the beginning of legislative sessions and other public meetings;
7. The performance of music with a religious origin or message in public programs;
8. The singing of Christmas carols and the location of nativity scenes or other seasonal decorations on public property during the Christmas holidays; and
9. References to God in public proclamations, such as at Thanksgiving.

Those who oppose all references to God in our public life have set themselves the task of rooting out historical facts and ceremonial tributes and symbols so ingrained in our national consciousness that their elimination could only be interpreted as an official act of hostility toward religion. Our constitutional law forbids that. As the Supreme Court said in another leading case:

“The place of religion in our society is an exalted one, achieved through a long tradition of reliance on the home, the church and the inviolable citadel of the individual heart and mind. We have come to recognize through bitter experience

that it is not within the power of government to invade that citadel, whether its purpose or effect be to aid or oppose, to advance or retard. In the relationship between man and religion, the State is firmly committed to a position of neutrality.” (*School District of Abington v. Schempp*; 374 U.S. 203, 226 [1963].) (“News of the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 108–9)

Because of the state of the economy, President Hinckley warned in the priesthood meeting, October 1998:

I wish to speak to you about temporal matters.

As a backdrop for what I wish to say, I read to you a few verses from the 41st chapter of Genesis.

Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, dreamed dreams which greatly troubled him. The wise men of his court could not give an interpretation. Joseph was then brought before him. . . .

So many of our people are living on the very edge of their incomes. In fact, some are living on borrowings.

We have witnessed in recent weeks wide and fearsome swings in the markets of the world. The economy is a fragile thing. A stumble in the economy in Jakarta or Moscow can immediately affect the entire world. It can eventually reach down to each of us as individuals. There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed.

The headline in the *Deseret News* two weeks ago: “Foreign markets cause stumbling in our own economy.”

In December of 1997, 55 to 60 million households in the United States carried credit card balances. These balances averaged more than \$7,000 and cost \$1,000 per year in interest and fees. Consumer debt as a percentage of disposable income rose from 16.3 percent in 1993 to 19.3 percent in 1996.

President Heber J. Grant spoke repeatedly on this matter from this pulpit. He said, “If there is any one thing that will bring peace and contentment into the human heart, and into the family, it is to live within our means. And if there is any one thing that is grinding and discouraging and disheartening, it is to have debts and obligations that one cannot meet” (*Gospel Standards*, comp. G. Homer Durham [1941], 111).

President Hinckley also spoke on this subject:

We are carrying a message of self-reliance throughout the Church. Self-reliance cannot obtain when there is serious debt hanging over a household. One has neither independence nor freedom from bondage when he is obligated to others.

In managing the affairs of the Church, we have tried to set an example. We have, as a matter of policy, stringently followed the practice of setting aside each year a percentage of the income of the Church against a possible day of need.

I am grateful to be able to say that the Church in all its operations, in all its undertakings, in all of its departments, is able to function without borrowed money. If we cannot get along, we will curtail our programs. We will shrink expenditures to fit the income. We will not borrow. . . .

What a wonderful feeling it is to be free of debt, to have a little money against a day of emergency put away where it can be retrieved when necessary. . . .

I urge you, brethren, to look to the condition of your finances. I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.

This is a part of the temporal gospel in which we believe. May the Lord bless you, my beloved brethren, to set your houses in order. If you have paid your debts, if you have a reserve, even though it be small, then should storms howl about your head, you will have shelter for your wives and children and peace in your hearts. That's all I have to say about it, but I wish to say it with all the emphasis of which I am capable.

I leave with you my testimony of the divinity of this work and my love for each of you, in the name of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, amen (Gordon B. Hinckley, "To the Boys and to the Men," *Ensign*, November 1998, 51).

The headline for the March 14, 2001 *Deseret News*, stated, "Investors feel poor, worried. Global economy getting the blame as nosedive increases pessimism."

Now, all of this is a prelude to our look at the family in the past decades.

In 1942, in the midst of the worst war in the history of this country, women had gone out to work because the men were off fighting the country's battles. Rosey the Riveter became the symbol of the working woman.

"Motherhood [is] a holy calling, a sacred dedication for carrying out the Lord's plans, a consecration of devotion to the uprearing and fostering, the nurturing in body, mind, and spirit, of those who keep their first estate and who come to this earth for their second estate. . . . To lead them to keep their second estate is the work of motherhood, and 'they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.'

"This divine service of motherhood can be rendered only by mothers. It may not be passed to others. Nurses cannot do it; public nurseries cannot do it; hired help cannot do it—only mother,

aided as much as may be by the loving hands of father, brothers, and sisters, can give the full needed measure of watchful care.

“The mother who entrusts her child to the care of others, that she may do non-motherly work, whether for gold, for fame, or for civic service should remember that ‘a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.’ (Prov. 29:15). In our day the Lord has said that unless parents teach their children the doctrines of the Church ‘the sin be upon the heads of the parents.’ (D&C 68:25.)

“Motherhood is near to Divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels. To you mothers in Israel we say, God bless and protect you, and give you the strength and courage, the faith and knowledge, the holy love and consecration to duty, that shall enable you to fill to the fullest measure the sacred calling which is yours. To you mothers and mothers-to-be we say: Be chaste, keep pure, live righteously, that your posterity to the last generation may call you blessed” (“Message of the First Presidency,” *Deseret News Weekly Church Edition*, October 1942, 5).

1965—Family Home Evening—why? The children “without mothers” now came to adulthood. Would you predict trouble ahead if you saw a generation of children grow up with mothers working all day in factories? What events came about in the 1960s that we are still dealing with?

1. Birth control and antibiotics—people could live together without being married because the threat of pregnancy or disease was now tamed. What was left to preserve virginity?
2. “God is Dead”—April 8, 1966 *Time* magazine—first time a national magazine dealt with the question.

In 1966, John Lennon, an outspoken atheist, said, “Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn’t argue about that. I’m right and I will be proved right. We’re more popular than Jesus now.”

6. National events (adapted from James C. Dobson, May 1993 letter to *Focus on the Family* subscribers)

- 1967—Summer of Love—flower power—hippie movement
- Millions of young people took to the streets in pursuit of free love, free speech, and free drugs. They made something of words like *groovy*, *flower power*, *far-out*, *outta sight*, *trip*, *cool*.
- 1968—On April 4 Martin Luther King killed—civil riots
- On June 5—Robert Kennedy was shot in a hotel
- 1969—Brian Jones (Rolling Stones) died of a drug overdose July 5, 1969
- Jimi Hendrix—September 1970
- Janis Joplin—October 4, 1970
- Jim Morrison—July 3, 1971

- The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws counted 45 rock groups that have declared their support for legalized pot (*USA Today*, March 19, 1993, p. 2D).

7. Feminist ideology: Gloria Steinem said that “a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle!” Kate Millett gave a talk at Cornell that depicted men and women as enemies. (Some good has come out of it, but not the radical side.)

8. Excessive emphasis on individualism—concern about the individual. “I gotta be me,” sang Sammy Davis Jr., while Frank Sinatra sang, “I did it my way.” “Looking out for #1” by Robert J. Ringer was the #1 best-seller. Selfishness became the number one reason for divorce.

9. Music/movies—permissiveness with affection; situational ethics

10. Drug culture—Timothy Leary advised teens and college students to “turn on, tune in and drop out.” Allen Ginsberg told a group assembled at a Boston church in 1966 that everyone over the age of 14 ought to try LSD at least once. Woodstock in August 1969, 400,000 gathered for three days of drugs, sex, and rock and roll.

11. Pornography—internet, magazines—70 percent of all Web sites are pornographic!

12. Easy divorce—Mel Krantsler—“Creative Divorce” may be the best thing to happen to you.

13. Trivialization of religion—is there a strong religious character in the movies/media? Most are usually seducing or being seduced by someone—that is the main theme of the story.

14. Personal responsibility, justification of bizarre behavior: Twinkie defense—killed supervisor because of too much sugar in system and therefore not responsible.

15. Ethics over doctrine—live the good life; do your own thing; ethics are personal, not doctrinal.

Tolerance becomes the ruling virtue in our country.

President Boyd K. Packer: “The word *tolerance* is also invoked as though it overrules everything else. Tolerance may be a virtue, but it is not *the* commanding one. There is a difference between what one is and what one does. What one is may deserve unlimited tolerance; what one does, only a measured amount. A virtue when pressed to the extreme may turn into a vice.

Unreasonable devotion to an ideal, without considering the practical application of it, ruins the ideal itself” (Boyd K. Packer, “Covenants,” *Ensign*, November 1990, 84).

Now, all of this took place in five years. Can you see the value of Family Home Evening and preparing our children against the onslaught that took place?

16. 1970—FHE—The Church went to Monday night Family Home Evening to make sure we were with our families. Shut the church door and let’s gather our families together.

17. 1974—missions mandatory for every young man worthy and “normal.”

We had a few years to get our families together so now they were prepared for the announcement that all young men were asked by the Lord to serve a mission.

18. 1995—Proclamation on the Family—principles to strengthen marriages and families

- Faith
- Prayer
- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Respect
- Love
- Compassion
- Work
- Wholesome recreational activities

19. 2000 Testimony of the Brethren (in contrast to the Jesus Seminar that meets annually to decide what Jesus really said or did not say in the New Testament record)

20. What do we need from Church members?

1. We need people who will follow the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.
2. Wonderful marriage partners—might expect a divorce rate of 1 to 2 percent, but rare.
3. Effective parenting—children service-oriented not selfishly oriented
4. Money managers—the costs of being a member of the Church with tithing/lifestyle = 17 percent/year more than non-members
5. Women—outstanding wives and mothers
6. Men—exceptional husbands and fathers
7. Missions are needed for men to prepare to build Zion
8. Zion—171+ years we have been trying to build Zion (Enoch took 365 years).
9. Keep covenants—power comes from obedience to gospel principles and keeping covenants.
10. Know gospel principles and doctrines that will change behavior more rapidly and surely than will the study of behavior change behavior.
11. Understand the threefold mission of the Church and our role in it.