

Teachings of the Living Prophets: Especially for Youth!

John Hilton III, Education Week 2007

Following the Living Prophets

Of course we who are here...love President Gordon B. Hinckley, the two counselors in the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. But in acknowledging our love and our loyalty, I would ask, "Could our attention to the counsel and the teaching of these Brethren be more active, searching, and responsive?" Think how you would respond to the following questions:

1. Could you tell me the names of the three members of the First Presidency and the names of each of those who comprise the Quorum of the Twelve? These are the 15 men you and I sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators.
2. If we were to hold up a picture of these Brethren, would you recognize each of them? We rarely pay close attention to someone we do not recognize or know.
3. Could you share with me the counsel given by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from last October's general conference? And could you identify the concerns of President Hinckley, President Monson, and President Faust in the First Presidency messages of the Ensign and Liahona during the first three months of this year?
4. Perhaps more important, could you share with me a recent decision where you changed something in your life because of counsel received from one of these 15 men?

(Elder Neil L. Andersen, "Hold Fast to the Words of the Prophets," <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Teachings from the First Presidency

President Gordon B. Hinckley "To you I say with all of the energy of which I am capable, do not become a weak link in the chain of your generations. You come to the world with a marvelous inheritance. You come of great men and women. ... Never let them down. Never do anything which would weaken the chain of which you are a fundamental part" ("Keep the Chain Unbroken," <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

President Thomas S. Monson "My advice to each one of you young people here this evening and elsewhere throughout the world, is that you should study and prepare for your life's work in a field that you enjoy, because you are going to spend a good share of your life in that field. It should be one which will challenge your intellect and which will make maximum utilization of your talents and your capabilities. Finally, it should be a field that will supply sufficient remuneration to provide adequately for your companion and your children" ("Life's Greatest Decisions," <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

President James E. Faust "Our search for happiness largely depends on the degree of righteousness we attain, the degree of selflessness we acquire, the amount and quality of service we render, and the inner peace that we enjoy. We also have some external sources of happiness, including those loved ones and friends whose smiles and regard mean so much to us" ("Our Search for Happiness" <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Teachings from the Quorum of the Twelve

Elder Boyd K. Packer "It's important that you know this. The inspiration you may draw from [your church meetings] depends only partly in the effort [the speakers] have expended in the preparation of their sermons. It depends much more considerably on what preparation you have made for their message" ("Follow the Brethren," <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder L. Tom Perry "God's eternal blessings are contingent upon our obedience and adherence to the word of the Lord that is revealed to us through His holy prophets" (*Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 86).

Elder Russell M. Nelson “One day you will be asked if you took upon yourself the name of Christ and if you were faithful to that covenant” (“Identity, Priority, and Blessings,” <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks “Wise are those who make this commitment: *I will put the Lord first in my life and I will keep His commandments*. The performance of that commitment is within everyone's control. We can fulfill that commitment without regard to what others decide to do, and that commitment will anchor us no matter what timing the Lord directs for the most important events in our lives” (“Timing,” <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder M. Russell Ballard “I’m aware that some members think they know better than members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles do about [entertainment]. And some will argue their case based on artistic merit, or on the fact that “everyone is seeing it,” or will insist they are not one of those people who will be influenced one way or the other by on-screen sex or violence. To them I have only one question: Are you going to follow the true and living prophets or not?” (“When Shall These Things Be?” <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin “May I ask you today to consider the effectiveness of your prayers? How close do you feel to your Heavenly Father? Do you feel that your prayers are answered? Do you feel that the time you spend in prayer enriches and uplifts your soul? Is there room for improvement?” (“Improving our prayers” <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder Richard G. Scott “With all my capacity I encourage you to discover who you really are. I invite you to look beyond the daily routine of life. I urge you to discern through the Spirit your divinely given capacities... When you really understand who you are, it is not difficult to resist Satan's temptations. Then he can't thwart the development of your true potential” (*Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 44).

Elder Robert D. Hales “Now is the time to organize and prepare ourselves to have the Holy Ghost as our constant companion. This means doing what your parents and leaders have taught you to do—study the scriptures; pray morning and night; keep a neat, well-groomed appearance; follow a schedule; set and achieve goals; be honest in your dealings; keep commitments; and be worthy of the priesthood you bear. Always, always live the standards, revealed by prophets, in the booklet *For the Strength of Youth*” (*Ensign*, May 2007).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland “Fighting through darkness and despair and pleading for the light is what opened this dispensation. It is what keeps it going, and it is what will keep you going. With Paul, I say to all of you: *Cast not away therefore your confidence*.” [Hebrews 10:35] (“Cast Not Away Your Confidence,” <http://speeches.byu.edu>).

Elder Henry B. Eyring “As the challenges around us increase, we must commit to do more to qualify for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Casual prayer won’t be enough. Reading a few verses of the scripture won’t be enough. Doing the minimum of what the Lord asks of us won’t be enough. Hoping that we will have the Atonement work in our lives and that we will perhaps sometimes feel the influence of the Holy Ghost won’t be enough. And one great burst of effort won’t be enough. Only a steady, ever-increasing effort will allow the Lord to take us to higher ground (“Raise the Bar,” <http://byui.edu/presentations>).

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf: Satan will try to make us believe that our sins are not forgiven because we can remember them. Satan is a liar; he tries to blur our vision and lead us away from the path of repentance and forgiveness. God did not promise that we would not remember our sins. Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time...It is our responsibility to avoid anything that would bring back old sinful memories (*Ensign*, May 2007).

Elder David A. Bednar: “My experience suggests that a specific and scheduled time set aside each day and, as much as possible, a particular place for study greatly increase the effectiveness of our searching through the scriptures” (“Understanding the importance of scripture study,” <http://byui.edu/presentations>).