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Blessed Are the Peacemakers

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Blessed Are the Peacemakers

HENRY B. EYRING

I am grateful for the prayer, for the music, for the kind introduction, and most of all for visiting with you tonight. I want to talk with you about peace and about the Prince of Peace. Please join your prayer with mine that we might have the companionship of the spirit of truth and of peace.

When you look at your newspaper and your television screen you don't see much about peace. Oh, there was and still is some talk in the press and by politicians in the United States about a "peace dividend." You will notice less and less talk about that. That dividend was supposed to be the money we would no longer have to spend on armaments as a nation because of what was called the "collapse" of the Soviet Union. But every day the news is filled with more violence, apparently growing violence, across the world and in our own cities. Most of you even plan what you do at night, taking your safety into account. You hope to avoid the violence of other people.

Now, if you listen carefully, in the debates about what to do to create peace, you will hear some common themes. Interestingly, the themes remain much the same whether the question is how to gain peace in the world or in your neighborhood. One theme is disarmament.

Those who see danger in bombs or in guns take comfort when any country or any group of people give up weapons. But there are those, equally sure, who argue that the only safety is to have enough bombs or guns that no one will attack you.

Another theme is that of negotiation: If we can just get people to talk with each other, then they will choose peace. And so you read about and see pictures of diplomats and secretaries of state and heads of nations flying to Geneva or somewhere else to talk. Always the media is there to tell you how it is going. They try to judge whether, because of what is negotiated, the shooting will stop or go on. But even when shooting stops, usually just for a short while, the meetings and the media move to some other place, because the shooting has started somewhere else.

Another theme in the search for peace is education: If people just knew more, if they understood better, if they were educated

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enough to have a better life, they would choose peace. And so we search for ways for more people to have better educations.

In that theme, the theme of education, is a key to understanding both the difficulties in most proposed solutions to violence and also the sure way to peace. The hope of ending violence by better education is that if people just understood better, they would want peace and so they would choose it. If you believe education could promote peace, you believe that anyone who could think clearly will not choose violence. But when you look at experience, both in your life and as the world has sought peace, you can see that the most devastating violence begins in thoughtful choice.

Disarmament treaties are signed, and then nations, and individuals, decide that it is in their best interest to break them. So, they do, usually in secret and then finally in the open. Or, people decide that arming themselves will keep the peace, and then, quite rationally, get more arms to match what their enemy gets. And then both sides acquire so much that their own bombs and guns become as dangerous to them as are those in the hands of their enemies.

Even the proposals to build more prisons and have tougher laws and give us more law enforcement officers are based on the hope that people who would harm you will make a thoughtful choice not to try. But you know from your own experience and from observing others where that finally fails. As long as people want something for themselves enough to hurt you to get it, they will keep searching until they find a way. And you can never build a fence long enough, or high enough, or strong enough but that they will find a way around, or under, or through it.

That is why neither education, nor disarmament, nor armament, nor negotiation, nor all of them in combination are likely to create a world or a neighborhood of lasting peace. To do that, a change has to come into human hearts. The change must be in what people

want. Almost everyone in the world has heard of what that change is, because it is common to religions and philosophies across the world and across the centuries. It is said differently in the scriptures and writings of others, but the words you will recognize best are these: “Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets” (3 Nephi 14:12).

You can see how that would work, if that change had come to your heart and to mine. If you and I both felt that way, whether we did or didn’t have a gun wouldn’t matter, unless you tried to give me yours because you felt I needed it to hunt for food more than you did.

We would certainly still need to negotiate when we disagreed, but our negotiations would take a very different turn. I saw two such men—changed men—negotiate for a place in a cafeteria waiting line a few years ago. One, the younger man, tried to get the older man to go ahead of him, because he thought the older man’s time was more valuable than his. But the older man refused. They were negotiating their disagreement as I watched, both determined that the other would go first. I remember that the older man won his point. His name was Spencer W. Kimball. The younger man must have thought that the time of the president of the Church was more valuable than his. But I suppose President Kimball thought that the younger man’s stomach needed something in it sooner than his did. There was disagreement and negotiation. But think of what a disagreement that was, and think of the smiles on their faces as they found, together, a path of peace.

Because so many of you are paying so great a price for education, you need assurance that what you learn can contribute to peace—in your own life and even in the world. Education can help you understand what is in the interests of your brothers and sisters and in your own best interests. And it can help you know

how to create and to provide what will be in our best interest. The fruits of science and of other learning are enriching our lives today beyond what our ancestors, even a few generations ago, could have imagined. Much of that came from the fruits of people like you, who sacrificed and persevered to gain education and then used its fruits in the service of others.

But knowing what is best for you and me, and even knowing how to provide it, will not necessarily change our hearts to want each other's interests as much as we want our own. That is the change which matters. And only a very special and rare education, one that the Savior Jesus Christ offers, will bring it into human hearts. And that is what we need in ourselves, in our families, in our neighborhoods, and in the world.

Now, as Latter-day Saints, we should work for peace. You remember that the Lord said, "Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace" (D&C 98:16).

So we should study out and then support whatever would reduce war and violence. But among all the proposals we may consider, only one will go to the heart of what is required for peace. Look at the very next phrase in that section of the Doctrine and Covenants, after we are commanded by God to renounce war and proclaim peace. It is just a few words—they may seem to some almost not connected to what went before, but they tell us where to look for the path to peace. Here is the whole phrase:

Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace, and seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children. [D&C 98:16]

The path away from war and violence and toward peace is in the turning of hearts. And we wisely start with a turning in feelings toward others—those closest to us, those to whom we owe the most, those upon whom we

most depend, and those with whom we want to associate most often.

With all the effort and thought and caring you may give to the pursuit of peace, never stray far from seeking ways to change hearts. And start close by, in your own heart and the hearts of those close to you.

More than that, we know, because God has told us through his servants, the road to travel to find peace. No road leads to peace, for a person or for the world, unless it leads away from the effects of sin and Satan. Satan has always taught men and women to take what they want by taking life. I like the forthright way John Taylor, a president of the Church in this dispensation, gave us the direction to follow. He said:

Peace is the gift of God. Do you want peace? Go to God. Do you want peace in your families? Go to God. Do you want peace to brood over your families? If you do, live your religion, and the very peace of God will dwell and abide with you, for that is where peace comes from, and it do[es]n't dwell anywhere else. [JD 10:56]

When President Taylor urges you to go to God for peace, he is saying more, much more, than to simply ask for it in prayer. That change in what we want, the one that will bring peace in your heart and then between people, is the natural fruit of the Atonement of Jesus Christ working in your life. President Kimball described our private peace this way:

The essence of the miracle of forgiveness is that it brings peace to the previously anxious, restless, frustrated, perhaps tormented soul. In a world of turmoil and contention this is indeed a priceless gift. [The Miracle of Forgiveness (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), p. 363]

And then, just a few pages later, he wrote, almost as if he were explaining how to follow the instruction of President Taylor:

It is not easy to be at peace in today's troubled world. Necessarily peace is a personal acquisition. . . . it can be attained only through maintaining constantly a repentant attitude, seeking forgiveness of sins both large and small, and thus coming ever closer to God. For Church members this is the essence of their preparation, their readiness to meet the Savior when he comes. [The Miracle of Forgiveness, p. 366]

How that cleansing of sin changes our hearts and moves us closer to God is described in numbers of ways in the scriptures, but one seems to me the clearest in telling you what to do to help others want to make the change and then choose to make it. It is in the eighth chapter of Moroni, starting at the twenty-fifth verse. Listen very carefully. This is almost like a list of instructions, and it is a simple one, one you could follow:

And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins;

And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God. [Moroni 8:25–26]

There are words to remember there. The remission of sins brings meekness and lowliness of heart. Because of that, the Holy Ghost can come, which gives us hope and perfect love. And that love—if you ask God for help with enough faith and sincerity and often enough—will stay with you through all the troubles and hatred you will ever face. And then you will live with God.

Now, with that clear, one of the passages in Isaiah that you may sometimes pass too quickly because you think you won't understand

it, makes perfect sense: “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever” (Isaiah 32:17).

But you might well say, “But do I have to wait until I am perfect and the people around me are perfect before I can live in peace?” I suppose in one way the answer is, “Yes,” if you mean to live in perfect peace. But there is a much happier answer, and a true one. It is this: We are promised peace in this life before we are perfect. You remember how the preface to the Book of Mormon describes its most important message:

The crowning event recorded in the Book of Mormon is the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ among the Nephites soon after his resurrection. It puts forth the doctrines of the gospel, outlines the plan of salvation, and tells men what they must do to gain peace in this life and eternal salvation in the life to come. [Introduction: 3]

I testify to you that you can taste peace in this life. God grants us peace as we go along the road to perfection. Here is the way Elder Bruce R. McConkie described the promise, which is a true one. He is describing eternal life, which means to live in families in the celestial kingdom, and then he speaks of what we can expect here, in this life:

Eternal families have their beginning in celestial marriage here in mortality. Faithful members of them continue in the family unit in eternity, in the highest heaven of the celestial world, where they have eternal increase. . . . Perfect peace and a full endowment of all good graces attend such eternal families. By obedience to the laws of the gospel (which are celestial laws), Latter-day Saint families begin here and now to enjoy much of that peace, joy, love, and charity which will be enjoyed in eternal fulness in the exalted family unit. [MD, p. 273]

You can begin to know peace, the peace the gospel brings, even before you are blessed to live in such a family, sealed by eternal covenants. If you are wise, you will start now to prepare to live in peace in such a family. If you start that preparation, it will direct your attention to the few people with whom you live and associate each day. It is with a few people where you have the best chance to begin learning how to go to God to bring peace.

Now, it's important that I give you a caution. We will talk tonight about what you can do to help those close to you choose the path to that change in their hearts which will bring them inner peace and peace with others. Most of you will be giving this service to those to whom you are not married, who are not part of your family. You naturally long for the day when you can build peace within the walls of a home you are creating. In learning how to do that before marriage, be careful. Always reserve for that future day, with great care, the physical and emotional intimacy which is sacred to the family.

Now, as we have talked tonight, a few things ought to be clear. First, you and I will know how to recognize the change of heart, the mighty change, when it comes to bring peace. You will know it has come in you when you or they want what is good for others as much as you want good for yourself. And, second, we know the sure way for that change to come: It comes as the certain fruit of the gospel of Jesus Christ working because you exercised faith in Jesus Christ unto repentance.

Now, let me tell you how I know some things you can do to make it more likely that those around you will find the peace the gospel brings. The reason I can do this is that people around me have helped me make choices that brought changes and peace to me. Now, to be honest with you, I also know what to recommend to you because when those around me didn't do these things we'll talk about, there

was less peace, and sometimes sadness for me. That wasn't because the people around me made me sad, but because without these influences we'll talk about, I was less likely to make the choices that would have brought me peace.

I can see a question forming in your mind. It goes something like this: "Wait a minute, Brother Eyring, are you saying that my living the gospel depends on help from people around me? Don't you know that I am nearly alone in trying to live the gospel?"

I know that many of you struggle with little help from those around you. No, of course you are not dependent, and neither am I, on having people around us to help. We are all responsible for our choices. And God will not leave us so alone that we cannot live the gospel of Jesus Christ. He never gives a commandment without preparing the way for us to keep it. And I am like you: I want to be strong enough to stand alone when I must. But what a blessing each of us can be, if we try, to bless those around us. I testify that your power to stand alone, to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in hard circumstances, will be increased as you reach out to help others live it. And you will feel less alone as you do.

It's not hard to know what to do to help. The people you will see tonight or tomorrow need to do some things that are simply said, but not easily done: First, they must exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, repent, with a broken heart and contrite spirit; third, accept the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ; and, fourth, gain the Holy Ghost as a constant companion. And you know, and I testify to you, that from these simple things will come in time the mighty change, and with that, the peace in this life and the hope of eternal life in the world to come will follow.

Let's begin with helping people to build faith: What could you do to make it more likely that someone you associate with will exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Example is one way. And, it is example that has had the most

powerful effect in encouraging me to exercise faith. You and I have seen great faith. You've seen young people choose to serve missions when neither family nor circumstance made that easy. You may have served with one as a companion. You've seen a child, late on a fast day, watch intently as dinner is prepared. And then it dawned on you that they had fasted, twenty-four hours, because they loved the Savior, without either being spoken to or saying a word about it themselves. You've seen parents at the funeral of their child, tears streaming down their faces, thanking you for being so thoughtful to come. And they may have whispered to you, "Oh, we're fine. We know we will all be together again." You remember their smiles as much as their words, and you felt their faith.

Now, to a suggestion for you. You can be an example that will make it more likely that those near you will decide to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is at least one simple way to choose what you will do. And, by the way, you don't have to plan to be observed. You don't start with the idea of putting on a performance. Just start this way: Ask yourself this question, "What would the Savior have me do that I have been putting off because it seemed hard?" You won't have any trouble thinking of more than one. It doesn't have to seem hard to anybody else, just to you. Then, choose one from your list and do it. You might even try not to be observed. People who live and work with you notice more than you think. And they are more likely to exercise faith when they see your faith in Jesus Christ by your doing what for you took sacrifice.

You will also at times want to bear testimony of the Savior in words. That can build faith. Although you will do that in your own way as you are prompted, I can tell you what has helped me most. My heart seems to feel faith when the person speaking expresses both conviction and love. The conviction doesn't seem to come with the emotion in the voice

as much as from the way I have seen the person behave. So your example may mean more than your words in conveying conviction. But, since my heart needs to be drawn toward the Savior, you help me most when your testimony includes words that tell me what you know about how the Savior loves you and loves me. That draws me to him, and that's what I must feel to have faith enough to want to repent and to feel I will be forgiven.

You can be sure of this: When the person begins to feel real faith in Jesus Christ, they will begin to feel sorrow for sin. You can't make another person repent, but you can make it easier for them to want a repentant heart. The people who have helped me most have been those who asked my forgiveness as if it mattered to them and have forgiven me easily when I have offended. I've noticed, as perhaps you have, that such help most often comes from children. Aren't you softened when you see a child forgive so easily? Or when one says to you, with a catch in her voice, "I'm sorry, Daddy. Will you forgive me?"

I suppose that act of a little child works so powerfully on me because it makes me want to be like them—clean. And just that thought starts the inner review which so often leads to our asking forgiveness, both from those we have wronged and from God.

For most of us, that forgiveness needs to come often, for things we hope are small and that we catch early. That forgiveness is hard enough to seek, from others and from God. But when someone who is close to you begins to feel the desire to repent of larger, more serious sins, there is something else you can do to help. You have to start early, long before the need for forgiveness is felt.

It comes from this simple fact: Forgiveness for serious offenses requires both the forgiveness of the Lord and of the Lord's servants in his Church, who he calls "judges in Israel." You remember how those servants were instructed to deal with repentance in Mosiah:

Therefore I say unto you, Go; and whosoever transgresseth against me, him shall ye judge according to the sins which he has committed; and if he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also.

Yea, and as often as my people repent will I forgive them their trespasses against me. [Mosiah 26:29–30]

From that, you can see what you could start to do. And sooner is better. You could look for some evidence today that confirms your testimony that your bishop, your stake president, or some other of God's servants in the Church is inspired. And you could find a moment to share that with someone close to you. Do it over a long period of time, and I will tell you how that may be the key to peace someday for the person who hears you say those words.

They will always find it hard, even when they have faith and want so much to be free of the weight of serious sin, to go to a bishop, an ordinary person, to confess and to ask for forgiveness. It may be even harder to accept a decision a bishop or stake president may have to make by revelation to take away a privilege, or even membership in the Church, to help the person you love gain forgiveness and then find peace. If you speak early and often of your faith in the office and callings of God's servants, preferably ones you know well, and of your honest confidence in their inspiration, you will someday make a great difference. The person you blessed in that way will be more likely to make the choice for repentance and the remission of sins.

You know what comes next in the simple description of the path to God and to peace: baptism. For someone not yet baptized, or for someone who has lost their membership, that ordinance is necessary to have the Atonement work to bring the mighty change in a heart. But even someone in the Church will need to bring the effects of that baptism into their lives

frequently. You may think of more ways than I can suggest to help, but I can give you two, offered to me by those around me. These may seem to you common things to do. But they can have an uncommon effect.

People around me have shown me by what they do how much they honor and value covenants. Others have had that blessing, too. You've all heard, I hope, the prophet, President Benson, tell of watching his mother press carefully her temple clothing. You've heard him talk about watching his parents pull out of their yard for the trip to the Logan Temple. I'm not sure how much his parents had to say about the value of a temple covenant. You don't have to say much to make it more likely that people around you will so treasure covenants to feel the remission of sins God promises by our keeping them.

You could show the value you place on the baptismal covenant by how regularly and carefully you renew it. You could be there, whatever your schedule and whatever your pressures, to partake of the sacrament when it is offered to you. Today, you did what the Lord commanded in the fifty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the ninth verse:

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day. [D&C 59:9]

And then, in verse 12, he goes on to say:

But remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

The sacramental prayers were dictated by the Lord himself to keep us reminded of the gospel covenants we have made. Your being there to do that every Sabbath will make a difference for those close to you. And there is

another way you could show that you value them. Here is what Alma said you promised as you made the baptismal covenant:

Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life. [Mosiah 18:9]

Many of you, and some in my family, have shown me what believing and honoring that covenant can mean. You have shoveled coal out of one basement and into another for someone else, built homes for the homeless, fixed a rusted and broken dryer in the apartment of a single mother, tutored little children, and on and on—giving comfort to those who needed it, as you covenanted you would, and doing it when I could not see how you could possibly fit one more thing into hectic schedules. And, oh, how you have helped me by carrying a Book of Mormon every time you traveled, and then telling me with excitement of how a book was accepted. Because of you, I find myself trying harder to stand as a witness at all times and in all things and in all places that I may be in.

Now, listen to the end of that invitation to the covenant of baptism. Listen to what God promises to those who honor the covenant:

Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you? [Mosiah 18:10]

You know that the change and the peace we seek comes only under the influence of the Holy Ghost. Remember how that wonderful

process goes, because it tells you something about how to help others. You remember it was described this way in Moroni:

And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love. [Moroni 8:26]

Think of that—the effect of feeling forgiveness is to feel meek and lowly. And that’s what then allows you to have the Holy Ghost with you. You not only need to be meek and lowly to receive the Holy Ghost, but that is part of the effect he has on you when he visits. Listen to this from Galatians. Listen to see what it suggests you might do to help someone welcome the Holy Ghost into their lives. As you listen, think of the apartment or the room or the house where you live and some of the people in it. Now, here is the description of what having the Holy Ghost as your companion brings:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. [Galatians 5:22–26]

Well, I’ve seen and felt how the people around me have helped me welcome the Holy Ghost more into my life. When I fish for vain-glory in the form of a compliment for the sake of a compliment, I don’t get much response at my house. Even when I act to provoke, they don’t provoke back. And I never feel or see envy, at least from those closest to me. I don’t

know how conscious all that is. It may just be that they know, as you do, that when I am meek and lowly and quiet, I will more likely receive the Holy Ghost. And they love me enough to want that for me.

You might consider one other thing you could do to help those around you have the Holy Ghost as a companion. I don't know what pictures you have hanging on walls in your room. Nor do I know what music you play or what magazines you have around for others to see and read. But I've been blessed with people around me who seem to make those choices, again perhaps unconsciously, as if they wanted all the sights and sounds to help me feel, and keep feeling, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. That doesn't make my home as dull a place as you might think. And I have felt and feel the Holy Ghost more often because of the music, and pictures, and words on a printed page, chosen by people around me. You could help someone that way, too. And you could start tonight.

Now, you will think of more ways than I have suggested to help those around you exercise faith, repent, make and keep covenants, and welcome the Holy Ghost. But it's important to be realistic about what to expect the results will be when you do.

You may be rejected. You may even meet anger. Now, you might well ask, "Wait a minute. You told me that I could bring peace, and instead I get war coming back at me. How can that be?"

First, don't feel picked on, because we've all had that happen. I have a memory of watching my little boys kick each other as they lay before me on the floor during our family night as I taught a lesson on peace in the family. In fact, that topic would bring it on. They heard me, they understood me, and yet they had been kicking for a long time before I started preaching. Now, years later, they reach across

the world to help each other. But the change takes time. So be patient and persistent.

There are techniques for bringing quick, brief periods of peace in families as there are in cities and among nations. I recommend whatever of those techniques work and do not interfere with the process of change that will give us peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come. But the change we need, the big and permanent change we need, takes some time. You can feel the patience you need by listening to this description given by Alma. It gives you a sense of the magnitude of the change that can come from the simple, small things we have talked about tonight. You need to remember both how simple are the things to do and yet how great the change that is promised. I testify to you now this is true.

And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God. [Mosiah 27:25–26]

You would expect that will take some time and effort. And you would expect some setbacks along the way. For one thing, not all hatred comes from sin. Some of it is passed on to us by tradition. You remember what Jacob told the Nephites who were falling into sin. He told them that the Lamanites were more righteous than they were. And he said that the Lamanites hated only because of the traditions handed down to them. Habits of hatred may yield slowly, even to the power of the gospel.

But let me give you some encouragement that is certain. First, however much turmoil and violence you have had to live with, your spiritual longings, which come from the father of your spirit, is for peace. However tough and

hardened you have become, perhaps just to survive, what you really want is a heart softened by the gospel. And that change of heart in the people close to you will bring peace to them and with them.

And as you offer that help in living the gospel of Jesus Christ, that same gospel is working on you. You come unto Christ and become more like him as you invite others to come unto Christ. When you become a peacemaker by offering the gospel of Jesus Christ, you also change by that same power. That may help you understand a scripture which is part of the promise made to you tonight. The Savior has always made this promise to his disciples. You can hear it again in 3 Nephi. He said it the same way, in the same words, in his mortal ministry in Jerusalem: “And blessed are all the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God” (3 Nephi 12:9).

When I read that as a boy, I wondered about the promise. You remember that he promised the meek that they would inherit the earth and that the pure in heart would see God. It didn’t sound like anything very glorious to be promised that you would be called the children of God for being a peacemaker. But you and I see now that the promise is both glorious and sure. Those who will have eternal life are the children of God. And the childlike heart which goes with that will come to you as you offer peace to the hearts of those around you.

That leads to one more encouragement which may help you. You may well doubt that you can have much effect on the people around you. But you will have help. You have been

given, as you were given the gospel, the promise of help as you reach out to help. The Lord made a promise to his twelve disciples who he chose among the people in the Americas, after his resurrection. He told them their role and gave them a promise: “Ye are my disciples; and ye are a light unto this people” (3 Nephi 15:12).

I testify that God knows you, that it is not by chance that you have found the gospel of Jesus Christ and his restored Church. He cares about those around you, and he loves you. You are his disciple, and that makes you a light to this people. When you act with faith to offer the gospel and peace to those around you, the light that will come to them will be more than your example and more than your words. They will feel the light of the Savior, and it will have drawn them to him. You will have pointed the way President Taylor said to go. You remember his direction: “Peace is the gift of God. Do you want peace? Go to God. Do you want peace in your families? Go to God.”

I testify to you that God lives, Jesus is the Christ. I feel his love for you. I feel your Heavenly Father’s love for you. I testify that through the Prophet Joseph and each of the prophets who have followed him has come the power to offer ordinances that, if honored, lead to mighty change, to peace in this life, and eternal life in the world to come. I pray that you will offer peace, and so as peacemakers become the children of God. I testify to you that I know the Savior spoke the truth when he said, both of you and of me, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.