

Excerpts from "A Plea to My Sisters" and "The Price of Priesthood Power " (Nelson)



President Russell M. Nelson
General Conference
Oct. 2015 and April 2016

Excerpts from "A Plea to My Sisters" (October 2015)

1. The women of this dispensation are distinct from the women of any other because this dispensation is distinct from any other.⁴ This distinction brings both privileges and responsibilities.
2. Thirty-six years ago, in 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball made a profound prophecy about the impact that covenant-keeping women would have on the future of the Lord's Church. He prophesied: "Much of the major growth that is coming to the Church in the last days will come because many of the good women of the world ... will be drawn to the Church in large numbers. This will happen to the degree that the women of the Church reflect righteousness and articulateness in their lives and to the degree that the women of the Church are seen as distinct and different—in happy ways—from the women of the world."⁵
3. My dear sisters, you who are our vital associates during this winding-up scene, the day that President Kimball foresaw is today. You are the women he foresaw! Your virtue, light, love, knowledge, courage, character, faith, and righteous lives will draw good women of the world, along with their families, to the Church in unprecedented numbers!⁶
4. We, your brethren, need your strength, your conversion, your conviction, your ability to lead, your wisdom, and your voices. The kingdom of God is not and cannot be complete without women who make sacred covenants and then keep them, women who can speak with the power and authority of God!⁷
5. President Packer declared:
6. "We need women who are organized and women who can organize. We need women with executive ability who can plan and direct and administer; women who can teach, women who can speak out.
7. "We need women with the gift of discernment who can view the trends in the world and detect those that, however popular, are shallow or dangerous."⁸
8. Today, let me add that we need women who know how to make important things happen by their faith and who are courageous defenders of morality and families in a sin-sick world. We need women who are devoted to shepherding God's children along the covenant path toward exaltation; women who know how to receive personal revelation, who understand the power and peace of the temple endowment; women who know how to call upon the powers of heaven to protect and strengthen children and families; women who teach fearlessly.
9. My dear sisters, whatever your calling, what every our circumstances, we need your impressions, your insights, and your inspiration. We need you to speak up and speak out in ward and stake councils. We need each married sister to speak as "a contributing and full partner"¹⁰ as you unite with your husband in governing your family. Married or single, you sisters possess distinctive capabilities and special intuition you have received as gifts from God. We brethren cannot duplicate your unique influence.
10. We know that the culminating act of all creation was the creation of woman!¹¹ We need your strength!
11. My dear sisters, nothing is more crucial to your eternal life than your own conversion. It is converted, covenant-keeping women—women like my dear wife Wendy—whose righteous lives will increasingly stand out in a deteriorating world and who will thus be seen as different and distinct in the happiest of ways.

Excerpts from "The Price of Priesthood Power" (April 2016)

12. To bear means to support the weight of that which is held. It is a sacred trust to bear the priesthood, which is the mighty power and authority of God. Think of this: the priesthood conferred upon us is the very same power and authority through which God created this and numberless worlds, governs the heavens and the earth, and exalts His obedient children.³
13. I fear that there are too many men who have been given the authority of the priesthood but who lack priesthood power because the flow of power has been blocked by sins such as laziness, dishonesty, pride, immorality, or preoccupation with things of the world.
14. I fear that there are too many priesthood bearers who have done little or nothing to develop their ability to access the powers of heaven. I worry about all who are impure in their thoughts, feelings, or actions or who demean their wives or children, thereby cutting off priesthood power.
15. I fear that too many have sadly surrendered their agency to the adversary and are saying by their conduct, "I care more about satisfying my own desires than I do about bearing the Savior's power to bless others."
16. I fear, brethren, that some among us may one day wake up and realize what power in the priesthood really is and face the deep regret that they spent far more time seeking power over others or power at work than learning to exercise fully the power of God.⁴ President George Albert Smith taught that "we are not here to while away the hours of this life and then pass to a sphere of exaltation; but we are here to qualify ourselves day by day for the positions that our Father expects us to fill hereafter."⁵
17. Why would any man waste his days and settle for Esau's mess of pottage⁶ when he has been entrusted with the possibility of receiving all of the blessings of Abraham?⁷
18. I urgently plead with each one of us to live up to our privileges as bearers of the priesthood. In a coming day, only those men who have taken their priesthood seriously, by diligently seeking to be taught by the Lord Himself, will be able to bless, guide, protect, strengthen, and heal others. Only a man who has paid the price for priesthood power will be able to bring miracles to those he loves and keep his marriage and family safe, now and throughout eternity.
19. What is the price to develop such priesthood power? The Savior's senior Apostle, Peter—that same Peter who with James and John conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery⁸—declared qualities we should seek to "be partakers of the divine nature."⁹
20. He named faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity, and diligence.¹⁰ And don't forget humility!¹¹ So I ask, how would our family members, friends, and coworkers say you and I are doing in developing these and other spiritual gifts?¹² The more those attributes are developed, the greater will be our priesthood power.
21. How else can we increase our power in the priesthood? We need to pray from our hearts. Polite recitations of past and upcoming activities, punctuated with some requests for blessings, cannot constitute the kind of communing with God that brings enduring power. Are you willing to pray to know how to pray for more power? The Lord will teach you.
22. Are you willing to search the scriptures and feast on the words of Christ¹³—to study earnestly in order to have more power? If you want to see your wife's heart melt, let her find you on the Internet studying the doctrine of Christ¹⁴ or reading your scriptures!
23. Are you willing to worship in the temple regularly? The Lord loves to do His own teaching in His holy house. Imagine how pleased He would be if you asked Him to teach you about priesthood keys, authority, and power as you experience the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood in the holy temple.¹⁵ Imagine the increase in priesthood power that could be yours.
24. Are we willing to pray, fast, study, seek, worship, and serve as men of God so we can have that kind of priesthood power?
25. My dear brethren, we have been given a sacred trust—the authority of God to bless others. May each one of us rise up as the man God foreordained us to be—ready to bear the priesthood of God bravely, eager to pay whatever price is required to increase his power in the priesthood.

Notes

1. See Philippians 4:7.
2. This includes tears—in keeping the commandment to weep for those we love when they graduate from this life (see Doctrine and Covenants 42:45).
3. See Rebekah's influence on Isaac and their son Jacob in Genesis 27:46; 28:1–4.
4. See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. (1957–66), 4:166. Note: All previous dispensations were limited to a small segment of the world and were terminated by apostasy. In contrast, this dispensation will not be limited in location or time. It will fill the world and merge with the Second Coming of the Lord.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 222–23.
6. When I was born, there were fewer than 600,000 members of the Church. Today there are more than 15 million. That number will continue to increase.
7. President Joseph Fielding Smith told sisters of the Relief Society, “You can speak with authority, because the Lord has placed authority upon you.” He also said that the Relief Society has “been given power and authority to do a great many things. The work which they do is done by divine authority” (“Relief Society—an Aid to the Priesthood,” *Relief Society Magazine*, Jan. 1959, 4, 5). These quotations were also cited by Elder Dallin H. Oaks in a conference address, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2014, 51.
8. Boyd K. Packer, “The Relief Society,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 8; see also M. Russell Ballard, *Counseling with Our Councils: Learning to Minister Together in the Church and in the Family* (1997), 93.
9. See Spencer J. Condie, Russell M. Nelson: Father, Surgeon, Apostle (2003), 146, 153–56. Note: In 1964 President Kimball set me apart as a stake president and blessed me that the mortality
10. “When we speak of marriage as a partnership, let us speak of marriage as a full partnership. We do not want our LDS women to be silent partners or limited partners in that eternal assignment! Please be a contributing and full partner” (Spencer W. Kimball, “Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 106).
11. “All the purposes of the world and all that was in the world would be brought to naught without woman—a keystone in the priesthood arch of creation” (Russell M. Nelson, “Lessons from Eve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 87). “Eve became God’s final creation, the grand summation of all of the marvelous work that had gone before” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Women in Our Lives,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 83).
12. See Russell M. Nelson, “Children of the Covenant,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 33.
13. See 2 Nephi 32:3.
14. See 2 Nephi 31:2–21.
15. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–20.
16. See Doctrine and Covenants 45:33.

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