

## The Ten Commandments of Priesthood Correlation and the Home Teaching Constitution

---

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PRIESTHOOD CORRELATION

#### 1. *Thou shalt teach correct principles and let the people govern themselves*

The principle of self-government is basic to the entire administration of the Church. We operate on the principle of love and persuasion without compulsion. This is the order of heaven.

President Harold B. Lee, in speaking at a Regional Representatives seminar, told the following story, which illustrates this principle. He said that he and Elder Melvin J. Ballard were assigned to attend a regional welfare meeting and stake conference at a distant stake. When they arrived for the welfare meeting they found everyone in attendance but one stake president.

“Where is President \_\_\_\_\_?” Elder Ballard asked the regional chairman.

“I don’t know. He knows about the meeting – I talked with him this morning”

Later the brethren went to the stake president’s home, and they asked his wife where he was. She replied, “Well, you know there is a banquet for fathers and sons tonight where you are to speak. He was on the committee to arrange chairs and tables, and he has been spending all day there.”

Later Elder Ballard said to Elder Lee privately, “Well, I guess if we have a stake president who thinks he ought to do the work of deacons, we had better get somebody to do the work of the stake president.” At the next conference there was a reorganization of the stake presidency.

#### 2. *Thou shalt operate all Church programs within the framework of priesthood correlation*

Priesthood correlation is that system of church administration in which we take all the programs of the Church, bring them to one focal point, wrap them in one package, operate them as one program, involve all members of the Church in the operation—and do it all under priesthood direction. This concept is easy to understand but difficult to operate.

For a hundred years or more our approach to serving our fellowmen has been: “Here is a group of people who have problems and need help. Let’s create a program, setup an organization, and call some people to work with them.” We have said: “Here are some Aaronic Priesthood boys who use drugs; here are some others who do not observe the

Sabbath; here are some returned missionaries whose faith is threatened by courses in evolution—and so on. Therefore, we must have a great anti-drug program, a great Sabbath observance campaign, a new program to harmonize science and religion for college students—and so on.”

All this is a poor approach. It is not in correlation. Our response to problems is no longer one of creating new programs. Now we strive to use the revealed priesthood organization to perfect all the Saints, no matter what their needs or problems. The basic principles of priesthood correlation grow out of this statement: The family is the most important organization in time or in eternity. The Church and all its organizations are service agencies to help families and individuals. Home teachers represent the Lord, the bishop, and the priesthood leader in making available to the family and the individual the help of the Church and all its organizations.

*3. Thou shalt place upon the family and the individual the responsibility to do all things in the Church*

On the city-owned garbage trucks in Salt Lake City is a sign that reads something like this: “Please help us keep your city clean.” This places the responsibility for a clean city upon the garbage collectors. How much better it would be if the sign read: “Let us help you keep your city clean.” This would place the responsibility for a clean city upon every citizen.

It is sometimes said in the Church, “Isn’t it wonderful that we have some full-time or stake missionaries in our ward. Let’s all get busy and help them. Let’s give them referrals and open our homes for group meetings, and so forth.” This places the responsibility for missionary work upon a handful of missionaries. How much better it would be if all the members of the Church assumed their full responsibility to do missionary work and said instead, “We are so grateful for these full-time or stake missionaries. We want them to help us convert our contacts to the Church.” Nobody helps the missionaries; rather, missionaries help all of us. Similarly, we do our own genealogical work and handle our own welfare needs; the Church has specialists who help us do it.

*4. Thou shalt use the Church and all its organizations as service agencies to help the family and the individual*

Every member of the Church is under covenant, made in the waters of baptism, to stand as a witness of Christ. President David O. McKay said, “Every member a missionary.” But the Church calls and trains specialists to help members discharge their missionary responsibility. These are the seventies and stake and full-time missionaries. Every member—not the Church or some committee—is responsible to do his own genealogical research and see that the saving ordinances are performed for them vicariously. Hence the genealogical responsibility of high priests group leaders and other trained specialists.

*5. Thou shalt use home teaching as the vehicle to make available to the family and the individual the help of the Church and all its organizations*

This is the great key to successful church administration. All phases of the church program succeed in direct proportion to the success that attends home teaching. Home teaching is not a program as such; it is the vehicle that carries all programs to the people.

We need, of course, to improve the quality of home teaching. Here is a very basic question: What is wrong with home teaching? Here is the answer: Home teachers are not used to doing their assigned work. Instead we appoint some fringe committees to do what home teachers ought to be doing, which is, to make available to the Church, to the family, and to the individual the help of the Church and all of its facilities.

#### *6. Thou shalt perfect the Saints through home teaching*

If you read and ponder section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants, you will find an assignment that is almost apostolic in proportion and caliber. Here are some of the phrases. Home teachers are to:

Teach

Preach

Expound

Exhort

Watch over the Church always

Visit the house of each member

Exhort them to pray vocally and in secret

Exhort them to attend to all family duties

Be with and strengthen the members of the Church

See that there is no iniquity in the Church

See that members have no hardness toward each other

See that there is no backbiting, nor evil speaking

See that all the members do their duty invite all to come to Christ

I adjudge this to be one of the greatest positions in the Church, a job of mammoth proportions. I think Paul put in perspective our positions in the Church when he said,

identifying the true church, “God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps...” (1 Corinthians 12:28.) The Lord’s perspective is that the true position of a teacher, of one who gets inspiration and does what these revelations appoint, places him in the number three position in the Church, just after those who guide and direct its destinies.

### *7. Thou shalt magnify thy calling in the priesthood*

The oath and covenant of the priesthood have terms and conditions. The covenant on man’s part is: “I will receive the priesthood. I will magnify my calling in the priesthood. I will keep the commandments.” The actual language of the revelation states: “. . . live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.” (D&C 84:44.) For the Lord’s part, the covenant is: “I will, in that event, give you eternal life. All that my Father hath shall be given unto you.”

We have received the priesthood—we are struggling to keep the commandments—and we need to specialize in magnifying a calling in the priesthood. This means, “Let every man stand in his own office, and labor in his own calling; . . . that the system may be kept perfect.” (D&C 84:109-10.) The church organization would become perfect if elders did the work of elders, seventies did the work of seventies, and high priests did the work of high priests.

### *8. Thou shalt magnify, ennoble, and exalt the presidents of priesthood quorums*

Here are some significant questions we need to ask:

Have the strongest and most able elders in the wards been called to serve as elders quorum presidents?

Are bishops now restricted from calling those serving in elders quorum presidencies into other church callings unless specific approval is given by the stake president?

Are Melchizedek Priesthood quorum presidents sitting on the stand at priesthood meetings, and are they addressed as “President”?

Are elders quorum presidents being invited to speak and pray in meetings, and especially sacrament meetings?

Are newly sustained members of quorum presidencies announced in sacrament meeting in their wards?

Are quorum presidencies sustained annually in quorum meetings and then announced in sacrament meetings?

Have bishops provided adequate space for Melchizedek Priesthood leaders to conduct personal priesthood interviews, hold presidency meetings, and otherwise administer the affairs of the quorums?

Are elders quorum presidencies fully responsible for prospective elders?

Are personal priesthood interviews with elders quorum presidents being held by the stake president at least quarterly?

Are strong and capable members of the high council used in supervising elders quorums?

Does the stake hold a social event at least annually for elders and prospective elders and their wives?

#### *9. Thou shalt use the priesthood quorums to operate the programs of the Church*

Preside Joseph F. Smith declared: We expect to see the day, if we live long enough (and if some of us do not live long enough to see it, there are others who will), when every council of the Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will understand its duty; will assume its own responsibility, will magnify its calling, and fill its place in the Church, to the uttermost, according to the intelligence and ability possessed by it. When that day shall come, there will not be so much necessity for work that is now being done by the auxiliary organizations, because it will be done by the regular quorums of the Priesthood. The Lord designed and comprehended it from the beginning, and he has made provision in the Church whereby every need may be met and satisfied through the regular organizations of the Priesthood. It has truly been said that the Church is perfectly organized. The only trouble is that these organizations are not fully alive to the obligations that rest upon them. When they become thoroughly awakened to the requirements made of them, they will fulfill their duties more faithfully, and the work of the Lord will be all the stronger and more powerful and influential in the world.” (Gospel Doctrine, Deseret Book Co., 1973, pp 159-60.)

#### *10. Thou shalt serve thy fellowmen*

Service is essential to salvation. We can't go to our Father's kingdom unless we get outside ourselves and serve our fellowmen. Jesus set the pattern when he said, "I am among you as he that serveth." (Luke 22:27.) We have the first and great commandment in the New Testament: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37.) The Lord improved upon that when he gave it by latter-day revelation in these words: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him." (D&C 59:5.) I think that is the most perfect rendition of the first and great commandment: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:8.)

If we can operate within the framework of priesthood correlation and if we can teach and instill into the hearts of everyone the basic and fundamental concepts here involved, the Church gradually will begin to move in the right direction; souls will be saved; and we will receive joy and peace and satisfaction from our ministries and have eternal joy with our Father's saved souls in his kingdom.

## THE HOME TEACHING CONSTITUTION

### *Article I*

If we are to gain salvation, we must learn and live the gospel. There is no salvation in ignorance of Jesus Christ and his eternal laws. We are saved proportionately as we believe and obey.

### *Article II*

The gospel is revealed from God to man by His own voice, by the ministering of angels, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost.

### *Article III*

Parents are to teach their children. Gospel teaching is a family-centered, home-centered, parent and child relationship "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." (Deuteronomy 6:6-9.)

### *Article IV*

In order that families can be perfected and parents can teach their children, the Church is to teach the gospel, to present the message of salvation to its members and to the world. Paul said: "... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21.) Joseph Smith said: "After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel." (*Teachings*, p. 113.)

### *Article V*

Priesthood is the power and authority of God, delegated to man on earth, to act in all things for the salvation of men; and those who hold the priesthood are the Lord's agents through whom the Church and the gospel are administered. "And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God." (D&C 84:19.)

### *Article VI*

Priesthood quorums are to train those who hold the priesthood in (a) how to teach and govern their families, (b) how to administer the Church and the gospel, and (c) how to gain eternal life. Quorum presidents are to “sit in council” with their members “to teach them their duty,” and to lead them to eternal life in our Fathers kingdom. (D&C 107:85.)

### *Article VII*

Being so trained, priesthood bearers, both Aaronic and Melchizedek, are to teach, preach, expound, exhort; watch over the Church always; visit the house of each member; exhort them to pray vocally and in secret; exhort them to attend to all family duties; be with and strengthen the members of the Church; see that there is no iniquity in the Church; see that the members have no hardness toward each other; see that there is no backbiting nor evil speaking; see that all the members do their duty; and invite all to come unto Christ. In effect, they are to be the instruments in the Lord’s hands to fulfill the charge given by Moroni as he closed the ancient record: ‘Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.’ (Moroni 10:32-33.)

### *Article VIII*

Home teachers are priesthood representatives, and home teaching is the priesthood way of watching over the Church. Through it, priesthood quorums guide and strengthen their members so they in turn can perfect their families. Through it, fathers, families, and individuals are so guided that they do their duty, keep the commandments, and gain salvation. Properly performed, home teaching is the Lord’s way of making all of the blessings of the gospel available to all the members of his kingdom.

### *Article IX*

The objective of priesthood correlation is to organize and prosecute in the Lord’s way the work he has assigned to his church. All priesthood and auxiliary organizations and programs are to operate within the framework of priesthood correlation. There are three basic governing principles involved: (1) The family is the most important organization in time and in eternity, and the family and the individual have the primary responsibility to do all the things that the Lord has commanded and to operate all the programs of the Church. (2) The Church and all its organizations are service agencies to help the family and the individual do the things they must do to gain peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come. (3) Home teaching is the vehicle that makes available to the family and the individual the help of the Church and all its organizations.

## *Article X*

Home teachers are an essential part of the power line that transmits the mind and will of the Lord through the channels he has ordained to the family and the individual. If there is a break in this line or if attempts are made to transmit the power of the gospel through auxiliary circuits or fringe committees appointed for specific purposes, the Lord's people are denied the full blessings that a perfect organization perfectly operated would bring them.