

Priesthood Principles Outline - Mike Baird

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What is the Priesthood?

- "The priesthood is the power and authority of God. It has always existed and will continue to exist without end (see Alma 13:7–8; D&C 84:17–18). Through the priesthood, God created and governs the heavens and the earth. Through this power, He exalts His obedient children, bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39; see also D&C 84:35–38).
In mortality, the priesthood is the power and authority that God gives to man to act in all things necessary for the salvation of God’s children. The blessings of the priesthood are available to all who receive the gospel." (Handbook 2:2.1)

Priesthood – Power of Creation and Resurrection

- Moses 6:7
" Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also."
- Dallin H Oaks:
" the priesthood "is the consummate power on this earth. It is the power by which the earth was created." The scriptures teach that "this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also" (Moses 6:7). Thus, the priesthood is the power by which we will be resurrected and proceed to eternal life." (The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood, May, 2014 Ensign)

Melchizedek Priesthood

- D&C 107:18-19
" The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to *hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church— To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.*"

Priesthood Keys

What are Priesthood Keys?

- "Priesthood keys are the authority God has given to priesthood leaders to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth. The exercise of priesthood authority is governed by those who hold its keys (see D&C 65:2; 81:2; 124:123). Those who hold priesthood keys have the right to preside over and direct the Church within a jurisdiction." (Handbook 2:2.1)
- Joseph F Smith:
" The Priesthood in general is the authority given to man to act for God. Every man ordained to any degree of the Priesthood, has this authority delegated to him.
But it is necessary that every act performed under this authority shall be done at the proper time and place, in the proper way, and after the proper order. The power of directing these labors constitutes the keys of the Priesthood." (Gospel Doctrine, pg 136)

J Rueben Clark:

” So in carrying on the discipline and government of the Church, and in administering the rituals and ordinances thereof, the Lord has established a control that there may be order in the Church—the Lord has said his house is a house of order. Those controls make it necessary to have special authority for the exercise of the Priesthood functions and powers which are involved in these matters of discipline, government, and administration. Not every bearer of the Priesthood, no matter what grade he holds, can perform these special services, rituals, and ordinances; he must be authorized to perform them by one holding the right to authorize, and this right of performance under authorization is called a key.” (On the Way to Immortality and Eternal Life, pg 172)

Who holds *all* Priesthood Keys

- Lord Jesus Christ holds all keys
 - "He has given His Apostles the keys that are necessary for governing His Church" (Church Handbook of Instructions, pg 161)
- Not all priesthood keys are given to the Apostles on the earth
 - Bruce R McConkie:

” As a matter of fact, there are purposes for which the priesthood is designed to be used but for which we cannot use it because the keys of that particular thing have not been given. For instance, "by the power of the priesthood we will be resurrected." But none of us yet in mortality have the keys of the resurrection and so we cannot use the authority which the priesthood has in that field because no one can authorize us to use it. That key is not had.” ("The Keys of the Kingdom, Bruce R McConkie, Highlights from his life & teachings, pg 291-2)
- Belong to the Presidency of the High Priesthood
 - D&C 81:1-2

"...my servant Joseph Smith, Jun.; Unto whom I have given the keys of the kingdom, which belong always unto the Presidency of the High Priesthood"
- Only one man on earth at a time, the Senior Apostle, the President of the Church, can exercise them in their fullness
 - D&C 132:7

" and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred"

- Joseph F Smith:
” In their fullness, the keys are held by only one person at a time, the prophet and president of the Church.” (Gospel Doctrine, pg 136)
- Bruce R McConkie:
” The keys of the kingdom of God—the right and power of eternal presidency by which the earthly kingdom is governed—these keys, having first been revealed from heaven, are given by the spirit of revelation to each man who is both ordained an Apostle and set apart as a member of the Council of the Twelve. But since keys are the right of presidency, they can only be exercised in their fulness by one man on earth at a time. He is always the senior Apostle, the presiding Apostle, the presiding high priest, the presiding elder. He alone can give direction to all others, direction from which none is exempt. Thus, the keys, though vested in all of the Twelve, are used by any one of them to a limited degree only, unless and until one of them attains that seniority which makes him the Lord’s anointed on earth.” (“The Keys of the Kingdom, Ensign, May 1983, 21)

Who holds Priesthood keys?

- How many people hold keys in a Ward
 - Answer – 4
 - Bishop, EQ President, Teachers Q President, Deacons Q President
- What about the HP group?
 - 1 Quorum with Stake President as President
- How many people hold keys in the Stake Organization?
 - Answer – 1 - Stake President
- Who holds keys then? (Church Handbook of Instructions, pg 161)
 - Presidents of: Temples, Missions, Stakes, Districts, Quorums, branches and Bishops

What does it mean to delegate keys

- Joseph F Smith:
”He may delegate any portion of this power to another, in which case that person **holds** the keys of that particular labor. Thus, the president of a temple, the president of a stake, the bishop of a ward, the president of a mission, the president of a quorum, each holds the keys of the labors performed in that particular body or locality. His Priesthood is not increased by this special appointment, ... the president of an elders' quorum, for example, has no more

Priesthood than any member of that quorum. But he holds the power of directing the official labors performed in the mission or the quorum, or in other words, the keys of that division of that work.” (Gospel Doctrine, pg 136)

How long does one hold keys?

- Until released

Do counselors receive keys?

- "Counselors do not receive keys, but they do receive delegated authority by calling and assignment" (Church Handbook of Instructions, pg 161)

Delegation of Keys - Example

- Story Elder Bradford – President Dalton – Bishop Baird
 - Elder Bradford (1st Quorum of 70) holds no keys
 - Elder Bradford authorized (delegated by assignment to him) to call & set apart new Stake Presidency
 - Elder Bradford authorized (delegated by assignment to him) to call a Bishop if new Stake President is a Bishop
 - President Dalton authorized (before he was sustained & set apart) by Elder Bradford to call a Bishop
 - Bishop Baird called before Stake Conference when President Dalton & counselors were sustained
 - Authorization ended when Elder Bradford got on the plane for home

Priesthood Authority

- Dallin H Oaks:
 - ” I come now to the subject of priesthood authority. I begin with the three principles just discussed:
 - (1) priesthood is the power of God delegated to man to act for the salvation of the human family,
 - (2) priesthood authority is governed by priesthood holders who hold priesthood keys, and
 - (3) since the scriptures state that “all other authorities [and] offices in the church are appendages to this [Melchizedek] priesthood” (D&C 107:5), all that is done under the direction of those priesthood keys is done with priesthood authority.” (The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood, May, 2014 Ensign)
 - What does this 3rd point mean?

- Dallin H Oaks:
” Whoever functions in an office or calling received from one who holds priesthood keys exercises priesthood authority in performing her or his assigned duties. ” (The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood, May, 2014 Ensign)
- Dallin H Oaks:
” While the sisters have not been given the Priesthood, it has not been conferred upon them, that does not mean that the Lord has not given unto them authority. ... A person may have authority given to him, or a sister to her, to do certain things in the Church that are binding and absolutely necessary for our salvation, such as the work that our sisters do in the House of the Lord. They have authority given unto them to do some great and wonderful things, sacred unto the Lord, and binding just as thoroughly as are the blessings that are given by the men who hold the Priesthood.” (The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood, May, 2014 Ensign)

Powers of Heaven – Only on principles of Righteousness

- D&C 121: 36-37
- D&C 41
- D&C 45-46
- Richard G Scott:
” However, the conferring of authority alone does not of itself bestow the power of the office. The extent to which we can exercise the power of the priesthood depends upon personal worthiness, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to His commandments. (Honor the Priesthood and Use It Well)

Priesthood Principles for Administering to the sick

- “The priesthood can not be used contrary to the will of Him whose priesthood it is” Elder Dallin H Oaks (Training meeting 11/1/2008)
- Priesthood blessings such as healing occur according to our faith and the will of God
- D&C 121 “the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness”

Why isn't everyone healed even when the requisite faith is there?

- Spencer W Kimball:
” If all the sick for whom we pray were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would

be annulled and the basic principle of the gospel, free agency, would be ended. No man would have to live by faith....

- The power of the priesthood is limitless but God has wisely placed upon each of us certain limitations. I may develop priesthood power as I perfect my life, yet I am grateful that even through the priesthood I cannot heal all the sick. I might heal people who should die. I might relieve people of suffering who should suffer. I fear I would frustrate the purposes of God.” (Faith Proceeds the Miracle, pg 97,99)

Sealing and Anointing (Handbook 2:20.6)

- Anointing by a Melchizedek Priesthood holder
- Sealing: *Normally* two or more priesthood holders administer to the sick
 - "one may perform both the anointing and the sealing alone *if necessary*"
 - All things done by the Authority and not the "power" of the Melchizedek Priesthood
 - "Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs"
- Dallin H Oaks:
 - ” Anointing and Sealing are essential”
 - “Blessing is not essential. If we refrain from stating the blessing it doesn’t mean it won’t happen”
 - “Anointing and Sealing open the windows of Heaven to the blessings”
 - “We don’t anoint over and over again” (It goes back to the principle of the principle of the anointing and sealing opening the windows of Heaven to the blessings.)” (Training meeting 11/1/2008)

These principles and their application should be of comfort

- Those who receive blessings are concerned because “it wasn’t said” need not be concerned
- Those giving the blessings worried about what to say against expectations. “Do your best and leave it up to the Lord”

Ordinance Performed by Someone who is unworthy

- When someone is unworthy to exercise his priesthood yet does perform an ordinance does it invalidate the ordinance?
 - No. The ordinance is still valid for those receiving the ordinance.

- However the person who is unworthy to perform the ordinance yet does violates the sanctity of the ordinance and will be accountable for his actions to God.

Foreordination of Priesthood holders

- Alma 13:3-4
 " And this is the manner after which they were ordained—being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.

And thus they have been called to this holy calling on account of their faith, while others would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren."

Priesthood Blessings are for all

- Dallin H Oaks:
 " Unlike priesthood keys and priesthood ordinations, the blessings of the priesthood are available to women and to men on the same terms. The gift of the Holy Ghost and the blessings of the temple are familiar illustrations of this truth." (The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood, May, 2014 Ensign)
- Russel M Ballard:
 " When men and women go to the temple, they are both endowed with the same power, which is priesthood power. ... Access to the power and the blessings of the priesthood is available to all of God's children." (M. Russell Ballard, New Era, Apr. 2014, 4; Liahona, Apr. 2014, 48)