

**Regular Temple Attendance**  
**Raising the Bar for the Cooper Mountain Ward**  
**Mike Baird – Sacramento Meeting, November 13, 2005**

## **Introduction**

- Ask for prayers
  - Speak by Spirit (D&C 50:22)
  - Listen by Spirit
    - Important so that everyone feel what I am going to say
- Rachel and Peggy spoke of the Temple
  - I too will speak of the temple

## **"Raising the Bar"**

- Today I will speak backwards from what I normally do
  - behavior then doctrine & principles
- In August I was given direct direction to have a sacrament meeting on Temples and that I should address our ward
  - Since then as I have pondered what I should say
  - Through much pondering and prayer and temple attendance it has become clear to me what to say
- Best description or title I could give is:  
"Regular Temple Attendance – Raising the bar for the Cooper Mountain Ward"
  - The Missionary "raising the bar":
    - Held up standards of worthiness
    - Held up standards of preparation
    - Invitation to YM to step up to the bar or these standards
  - Today in a similar way - we are raising the bar or Standard for the Cooper Mountain Ward with regards to the temple
  - Cooper Mountain Standard: Every member, 12 years+ regularly attends the Temple
    - Similar to raising the bar for missionaries
    - I am holding up a standard of worthiness
      - Be worthy to hold a recommend
      - Let me make it clear – We are NOT changing worthiness standards or the Temple recommend questions
      - We are simply holding the worthiness standards up

- Attend Temple Regularly
  - I will speak to what I mean by "regular" in a few minutes
  - Invitation is for everyone 12+ to step up
- **Witness** – This direction is from the Lord
  - Lord would have us do collectively as a ward and individually
  - Everyone 12+ regularly attends the Temple

## Regular Attendance

- What does "Regular" mean?
- I'm not going to define "Regular" to mean the exact same thing for each of us
- I'm not going to tell each one what it means for you
- The Holy Ghost will guide you as to what that means for you individually
  - I have prayed that all will know
  - **When you decide correctly what it means to you - you will feel at peace with it**
- It may mean for you:
  - Couple times per week, once per week, biweekly, every 3<sup>rd</sup> week, monthly
  - May change as your circumstances change too
- It will not mean:
  - every 4-6 months, yearly, biyearly
- Elder Koeliker:  
 "Whatever your level of participation in the temple is today, it needs to increase." (BOW Stake Conference Leadership meeting, 11/6/2005)

## Youth

- I will speak now to Youth and Parents of Youth
- We do something special – unique in our ward – monthly temple attendance for our youth
- Rachel spoke of what regular temple attendance has done for her
- President Dalton: "We don't fully realize the impact on our youth of going to the temple monthly"
- Elder Koeliker to President Dalton: You have high statistics – what do you do?
  - Answer from President Dalton: "We take our youth to the Temple"
- I feel the most important thing we do as Youth leaders is provide this opportunity for our youth to go to the temple regularly
- Youth – Now is the time to begin your lifetime of regular temple attendance
  - Do what it takes to be there

- Parents - move heaven and earth to get your children there
  - We think nothing of driving for hours to "support our children"
  - We spend countless hours at soccer practices & games
  - Yet sometimes we can't get up early Saturday morning to get our children to the Temple?
  - None of these other activities will have the same impact as getting up with your children and getting them here at 6:00 AM on Saturday mornings when we go to the Temple

### **Those who haven't been often**

- Let me now speak to those of us that have not been often to the Temple
  - You may feel a little uncomfortable about going
    - You might feel anxiety with this "raising of the bar"
    - This is all not going to go away
      - We can't stick our head in the sand or ignore this call any other way
        - Make no mistake this is a clear call – yet remember it is a *gentle invitation*
  - When you go to the temple:
    - It is not a race to see who can get to the Celestial Kingdom first
    - It is not a test to see if you remember everything from last time
    - Don't focus on the mechanics
    - Focus on the blessings and covenants
      - We don't "renew" our covenants when we go
      - But we can re-acquaint ourselves and re-dedicate ourselves
  - We may feel we don't have enough time
    - Gordon B Hinckley:  
"Where time and circumstances permit, members are encouraged to replace some leisure activities with temple service" (Letter from 1<sup>st</sup> Presidency, March 11, 2003)
    - Just as reading the Book of Mormon per the prophet's challenge requires adjusting our priorities and time so to does this raising the bar

## Consistency

- Regular attendance at the temple is in harmony with the principle of consistency
- Lord would like us to be consistent
- Make steady, measured growth
- We are asked to have regular
  - Scripture study
  - Prayer
  - Family Home Evening
  - Church attendance
  - Temple attendance
- Elder Neal A Maxwell:  
"eternal progression rests on the assumption of gradual but regular improvement in our lives. In the city of Enoch the near perfection of this people occurred "in process of time" over many, many years. This is also the case with us." (Deposition of a Disciple, p. 71)
- This call today is not asking for wild frantic efforts
  - Mosiah 4:27  
"And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength"
- Elder Neal A Maxwell:  
"Given our weaknesses, however, paced progress is essential, much as God used six measured and orderly creative periods (followed by respite) in preparing man and this earth. There is a difference, therefore, between being steadily and effectively or "anxiously " engaged, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, being frantically engaged one moment and being passive and detached the next." (Notwithstanding My Weakness, pg 3)
- What is important in life is being on the path moving forward
  - The focus is not on how fast or slow we are moving forward but that we are on the path
- Bruce R McConkie  
" You don't have to do what Jacob said, 'Go beyond the mark.' You don't have to live a life that's truer than true. You don't have to have an excessive zeal that becomes fanatical and becomes unbalancing. What you have to do is stay in the mainstream of the Church - keeping commandments, paying your tithing, serving in the organizations of the Church, loving the Lord, staying on the straight and narrow path. " ("The Probationary Test of Mortality," Devotional Address given at University of Utah Institute of Religion, January 10, 1982, p. 11.)



## Exposure to the Spirit

- Elder Hartman Rector Jr... quote when I was a teenager
  - This had a profound effect on me
  - "Parents, take every opportunity to "expose" your children to the Spirit"
    - I remember my mother driving me several hours to see Elder Mark E Petersen
  - The effect on me in of itself is an example of this principle
- Going to the Temple is "exposing" yourself to the Spirit
  - President Waite (Portland Temple President at time):  
"Coming to the Temple is like receiving an inoculation of the Spirit against Satan and the world" (to Cooper Mountain Youth on Youth baptism trip on the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of monthly temple trips)
- There is something about going to the temple that changes us
  - I saw this in my parents after they became Temple ordinance workers
  - There is something about communion with the Spirit there that:
    - strengthens us
    - knocks off rough edges
    - Changes us

## Not "routine"

- What about those who regularly attend the temple?
- Elder Koeliker:  
"Whatever your level of participation in the temple is today, it needs to increase." (BOW Stake Conference Leadership meeting, 11/6/2005)
- David A Bednar:  
" In our customary Church vocabulary, we often speak of going to church, going to the temple, and going on a mission. Let me be so bold as to suggest that our rather routine emphasis on going misses the mark.  
The issue is not going to church; rather, the issue is worshipping and renewing covenants as we attend church. The issue is not going to or through the temple; rather, the issue is having in our hearts the spirit, the covenants, and the ordinances of the Lord's house. " ("Becoming a Missionary" Ensign Nov,2005)
- As we regularly attend the Temple we can increase our qualitative level of participation

## **Blessings of attending the Temple**

- Rachel spoke of blessing she has received
- Peggy spoke of blessings she has received
- Gordon B Hinckley:  
"We repeat what we have said before: make a habit of going to the house of the Lord. There is no better way to ensure proper living than temple attendance. It will crowd out the evils of pornography, substance abuse, and spiritual atrophy. It will strengthen marriage and family relations." ("April 2005 Conference, closing session remarks)

## **Coming to Christ – what this is really about**

- What this is really about is an invitation to come unto Christ and be perfected in him by attending the temple
  - By attending regularly we will receive the blessings spoken of by our Prophet
- **Moroni 10:32**

## **Testify**