

THE FAMILY

A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

An official proclamation read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah. He introduced it with this preface: "With so much of sophistry that is passed off as truth, with so much of deception concerning standards and values, with so much of allurements and enticement to take on the slow stain of the world, we have felt to warn and forewarn. In furtherance of this we of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles now issue a proclamation to the Church and to the world as a declaration and reaffirmation of standards, doctrines, and practices relative to the family which the prophets, seers, and revelators of this church have repeatedly stated throughout its history."

WE, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that ^amarriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

2 All human beings—male and female—are created in the ^aimage of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. ^bGender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

3 In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters ^aknew and ^bworshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward ^cperfection and ultimately realize his or

her divine destiny as an ^dheir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ^eordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to ^freturn to the presence of God and for families to be ^gunited eternally.

4 The ^afirst commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God's commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

5 We declare the ^ameans by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God's

1 ^a D&C 49:15.
2 ^a Gen. 1:26–27.
 ^b 1 Cor. 11:11.
3 ^a Jer. 1:5.

^b Heb. 12:9.
^c Matt. 5:48.
^d Rom. 8:17.
^e D&C 132:19.

^f Hel. 14:17.
^g D&C 130:2.
4 ^a Gen. 1:28 (Moses 2:28).
5 ^a Gen. 2:24–25.

eternal plan.

6 Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. “Children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalms 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to ^ateach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be ^blaw-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

7 The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is ^aessential to His eternal plan. Children are ^bentitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete ^cfidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when ^dfounded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion,

work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to ^epreside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to ^fprovide the necessities of life and ^gprotection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the ^hnurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as ⁱequal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. ^jExtended families should lend support when needed.

8 We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse ^aspouse or ^boffspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the ^ccalamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

9 We call upon responsible citizens and ^aofficers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

6 ^a Isa. 54:13; Prov. 2:26;

Eph. 6:4.

^b D&C 134:5; AofF 12.

7 ^a D&C 131:1–4.

^b D&C 83:4.

^c Hosea 2:20.

^d Matt. 6:33.

^e Gen. 3:16; D&C 121:41.

^f D&C 83:2.

^g Alma 43:47; D&C 134:11.

^h Prov. 29:15; D&C 93:40.

ⁱ Gen. 2:18; 2 Cor. 6:14.

^j D&C 90:25.

8 ^a Jacob 2:7, 9.

^b Luke 17:2.

^c Nahum 3:8–10; D&C 109:45–46.

9 ^a D&C 134:3.