

D&C Lesson # 45
The Family Is Ordained of God
(A Family Proclamation)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(Here is inspirational background and evidences supporting the Restoration)

I. To put the “Family Proclamation” at the end of lessons on the *Doctrine and Covenants*, all of which pertain to modern revelation, is highly appropriate. For **this Proclamation truly is, as are all others before, a Revelation.**

A. Elder Dallin H. Oaks made this clear at October Conference, 2017. He said:

“The inspiration identifying the need for a proclamation on the family came to the leadership of the Church over 23 years ago. It was a surprise to some who thought the doctrinal truths about marriage and the family were well understood without restatement.⁸ Nevertheless, we felt the confirmation and we went to work. Subjects were identified and discussed by members of the Quorum of the Twelve for nearly a year. Language was proposed, reviewed, and revised. **Prayerfully we continually pleaded with the Lord for His inspiration on what we should say and how we should say it. We all learned “line upon line, precept upon precept,” as the Lord has promised (D&C 98:12).** (Emphasis added).

B. Elder Oaks’ full statements confirm the whole process was “revelatory.” And he pointed out when President Gordon B. Hinckley first revealed the proclamation to Latter-day Saint women, he did so, showing that **it was meant, as all prophecy is, to forewarn:**

“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.**”⁹

C. This was not the first prophetic warning of why the world should not abandon good moral standards. One given clear back in 1859 by Charles W. Penrose was highly revelatory. Note that he foresaw with great precision future events which could not have been foreseen **except by revelation.**

“the passions of human nature will be put to the vilest uses [and] **new diseases will silently eat their ghastly way through the ranks of the wicked**” (*Millennial Star* 21:582).

Note that he foresaw new diseases which would be silent for a long time, but whose result would be “ghastly.” Such new diseases have indeed appeared, and they have come due to sexual promiscuity.

D. Elder Oaks did not just teach, he **testified** that the Proclamation came by revelation: “I testify of the truth and eternal importance of the family proclamation, revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ to His Apostles for the exaltation of the children of God (*Doctrine and Covenants* 131:1–4), in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

II. But as Elder Oaks’ remarks show, an important feature of the Proclamation is that it **lays out the True View as opposed to world views which are faulty and are leading to disaster.**

A. That is, it revealed the Eternal Truths **behind** age-old commandments given in scriptures such as the Bible. And that makes a huge difference.

1. For it shows such commandments cannot be changed simply because “times have changed,” as so many proclaim.

B. This writer has noticed more and more media productions romp through all kinds of wrong behavior, then end with everything seeming to be okay if there is some kind of “family” reconciliation, better communication, or togetherness. (Such as *On Golden Pond*).

C. But the Proclamation shows the “**true essence of Family**” is meant by the Lord to become a **Righteous Eternal Unit**, something far beyond the lip service given to “family” in modern media.

D. President Russell M. Nelson explained that essence when he said: “In God’s eternal plan, salvation is an individual matter; [but] exaltation is a family matter.”²

E. Elder Oaks gave clarification: “God created this earth according to His plan to provide His spirit children a place to experience mortality as a necessary step toward the glories He desires for all His children. While there are various kingdoms and glories, our Heavenly Father’s ultimate desire for His children is what President Monson called “eternal life in the kingdom of God,” which is exaltation in families.”

F. **Healthy, well-functioning families are not only vital because they give stability to societies on earth; Righteous living families are also the vital essence of a Happy and Productive Eternal Existence.**

This true knowledge is unique among Latter-day Saints.

And this is the reason for the need of The Family Proclamation.

III. Failure to adhere to true family values with high moral standards, which were once given more wide-spread acceptance, is indeed leading to disaster.

A. In the early nineties, a commission of educational, political, medical and business leaders studied the problems of American youth. They issued a report called *Code Blue*. After reporting the then current statistics of teen suicides, teen pregnancies, teen homicides, teen substance abuse, each of which had risen between 300 to over 600 % since the forties and fifties, the report concluded:

“The challenges to the health and well-being of America’s youth are not primarily rooted in illness or economics. Unlike the past, the problem is not childhood disease or unsanitary slums. The most basic cause of suffering... is profoundly self-destructive *behavior*: Drinking, Drugs, Violence, Promiscuity. A crisis of behavior and belief. A crisis of character.” (*Imprimis*, Sept. 1991, p. 1).

And today, in every area of study, those problems have only continued to expand and escalate.

IV. The enlightening and powerful Worldview the Family Proclamation reveals is:

A. “Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”

1. The Family is not just a convenient institution set up my man. It came from a wise God who established it for the Eternal Happiness of Man.

B. “Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.”

1. Individuals are not male or female because of accidents. That heritage is also Eternal.

C. “God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.”

1. While some may be tempted by other desires, and multiple desires, procreation is a major purpose of marital unions and families. And if God's laws concerning such are obeyed, the family unit will be eternal.

D. The proclamation affirms the continuing duty of husband and wife to multiply and replenish the earth and their "solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children:"

1. While many have abandoned a desire for children out of selfishness or fear caused by the large world population, the Lord's commandment still stands. Furthermore, the real problem now developing in the world is *lack* of population growth. Due to low birth, Societies are getting older and older, which is causing much destabilization.

E. The Proclamation also declares "Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity."

1. It is a blessing to a child to have both a father and a mother and to have the stability that comes with loyalty and faithfulness.

F. The Proclamation solemnly warns against the abuse of spouse or offspring, and it affirms that "happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ."

1. Families cannot survive well if there is abuse. And happiness in families is more likely when the teachings of Jesus Christ are lived.

G. Finally, the Proclamation calls for the promotion of official "measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society."

1. It invites society and government itself **to work to help stabilize the highly endangered but most essential part of society, the well-functioning family unit.**

V. In words of the greatest soberness The Family Proclamation ends by warning:

"We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, 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 calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets."

What a powerful, prophetic statement! It is indeed the voice of the Lord who is speaking through His prophets. Unfortunately, we see their warnings already coming to pass.