

# Direct Link to Christ

Elder Richard G. Scott

May 17, 1992 Layton Northridge Stake Priesthood Meeting

Elder Scott started by explaining that he had been on the phone to South America to a branch president who had gone to the church building that day and had found a note giving the names of several leaders of the church in that area and stating that if they proceeded to hold church that day that those people listed would be killed. He stated that we in the safety of the Wasatch Mountains have no idea of the challenges the members in other parts of the world are experiencing. Is it possible that we are too comfortable? He also said he did not really know why he was in our stake conference; that it was a last minute change of assignment, and that he usually does not come to Utah Stake conferences unless there is something necessary to teach or a major change to make.

Elder Scott then wrote on the blackboard "Come unto Ch", and then said – Brethren, I am concerned about a very serious problem in the church and it is that we have been teaching each other to Come unto What? He said he feared we have been teaching each other to Come unto Church, when we should have been teaching each other to Come Unto Christ. He stated that he has attended many testimony meetings and sacrament meetings lately where the members will bear testimony that they believe the church is true, but hardly anyone ever testifies that they believe in Christ, nor do they tell of their love for Christ.

Then he drew a picture on the Blackboard like the one in Figure 1.

He asked the priesthood leaders present in the meeting 'Where on this picture are you supposed to be in relation to Christ and one of His children?'

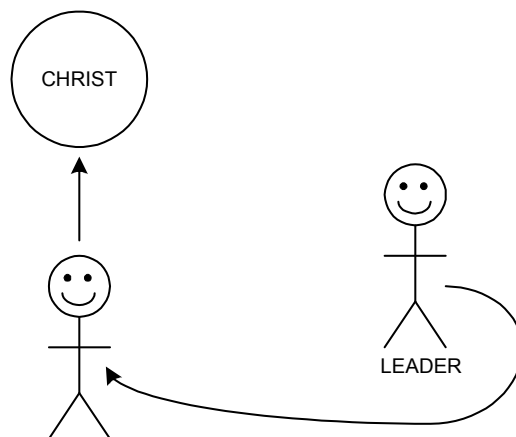


Figure 1 - Leader's Place

One of the brethren said "We should be behind the member helping him to come unto Christ" and another brother said we should be at his side bringing him with us. Elder Scott said those were good thoughts, but then quoted Pres. Harold B. Lee when he said that if you want to lift someone, you must be on higher spiritual ground. Therefore, priesthood leaders should be on higher ground, but he drew the leader's figure off to the side helping the member.

He said, "Now here is the point I want to make. DO NOT PUT YOURSELF BETWEEN CHRIST AND ONE OF HIS CHILDREN, so that you block the path. AND DO NOT PUT THE CHURCH IN THE PLACE OF CHRIST!"

He elaborated on how we as leaders are really servants, to teach others how to establish "A DIRECT LINK TO CHRIST." He explained that the real purpose of the Church was to bring the members unto Christ and that our only purpose as leaders was to serve the members by teaching them how to get to Christ and to live the fulness of the gospel. Elder Scott emphasized that a righteous priesthood leader always strives to lead people to Christ and never to look to himself as a source of truth. He also pointed out how leading or helping others to Christ, brings both the people he helps and himself to the source of revelation and truth. He warned strongly against anyone who, through thinking they were in a powerful position, might begin to block the way to Christ, by teaching that the people had to go through himself or other leaders to get to Christ. He then explained how we establish that direct link to Christ is by direct communication with Him through personal revelation, the rock upon which our own personal salvation is built.



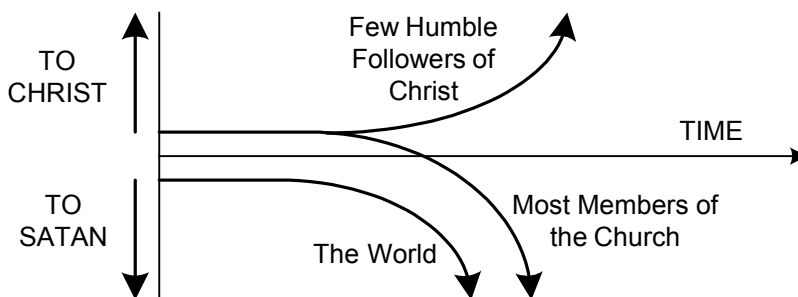
Figure 2 - Time and Progression

He then quoted D&C 123: 12-17 where it says that we must bring to light the hidden things of darkness (which

the footnote says is secret combinations) and he emphasized that point saying that he did not have the time to go into that subject now, that it would take over two hours alone, but he said “Brethren, I want you to go home and study D&C 123 diligently until you understand completely what it means and how it affects your life.”

Then he drew an axis on the black board as shown in Figure 2.

He then asked “If up is a course toward God, then which way is the world headed?” Everyone agreed that it is on a sharp logarithmic curve downward. Then he asked “Which way are most members of the Church headed?” One brother tried to say that maybe we are not really making a lot of progress upwards, but just wavering between God and Satan so it ends up being a wavy line straight forward. Elder Scott said he did not believe that was the case with most members, maybe a few. He said that there are a few humble followers of Christ who are on a course back to God and making a curve of progress as shown below, but that he believed that most members are so concerned with being part of the world and being acceptable to the world that they are on a course of downward drift like the world but maybe not so drastic a downturn. He pointed out how we accept so much wickedness that we would not have accepted twenty years or so ago (through our exposure to TV and Movies and Music), and even many of the Saints are partaking of that wickedness, thinking that it is just part of being here.



**Figure 3 - Paths of Different Groups**

He said that one of the MOST SERIOUS downward trends is that of Mothers working outside the home contrary to the inspired counsel of Pres. Benson. He said he knows that there are some mothers who have to work as single mothers or because fathers cannot, due to health problems etc., and he understands how hard it is to make ends meet in this wicked society. He said he feels that most working mothers do so because couples have coveted worldly goods so much that they either go into debt and have to send the mother to work to pay for things they want, or instead of curbing their desires or selling what they cannot pay for, they rationalize that the wife can just work until the goods are paid for and then they see more and more things they want to buy. Then luxuries become necessities and we think we can't get by without them, such as having two cars.

He then turned the time over to Elder William O. Nelson who talked about problems and the real solution to those problems. Elder Nelson asked the brethren to tell him what problems they as priesthood leaders were dealing with, especially the bishops. These were listed on the board as things like: Financial problems (not enough income to support the things we have purchased or would like to purchase), Divorce, Child Abuse, Spouse Abuse, Drug Abuse, Teen Pregnancies, Immorality, Dishonesty with others, etc.

Then Elder Nelson pointed out the fact that NONE of those things were problems. He indicated that those are only symptoms of one problem. He asked what the ONE PROBLEM was. No one answered.

He went to the board and wrote down: “Lack of Conversion to Christ” He pointed out how all these things were only symptoms of the lack of conversion to Christ and how if everyone were to Come unto Christ that these symptoms would disappear in their lives and bishops and priesthood leaders would not be having to deal with so many of these supposed problems. He said that if we as priesthood leaders would go out into the homes of the members and teach them how to Come Unto Christ that all of these problems would disappear for all those who would come unto Christ, or at least they would be greatly minimized as people would either become self-reliant through their relationship with Christ and those symptoms would not be so real and obvious in their lives.

Elder Nelson pointed out that our natural solution to these symptoms is to run the people through programs and meetings and to organize more and more meetings to discuss the problems of the people. He said the real solution is to get out of the meetings and go help the people to achieve personal conversion to Christ and to understand the principles of Faith and the Pure Love of Christ. He listed on the board the following Scriptures and suggested study and concentrated effort to understand their meaning:

Alma 4: 4-12  
Alma 22: 15-16  
Alma 31: 5 and Alma 17: 2-4  
Mosiah 18: 17-25

Helaman 5: 4-10, 15, 17, 19  
3 Nephi 6: 12-15 and 3 Nephi 7: 16-17  
Moroni 6:4  
D & C 50

Then Elder Scott took the remainder of the time teaching us of the absolute importance of being sanctified. He started by quoting D&C 43: 8-10 and explaining that we are to be sanctified (as a commandment) by binding ourselves to ACT on all inspiration we receive through the Holy Ghost. We must seek inspiration on all our actions and decisions and we MUST OBEY WHEN WE RECEIVE ANY INSPIRATION. Otherwise, if we don't seem to be concerned enough to follow its promptings, then the spirit will cease to speak to us. He said we are to sanctify ourselves by keeping ALL the commandments the Lord has given, which, of course, means we must find out what the commandments are by studying with great diligence.

He then quoted D&C 43: 15-16 which says that we are not sent forth to be taught by men but that we are to be taught from on high, and to sanctify ourselves, that we might be endowed with power. He showed how this means that the bulk of our knowledge and wisdom should come from being taught through the scriptures and directly by the Spirit. We do not take advantage of the blessings the Lord has promised to teach us ALL things by the power of the spirit. Do we not have enough faith that the Lord really means what he says in scripture? Would we rather place our faith in what we learn through the world? He suggested that we should learn to use all three available avenues of learning: 1. What we hear. 2. What we see. 3. What we feel through the Holy Spirit, which is the most important of the three ways of learning.

Next, Elder Scott explained that we live in a very wicked society, one that is comparable to that wicked society that was destroyed in the days of Noah, and in Sodom and Gomorrah. He then very strongly and pointedly said, "NOBODY IN THIS WICKED SOCIETY WILL SURVIVE WITHOUT FAITH IN CHRIST AND THE POWER THAT COMES FROM COMING UNTO CHRIST."

He talked about how he and his wife were content with orange crates for furniture. He had rented an apartment that he thought would be nice for his wife when they were first married that they did not have enough income to pay for, and one day he came home from work and she said to him, "We have a choice to make. We can either stay in this apartment or we can eat." They left the apartment, for a smaller one. He said "I know many of you might think that I just don't understand, but let me assure you I do." He also related about sleeping on a mattress on the floor, rather than go into debt for a bed.

He very emphatically stated that we MUST SEE THE IMPORTANCE of following the inspired counsel of our prophet Ezra Taft Benson as he pleaded with us to see the destroying power to our families and our society if mothers are not at home. And he reminded us of the great truth that "Happiness comes from what we are, not from what we have."

He told of a wind-up watch he used to have that constantly had to be wound up to keep it working, but how he now uses an automatic watch that does not have to be wound up, but keeps correct time and does other functions. He talked about how dependable that automatic watch is, and then explained that people are similar. Some people need constant winding up, and lack self-reliance and the ability to "go" by themselves. And some people are automatic, and have made decisions in life to be true and faithful to the teachings of the Lord and to live their lives by faith when they cannot see the end from the beginning. They are those who when faced with alternatives, unwaveringly choose to follow those that are consistent with the teachings of the Savior. These people have decided that while they will work to obtain enough for the needs of their family, they will not set their hearts on the acquisition of wealth or power but will serve and be led by the Lord in all they do. He talked of the criticism that such people sometimes get, from those who would call them fanatical, and who do not understand why they don't do what everyone else in the world seems to do. Elder Scott promised that through quiet, uncompromising determination to live a righteous life would come inspiration and power beyond their imaginations.

NOTE: Elder Scott quoted President Ezra Taft Benson many, many times during the three meetings he attended in our stake conference.

I would strongly urge anyone reading this account to go back and study the last 5 or 6 years of conference talks of Elder Scott so that you may understand how he has been pleading with us to understand the need to come unto Christ and how we do that. Especially read the October 1991 talk in the Nov 91 Ensign.

He is a servant of Christ, a very humble and loving follower of Christ, and was very inspired in teaching the pearls of great price he shared with us in the Layton Northridge Stake. I believe he was sent by the Lord to teach us those things for a very specific and important reason.