

2018 General Conference
"Lift Up Your Head!"



Brothers and Sisters:

Welcome to the 2018 General Conference. I am grateful for your presence and trust that you have come in response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is my prayer that each one has come with a sense of personal responsibility for the presence of the Spirit in the events of this week. Hopefully, we have all come in sincere prayer and fasting, which will continue throughout the Conference. It is also my hope that we have come in humility and true repentance, recognizing that this Conference will be of value only if we individually, and as a united body, submit ourselves to the Lord and allow His Spirit to direct this conference.

There is no time for debating or posturing over who is or who is not a part of God's church. God will make that determination based on His definition, not ours. (Please read Psalm 14; D & C 3:16a; Mosiah 9:50-55; Mosiah 11:125-135; 3rd Nephi 12:25-35.) Now is the time for us to "be doing." (1 Chronicles 22:16) It is time to quit talking about how we can become His people, etc. and get to work! My concern is that we may have waited too long now, having spent all our time and energy talking about who is qualified to do the work and how to do the work while the season of the harvest has come and gone.

The Lord has told us, even in recent times, that He still desires to gather us unto Himself and is still willing to allow us to participate in His work of gathering souls unto Himself. But, we have to decide if we will truly accept and respond to that invitation, and we have to do so now. We will be able to know, even this week, if we are acceptable unto Him. If we are, His Spirit will be with us and guide us. He has so promised and His promises are sure. If we do not experience His presence this week, it will be because we have not chosen to respond to Him. I plead with you to repent, come out of Babylon, and join together in mighty prayer seeking His will for you/us. Do not procrastinate in your response to Him (Alma 16:226-239). Make good use of this time together.

Our theme this week is "Lift up your Heads!" This act of looking upward, together with embracing the truth, is our part in the everlasting covenant which God made with Enoch (Genesis 9:21-23 I.V). Is it possible that even this week we can act together in a manner that will result in Zion looking down upon the earth, in the heavens shaking with gladness, and the earth trembling with joy? Is it possible that we could have the privilege of the general assembly of the church of the firstborn coming down out of heaven and being present with us, and possessing the earth where we are gathered for the week? The only variable is our response – our willingness to embrace the truth and look upward. I plead with you to look upward and not be distracted by Babylon or anything other than the Master's voice this week.

May God have mercy upon us, may we live so as to receive Him into our midst this week, may we submit ourselves unto Him that we might yet be allowed to participate in bringing souls unto Him for eternity. Recognizing and acknowledging my nothingness before God, I also still hope to be allowed to serve with you.

Your Brother in Christ,

Sherman Phipps