

Classic Thoughts

The Restoration of the Priesthood

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



May 15 is a day of celebration in the Church. We commemorate . . . [the] restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, which occurred on May 15, 1829. The restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood occurred a short time later. . . .

Can you imagine what a wonderful experience this restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood must have been for Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery when John the Baptist spoke to them? Here was a man who had lived upon the earth more than 1,800 years earlier. Now he was speaking in English to two young men while he held his hands upon their heads. His was a resurrected body. Theirs were mortal bodies. They felt his hands . . . and understood the words that he spoke. . . .

He told them, among other things, that, while the authority he gave them authorized them to baptize, it did not include the authority to bestow the Holy Ghost. Another order of the priesthood was necessary for this, and it would be given to them by Peter, James, and John.

That marvelous event followed. . . . What is this remarkable gift and power that has come to us with no price other than our personal worthiness . . .

It is the power of the Almighty given to man to act in His name. . . . It is different from all other powers and authorities on the face of the earth. Without it there could be a church in name only, lacking authority to administer in the things of God. With it, nothing is impossible in carrying forward the work of the kingdom of God. . . .

It includes the right to receive of the things of God. It carries the responsibility to instruct. It holds the authority to govern. It grants the power to bless. . . .

How precious is the gift of God that has come to us. . . .

May we reflect on the wonder of that which we have. ●

(Ensign, October 1988, 69–72.)



At a Churchwide fireside in 1988, President Gordon B. Hinckley, who was then First Counselor in the First Presidency, shared his thoughts on the restoration of the priesthood.

