

25 Women and the Priesthood

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One of the current issues and concerns of many who seek to change the church revolve around “Women and the Priesthood.” Those who believe that it is time that women be ordained to the priesthood need first to understand the priesthood and address the answers to a few questions, such as: What is Priesthood? What is the purpose of the priesthood? Is there a “power” bestowed with the priesthood? What is the difference between power and authority? These issues will be addressed later in this chapter; however, a basic understanding of the priesthood should precede any discussion as to why the priesthood has been limited to male members.

This chapter will include a brief history of the priesthood, a discussion of the Patriarchal Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood, with a brief mention of the Aaronic Priesthood and their corresponding “authorities” or responsibilities.

What is Priesthood? The stock response is “the power and authority to act in God’s name.” The priesthood organization (sometimes called “the church”) is the organization that administers the gospel and makes available the ordinances to those who desire and are worthy to participate in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The “Priesthood” itself: is an *authority* that is given, passed or transferred. The word “hood” implies ‘*a responsibility given and accepted*’ often by covenant. A “*priest*” is one who serves and ministers to man for and in-behalf of God. The word “hood”, connected to that of “*priest*”, becomes “*Priest-hood*” which is the “*authority to serve and minister to mankind for and in-behalf of God.*” Service is truly the activity arm of the priesthood.

Many view the priesthood as a miraculous God-like “power” that is invested or bestowed upon an individual that can move mountains and raise the dead. Man cannot actually hold the power that makes God, God, let alone view His works.

5 Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth. (Moses 1:5)

The power that belongs to God is inherent in God himself (D&C 121:36) but there is an authority (“rights of the priesthood”) that are “connected to the powers of heaven,” which “right” is to serve and bless others as an authorized ambassador of God. The authority that exists in the church must be provable by a certificate of ordination and worthiness through record keeping and the church organization. The Priesthood has no inherent “power” in and of itself, for “*no power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood*” (D&C 121:41) or priesthood position.

Nowhere in scripture is the priesthood invoked as a power to initiate a miracle or healing. All miracles are done in the name of Jesus Christ and by faith. It is by faith that one is healed or may heal; it is power of faith that moves the mountain. The vocal mention of the authority of the priesthood holder in the administering of an ordinance is for the record keeping that is required of

an ordination or blessing within the organization of the church and its community of saints (D&C 20:63-64). An individual that performs a gospel ordinance within the church must vocally recognize (state) their authority as part of the record keeping process, but the authoritative power behind that ordinance is faith and the name of Jesus Christ.

Abraham is told that the “rights of the priesthood” (D&C 121:36) is the “right” (authority) to administer the “rites” (ordinances) of the gospel. The priesthood is an adopted lineage and an organization of administration. Abraham was so righteous that he wanted a posterity that could and would serve God by serving and blessing all of mankind.

11 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in *thy Priesthood*) and in thy seed (that is, *thy Priesthood*), for I give unto thee a promise *that this right* shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) *shall all the families of the earth be blessed*, even with the blessings of the gospel, *which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal*. (Abraham 2:11)

There is no ‘power’ in the priesthood (the ‘Power of the priesthood’ is the authority to administer) that performs the ordinance, nor any power in the ordinance itself. The real power of any ordinance lies in the character change initiated by the *power of hope*. A loving Father has made sure that no priesthood power is able to defy one’s spiritual agency. For this reason, Satan was cast out of heaven (Moses 4:3). One could be baptized a million times or participate in any ordinance of the gospel multiple times over, yet these ordinances have no *power* over the individual receiving them if the person receiving the ordinance chooses not to change his character. The power behind any ordinance lies in the agency of the person who receives it. There is no ordinance that can ‘repent’ you, no ordinance that can ‘faith’ you, nor is there any ordinance that can perfect you or change your will into God’s will. The ordinances exist for a “hope.” Speaking of all Melchizedek Priesthood ordinances, Alma explains what the priesthood ordinances are for:

16 Now these ordinances were given after this manner, *that* thereby the people ***might look forward*** on the Son of God, it being a type of his order, or it being his order, and this *that they might look forward* to him for a remission of their sins, *that they might enter into the rest of the Lord*. (Alma 13:16)

The ordinances are a hope of a future reality IF the receiver chooses to change his character and begins to exercise faith unto repentance. It could be a hope of being washed and becoming clean, or a hope of rising in the first resurrection, or a hope of having the Holy Ghost as a constant companion. The reality of the power lies within the individual, not the priesthood holder or the ordinances of the priesthood. The “power” is wholly in the agency and change of the individual, ‘acting in futurity’ (D&C 101:78) in the hope of a future reality. However, the ordinances must still be administered by someone who is authorized by the church as part of their record keeping responsibility.

The following pages will address the authority and responsibilities of the different priesthoods as defined by Joseph Smith and scripture. Addressed in light of the standards found in scriptures, the issue of women and the priesthood can be understood and put in proper perspective.

Three Grand Orders

Joseph Smith taught that; "There are three grand orders of priesthood referred to [in the Epistle to the Hebrews]" and then outlines them as "the Melchizedek, the Patriarchal, and the Aaronic" (*TPJS*, p. 322-23; HC 5:554-55). Each of these different 'orders' of priesthood have selective and separate responsibilities that would govern their use and authority in the administration of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Patriarchal Priesthood

The Book of Genesis is the priesthood manual for the patriarchal priesthood. Under the patriarchal order, mentioned throughout the Book of Genesis, the patriarch or father was *prophet, priest, and king* to his family. He would give inspired direction and provide the priesthood ordinances for the salvation and exaltation of his wife and children, while providing food and shelter for their proper growth, nourishment, and protection.

The government of God is Patriarchal. It consists of the Patriarch acting as *Prophet, Priest, and King*. Anciently, the authority and calling of a father and patriarch as a "*prophet*" would be to provide the inspired direction and guidance to those for whom he was responsible. As the "*priest*," the father was to stand as a mediator between his family and God, providing the ordinances of salvation and exaltation for those in his immediate care. Acting as a "*king*" in the ancient world, the patriarchal responsibility was to take care of the temporal needs of his family (subjects). He (the King) was to provide for and protect his people. This truth is taught in the address of King Benjamin in the first few chapters of Mosiah. The patriarchal priesthood authority has the authority to administer the gospel and provide *direction* to his family line and to none others. Speaking of this patriarchal order, the Doctrine and Covenants teaches that this authority passes only from father to son. The "order of this priesthood" in the quote below refers to the Patriarchal Priesthood as Adam the patriarch of the race provides the blessings to his direct line of righteous posterity and future 'grand patriarchs.'

40 The order of *this priesthood was confirmed to be handed down from father to son*, and rightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made.

41 This order was instituted in the days of Adam, and came down by lineage in the following manner:

42 From Adam to Seth, who was ordained by Adam at the age of sixty-nine years, and was blessed by him three years previous to his (Adam's) death, and received the promise of God by his father, that his posterity should be the chosen of the Lord, and that they should be preserved unto the end of the earth;

44 Enos was ordained at the age of one hundred and thirty-four years and four months, by the hand of Adam.

48 Enoch was twenty-five years old when he was ordained under the hand of Adam; and he was sixty-five and Adam blessed him. (D&C 107:40-42, 44, 48)

There are patriarchs and 'grand patriarchs.' As described, every father is a patriarch for his immediate family, becoming a prophet, priest, and king, as described, for his wife, children, and grandchildren in a direct line. A 'grand patriarch' is one who has been chosen to assist his father – becoming responsible for the temporal and spiritual salvation of all his father's children.

Every grand patriarch would ordain his first-born son or first righteous born son to become a co-regent or co-patriarch, with ordained authority to function outside of his own family line. Adam blessed and ordained the early patriarchs to this authority (see D&C 107:40-48). This ordained authority is Melchizedek.

3 For this Melchizedek was ordained a priest after the order of the Son of God, *which order was without father, without mother, without descent*, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. And all those who are ordained unto this priesthood are made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually. (JST Hebrews 7:3)

Modern scripture reveals that the Melchizedek authority is conferred upon the “grand patriarchs” to minister outside of their family lines. Prophet Joseph explains that: “The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right from the eternal God, and *not by descent from father and mother*” (TPJS, p. 323) unlike the patriarchal priesthood which “*was confirmed to be handed down from father to son*” (D&C 107:40). Therefore, the grand patriarch needed to be ordained to a Melchizedek authority to perform ordinances outside of family lines.

Following the death of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt, the patriarchal authority becomes dormant during the falling away that occurs as the dispensation changes from Abraham to Moses. It is during this time that the children of Israel fall from the ways and teachings of the patriarchs and the priesthood of their fathers, becoming enamored in the splendors of Egypt. Without righteous fathers in the home, the necessary blessings and ordinances normally administered by the father must now be administered under another authority that is “without father or mother.”

Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses recognized the differences between the patriarchal and Melchizedek authorities and responsibilities. instructs Moses about priesthood organization and councils. When Moses thinks to act in a patriarchal manner, Jethro (who ordained Moses to the Melchizedek Priesthood – see D&C 84:6-7) tells Moses that he (Moses) is not the Patriarch to the Children of Israel, and then counsels him about his Melchizedek priesthood responsibilities.

Moses acts like he is the Patriarch of all Israel:

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

Jethro tells Moses that “this is all wrong:”

16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws.

17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

Jethro tells Moses that he is the “Prophet and Priesthood Leader” and what his responsibilities are:

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

20 *And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.*

Jethro then explains to Moses about the Melchizedek organization of administration. Setting up assignments and quorums:

21 Moreover *thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:*

22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

Moses listened to his Father-in-law, his priesthood leader:

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 *So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.*

25 *And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.*

26 And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

Jethro says: “You’ve got it and I’m out a’ here:”

27 And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land. (Exodus 18:13-27)

Jethro, in his wisdom and priesthood understanding, teaches Moses that he is not the father and patriarch of the children of Israel; rather, he is the prophet and high priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood. As such, he may help take care of every family’s spiritual and temporal needs through the Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthood organizations. As the patriarchal era come to an end, with the rejection of the higher priesthood and its ordinances, the responsibilities of prophet, priest and king are divided. In the Old Testament, this division of responsibility is executed thusly: the *prophet* gives direction from God to the *king*, and the *High Priest* administers the temple ordinances and sacrifices that were required by the Lord under the Law of Moses. An example of this is seen as the kingship is about to be passed to Solomon: David is the king of Israel, Nathan is the Prophet, and Zenock is the Priest.

Melchizedek Priesthood

Because the responsibility of the Patriarchal Priesthood is to take care of the temporal and spiritual needs of one’s family, the priesthood authority also divides these two responsibilities as it serves

and ministers to the family. Spiritual needs are provided for by Melchizedek authority; temporal concerns are addressed by the Aaronic authority. Thus the umbrella of Melchizedek authority has the power to preside over both spiritual and temporal needs, which it does through the Stake (Melchizedek) and Ward (Aaronic) organizations. The Aaronic authority will not be addressed here as it does not pertain to the immediate discussion

The Savior fulfilled the Law of Moses and introduced the Melchizedek Priesthood and the Ordinances of Godliness back to the earth beginning with the Sermon on the Mount. The combined responsibility of prophet, priest, and king was given back to the worthy man and woman through the Melchizedek authority and the ordinances (D&C 84:19-22) and endowment of power found only in the Temple. Through the sacred ordinances performed in the Temple, a couple may be sealed and enter into the patriarchal order of the priesthood, becoming a patriarch and matriarch, a king and queen, a priest and priestess unto God and their family.

Temple marriage is the ordinance that bestows the patriarchal priesthood upon the sealed couple.

- 1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;
- 2 And in order to obtain the highest, *a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];*
- 3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. (D&C 131:1-3)

A couple, upon being sealed, enters into the patriarchal “order of the priesthood.” Each spouse, equal in all things and responsibilities, holds this most important priesthood together as a patriarch and matriarch to their family. They have entered into “this order of the priesthood, meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage.” There can be no patriarch without a matriarch and each has separate responsibilities in this order of father and mother. This is the same priesthood that Adam and Eve were blessed with before the fall (Gen. 1:28).¹ It is the same priesthood that they had after the fall, with divided responsibilities in mortality. This “order of the priesthood” is the order of heaven and inherent in the couple who have been sealed together, with the same commission in life as our first parents was given in the Garden of Eden. The main responsibility of this patriarchal priesthood, which the married couple jointly holds, is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of their children, by instruction and ordinance.

As the examples throughout Genesis teach, the matriarchal responsibility in this priesthood is to prepare and present her children to her husband. The one primary responsibility of the matriarch is to choose the new ‘grand patriarch’ and present him to her husband for his ordination and blessing, as in the case of Rebekah and Jacob. Only the mother knows who her firstborn is and who the father is. Under the patriarchal priesthood, the selection of the new patriarch is the responsibility of the mother and matriarch. This is called a *Matrilineal Patriarchy*.

1. *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, Compiled and Edited by Dean C. Jesse, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), pp. 92, 132. The Prophet Joseph Smith remarks in a marriage ceremony that “marriage was an institution of heaven instituted in the Garden of Eden.” Following the ceremony, he pronounced them Husband and Wife and “in the name of God” blessed them with the “blessings that the Lord conferred upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden” in Gen. 1:28. Joseph remarked that the ‘dominion’ given to Adam & Eve was the Priesthood. The Lord was speaking to them, Adam & Eve. He gave unto them—dominion. When a man and woman enter into the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage, they enter into the covenants of the Patriarchal Priesthood.

The authority to administer over people outside of a family line is a power reserved for the Melchizedek priesthood. For example; a father *could* bless his children under the authority of the Patriarchal priesthood which he jointly holds with his wife, having been sealed in the temple. However, to perform the same ordinance or blessing for his home teaching families, he must perform the ordinance under the authority of the Melchizedek priesthood. It should be kept in mind that “all authorities or offices in the church are appendages to this (Melchizedek) priesthood” (D&C 107:5). Therefore, the Melchizedek priesthood is the greater priesthood and becomes the ‘umbrella authority’ over the church, having “power and authority over *all the offices in the church* in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things” (D&C. 107:8). Therefore, all ordinances and blessings are pronounced and performed under this Melchizedek authority, as the church and record keeping is recorded and governed by the Melchizedek priesthood. Since the church functions under the Melchizedek authority, patriarchal authority is seldom if ever mentioned, and the Aaronic authority is invoked only when ordinances (such as a baptism) are performed by those holding only the Aaronic priesthood.

The responsibility of the patriarch and matriarch is to prepare and assist their children in their personal quest of salvation and exaltation. The Melchizedek priesthood exists to assist the fathers and mothers in these patriarchal responsibilities. The church, under the direction of the Melchizedek Priesthood leadership, has as a primary goal and purpose to make sure *every man woman and child, (alive and dead)* have the opportunity to receive, if so desired and worthy, the ordinances of salvation and exaltation in an organized and orderly way. The administration of the gospel by the church or priesthood organization is done for the sake of order and record keeping. Thus, all ordinances performed that are for salvation and/or exaltation must be done under the direction of the member of the Melchizedek priesthood leader who “presides” (has the authority and responsibility to assist and record the ordinance) for the person involved.

The church organization or Melchizedek Priesthood leadership’s primary purpose is to *minister* to (serve) and *administer* the gospel, assisting the father and mother in their responsibilities. This they do by teaching the gospel via classes, talks and other activities, and by providing opportunities to serve others and to learn to love others. The patriarch and father of the family has the inherent authority and responsibility to provide the spiritual and temporal needs of his family. This is true no matter if the father is a member or not as the patriarch is the authority of the home. The priesthood organization works for the father and patriarch, making sure the ordinances of the gospel are made available to his family when needed—like baptism and the sacrament. The priesthood leadership provides council and direction to help perfect the saints and edify the body of Christ.

The priesthood organization fundamentally works for the father and mother. The church organization, with its auxiliaries, aids and assists in the ministry (responsibilities) of the father and mother, and, if needed, administers the ordinances of the gospel by substitution. Ordinances of salvation and exaltation are administered by the authority of the priesthood on those who stand in proxy for the dead. Likewise, saving ordinances may be administered to the living by the authority of the priesthood who officiate as proxy for the father and patriarch of the fatherless, widows, and orphans.

Why the Melchizedek Priesthood is Male

The oldest form of authority is connected to the authority and government of heaven, which is patriarchal. The Father has no priesthood. He has authority and power by virtue of being God. It is not given ('hood') to Him. The power of God lies inherent within him as the Father of all. This authority is patriarchal in its very nature as it is the authority of the Father and fathers to provide the spiritual and temporal needs of their family. When the patriarch has a son, that first born son will usually become the 'birthright son,' chosen because of his righteousness and ordination. That chosen son, by virtue of birth position and righteousness, has an *inherent authority* or responsibility to become *as a* patriarch and priesthood leader for the temporal and spiritual welfare of all his father's family (see Numbers Chapter Three).

Christ is the Firstborn and Only Begotten Son of the Father and therefore has an *inherent authority* and responsibility for the temporal and spiritual needs of all of His Father's children. Christ is the temporal creator and the spiritual redeemer. According to scripture, Christ's inherent authority is called: "The Holy *Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God*" (D&C 107:3). This Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God, is now called the Melchizedek Priesthood. It's the authority to *serve and minister to man for and in-behalf of Christ* the Firstborn and is the authority to administer ordinances *outside* of the immediate family lines. Thus the "Grand Patriarchs" from Adam, Seth, Enos, and Canaan down through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph hold not only the patriarchal priesthood to administer to their direct family line but also hold the Melchizedek authority to provide, as needed, the necessary ordinances and temporal sustenance for their father's other children (extended family) in the event a patriarch may physically be unable, unrighteous, missing, or dead.

To put it succinctly and simply, the Melchizedek priesthood holder becomes an assistant or substitute to the husband, father and patriarch in the temporal and spiritual care of his family. Thus, the priesthood holder may only act only under the direction of the father [patriarch], if present, or the matriarch of the family in the absence of the father. The injunction within scripture to take care of the "fatherless, widows, and orphans" all have one thing in common, which is the absence of a father, husband and patriarch. For this reason, the priesthood responsibility rests on the male, who acts with the authority of ***God the Father*** using the authority inherent in the Firstborn Son of God.

Those who continue trying to change the church's position on the issue of women holding the priesthood do not understand the standard that governs the church. The scriptures are the standard of truth and the Standard Works determine all doctrine. A system of beliefs that is not founded upon scripture or a standard of God-given rules that do not change is not a religion. Without a standard of truth, every system of belief becomes nothing more than a club, existing without any power, doctrine, or truth capable of providing salvation. Thus those who seek to change the rules to suit their personal interests and desires fail in their assessment and vision of a church and religion. There are other options. Organizations and religions exist that will allow and accept female ministers. There are religions where the rules and standards may be changed by vote or petition, like a club. Those who do not agree with standard church doctrine are not forced in any way to compromise their agency.

Joseph Smith said the following in regard to those who believe they have a right to tell the priesthood leaders when changes need to take place:

I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the church, or any one, to receive instructions for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore, you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them; but if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction; for the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the church are vested in the keys of the kingdom. (*TPJS*, p 21)

There would be no revelation (from God) that an individual lay member would or could receive that would cause or effect a change in church doctrine or policy. God does not work that way. He is not a God of confusion. A person will never receive from God inspiration or a revelation that should ascend the leadership ladder higher than themselves and their own responsibility. Instruction from God will come from the top down to avoid confusion and a lack of faith in leadership. Because of the *checks and balances of quorum authority* as outlined in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 107:22-29) there will never be a revelatory change or instruction that will come from any single individual without the authority and keys of administrative responsibility. The only one who holds all keys of administration is the sustained president of the Church; he alone may speak for the whole Church and to the whole Church, for that is his authority, office, and priesthood responsibility.

Priesthood Authority

The priesthood cannot be conferred without an ordination to an office and responsibility. The conferral of the priesthood without ordination to office of responsibility has no inherent value and no authority. Hence the question: Is the priesthood then a *power*? The priesthood cannot be conferred upon anyone without also ordaining them to an office of responsibility, otherwise the "power" of priesthood would not need an office in which to function—it would be a power or authority in and of itself.

When priesthood is conferred and one is ordained to an office, then the priesthood becomes a responsibility of service inherent within that office. Any power of the priesthood lies in *the power to act on the accepted responsibility* by the individual. The authority to function in the priesthood is not given by ordination. It is given to the individual by common consent, i.e. being accepted by the community of saints where the responsibility will be filled and is ultimately confirmed by ordination by the correct or presiding authority in that ward or stake.

63 The elders are to *receive their licenses from other elders, by vote of the church* to which they belong, or from the conferences.

64 Each priest, teacher, or deacon, who is ordained by a priest, *may take a certificate from him at the time, which certificate, when presented to an elder, shall entitle him to a license, which shall authorize him to perform the duties of his calling*, or he may receive it from a conference. (D&C 20:63-64)

IF there were a *power* of the priesthood then an individual would not lose that power when released from responsibilities, or when moving from a one ward or stake to another.

19 And now, verily I say unto you, let every elder who shall give an account unto the bishop of the church in this part of the vineyard be recommended by the church or churches, *in which he labors*, that he may render himself and his accounts approved in all things (D&C 72:19)

In short, to serve in a priesthood position, a recognized authority and priesthood leader must call a person, with the acceptance of the responsibility voiced and agreed upon by the individual being called. The *authority to function* in any priesthood office or position actually comes from the people they will serve. In 'sustaining' the individual in a position of responsibility, they (the members) bestow the authority to administer to them by common consent. The Doctrine and Covenants explains the purpose of priesthood and describes how common consent works:

143 The above offices I have given unto you, and the keys thereof, *for helps and for governments, for the work of the ministry and the perfecting of my saints*.

144 And a commandment I give unto you, that you should fill all these offices *and approve of those names which I have mentioned, or else disapprove of them* at my general conference; (D&C 124:143-144)

To recap, the priesthood and the priesthood position *does not* honor the man; the man honors the responsibility by service. The work of the priesthood is the work of a loving God and is predicated on loving and serving others. This is the law upon which all the law and the prophets hang. *There is no rank in the kingdom, only responsibility!* The priesthood ordination *is not* one of power, but an authorized responsibility of service that is received by acceptance and recognition from those that will be served. For this reason, when the priesthood is conferred, the individual must also be ordained to an office, which is an ordination to a responsibility. The priesthood is a responsibility to serve others in the administration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to assist the father in his temporal and spiritual responsibilities. In family units without a worthy father to administer the temporal and spiritual needs of life, the priesthood becomes the substitute and/or assistant to the family's patriarch by invitation only. The priesthood and the father have the right and *responsibility* to administer to the needs of the family, temporally and spiritually.