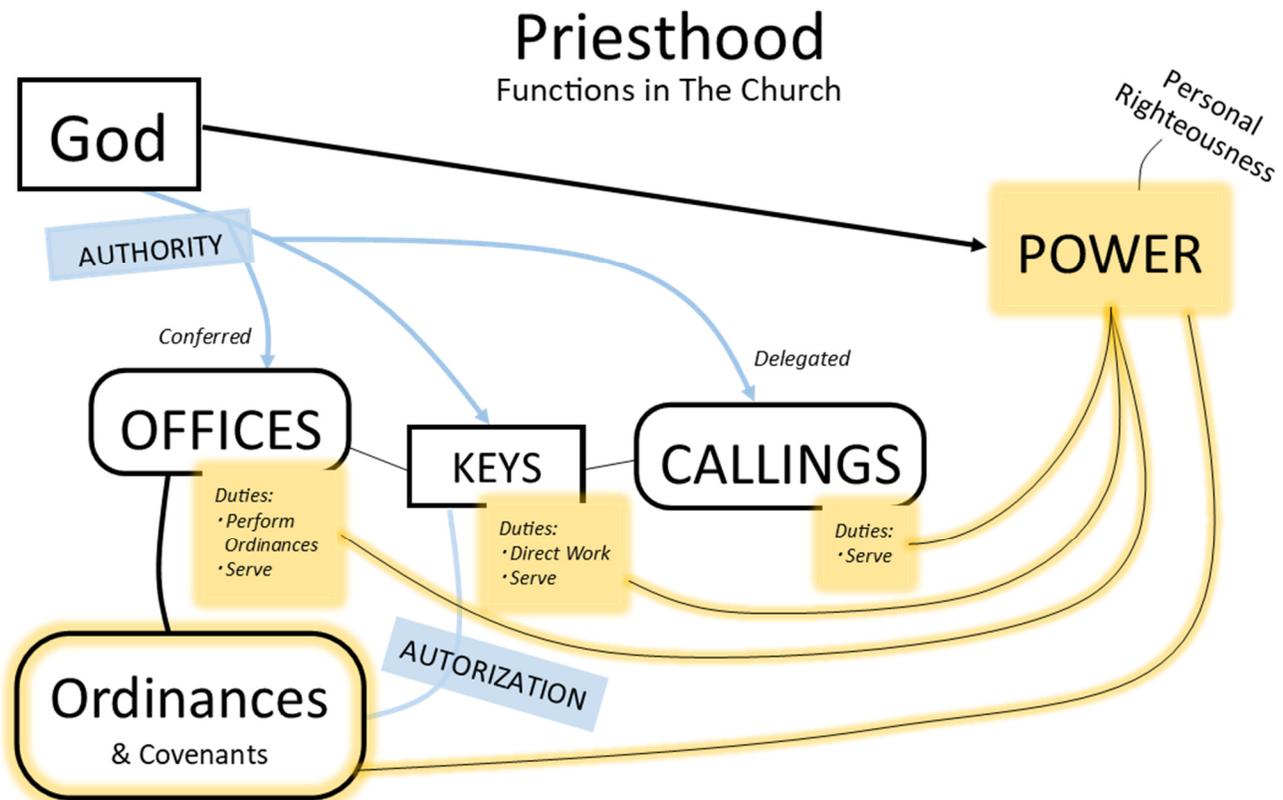

Priesthood in The Church

Diagram, Lesson Plan, Quotes & Sources



Lesson Plan

Purpose

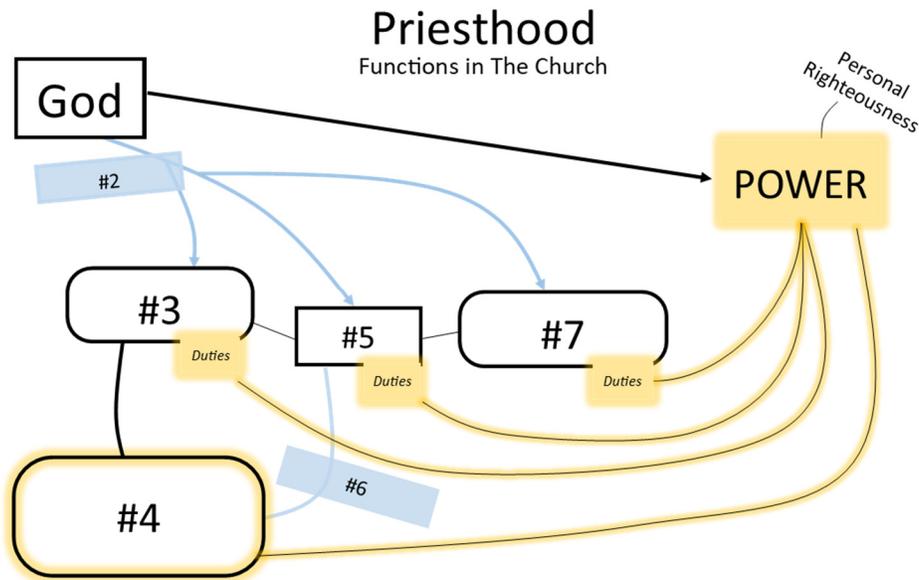
- To explain different parts and functions of the Priesthood and how they connect to each other.
- Can easily be adapted to focus more on a certain part. The sources listed at the end includes a lot of additional quotes that can be added.
- Afterwards the diagram can be helpful to refer back to anytime mentioning the Priesthood to remember how one function is connected to another.

Supplies & Preparation

- Print out a diagram for each student (can be glued in a notebook)
- Print out two copies of the 8 lesson parts (more if groups need more than 1 copy)
- Print out and cut word strips
- Print out a diagram poster size or draw it on the board
- Determine groups and organize lesson parts and word strips for each group
- Get video ready (if using it)

Overview

- The lesson contains 8 parts (God, Offices, Ordinances, Keys, Authorization, Callings, Power) to be given to students/groups. Consider giving students a minute to read through their part, but no other prior preparation for students should be needed. They can follow their paper to lead the class through a discussion about their topic. Each of the 8 parts are about one of the areas on the diagram and students will place their word strip in the proper place during their part.
- Give each student a fill-in-the-blank diagram. They can write in the words during the lesson.
- Make a poster of the numbered diagram or draw it on the board.



- To skip the word strips or students filling in the diagram during the lesson, use the filled in diagram instead.
- Print at least two copies of the 8 parts, one or more for the groups and one for you.
- Introduce the lesson then sit down and let the students do their parts. As they present, ask questions or make comments to clarify or cover parts they didn't mention clearly.
- The Video "Where are the Keys?" with Gary E. Stevenson goes well with this lesson. Consider playing the video (to time 1:42) between part #4 & #5 if there is time. The rest of the video (1:42 to 2:52) works well for a conclusion at the end of the lesson.
- At the end of the lesson as you testify, consider pointing out that the word "Priesthood" can go in front of many of the other words (ex: Priesthood Power, Priesthood Offices, Priesthood Keys, Priesthood Authority, Priesthood Ordinances). When we say Authority in the Church, we usually mean Priesthood Authority. (See the quote in Authority Sources by Dallin H. Oaks.)

Introduction

- The idea of the Priesthood can be confusing because it is a big idea and there are many different parts to understand. Even when we have learned a lot about it, there is more to learn.
- Today we're going to try and sort out some more of it. Like with all things it will take a little effort on your part.
- Here is something that can help us sort some of it out. (Divide into groups and give out diagrams, lesson parts with word strips.)

#1 (God)

Draw a picture of a door with a keyhole or ask people to think about one.

Ask: What is the purpose of a door?

If not mentioned explain these points:

- A door is the beginning of the way to another location
- A door can either keep us out or let us in

Draw a picture of a key or ask people to think about one.

Ask: How does a key relate to the function of a door?

If not mentioned explain this point:

- When we use a key to unlock a door, it allows us to pass through and experience what is on the other side of the door.

Point to the word “God” on the diagram as you read or explain these ideas:

- Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to make it back to Him. He has given His power and permission to do what is needed here on earth in an orderly way. All these things are to help us become our best selves and be able to make it back to Him.
- The Lord uses keys as a symbol to represent the authority of the Priesthood, which unlocks and opens the way for us to receive eternal opportunities and blessings.
- When understanding the Priesthood there is a lot more to understand than just keys. We’re going to briefly discuss several parts and take a look at how they connect.

#2 (Authority)

Put your word on the board in spot #2.

Ask:

- What does authorization mean? (*Answers: permission or approval*)
- What kinds of things do you need authorization to do? (*Some Answers: drive a car, vote, access a bank account, perform a marriage*)

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- To run God’s church, we need authorization too.
- We’ll talk about two types of authorization today.
- The 1st kind we often call Priesthood Authority. It is God giving His ok for that person to stand in for Him in that certain job or specific role.

#3 (Offices)

Put your word on the board in spot #3.

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- One way God gives His authority is by conferring the Priesthood upon people.
- When the Priesthood is conferred upon men, they are given specific Offices, like a long calling.
- Some of the Offices are Apostle, Bishop, Deacon, Teacher, and Priest.
- Each Office has specific roles or responsibilities. Those duties are defined. We can learn and know what they are.
- That Office gives them the Priesthood Authority to perform those tasks. *(On the diagram point to the line between Offices and Authority.)*

Ask:

- What are some things that men can do because they hold the Priesthood? *(Answers should be things like give blessings, baptize, or bless or pass the sacrament.)*
- What does a Priest have Authority to do that a Teacher doesn't? *(Answers: bless the sacrament or baptize)*
- *(Ask one of the Young Men)* What is another role/duty for the Office you hold?

#4 (Ordinances)

Put your word on the board in spot #4.

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- Ordinances are formal, sacred acts performed by the authority of the Priesthood. Through these Ordinances we make solemn promises with God. *(From Gospel Library: Gospel Topics: Ordinances.)*
- By making those covenants, we are more connected to Him and can have more of His power in our life.
- This is a direct connection from God's power to us. So even those who do not hold the Priesthood have access to this Priesthood Power. *(On the diagram point to the line between Power and Ordinances.)*

Read this quote (or ask someone else to read it):

"The heavens are just as open to women who are endowed with God's power flowing from their priesthood covenants as they are to men who bear the priesthood. I pray that truth will register upon each of your hearts because I believe it will change your life. ...

"If [a woman is] endowed but not currently married to a man who bears the priesthood and someone says to [her], "I'm sorry you don't have the priesthood in your home," please understand that that statement is incorrect. [She] may not have a priesthood bearer in [her] home, but [she has] received and made sacred covenants with God in His temple. From those covenants flows an endowment of His priesthood power upon [her]." -Russell M. Nelson (October 2019 Conference)

#5 (Keys)

Put your word on the board in spot #5.

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- The church is like a vehicle that gets us where we want to go... back to Heavenly Father.
- Just like you need keys to make a car work, Priesthood Keys are needed to activate or make different parts of the church work. We call some of those parts Ordinances or Covenants.
- Some callings, like Prophet, Bishop, Teachers or Deacons Quorum President include holding some of these Priesthood Keys. *(On the diagram point to the line between Callings and Keys.)*
- One of the duties of those who serve in these callings is to direct and organize the work in the church. Using the Keys, they can give other people permission to do certain jobs in the church.

#6 (Authorization)

On the diagram point to the word "Authority."

Then put your word on the board in spot #6.

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- Let's talk about the 2nd kind of Authorization.
- Authorization for an Ordinance is also giving permission. But this time it has to do with people who hold Priesthood Keys.
- When it comes to Ordinances, someone with Keys needs to say it's ok to do that Ordinance and to make sure it is done correctly.
- It's like they are using their keys to unlock the door so someone can go through and have the experiences waiting on the other side.

Ask:

- After blessing the sacrament, why do the Young Men look at the Bishop? *(Answer: The Bishop has the Keys to oversee the sacrament. The Bishop says the prayer was said correctly and that they can continue.)*

Explain:

- During COVID time you may have heard the Bishop mention that people have Authorization to do the sacrament at home. This is something else the Bishop can do because he has responsibility or Keys for administering the Sacrament. People in his ward should not administer the sacrament without this permission.

#7 (Callings)

Put your word on the board in spot #7.

Read this or explain these ideas in your own words:

- Through someone with Keys, like the Bishop, we receive callings. Meaning we're asked to fulfill a certain job for a little while. *(On the diagram point to the line between Keys and Callings.)*
- Because God is asking us to do an official job in the church, He gives us Authority (even if we do not hold the Priesthood). *(On the diagram point to the line between Authority and Callings.)*
- We have that Priesthood Authority for the time of calling. That's different than the Authority given through the Office which is pretty much permanent.
- When you are given a calling by someone with Priesthood Keys you are given Authority, but NOT the keys.
- So although a Young Women President does not hold the Priesthood, she does have Priesthood Authority to do the duties of her calling. *(On the diagram point again to the line between Authority and Callings.)*

Ask:

- What is one difference in Authority Elders have that Sister Missionaries don't have? *(Answers: Elders have the Authority to give blessings and baptize.)*

Explain:

- That Authority Elders have to give blessings or baptize comes because of their office as Elders in the Melchizedek Priesthood, not from their calling as a missionary. *(On the diagram point to the line between Authority and Offices.)*
- The Authority the Elders have to teach the gospel is the same Priesthood Authority (or permission) that the Sisters are given when they are both called to be missionaries. *(On the diagram point to the line between Authority and Callings.)*

#8 (Power)

On the diagram point to the word "Power"

Read these quotes (or ask someone else to) and ask someone to explain it after each quote:

#1 "In our Heavenly Father's great priesthood-endowed plan, men have the unique responsibility to administer the priesthood, but they are not the priesthood. Men and women have different but equally valued roles. ...

"It is crucial for us to understand that Heavenly Father has provided a way for all of His sons and His daughters to have access to the blessings of and be strengthened by the power of the priesthood."

-M. Russell Ballard (April 2013 Conference)

#2 "A boy or a man may receive priesthood authority by the laying on of hands but will have no priesthood power if he is disobedient, unworthy, or unwilling to serve. 'The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and ... the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.'" -David A. Bednar (April 2012 Conference) - That quotes D&C 121:36, which is a Doctrinal Mastery Scripture!

#3 "Your authority comes through your ordination; your power comes through obedience and worthiness. ... Power in the priesthood comes from doing your duty in ordinary things: attending meetings, accepting assignments, reading the scriptures, keeping the Word of Wisdom." (Boyd K. Packer, "The Aaronic Priesthood," October 1981 Conference.)

Explain:

- Priesthood Power is the Power of God. *(On the diagram point to the line between God and Power.)*
- Priesthood Authority is God's approval to officially do specific jobs or actions in His name. *(On the diagram point to the line from Authority to Offices and the line from Authority to Callings.)*
- Because women do not hold the Priesthood there are some specific actions, like giving blessings that they are not authorized to do. However, it is very important for both men and women to know that anyone, including women, can have direct access to Priesthood Power through their Covenants. *(On the diagram point to the line from Ordinances to Power.)*

Ask:

- What is the difference between Priesthood Authority and Priesthood Power?
- Who has access to the Priesthood Power? *(Answer: anyone, a woman or a man, who has made covenants, depending on their personal righteousness)*
- Why would someone who has Priesthood Authority also need Priesthood Power?

Quotes & Sources

Section #1

- Idea adapted from “Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Seminary Teacher Manual” Lesson #19: D&C 13 & JS-H 1:68-75 (2021)

Section #2 -AUTORITY

- “Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church.” (Doctrine & Covenants 42:11 -a Doctrinal Mastery scripture!)
- “Priesthood authority is the authorization to represent God and act in His name. In the Church, all priesthood authority is exercised under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys.” (From “General Handbook” 3.4 on 2/11/2021)
- “The purpose of Priesthood Authority is to give, to serve, to lift, to inspire.” (Richard G. Scott, “Honor the Priesthood and Use It Well” October 2008 Conference)
- “We are not accustomed to speaking of women having the authority of the priesthood in their Church callings, but what other authority can it be? When a woman—young or old—is set apart to preach the gospel as a full-time missionary, she is given priesthood authority to perform a priesthood function. The same is true when a woman is set apart to function as an officer or teacher in a Church organization under the direction of one who holds the keys of the priesthood. Whoever functions in an office or calling received from one who holds priesthood keys exercises priesthood authority in performing her or his assigned duties. Whoever exercises priesthood authority should forget about their rights and concentrate on their responsibilities.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood” April 2014 Conference)

Section #3 - OFFICES

- “Worthy male Church members receive priesthood authority through priesthood conferral and ordination to priesthood offices.” (From “General Handbook” 3.4 on 2/23/2021)
- Offices in the Aaronic Priesthood are Deacon, Teacher, Priest, and Bishop. Offices in the Melchizedek Priesthood are Elder, High Priest, Patriarch, Seventy, and Apostle. (From Gospel Principles, Chapter 14: Priesthood Organization)
- “In the Lord’s Church, the offices in the Melchizedek Priesthood have different functions.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood” April 2018 Conference)
- To learn more about the specific duties of the offices in the Priesthood see D&C 13:1 (Aaronic Priesthood); D&C 20:38-45 (Elders); D&C 20:46-52 (Priests); D&C 20:53-59 (Teachers); D&C 42:44 (Elders giving blessings); D&C 84:33-44 (oath & covenant of the Priesthood) & D&C 107.

- Some duties of priests are to baptize and administer the sacrament, while Teachers and Deacons do not administer the sacrament (see D&C 20:46 & 58). Elders can also confirm those who are baptized and give blessings (see D&C 20:41 and D&C 42:44).
- “Teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may prepare the sacrament. Priests and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may bless the sacrament. Deacons, teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may pass the sacrament.” (From “General Handbook” section 18.9.2 on 3/1/2021) Note that in section 18.9.4 the Handbook also mentions Teachers preparing the sacrament.

Section #4 - ORDINANCES

- See quote included in the lesson section.
- See Handbook, Section 18: Priesthood Ordinances and Blessings for a list of ordinances.

Section #5 - KEYS

- “Without this restoration, we would be locked out from the vehicle necessary to transport us on our journey home to loving heavenly parents.” (Gary E. Stevenson, “Where Are the Keys and Authority of the Priesthood?” April 2016 Conference)
- “The performance of every ordinance of salvation comprising our covenant pathway back to the presence of our Father in Heaven requires appropriate governance through priesthood keys.” (Gary E. Stevenson, “Where Are the Keys and Authority of the Priesthood?” April 2016 Conference)
- “Priesthood keys are bestowed on presidents of temples, missions, stakes, and districts; bishops; branch presidents; and quorum presidents. A person who serves in one of these positions holds the keys only until he is released. Counselors do not receive keys, but they do receive authority and responsibility by calling and assignment.” (From “True to the Faith” Priesthood: Priesthood Keys)
- See Handbook, Section 18: Priesthood Ordinances and Blessings for a list of who hold keys for which ordinances.
- “Priesthood keys are the authority to direct the use of the priesthood on behalf of God’s children. The use of all priesthood authority in the Church is directed by those who hold priesthood keys (see Doctrine and Covenants 65:2).” (From “General Handbook” 3.4.1 on 2/11/2021)
- “The keys of the priesthood are the powers to direct the exercise of priesthood authority. ... The principle that priesthood authority can be exercised only under the direction of the one who holds the keys for that function is fundamental in the Church...” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood” April 2018 Conference)

Section #6 - AUTHORIZATION

- See sources for section #5
- “In the Church all ordinances are performed under the authorization of the priesthood leader who holds the keys for that ordinance. An ordinance is most commonly officiated by persons

who have been ordained to an office in the priesthood acting under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys” April 2020 Conference)

Section #7 - CALLINGS

- “All Church members can exercise delegated authority as they are set apart or assigned to assist in accomplishing God’s work. Members are accountable to God and to those He has appointed to preside for how they exercise His authority.” (From “General Handbook” section 3.4 on 2/11/2021)
- “Those who hold priesthood keys direct the Lord’s work within their areas of responsibility. ... This presiding authority is valid only for the specific responsibilities of the leader’s calling. When priesthood leaders are released from their callings, they no longer hold these keys. All who serve in the Church are set apart or assigned under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys. When members are set apart or assigned, they are authorized by God to serve in His work.” (From “General Handbook” section 3.4.1.2 on 2/23/2021)
- “Another example of priesthood authority under the direction of one who holds the keys are the teachings of men and women called to teach the gospel, whether in classes in their home wards or in the mission field. Other examples are those who hold leadership positions in the ward and exercise priesthood authority in their leadership by reason of their callings and under the setting apart and direction of the priesthood leader who holds the keys in the ward or the stake. This is how the authority and power of the priesthood is exercised and enjoyed in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys” April 2020 Conference)

Section #8 - POWER

- See quotes included in the lesson section.
- “Church leaders and members use conferred or delegated priesthood authority to bless the lives of others. This authority can be used only in righteousness.” (From “General Handbook” section 3.4.4 on 2/23/2021)
- “If you are a priesthood holder, remember that the priesthood should be a part of you at all times and in all circumstances. It is not like a cloak that you can put on and take off at will. Any ordination to a priesthood office is a call to lifelong service, with the promise that the Lord will qualify you to do His work according to your faithfulness. You must be worthy in order to receive and exercise priesthood power. The words you speak and your everyday behavior affect your ability to serve. Your behavior in public must be above reproach. Your behavior in private is even more important.” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 127)
- An example of the need for personal righteousness to have Priesthood Power: “Fathers who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood should keep the commandments so they will have the power of the priesthood to give blessings to their family members.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood” April 2018 Conference)
- “Vested in the power of the priesthood, which is the power of Almighty God, is the power to perform miracles if the Lord wills it so, but in order for us to use that priesthood, we must be

worthy to exercise it.” (President Harold B. Lee quoted by Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood” April 2018 Conference)

- See more about Priesthood Power in “General Handbook” section 3.5 including a list of blessings of Priesthood Power.

Priesthood Functions Within the Family

The above information is about the functions of the Priesthood within the organization of the Church. There are differences in how the Priesthood functions within the family.

“The principle that priesthood authority can be exercised only under the direction of the one who holds the keys for that function is fundamental in the Church, but this does not apply in the family. For example, a father presides and exercises the priesthood in his family by the authority of the priesthood he holds. He has no need to have the direction or approval of one holding priesthood keys in order to perform his various family functions. ... The same principle applies when a father is absent and a mother is the family leader. She presides in her home and is instrumental in bringing the power and blessings of the priesthood into her family through her endowment and sealing in the temple. While she is not authorized to give the priesthood blessings that can be given only by a person holding a certain office in the priesthood, she can perform all of the other functions of family leadership. In doing so, she exercises the power of the priesthood for the benefit of the children over whom she presides in her position of leadership in the family.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys” April 2020)

For more about this see Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys” April 2020 Conference or section 4 of “The Powers of the Priesthood” by Dallin H. Oaks in April 2018 Conference.

For More Information about the Priesthood

- Handbook, Section 3: Priesthood Principles
- Handbook, Section 18: Priesthood Ordinances and Blessings
- Jean B. Bingham, “Women and Covenant Power” January 2021 Liahona Magazine
- Dallin H. Oaks, “The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys” April 2020 Conference
- Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures” October 2019 Conference
- Dallin H. Oaks, “The Powers of the Priesthood” April 2018 Conference
- Gary E. Stevenson, “Where Are the Keys and Authority of the Priesthood?” April 2016 Conference
- Dallin H. Oaks, “The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood” April 2014 Conference
- Richard G. Scott, “Honor the Priesthood and Use It Well” October 2008 Conference
- Dallin H. Oaks, “Priesthood Authority in the Family and the Church” October 2005 Conference