



Joining the Army of the Lord

by
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Last week, I sat in a meeting that included Elder Ballard and Elder Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. We were talking about the College and the direction it will take in the next century. Elder Eyring expressed a thought he has shared a number of times, and that is that the Lord has preserved LDS Business College for a specific reason. His phrase was that the future of the College is heaven directed.¹

Through the years, LDS Business College has nearly closed its doors a number of times. In the late 1800s a lack of money made closure appear certain. One hundred years ago at the 1899 commencement exercises, the ceremonies had the feeling of a funeral as speakers spoke of the end of the College. But Karl G. Maeser, the first principal, said the College would not close, but that her future would be “more glorious than her past.”² Three decades later, the College came near closing again. This was during the depression and the Church closed or gave most of its colleges to the state. Dixie College, Utah State and Weber State University, Snow College and others were all Church schools given to the state. At the time, everyone talked of the closure of LDS Business College. But, in a decision that surprised most, President Heber J. Grant, decided that the Church would keep the College as one of its four colleges.³

Again, in 1986 the College appeared ready to close. Plans were nearly finalized to sell the school, but through the instrumentality of President Ezra Taft Benson the College was preserved.⁴ Throughout its history, the College has been nurtured by prophets who have acted under the direction of heaven to preserve and bless this institution.

Now the reason I tell you all that is this: The Lord has preserved this institution for a specific purpose. There is

yet a great work to be accomplished by LDS Business College to help the Church accomplish its divine mission. And now you are a part of that purpose and mission. The Lord has directed you to us that you might gain the knowledge you need to help the Church.

The day has dawned and will yet come when the world will see the wonder of the Church. The scriptures say it this way:

“Let my army become very great, and let it be sanctified before me, that it may become fair as the sun, and clear as the moon, and that her banners may be terrible unto all nations; that the kingdoms of this world may be constrained to acknowledge that the kingdom of Zion is in very deed the kingdom of our God and his Christ... .”⁵

With your graduation today, you become a part of that army, not an army of deadly force, but an army based in sound knowledge and strong spiritual strength. And your inclusion in that army comes with a responsibility to move the work forward. You are the ones who will put your education to work for the benefit of all the people of the earth.

President Spencer W. Kimball said, and I quote:

“As the Church grows global and becomes more and more multicultural, a smaller and smaller percentage of all our LDS college-age students will attend BYU, or the Hawaii campus, or Ricks College, or the LDS Business College. It is a privileged group who are able to come here. ... Those who do come here have an even greater follow-through responsibility to make certain that the Church’s investment in them provides dividends through service and dedication to others as they labor in the Church and in the world elsewhere.”⁶ Unquote.

The prophet Nephi talked of the Church in our day:

“All the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord...; every

nation, kindred, tongue and people shall be blessed.”⁷

The salvation of the Lord includes the saving influence of the Church Educational System. Our hope is that you use your education to improve the lives of your family, your neighbors, your community and the Church. As you do so, all will see how the Lord, through you, can bless the world.

And so, as you leave us for work or further education or missions or to become mothers and homemakers, we urge you to use the skills you have developed here to more fully

follow God and build His kingdom. As faculty, staff and administration we feel as did Jacob, the brother of Nephi, our “anxiety is great for you; and ye yourselves know that it ever has been.”⁸ We pray for your success and wish you Godspeed. May you be willing to serve and may you live lives of personal integrity and virtue.

May the Lord bless you with prosperity, peace and righteousness, and may He give you a determination to remain true and faithful. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

¹. Private conversation; Elder Henry B. Eyring to President Stephen K. Woodhouse; Executive Committee Meeting, April 28, 1999.

². Lynn M. Hilton, *The History of LDS Business College: 1886-1993*, 68

³. William E. Felt, “*The Inception and Growth of the LDS Business College*,” 161-166; Hilton, p. 144

⁴. Hilton, 82

⁵. D&C 105:31-32

⁶. Spencer W. Kimball, “Second Century Address,” delivered October 10, 1975 at the Founder’s Day Convocation, Brigham Young University quoted in “Educating Zion,” p. 74.

⁷. 1 Ne 19:17

⁸. 2 Ne 6:3