

### “A Brighter Future for You and Your Family”

*Richard J. Maynes*

*General Authority Seventy, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Brothers and sisters, I’m joining you from the Tabernacle at Temple Square. This beautiful location has been home to many significant historic events. It is a testament to the dedication of the original pioneers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As this location reminds us of our shared history and the foundations of our faith, I invite you to think about your future.

BYU-Pathway Worldwide provides access to higher education to more than 40,000 students in over 500 locations throughout the world and I consider it a great privilege to address this large and important audience today.

Those of you participating in BYU-Pathway have varied backgrounds and life experiences. A large percentage of you are first-generation university students. This means many of you are pioneers in your family, blazing an education trail for future generations. Your children and loved ones will see your example and have a desire to follow in your pioneering footsteps, with an increased desire for advanced education. Many of you are also mothers making a difference in your child’s future. “Educated mothers help their children succeed at school not just by expanding their academic knowledge, but by modeling behaviors and making social connections that lead to educational success.”<sup>1</sup> What a great example each of you are to your posterity and loved ones.

The median age of participants in BYU-Pathway is 33 years old. This means you are probably studying your chosen field at a time in your life when you are very busy with other important and pressing responsibilities within your family and work lives.

I want you to know how much you are respected for your desire to improve your lives through higher education at this critical time in your life. Prior to my full-time callings in the Church as a mission president and general authority, I was the owner of an engineering and manufacturing company. We were always looking for great new engineers to add to our team. When searching for talented and enthusiastic new engineers, we would occasionally encounter a résumé which would indicate that the applicant had illustrated extreme commitment and sacrifice in achieving their scholastic goals, by studying later on in life. We knew that these individuals would be dedicated, hardworking, and appreciative of opportunity. When we were lucky enough to hire someone with that type of background, it seemed to always turn out for the best – for the company as well as for the applicant and their family.

Author Alice W. Rollins once said, “God’s best gift to us is that He gives not things, but opportunities.”<sup>2</sup> BYU-Pathway Worldwide provides incredible opportunities to those who are willing to work hard and sacrifice their

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<sup>1</sup> Marsha Maxwell, “Mom’s education makes a difference,” *Deseret News*, February 23, 2015

<sup>2</sup> Alice Wellington Rollins, *Poems by Grades*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1907), 323

time in order to accomplish academic goals. I promise you the sacrifices you make today will pay dividends tomorrow. In order to accomplish those goals, we recognize that you will need to be very well-organized in your daily routines. However, learning to be well-organized in this area of your life will be a great blessing to you in other areas. Remember the Lord's admonition in D&C 88: 118-119, "...yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith." "Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God..."

Brothers and sisters, we recognize that many of you are in the process of overcoming challenges and tribulations in life as you continue your quest to further your education. Don't lose hope in your dreams and aspirations for a better and brighter future! President Russell M. Nelson said, "When deepening trials come your way, remember this glorious promise of the Savior:<sup>3</sup> 'to him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with my Father in his throne.'<sup>4</sup>

We also read in D&C 58: verses 2 and 4, "For verily I say unto you, blessed is he that keepeth my commandments...and...is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven."

"For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand."

Please remember that whatever the effort, whatever the sacrifice, and whatever the tribulations you might be confronted with during this time of furthering your education, it will be worth it! Your future, and the future of your children and grandchildren, will be filled with many more opportunities to progress, if you will just keep the faith and continue to persevere in your quest to further your education. Future generations of your family will look back and ultimately see your sacrifice to get an education as an expression of love and support for them. Your choices today are leaving a legacy and standard for them to aspire to. What an incredible way to minister to your loved ones.

I sincerely pray this day that you might all feel of the love and respect we have for you as you stretch yourselves in the pursuit of higher education and a more fulfilling future for you and your loved ones. May the Lord bless you all in this righteous desire, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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<sup>3</sup> Russell M. Nelson, "Self-Mastery," *Ensign*, November 1985, 32

<sup>4</sup> Revelations 3:21