ing beyond our means, envying, coveting, withholding gratitude . . . and being unforgiving and jealous” (1989, p. 5).

God has commanded the Saints to “seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion” (D&C 6:6). When Zion is established, its people will be “of one heart and one mind” and will dwell together in righteousness (Moses 7:18). But “pride is the great stumbling block to Zion” (Benson, 1989, p. 7). Pride leads people to diminish others in the attempt to elevate themselves, resulting in selfishness and contention.

The proud love “the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42–43) and fear the judgment of men more than that of God (cf. D&C 3:6–7; 30:1–2; 60:2). They do not receive counsel or correction easily but justify and rationalize their frailties and failures, making it difficult for them to repent and receive the blessings of the Atonement. They have difficulty rejoicing in their blessings, because they are constantly comparing them to see whether they have more or less than someone else. Consequently, they are often ungrateful.

The antidote for pride is humility, “a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Ne. 9:20, 12:19). Men can choose to do those things that will foster the growth of humility: they can choose to confess and forsake their sins, forgive others, receive counsel and chastisement, esteem others as themselves, render service, love God, and submit to his will (Benson, 1989, p. 7). By yielding “to the enticings of the Holy Spirit,” the pridelful individual can become “a saint through the atonement of Christ” and become “as a child, submissive, meek, humble” (Mosiah 3:19; cf. Alma 13:28).

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**REED A. BENSON**

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**PRIEST, AARONIC PRIESTHOOD**

Priest is the highest office of the AARONIC PRIESTHOOD to which young male members of the Church may be ordained. To receive this office the candidate must be sixteen or older; most priests are between the ages of sixteen and nineteen.

Priests in the restored Church are empowered to “preach, teach, [and] expound” the doctrines and the covenants of the Church and to “visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray . . . and attend to all family duties” (D&C 20:46–47). Priests fulfill these duties in Church meetings and in visits to members as HOME TEACHERS. They also have authority to baptize, to administer the SACRAMENT, to ordain other priests, TEACHERS, and DEACONS under the direction of their BISHOP, to preside at meetings when no ELDER is present, and to perform all duties of deacons and teachers.

Historically the term “priest” has been used to describe a variety of offices and functions. From the time of AARON until the ministry of JOHN THE BAPTIST, priests in the Aaronic order taught the LAW OF MOSES, offered sacrifices, officiated or performed in numerous temple functions and priesthood ordinances, and thereby mediated between the people and God. Only the lineal descendants of Aaron could be priests. Christ’s sacrifice and atonement fulfilled the “law of carnal commandments,” thereby ending for Christians the priests’ role as officiators in Mosaic ordinances.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is named the great “high priest” and as such is seen as the everlasting mediator by whom all men may come unto God (Heb. 5:1–10; 9:24–26). For Latter-day Saints, HIGH PRIEST is an office in the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD. While most English-speaking Christian traditions use the word priest to refer both to the ancient Levitical roles and to the presbyters (elders) of the early Christian churches who had responsibilities to preside over and instruct congregations, the two offices are separated in the LDS Church in that priests are of the Aaronic Priesthood and perform basic ordinances and otherwise assist the elders and high priests of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Because there were no descendants of Aaron among the Nephites or Lamanites, priests in the Book of Mormon held the Melchizedek Priesthood and thus engaged both in the sacrificial functions and in broader presiding and teaching functions (Alma 18:24; 45:22).

Joseph SMITH and Oliver COWDERY received the Aaronic Priesthood from John the Baptist on May 15, 1829 (see D&C 13; see AARONIC PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF). They subsequently ordained the first priests in this dispensation on June 9, 1830.
Today, priests in each ward are organized into quorums of forty-eight or fewer members. The ward bishop presides over this quorum, with two priests called to assist him, and another as secretary. An adult adviser is also assigned by the bishop to teach and assist quorum members. As in all of the offices of the Aaronic Priesthood, members of this PRIESTHOOD QUORUM receive instruction to prepare them for ordination as elders in the Melchizedek Priesthood and for missionary service. Each priest is expected to emulate the example of Jesus Christ.

In addition to performing their priesthood duties, priests participate together in a variety of educational, recreational, and social activities (see YOUNG MEN). For example, the priests in a ward in the United States participate as a group in the Explorer program of the Boy Scouts of America (see SCOUTING). In social and service activities they often join with the Laurels, who are sixteen- to eighteen-year-old members of the YOUNG WOMEN organization of the Church.

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W. LADD HOLLIST

PRIESTCRAFT

The Book of Mormon says, "Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion. . . . But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish" (2 Ne. 26:29, 31). Inherent in this definition is the concern that Church leaders must labor to build Zion into the hearts of the people, and not for their personal aggrandizement or reward. When leaders "make merchandise" of men's souls (2 Pet. 2:3), they turn religion into a business, and pride, materialism, and unrighteous dominion follow.

Both in scripture and in literature priestcraft is condemned. Peter cursed Simon the sorcerer, who wanted to purchase the priesthood for money (Acts 8:14–24). Dante's Peter castigates several popes and priests for not serving freely and for making a sewor of the sepulcher of Peter by selling priesthood appointment (Paradiso 27:22–57). Chaucer observed that greed for personal gain and glory often replaced genuine priesthood service ("General Prologue" and "Introduction to the Pardoner's Tale," Canterbury Tales). Milton's lines from Lycidas condemning a clergy who "for their bellies' sake, / Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold" (ll. 114–15) sum up the evil of priestcraft: "The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, / But swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw, / Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread" (ll. 125–27).

CHARLES D. TATE, JR.

PRIESTHOOD

[Other articles dealing with various aspects of the priesthood are Aaronic Priesthood; Authority; Brotherhood; Clergy; Godhood; Keys of the Priesthood; Lay Participation and Leadership; Levitical Priesthood; Magnifying One's Calling; Melchizedek Priesthood; Men, Roles of; Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood; Presidency, Concept of; Presiding High Priest; Priesthood Councils; and Priesthood Quorums.

On the specific offices of the priesthood, see Apostle; Bishop; Deacon, Aaronic Priesthood; Elder; High Priest; Patriarch; Priest, Aaronic Priesthood; Priesthood Offices; Prophet; Seventy; Teacher, Aaronic Priesthood.

For discussions of various priesthood ordinances, see Baptism; Baptismal Prayer; Children: Blessing of Children, Confirmation; Dedication; Father's Blessing; Laying on of Hands; Ordinances; Ordination to the Priesthood; Patriarchal Blessing; Priesthood Blessings; Rebaptism; Sacrament Prayers; Sealing; Setting Apart; Sick, Blessing the; Temple Ordinances.]

THE SOURCE OF PRIESTHOOD POWER. Jesus Christ is the great High Priest of God; Christ is therefore the source of all true priesthood authority and power on this earth (Heb. 5–10). Man does not take such priesthood power unto himself; it must be conferred by God through his servants (Heb. 5:4; D&C 1:38).

Before the world was created, Jesus Christ, the great JEHOVAH and firstborn of God the Father in the spirit world, covenanted to use the power he had obtained from the Father to implement God's program for the eternal happiness of all God's children (cf. TPJS, p. 190). The actual name of the