

The Priesthood Can Bless Families

OBJECTIVE Each young woman will understand how the priesthood can bless families.

PREPARATION

1. Provide paper and pencil for each young woman.
2. Prepare a copy of the handout “A Father’s Responsibilities” for each young woman.
3. Assign young women to present any stories, scriptures, or quotations you wish.

Note: Some young women in your class may not now have a priesthood bearer in their home. Be sensitive to the feelings of these young women so they will not be discouraged by this lesson. Young women should respect their fathers whether or not they are priesthood holders. The principles taught in this lesson can be applied where possible in their present homes and should be learned for application in their future homes.

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

Priesthood Holders Should Lead Their Families in Righteousness

**Quotations
and discussion**

Read and discuss the following quotations:

“God has revealed through his prophets that men are to receive the priesthood, become fathers, and with gentleness and pure, unfeigned love they are to lead and nurture their families in righteousness as the Savior leads the Church (see Eph. 5:23). They have been given the primary responsibility for the temporal and physical needs of the family (see D&C 83:2)” (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, p. 90).

“There is no higher authority in matters relating to the family organization, and especially when that organization is presided over by one holding the higher priesthood, than that of the father. The authority is time honored, and among the people of God in all dispensations it has been highly respected and often emphasized by the teachings of the prophets who were inspired of God. The patriarchal order is of divine origin and will continue throughout time and eternity” (Joseph F. Smith, “The Rights of Fatherhood,” *Juvenile Instructor*, 1 Mar. 1902, p. 146).

- What are the responsibilities that God has given to fathers?
- In what ways can righteous priesthood holders bless their families?

Explain that the Lord has given fathers the responsibility to lead their families in righteousness using the power of the priesthood. This leadership can bring great blessings to families. If there is no father in the home or if the father does not hold the priesthood, the family may receive the blessings of the priesthood through worthy relatives, the bishop or branch president, the quorum leaders, and the home teachers assigned to the family. Priesthood blessings are available to all members of the Church.

Scripture discussion

Explain that the Lord has given priesthood leaders guidelines for how they are to lead their families. Have the young women read Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–45.

- What are the leadership qualities that priesthood holders are to develop?

You may want to list these on the chalkboard, including persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, love unfeigned, kindness, pure knowledge, reproving when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, showing an increase of love, charity, and virtuous thoughts. Review the meanings of some of these words with the young women to make sure they understand them.

- How would you feel about being led by someone who had these qualities?

Fathers Have Many Responsibilities

Discussion

Explain that fathers have many important responsibilities as they strive to lead their families in righteousness. Ask the class to name some responsibilities that fathers have.

Handouts

Distribute copies of the handout you have prepared. Ask the class members to read each statement and discuss it. Explain that the list is the ideal toward which all worthy fathers are working. In your discussion, stress that young women should help their fathers as they strive to accomplish these worthy goals.

A Father's Responsibilities

1. Fathers are to be the heads of their homes in the way the Lord instructed (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–45).
2. Fathers have the responsibility to physically provide for and protect their families (see Doctrine and Covenants 83:2, 4–5).
3. Fathers love their children and teach them the gospel (see Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28).
4. Fathers who hold the priesthood have the right and responsibility to—
 - Give blessings of comfort to their wife and children.
 - Administer to the sick in their families.
 - Receive inspiration and revelation for their families.
 - Name and bless, baptize, confirm, and ordain their children, under the direction of the bishop.
5. Fathers encourage eligible family members to serve as missionaries and receive temple blessings.
6. Fathers keep the commandments and set good examples for their children.
7. Fathers are worthy companions to their wives.
8. Fathers counsel often with their families and maintain good communication with family members.

Have the young women keep this list. As they date and prepare for marriage, they may want to refer to the list to evaluate whether a young man would be a good father. The young women should be committed to helping young men develop these characteristics.

Case studies

Read the following case studies to the class. Ask for suggestions about how the father can bless and lead his family in each case. Following the class comments on each case study, read the suggestions if they have not been mentioned.

Case Study 1

The Thomas family has six children. Three of them are teenagers, and the rest are under age twelve. The oldest girl is on the soccer team, and the rest of the children are also involved in school and Church activities. They have many friends and are happy in their ward and neighborhood. Brother Thomas has been offered a much better job in another part of the country. The family is having a difficult time deciding what to do. How can Brother Thomas use his priesthood to help them make the right decision?

Suggestions: Brother Thomas can call a council meeting in which all family members have a chance to express their feelings. He could ask the family to fast and pray together and seek direction from Heavenly Father. As the head of the family, the father is designated by the Lord to receive revelation for the family's needs. The rest of the family can counsel with him, offer suggestions, and seek confirmation of the decision through the Holy Ghost.

Case Study 2

Susan is a sixteen-year-old young woman who has some new friends. These friends sometimes smoke and have recently stolen clothing from a nearby store. Susan's father and mother do not know her new friends, but both feel that something is not right with Susan's life. How can her father use his priesthood to help Susan?

Suggestions: Susan is already blessed because her father and mother have been inspired to know that she needs their help. Susan's parents could show their love for her in many ways and make it easy for her to talk to them. Her father could hold an interview with Susan. He could offer to give her a special blessing for strength and discernment in choosing companions and making decisions.

Young Women Should Support Their Fathers

Chalkboard discussion

• In what ways can you help your father fulfill his priesthood responsibilities? (If some young women do not have the priesthood in their homes, they can suggest ways they can help their fathers or mothers be good leaders in the home.)

List their answers on the chalkboard. The answers may include the following:

- Respect and love my father and obey him in righteousness.
- Ask my father for a blessing when needed, such as in times of illness or difficulty.
- Encourage my father and brothers in fulfilling priesthood assignments such as Church leadership callings, home teaching, and attending priesthood meetings.
- Show respect for all priesthood leaders.

Writing activity

Give each young woman a piece of paper and a pencil and have her write some things she wants to do to support and strengthen the priesthood bearers in her home.

A young woman who does not have the priesthood in her home can list the things she can do to support her father's or mother's leadership in the home. All young women should honor and sustain their parents, even if the priesthood is not in their homes.

Have the young women share some of their ideas if they desire. Also have class members suggest what they can do to be certain that their future homes will be led by the priesthood.

Conclusion

Scripture

Read Ephesians 6:1–4. Discuss how the young women could apply this scripture in their homes. Explain that the Lord is pleased when we obey and honor our fathers and help them to fulfill their priesthood responsibilities.

Suggested Class Activities

The following activities could be used as a follow-up for this lesson.

1. Each class member could write a letter of appreciation to her father expressing gratitude for priesthood leadership and blessings.
2. The young women could gather and organize certificates showing priesthood ordinances they have received, such as naming and blessing, baptism, and confirmation.