

A MATTER OF FAITH

established it, and I know of no change, although we are subject to revelations of the Lord in case he should ever wish to make a change.²¹

Interestingly, just over four years later he received the revelation which accomplished that change. (I more fully discuss the revelation in Chapter 13.)

I also believe that reflective comments made by President Kimball some five years after the receipt of the 1978 Revelation on Priesthood provide an insightful snapshot of his faith in God and his desire to do the Lord's will first in resolving the issue:

After we [the First Presidency] began to think of it seriously, we held a meeting of the Council of the Twelve in the temple on the regular day and we considered this very seriously and thoughtfully and prayerfully. I offered the final prayer there and I told the Lord if it wasn't right, if He didn't want this change to come in the Church, that I would be true to it all the rest of my life and I'd fight the world against it. I would be loyal and true to the program if that's what He wanted. Then as we had a special prayer circle, I knew the time had come.²²

Perhaps the most poignant comment from President Kimball on the revelation came during the aforementioned interview given five years after the revelation was received, when he humbly allowed that prior to the receipt of the revelation he personally accepted the fact that blacks should not have the priesthood:

I had a great deal to fight, of course, myself largely, because I had grown up with the thought that Negroes should not have the priesthood and I was prepared to go all the rest of my life till my death and defend it as it was. But this revelation and assurance came to me so clearly that there was no question about it.²³

Given the courage, faith and testimony shown by Spencer W. Kimball regarding the question of the LDS Church's restrictive practices towards blacks, along with the other things I have felt in my heart on the issue, my spirit will not allow me to believe any other position but that the Church's priesthood ban was both *instituted* and *lifted* by the Lord. Thus testified

²¹Ibid., 449.

²²Spencer W. Kimball, as quoted in "One More Lengthening Stride," *This People* (Summer 1988): 22.

²³ Ibid.

LAST LABORER

Elder and President Spencer W. Kimball as one of the Lord's anointed. The substance of his testimony of this matter cannot be verified historically; yet, the Spirit has confirmed to me, and for me, beyond doubt, the truthfulness of what President Kimball has stated. It can, and will, do the same for you, upon the exercise of your faith.

A CHALLENGE AND PROMISE

Using reason alone in studying the *history* of the issue regarding the LDS Church's former priesthood ban against blacks will not lead one to a resolution of the question. Only by faith and personal revelation from the Holy Ghost can one's troubled heart be comforted concerning the issue. Only by the knock of humble prayer will the Lord open the door of His mysteries unto you. Alma taught: "It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God . . . and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full (Alma 12:9-10).

I challenge all who seek to know the mystery of God concerning the origin of the priesthood ban, and the LDS Church's former restrictive policies toward blacks, to do so through study, contemplation, faith, prayer, and revelation. I promise that as you do so your heart will be softened, enabling you to receive the greater portion of God's word.

And I tenderly implore you, as you study and prayerfully consider the abundance of information on this matter, which is truly a matter of faith, to especially ponder and pray concerning the words of Spencer W. Kimball. Then "follow the prophet, follow the prophet, follow the prophet," for, surely, he came to know—and then showed us—the way!

Last Laborer

Thoughts & Reflections of A Black Mormon

Keith N. Hamilton



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