

SUPPORTING THE PRIESTHOOD

Given in the Logan 10th Ward—2000—Before our move to Virginia

Thirty seven years ago, the first of this month, Glen and I went on our first date—to an Arab Club Dinner Dance at the University of Utah. We had a marvelous time, and afterwards we talked until way late. Glen said that the woman he married would have to meet 3 requirements:

1. Love him
2. Love the Lord
3. Understand priesthood government in the home

Even though I had just given an engagement ring back to another young man only the week before because it just wasn't right, I was very impressed with Glen and thought —“I could meet those requirements.” I wasn't exactly sure what he meant about Priesthood government—but I felt I could do whatever I needed since my father had been stake president most of my life and I had observed my mother support him in that calling.

2 1/2 months later we were married, and I have had many opportunities to support my husband in his priesthood callings and experiences along the way have taught me about the priesthood.

Shortly after we were married we were living in Salt Lake and Glen was called to serve as Elders Quorum President. He went to a Welfare meeting with the Bishop and I thought he would be home in an hour. It was well over 3 hours when he got home—and I was concerned.

Fortunately I never said anything to let him know of my frustration. A talk I had heard by Elaine Cannon, (then serving as the General Young Women's President) has saved me many times. She told about having her husband serve as a bishop early in their marriage. She always envisioned Sunday dinners with the children in their pinafores seated around a delicious meal. One fast Sunday she went home with the children and prepared the meal and waited for her husband to return. She waited and waited—but he never came.

Finally she fed her children and continued her fast as she watched for him to return. She said it finally dawned on her that if she were hungry, then surely her 6 foot husband must be hungry, so whatever was keeping him must surely be important or he would be home for dinner. This realization changed her outlook and she was able to greet him lovingly when he finally arrived. He said he'd had such a spiritual experience that it was difficult to talk about it. What a let down that would have been had she greeted him angrily!

Getting back to my story—Glen had been to see a member of the ward who was dying of cancer—the bishop had asked the members in the meeting to try to give him some

encouragement, and it had been a rich spiritual experience for both of them. It had been so profound that when he drove up in front of our house, he just sat in the car and wept because he was so overcome with emotion.

An interesting aside to this is that a neighbor saw him as he sat and wept in the car, and he tapped on the window and said, "All newlyweds have these kinds of problems. Cheer up, and in time things will level out."

We have never had problems like he was referring to.

After graduating from the University of Utah with his BS degree, Glen received his MS from Utah State University and then he was hired to teach Institute of Religion in San Diego. We lived in San Diego for 5 years, and then we moved back to Salt Lake City. We had only been there for about 8 months when a big change came into our lives. Glen was serving as deacons' quorum advisor in our ward when he was called by Elder Marvin J. Ashton to serve as 2nd counselor in the Murray Utah East Stake Presidency. We were very young and new to the stake. It was interesting to see the people look around and question who was being sustained.

The Lord qualifies whom he calls, including the wife, and priesthood callings force one to rise to the ability to manage. At the time of his call we had 6 children, the oldest was just 8 years old, and the 7th was born a couple of years later.

It was difficult caring for the children by myself in church since Glen was always at other meetings or was sitting on the stand, but somehow we managed. It was especially hard at nights because it seemed like he was always at meetings or teaching his night class. I really tried not to complain—but I did a lot of praying that somehow his load could be lessened a bit or that I could manage better. How well I remember the night we were with the other members of the Presidency and the Stake President said, "I think we'll be able to cut out our Thursday night meetings." I felt like my prayers had been answered.

In late January of 1976 Glen called from work and asked what I was doing. I replied that I was fixing dinner. He said he thought we ought to fast—President Romney's secretary had called and asked us to meet with him the following day.

Needless to say we spent a sleepless night—and did much soul searching. As we waited to meet with President Romney, President Tanner came by and shook hands with us. He jokingly asked what kind of trouble we were in, and Glen said, "If you had known the sleepless night we had last night you'd know it feels like we are in trouble."

The Secretary to President Romney said, as we went into the office, "Well, are you ready to have your lives changed?" and truly that did change our lives. We have never been the same since then, for ourselves and for our entire family, as President Romney called Glen to serve as President of the Germany Hamburg Mission.

We held a special family home evening where we talked to our children about what it meant to serve the Lord in a foreign country for 3 years, and those 3 years became a pivotal point for our family.

We took 7 children to Germany with us. It was honoring a priesthood call that meant I had to give birth to babies in a foreign land where the nurses couldn't speak English and I couldn't speak or understand German—but both Sarah and Joseph were born in Germany.

Following our mission, in 1979, we were assigned to Logan where Glen taught at the Institute of Religion. We first rented a house in the 24th ward for a year, but then as we looked for a house to buy, we truly feel that the hand of the Lord led us to our home on Wasatch Drive. We feel that we were directed to it because of Glen's 18 1/2 years of priesthood service in the Logan Central Stake Presidencies. We moved into our house on Labor Day, 1980. In February of 1981 Glen was in California speaking at Know Your Religion, and he called to tell me that Gordon B. Hinckley had called home on the phone and asked him to serve as a counselor to President Thad Carlson. Glen wasn't even at the stake conference, and once again people didn't know who he was when his name was read as a counselor. But the people soon became acquainted with him and we both came to know and love the people in the stake.

I raised the family—and Glen was busy with Priesthood service—but he was always there when we needed him. Our last son, John, was born in 1983.

As the time of service in the stake presidency drew to a close, we seriously considered the possibility of other things—but as Elder Russell M. Nelson came to change the presidency in February of 1990, I was asked to meet with him. President Nelson asked me if I would be willing to support my husband if he were called to lead the stake—I naturally said, "Yes!" Then he asked Glen to come into the room and he called him to be the new stake president. This priesthood interview affected our life for almost a decade, being released in September of 1999. After that he was called to be the patriarch for two Single Student Stakes, in January of 2000.

I am grateful for the influence of the priesthood in my life and the blessings it has brought to me, and I am grateful that I have been able to support my husband in his priesthood callings. The priesthood has been significant in our family home evenings, family prayers, family testimony meetings, priesthood interviews of children and other numerous priesthood blessings—all of which have created a family life permeated by the priesthood. Indeed, our marriage and family have been intimately affected by the power and authority of the priesthood and has been shaped by the various callings, that charted our life as a family.

Certainly if we had it all to do over again and could make a choice in the matter, we would change nothing. Undoubtedly the future, as our lives take new shape in the East, will continue to be channeled by this very dominant and directing influence of the priesthood in our home and our lives.