

Memorial Service for Lloyd M Rasmussen  
Remarks by Daniel L. Rasmussen  
December 8, 2010

At times like this, it is fitting that we reflect on the life of my father.

Lloyd M Rasmussen filled his life with love and bravery and did indeed lead a life uncommon. (*Life Uncommon*, Jewel Kilcher)

It is also fitting that we take a moment and reflect on the precious gift that this mortal life is to each of us.

The scriptures teach us that there is something more to life than just living day to day. Mortal life has a divine purpose.

God, our Heavenly Father, has planned for our happiness. When we realize that God has a plan for us, it is easier to understand why we are on this earth. God wants all of His children (including all of us here today) to become more like Him. During our time on earth, we receive a physical body, exercise moral agency, and learn to choose between good and evil. We are to form family relationships that may become eternal. We are given opportunities to learn, to grow and to gain experience.

By following our Heavenly Father's plan, each of us can someday return to live with Him and with our loved ones. We can have greater peace in this life and eternal joy in the life to come.

We are assembled here today because my father died. But death is not the end of our existence. Death is really a beginning—another step forward in

the Eternal Plan. Inevitably, our mortal body will die. But our spirit does not die; it leaves behind the decaying physical body and enters the spirit world. There, we continue to learn and progress and may be reunited with loved ones who have passed on.

Last week, as my mother, brothers, sisters and I surrounded the hospital bed where my dying father bid us farewell and took his last breaths, we were witnesses to the divine. We felt the veil thinning between this life and next. We felt the presence of our loved ones who preceded my father in death who had come to receive him. We rejoiced as he left behind the pain he had been suffering and felt reassured that he is moving on to a joyful place. We know our separation from him will be brief in the eternal scheme of things.

We understand that death is a necessary step in our eternal progression, just as birth was. Ultimately, our spirit and our body will be reunited—never to be separated again. This is called resurrection, and it was made possible by the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:20-22).

It is impossible to put into words the full meaning of what Jesus Christ has done for each of us. His Atonement is the most important and most transcendent event in God's plan. By suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, the Savior atoned for our sins. This is the good news of the gospel!

We do not fully understand how Jesus took upon himself our sins, grief, pain and sorrow. But we know that in the Garden of Gethsemane, the weight of it caused Him to feel such agony that He bled from every pore (Luke 22:39-

44). Later, as He hung upon the cross, Jesus willingly suffered painful death by one of the cruelest methods ever known. The Savior tells us: “For behold, I... have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer... even as I.” (Doctrine and Covenants 19:16-17)

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that: "The Atonement of the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh is the crucial foundation upon which all Christian doctrine rests and the greatest expression of divine love this world has ever been given. Its importance in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints cannot be overstated. Every other principle, commandment, and virtue of the restored gospel draws its significance from this pivotal event" ("The Atonement of Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, Mar 2008, 32–38).

Lloyd Rasmussen “[talked] of Christ, [rejoiced] in Christ, and [preached] of Christ , . . . , that [his] children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.” (paraphrasing 2 Nephi 25:26)

In fulfilling His part in God’s eternal plan, Jesus Christ did what only He could do – atone for each of us. To make that greatest of all gifts fully effective in our individual lives, we must have faith in Christ, repent of our sins, be baptized and confirmed by one having authority, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, obey God’s commandments, receive sacred ordinances, and strive continually to become like Him. His promise to us is that we can return to live with Him and our Heavenly Father forever.

But that is not all. Jesus gave power to His disciples to seal families together forever when He said, “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).

Death does not need to be the end of our relationships with cherished loved ones. The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that the “same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there [in eternity], only it will be coupled with eternal glory” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:2).

Family members who accept the Atonement of Jesus Christ and follow His example can be together forever through sacred ordinances performed in God’s holy temples. These ordinances seal a husband and wife together for all eternity and children to their parents as an eternal family. (See: “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”) Remarkably, these important ordinances are performed, not only for those who are able to attend the temple while in mortality, but also vicariously for those who have already passed on to the spirit world and are continuing their gospel education there. Our loving Father’s plan does not play favorites, but provides this heavenly opportunity to all His spirit children who have ever been born on the earth.

While I will miss my father now that he has completed his mortal life, I am buoyed by the knowledge that we will be reunited again. If I accomplish nothing else in my remarks today, I want you to understand that I know that these things are true. They are not just platitudes we spout off to make us feel better about losing a loved one. They are real.

God's eternal plan for us is the "big picture." It is what this life is really all about. Understanding it provides us with perspective, gives our lives purpose, and is the only real source of lasting happiness and peace.

In this season when we celebrate the birth of the Savior of the World, I challenge each of you to learn more about Him and what His atonement offers you. I ask you to examine or re-examine the details of God's plan for your life. If you do, I promise that you will have a GLORIOUS holiday season.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.