

ELDER REED SMOOT

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I thank my heavenly Father for the privilege I have of standing before this immense audience of his servants and handmaidens, and as time is limited I have decided that the only way to stop when you get started is to have it in such form that you will know when the end is reached.

Get into the habit of being happy. I tell you you can do it. You can say to yourself when you are awakened in the morning, "Everything is all right," and keep on saying it. You will be surprised to find how nearly all right the mere saying of it at the beginning of the day will really make everything right after all. This is true in business as well as in the home. Prophets of gloom are never popular, and ought not to be.

JOSEPH SMITH'S SAYINGS

Joseph Smith was the author of such sayings as these:

The glory of God is intelligence.

It is impossible to be saved in ignorance.

Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.

And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come.

The Prophet was true to his principles. He established schools and championed the cause of education.

A TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH SMITH

A Mormon writer has said:

His educational ideals passed over the threshold of time and strode down the halls of eternity. With a full appreciation of the knowledge that makes men and women capable and skilful in this life, he prized, and taught others to prize, above all, the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation.

How to solve life's every-day problems is of course important, but how to grapple successfully with the mightier problems of the great hereafter, how to store up treasures in heaven and lay hold upon eternal life, is far more consequential. Education meant to him the leading of the latent potential powers of the individual, the training to perfection of every divine attribute in man. As a child of God, and as a God himself in embryo, he stood for the full and complete development of the soul, body and spirit combined—mental, physical, moral, and spiritual education, the education contemplated and inculcated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and every succeeding President of the Church has stood for these principles.

DEFINITION OF CAN'T

There is a place provided in our Church organizations for every member. Excuses are sometimes offered, and many times the reason

given is, "I cannot give the time." "Can't!" What a word! That which I intend to quote now is Edgar A. Guest's definition of the word can't."

Can't is the worst word that is written or spoken
 Doing more harm here than slander or lies.
 It has many a strong spirit broken,
 And with it many a good purpose dies.
 It springs from the lips of the thoughtless each morning,
 And robs us of courage we need through the day:
 It rings in our ears like a timely sent warning,
 And leaves when we falter and fall by the way.

Can't is the father of feeble endeavor,
 The parent of terror and half-hearted work;
 It weakens the efforts of artisans clever,
 And makes of the toiler an indolent shirk.
 It poisons the soul of a man with a vision,
 It stifles in infancy many a plan;
 It greets honest toiling with open derision
 And mocks at the hopes and the dreams of a man.

Can't is a word that none should speak without blushing;
 To utter it should be a symbol of shame;
 Ambition and courage it daily is crushing;
 It blights a man's purpose and shatters his aim.
 Despise it with all of your hatred of error,
 Refuse it the lodgment it seeks in your brain;
 Arm against it as a creature of terror,
 And all that you dream of you some day shall gain.

Can't is a word that is doom to ambition,
 An enemy ambushed to shatter your will;
 Its prey is forever the man with a mission,
 And bows but to courage, and patience, and skill.
 Hate it with hatred that is deep and undying,
 For once it is welcomed 'twill break any man;
 Whatever the goal you are seeking, keep trying,
 And answer this demon by saying "I can."

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH WORK

One splendid way to avoid falling into error is to labor. Don't become a loafer. There is always something to do for a boy and girl, a father and mother, around the home, in the home. Take part in the Church in any interest for the welfare of the people. You remember in the old fable the tortoise won the race with the hare, not by a single burst of speed, but by plodding along steadily, tirelessly. In the Civil War it was found that Lee's army could not be overwhelmed in a single battle, but one federal general perceived that it could be worn down by time and the pressure of numbers. "I propose," said Grant, "to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." It took more than a summer, it took nearly a year, but he did it.

In the moral realm likewise, all things excellent are as difficult as they are rare. Character is not attained over night. The only way to develop moral muscles is to exercise them patiently and long. This is so well expressed by that renowned man, J. G. Holland, as follows:

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
 But we build the ladder by which we rise
 From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
 And we mount its summit round by round.

I count this thing to be grandly true:
 That a noble deed is a step toward God,
 Lifting the soul from the common clod
 To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet;
 By what we have mastered of good and gain;
 By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
 And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,
 When the morning calls us to life and light,
 But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the night,
 Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,
 And we think that we mount the air on wings
 Beyond the recall of sensual things,
 While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men!
 We may borrow the wings to find the way—
 We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray;
 But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
 From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;
 But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,
 And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
 But we build the ladder by which we rise
 From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
 And we mount to its summit, round by round.

TRUE RICHES

How rich are you, how rich are any of us? I think the letter portraying and answering that question is very well worded. No one yet has learned the author. When first it was published every effort was made to learn who the author was, but up to the present time we know not. But no matter who the author was I think the words are beautiful:

I do not mean how much money you have in the bank, or how much your real estate is worth, there are other riches more valuable than these. Some day I am going to write a book about how every man and woman may be rich, right now, today, in the things that really count. In my scrap book I have a little article about being richer each day that I would like to share with you. Here it is:

"You are richer today than you were yesterday. If you have loved often, given something, forgiven often, made a new friend today, or made stepping-stones of stumbling-blocks, if you have thought more in terms of thyself than myself, or if you have learned to be hopeful even if you were weary, you are richer tonight than you were this morning. If you have taken time to trace the handiwork of God in the

commonplace things of life, or if you have learned to count things that really do not count, or if you have been a little blinder to the faults of friends, and know you are richer if a little child has smiled at you, a stray dog has licked your hand, or if you have looked for the best in others and given others the best in you."

STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH

My brethren and sisters, I have often wondered why intelligent men and women who believe in the Bible, men and women who believe that there was a Christ, do not attend church. We find churches in all parts of America with but very few in attendance. I have had men ask me time and time again how it was that the Mormon Church had that power and influence over people to tell them to do a thing and they do it with all their might, mind, and strength, and with joy in their souls. They do not understand why our missionaries go out into the world for two or three years, once or twice, or three times, as the case may be, bearing their own expenses in an effort to convert the people who believe that they have the Gospel.

How happy we should be that our lives, our position, our belief are based upon a direct visitation from the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith in this dispensation! If that were not true do you think that this Church would have lived and grown and become the power it has? And do you think that any man, I care not whether it was Joseph Smith, or Brigham Young, or any other living soul, could have done this if it were not true that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith, and also that later the Priesthood of the living God was conferred upon him and he was instructed to organize the Church to which you and I belong?

God grant that we may ever be loyal and true to it, and that whatever comes, and whatever demand is made we may know it is what God would desire. God be with you, and bless you, and prosper you. May the Gospel of Jesus Christ grow every day and every year until the Master shall come, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brethren and sisters, nowhere in all the world do I feel myself so much in the presence of friends, as in these great General Conferences of the Church—thousands of men and women who are of the same faith, with the same objective in life, having the same aspirations as to the hereafter. I feel myself as one of a great family in these conferences. Yet there is a feeling as one stands before this group, akin to fear, akin to awe. I have heard my brethren say that they also have that feeling. Brigham Young explained it by saying that we are all children of Almighty God, his very children, begotten in the spirit world before we came here upon this earth, and that within every one of us, for that reason, is a spark of divinity. When a man stands before a group of thousands of righteous men and women, as I do this moment,