

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I DESIRE to bear my testimony to you that I know that we are engaged in building up the Kingdom of God on earth and that the teachings of the Church are in truth with fulness of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ restored to the earth in these latter days. That testimony is strengthened as I observe the influence of the Church in the lives of our young men and women today.

What is it that, *having*, we are strong in overcoming temptations and personal difficulties, and *having not*, we are afraid, weak, and an easy prey to the temptations of the world?

Often during the past few weeks I have asked myself that question, during which time I have had an opportunity to visit many of our young Latter-day Saint boys in military camps in company with Elder Albert E. Bowen of the Council of the Twelve and President Hugh B. Brown, and to inquire after many others whom we were not privileged to see. There I observed many of our young men who were meeting the problems of their strange environment with great fortitude, and were optimistic and hopeful. They were maintaining the highest Church standards. They were applying themselves diligently to the business of military training and were steadily advancing in rank. They were seeing in this experience a great opportunity for missionary work among their fellow soldiers. They were seeking out other Latter-day Saint boys to enjoy with them, whenever possible, the sweet communion of a sacred hour spent in sacrament meeting or in a study of the gospel in a Mutual Improvement organization. During their leisure hours when on leave of absence from camp, they were finding social relaxation in wholesome associations and seemed to be little affected by the tawdry and cheap entertainment that beckons in the vicinity of nearly every armed camp.

THE thought has often been expressed that the discontinuance of sending of young men into the mission field un-

til after the war would result in great spiritual loss to the Church, but after seeing the splendid young men of the Church—many of them returned missionaries—and the work they are doing in armed camps, I am convinced that upon their return home the Church will receive a great spiritual uplift as these young men bear testimony to the guiding hand of the Lord in their preservation and of the good that they were able to do.

Others there were who were melancholy, and discouraged, who seemingly had yielded to the deadly fatalism all too often found among soldiers. These had adopted a sort of indifference and an "Oh, what's the use" attitude that finds expression in the army song they sing, "We're in the Army Now." These, it was observed, are the ones that frequently yield to the enticing invitations that induce to harmful practices and vices and are encouraged in their indulgences by the "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die" philosophy frequently expressed by men in the armed services.

In one of the army camps we visited on the west coast, we had met with a group of our boys to consider what the Church might do to provide materials for use in religious services and to aid them in making proper social contacts with organized branches of the Church adjacent to the camp. After a prolonged discussion of these matters, a young captain in the group made this remark, "To my mind it's a question of spirituality—if a man lacks that, then there is little gained by anything you try to do for him; if he has spirituality, then he will be all right whether you do little or much."

What is meant by spirituality? The dictionary defines it as "the faculty that gives a feeling of confidence; sense of the spiritual; belief in divine things; an inclination to interpret prospects of promise in one's own favor."

I found out two weeks later what spirituality meant to that young army captain when I met him on the street

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here in Salt Lake City, and learned that during a short furlough prior to his leaving for overseas duty he had brought his wife and family with him to the temple where, by the authority of the Holy Priesthood, they were sealed together in the everlasting covenant for time and for all eternity. He was living with "an eye single to the glory of God" to lead him through this trying war period.

RECENTLY I had a visit with a young man returning from a mission. When I asked him what he thought had been the most important thing he had gained from his mission experience, he replied, "I expect shortly to be drafted for army service. I have gained a testimony that if I live a clean life I will be entitled to the companionship of the Holy Ghost that will warn me of needless danger and keep me safe until my work here on earth is completed. Also I have gained a testimony that life on this earth is but a preparation for eternity and that if I live worthily, after this life I will have important work there; so I have overcome the fear of death and am better prepared to go into the army than I would have been without my missionary experience."

In my heart I said, "Thank God for the seeds of the teachings of the gospel planted in the hearts of the youth of Israel that build a faith to fortify them in times of danger, adversity, and temptation."

Sometime in his youth, and through the experiences of his mission, there had been burned into the heart of that young man the truth that if he was purified and cleansed from sin he could ask whatsoever he would in the name of Jesus and it would be done (D. & C. 50:29-30) and that the Spirit of the Lord would not always strive with man; and that when the Spirit ceased to strive with man, there came speedy destruction. (II Nephi 26:11) He had learned that if he were wise and had received the truth and had taken the Holy Spirit for his guide that he should not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but should abide the day. (D. & C. 45:57) The scriptures had taught him that his

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body was the temple of the Holy Ghost which was in him, which he had of God (I Cor. 6:19) and that whatsoever temple is defiled, God shall destroy that temple. (D. & C. 93:35)

One who has a testimony of the purpose of life sees the obstacles and trials of life as opportunities for gaining the experience necessary for the work of eternity; he sees death as one of the greatest experiences of life. One of the saddest things I see as I travel throughout the stakes and wards of the Church is occasionally a person who because of a little wordly learning or wealth has come to think he has outgrown the Church and the faith of his fathers.

To one who has high spirituality, faith in the gospel and in the doctrines of the Church supersedes scientific theories and the philosophies of men; Priesthood quorum activities supplant service clubs and lodges; and Church social and recreational responsibilities come before fraternities and sororities.

Security that comes from the brotherhood of a Priesthood quorum with a Church membership and the living of the Church standards is valued above a fancied security that is purchased with wealth or political prestige.

The spiritually-minded seeks the respect of the high-minded who obey the law, who revere womanhood and virtue and encourage purity of thought and action rather than cater to the applause of the tipsters who secretly despise the man who thinks and acts below the standards he professes.

When prospering in a material way, those with great spirituality show appreciation to God to whom they are indebted for all that they have, by a thrifty, frugal husbanding of their substance and by extending generosity to the unfortunate according to the laws of the Church, rather than indulging in a reckless, riotous living as a prodigal in defiance of the laws of both God and man. In adversity he does not despair; when his bank fails he does not commit suicide; he lives above his world, and all that he does is with his eye ever fixed upon the goal of eternity.

If face to face with death, such a one will not fear if his feet have been "shod

with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and those who lose their loved ones will have the faith of Moroni, the captain of the army, who declared, "For the Lord suffereth the righteous to be slain that his justice and judgment may come upon the wicked; therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord their God." (Alma 60:13)

IT is my conviction that the present devastating scourge of war in which hundreds of thousands are being slain, many of whom are no more responsible for the causes of the war than are our own boys, is making necessary an increase of missionary activity in the spirit world and that many of our boys who bear the Holy Priesthood and are worthy to do so will be called to that missionary service after they have departed this life.

The Lord, ever mindful of the welfare of His children, has, through His prophets, given wise counsel as to the rock upon which men should anchor their lives.

And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to

drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fail. (Helaman 5:12)

And again in another place we are counseled:

O, remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea, learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God.

* * *

Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day. (Alma 37:35, 37)

The time is here when we would do well to sing again the song that comforted the pioneers of a former day:

Think not, when you gather to Zion
Your troubles and trials are through
That nothing but comfort and pleasure
Are waiting in Zion for you.
No, no; 'tis designed as a furnace,
All substance, all texture to try,
To burn all the wood, hay, and stubble,
The gold from the dross purify.

May we survive the fiery furnace of God's judgment and prove true to whatever test shall be made of us and abide the day of the second coming of the Son of Man. I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

DEAR Brethren and Fellow Workers:

During the time allotted me I should like to call to mind some fundamentals of leadership.

Nearly every member of the Church, at one time or another, is called to some official Church position; but here are assembled the present Priesthood leadership of the Church. In our hands, with the willing cooperation of the membership the Latter-day Saints, lies, in large measure, the future of the Church. We may retard or accelerate

its progress. The Lord has given us a great trust:

The Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days has had great leaders. From Joseph Smith to Heber J. Grant they have been mighty men. In their day they may have suffered persecution and derision; but with the process of the years they have come to stand as gigantic figures, worthy of the acclaim of all who love righteousness. They are fruits of the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To follow the examples of these great leaders is to make