

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

On the advice of their physicians, we have not asked President S. O. Bennion of the First Council of the Seventy, nor Bishop Marvin O. Ashton of the Presiding Bishopric, to speak at this Conference. We have been happy to have them with us at nearly all the sessions. Word from the hospital tells us that President Rufus K. Hardy of the First Council of the Seventy is much improved, for which we give thanks to the Lord.

We shall ask President David O. McKay of the First Presidency to speak to us for a few moments at the close of this Conference.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY*Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

At the conclusion of this Conference I think it is fitting, first, to express appreciation of the services rendered by our wives, mothers and sisters, who have remained at home to take care of household duties, and to carry on other responsibilities of farms and businesses while we have been here receiving instructions regarding our spiritual work.

I speak for myself when I say that too seldom we stop to tell our wives how much we think of their help and support. We feel it, but in the busy work-a-day life, we do not stop to say how much we love them. We can now, here in Priesthood meeting assembled, speak to those who are listening at least, and tell them we are not unmindful of their inspiration and help.

I hope each one of them deserves the tribute paid to his wife by a Scotchman who, in a dilatory way, had waited until she was gone before he expressed just how much he appreciated her. His tribute lies more in the implication than in the expression: "She was . . . Words cannot tell what she was—Think what a good wife should be. She was that." No matter what virtues or how many you might apply to womanhood, you would be but enumerating the virtues of his wife.

We owe much to our wives—

Helping and loving and guiding,
Urging when that were best,
Watching and guarding, whispering still,
Win you can—and you must, you will!

God bless them, keep them strong in the faith, and give them power to train our children in the ways of righteousness; for, after all, "the mother makes us most."

Brethren, we have listened to many glorious instructions. It is now for us to remember that better than to know what is good to do, is to *do it*. Shakespeare says:

I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than to be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

With the idea of application in mind, it is well to remember the parable of the sower. Some seeds, Jesus tells us, fell by the wayside, and were trampled under foot or devoured by fowls. Other seeds fell on the rock, sprang up, but, having no root, died. Other seeds fell among thorns and thistles, which choked out the seed. But some seeds fell on good soil and brought forth an hundred fold.

The disciples asked the Savior what he meant by that parable, and that is one that Jesus explained, saying: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are those that hear, but then Satan comes along and deceives and misleads them. They on the rock are persons who receive the word gladly, but who have no root, and when temptation comes, fall away. The seed that fell among thorns and thistles is the seed that falls in the hearts of men, who, when they have heard, permit it to be choked by the cares, and the riches and pleasures of life.

But the seed that fell in good soil was the seed that fell in honest and good hearts who, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.

We trust those who have been assembled here, and those who have listened, fall into the fourth class, who receive the word of God gladly, and will cultivate it to bring forth abundantly.

To the officers of the Church, the best way to achieve this is to discharge at least three great responsibilities which are ours. The first is the *responsibility to set a proper example*. Example is the best and most effective way of teaching. Let us be exemplary in our speech. No true leader of the Church will ever profane the name of Jesus, especially in the presence of his sons or the presence of any other young people. Profanity is a vice. I know of no country in the world where that vice is so prevalent as here in the United States. The Latter-day Saints are not free from it. Our duty is to set a proper example in reverence.

SETTING WORTHY EXAMPLES

We can set a proper example by speaking well of others. The Lord has admonished us not to engage in backbiting. I commend that simple little hymn, too seldom sung, "Nay, Speak No Ill."

Nay, speak no ill, a kindly word
 Can never leave a sting behind;
 And oh, to breathe each tale we've heard,
 Is far beneath a noble mind.
 Full oft a better seed is sown
 By choosing thus the kinder plan,
 For, if but little good is known,
 Still let us speak the best we can.

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Then speak no ill, but lenient be
 To others' failings as your own;
 If you're the first a fault to see,

Be not the first to make it known.
 For life is but a passing day,
 No lip may tell how brief its span;
 Then, O the little time we stay,
 Let's speak of all the best we can.

Another worthy example is exercising self-control—controlling our temper by not speaking angrily in the home. Let calmness be characteristic of our home life. If we do this, we shall be setting a proper example to the world.

Second, then there is the responsibility of guardianship, of being shepherds. That is what the Priesthood means. Guard well those who have been put in your keeping. "Feed my sheep," said the Savior to Peter. "Feed my lambs," He repeated. "Feed my sheep."

And the third obligation, so to live that we may merit the companionship and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such guidance is a reality. Every officer in the Priesthood is entitled to it if he lives to merit it. That is a great, sublime privilege of membership in the Church of Christ. We sometimes have it, but we do not heed it. I am speaking to myself when I say that, for I nearly lost my life by not heeding it. I once received a warning just as distinct as anything that has ever come into my life. "Go up to the bridge and back." When I reached the bridge, I thought we should go farther; I let my own judgment supersede inspiration; and if it had not been for the blessings of the Lord following the accident, I should not be here today.

God help us, brethren and sisters—those who are listening in—to be true to the responsibilities that membership and position in the Church of Christ entail. I pray that the spirit of unity, the spirit of peace, the spirit of mutual confidence that has pervaded the sessions of this, the one hundred fourteenth annual conference, will go with us to our homes, to our wards, throughout the stakes and the missions of the Church, and that God's blessings will attend Israel everywhere, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren: We come to the conclusion of a great Conference. Certainly I, in my lifetime, have not attended a greater, and in some respects I think this is the finest of any at which I have ever been present.

I just want to say one word: I think the quotation I shall use will typify the spirit of this Conference. On the evening of the meal of the Passover chamber, after the apostles had assembled, after they quarreled a bit among themselves about precedence, after the Savior had washed their feet, after they had eaten the Paschal Supper, after Judas had gone to work out the betrayal, after the Savior had instituted the sacrament, he then preached some great discourses. The last one before they left the chamber related to the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, and I am reading from John 14:26-27: