

HELP IN TIME OF NEED

I don't know of anything that has impressed me more the last few months than the little experience we had in Salt Lake City a few weeks ago when the flood came through the cemetery and did its damage. The unfortunate people of the north bench received more water and gravel in their basements and on their lawns than they had ordered. The thing that impressed me was how President Christensen of this particular stake and his people got together. They organized themselves and went into the basements and dug out the debris. They found some basements half full. What impressed me most about this whole program was that as they went from door to door to do the Samaritan act, the question was not asked, "Are the people under this particular roof members of our Church?" They went to every home that was afflicted. I thought that was a grand act. We will have to put more of that stuff, if you please, into our systems. I was interested in what they said of one particular man helping with this work. I don't know whether this man could write out a check for a million dollars or not. That's quite a lot of money, but he was a man of considerable wealth. There he was up to his knees in mud, using the shovel. Someone who knew him well and knew his wealth said to him, "You don't have to do this." Of course he didn't. He could have written a check out to have someone else do it, but what was his comeback when so approached? He said, "Sure, I don't have to do this, but I want to know what the taste of it is along with the rest of these good people." Now that's what is going to convert the world—that's what is going to bring peace.

May the Lord bless us and help us to be tolerant and kind and do unto others as we would like to be done by, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

It is thrilling to me, my brothers and sisters, to see this tabernacle filled again at a general conference of the Church. It is a glorious sight to behold.

ACCEPTANCE OF NEW APOSTLE

I should like to express first of all my earnest appreciation for the appointment of Brother Matthew Cowley as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. I heard him voice his testimony day before yesterday in the temple, with the mission presidents, and was thrilled with the conviction of it. I must confess that several months ago I had his name on a list which I was preparing for another purpose.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH

Since this is an unusual day in Church history, one on which

we have sat in solemn assembly and sustained a President of the Church, I should like to express to you my conviction and state to you my acceptance of him as a prophet of the living God, and of all of his predecessors; and likewise my testimony of the divinity of this work and of the divinity of Jesus the Christ. I should like to echo also some of the things that have already been said concerning President George Albert Smith, borne out in my own experience with him, as to his kindly consideration for all his brethren and all his fellow men. He is considerate and loving and kindly under all circumstances, and on all occasions in my experience, and I am grateful for the privilege of associating with him.

There has been a phrase running through my mind—a phrase as to the perishability of the opportunities for teaching our children. I say perishable because they are opportunities which pass quickly and which never come again. On many occasions I have been impressed with the fact that some of those who were teachers, and even Jeacons, when the recent war first broke in Europe, have since fought and died for their country. It would be impossible to say what the critical year of a boy's or a girl's life is. Indeed, it would be impossible to say what the critical year of a man's life is. All the years are or may be critical years in our lives; but I feel sure that as parents if we should become too busy or too preoccupied in any single year to keep close to our children, to keep counsel with them, we might find that that was a critical year, and that we had missed a perishable opportunity. They grow up so quickly, these youngsters of ours, and teaching cannot be safely postponed, and loving counsel and close contact with them are essential at all times.

KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS PAST IMPORTANT TO YOUTH

Often I think we assume that our children know more than they do know concerning the ideals which mean so much in our lives, and concerning the principles and the reasons therefor. Because we have lived longer and have learned the reasons for some of these things, we may assume that they likewise know the reasons for them, but frequently they do not. I was particularly impressed with this fact, one day, as I had a casual meeting with a young man in a shop where there were photographs on display of old Salt Lake City scenes. He was a young man whom I had set apart for missionary service, who had returned, was married, was rearing a family, and was then in army uniform, serving his country. I happened to see a picture of the old Salt Lake Theater and made some comments concerning it, as to my own impressions and memories of it, and there appeared on his face a rather unresponsive expression. Finally he said, "You know, Brother Evans, I don't remember the Salt Lake Theater."

Well, it astounded me. Here was a young man, having taken his place in the world, having assumed his obligations in life, who had no memory of something which was for long years one of the great institutions of this community, even up to and including my own arrival

at manhood—and yet he had grown up in this community. I began to think back and to count back the years to the time when that glorious old structure was torn down, and I found that indeed he may well not have remembered it. He was probably not more than three or four years old when it was removed.

As it is with physical structures, so it is also with principles, with traditions, with events of history. Things which shape our beliefs and give foundation and stability and meaning to the glorious truths and safeguards in the lives of our parents and grandparents, and in our own lives, we too often assume will somehow, automatically, become understood by our children as we understand them; but, unless we do our duty in passing on a knowledge of these things, we shall find that the next generation have grown up without a knowledge of them.

And this isn't true only of the principles and traditions and truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, but it is likewise true of the principles that govern this nation, and of the reasons for which they were established and the difficulties by which they were established—why they were fought for and died for, and how precious they are, and why we must be everlastingly vigilant to preserve them. These young people of ours have heard of the Constitution of the United States, of course. They know it to be an historic document with considerable significance, but, unless we find a way to teach them, they may grow up missing something of its significance as a living instrument of freedom and they may unfortunately be led to think that some of the old fallacies and ancient evils are new and smartly modern principles to be tried and followed. They may not know that such fallacies have been tried over and over again by foolish and unwise peoples in generations past, much to their sorrow and regret.

A PLEA FOR UNITY IN THE HOME

I plead not only for the constant teaching of our children, and for close association with them, but for unity in our homes as concerning what we teach them, so that parents may not be divided before their children. Our youth will grow up in confusion if parents are in any wise divided in what they stand for and in what they present to their children in their impressionable years. It is not uncommon to see a child "shop" between a mother and a father, picking his time and his purpose where he thinks he will find the greatest leniency at the moment. And while there must be a sympathetic understanding of the point of view of our young people, we must not be inclined to give in to them on things which we know to be improper or unwise—not even if they confront us with the age-old argument that all the other mothers and fathers are letting their children do it. It is a difficult argument to meet, but one which must be firmly and wisely met.

I am grateful, my brethren and sisters, for my membership in this Church, for my fellowship with you. May God's blessings be

with us in our homes, and in all that we undertake in life, and may we not let the opportunities that we have to counsel with our children perish without our having made the most of them, I ask, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I desire to bear testimony this afternoon, my brethren and sisters, to the great work in which we are engaged, that it is the work of our Father and that those who preside as the Presidency of the Church are prophets, seers, and revelators of whom the Lord has said he would do nothing save he would reveal his secrets to them. In this day, a day perhaps when the youth of the Church have been faced with the greatest problems with which the youth of any age have been faced, particularly so in this dispensation, it is not a mere coincidence that there should come to the Presidency of the Church a man who in our day has had more to do with presiding over youth organizations than any other man. He brings a wealth of experience that to me augurs a program of care and attention to the problems of youth, the like of which we need greatly this day.

A NEW APPRECIATION FROM SERVICE MEN

There came to our hands recently a resolution passed by a group of our servicemen who were in the European theater of war. They styled this document which they had prepared and had agreed upon, "A New Appreciation," and this is the way it read in part:

Out of a world of chaos and confusion, out of the hopeless depths of a universal catastrophe spring new convictions, a new appreciation for the finer virtues of life. We left a world where certain fundamental truths were accepted lightly, where our thoughts and actions were characterized by a tendency to be too proud and a little arrogant. We have been guilty of appraising the desirability of a girl by the standards established by a judge in a Hollywood beauty contest. Perhaps some of us have been more guilty than others but we have all been guilty. Last Sunday in a meeting we openly confessed that regrettable error; we asked forgiveness of all we may have neglected by that total misconception. We think we can speak for the greater percentage of L.D.S. servicemen all over the world when we say that through this new inlet God has given us the true light of real beauty. A girl is beautiful when her virtue cannot be questioned, when her stability and faith in the Church is steadfast. A girl is beautiful when she is sincere and humble, when she looks upon a child with affection, or upon a sufferer with compassion. She is beautiful because she has a smile and a cheerful word for her associates. Beauty does not lie in the face alone but rather it is measured by character and the sweetness of her disposition, as we expect it to be. But you can be sure of one thing, those of us who are yet single and have the desire for the companionship of a beautiful girl will be going to the Mutual Improvement Association to find her. We have traveled to many different parts of the world and such travel has only tended to convince us more thoroughly than ever that our greatest hope for complete happiness lies in Zion. There we can rest assured the girls are beautiful. (See *Improvement Era*, August 1945, p. 435.)