

PROCRASTINATION

There is one important thing to remember. As the time of repentance is procrastinated, the ability to repent grows weaker. Neglect of opportunity in holy things brings a forfeit of the chance.

From the Book of Mormon in the Book of Alma we read:

Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.

For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; therefore, the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked. (Alma 34:34-35.)

TEACHINGS OF CONFERENCE

May the Lord bless us to be able always to keep his commandments to the best of our ability. And I bless you, my brothers and sisters, with a strength of memory sufficient to take home with you the spirit and teachings of this conference that you may not be forgetful of the kernels of truth and light, and that you may not be so burdened with the numerous teachings of this conference, that you will lose sight of the important things, and that you will remember them and put them into practice and teach them to the many hundreds of our members who are not able to attend this conference.

I bless you, my brethren and sisters, that you may be saints in very deed, through your faithfulness and your devotion to the teachings which are given in this conference, and may God be with us all, that we may ever honor and glorify him. May God be ever honored and glorified for his manifold mercies unto us, his children, I pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I wish I might say something to the missionaries of the Church that would be helpful in their work in teaching the gospel. In a broad sense, we are all missionaries who hold the priesthood of God. We are ever ready to give the message of eternal life because of the truth, beauty, and goodness of the divine teachings of the Savior. Out of our faith, we find everything that is holy and

pure and of good report. I was thinking this morning of the Sabbath day after the arrival of the pioneers in this valley, July 24, 1847. Divine services were held, and the people were seated in a circle out in the sagebrush, and nearby were the waters of a lovely stream. Gratitude to God was expressed in song and prayer, and the words of Isaiah were read by Apostle Orson Pratt, who gave the sermon:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. (Isaiah 52:7-8.)

TRUTHS OF GOD

The Saints had sung their sacred hymns during their long journey. They had endured their trials, and the more they suffered, the deeper was their gratitude to God. The missionaries go forth to speak of these things, because the history of this people is in many respects the most majestic and sublime of any people that ever lived. There is a sacred foundation to their teachings. The Latter-day Saints believe and know honestly that Adam came to earth sent of God from heaven. He held the priesthood of God and became the first teacher of the gospel to his descendants. The divine ideals as taught by the Father of us all were held sacred, and from that time to the days of the Messiah upon the earth, the truths of God were planted in the hearts of his children. Maurice Maeterlinck in his book, *The Great Secret*, says that what we read in the oldest archives of wisdom gives us only a faint idea of the sublime doctrines of the ancient teachers. The older the texts, the more pure, the more awe-inspiring are the doctrines they reveal. They may be merely an echo of sublimer doctrines. We come down to the age of the prophets. Says a noted historian:

How fitting it is that Malachi should seal up the book of the Old Testament prophecy by such a clear statement of the coming of the Lord, the Messenger of the Covenant, the Son of righteousness, and thus give the last prediction of him, with whom the evangelists begin their gospel history.

Hugo Munsterberg of Harvard University wrote, in his *Psychology and Life*, something of the past glory of the sacred records:

There is a truth, a beauty, a morality, which is independent of psychological conditions. Every straightforward man, to whom the duties of his real life are no sounding brass, speaks with a sound voice to the psychologist: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

GOSPEL RE-ESTABLISHED

We have the age in which the Prophet Joseph Smith lived. He was undoubtedly the greatest character in history since the days of the Savior of the world. He re-established the divine principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the day in which we live. We first see him in the woods on the frontier of America praying as a child might pray and the Lord appearing to him. Using the words of the Psalmist,

... grace is poured into thy lips, therefore, God hath blessed thee forever. (Psalms 45:2.)

With the Father was Jesus the Savior. Joseph heard the voice of God and the divine words: "This is my Beloved Son!" A new day was at hand. From that moment he was heart and mind to the word of the Lord.

He learned that day that the divisions of Christendom are its most conspicuous reproach and the chief cause of its inefficiency. They present a moral affront to the enterprise inaugurated by Jesus Christ and constitute the outstanding limitation of its progress. Christianity is weakened by its divisions in facing the problems of today, among which are class hatreds, race antagonisms, blindness to social justice, the lure of vicious literature, crime-instigating narcotics, and the spread of military spirit in the world.

PRINCIPLE OF REVELATION

The supreme test of religion is revelation. No religion can be persuasive unless it relies on the principle of revelation. The living Church of Jesus Christ must be revelatory. Christianity in its pure sense is the religion of redeemed personality. While all true men reveal God, the completest carrier of revelation can be no other than a chosen personality.

By the power of the Holy Priesthood which Joseph Smith received from heaven, he established our true relationship to God. Out of this grows the salvation of man—his true immortal life. The nations all bear witness to the need of a light that is not of man. We can give our word to the world that the forces which are to make the world the world it ought to be are now within it. My fellow missionaries: We are to study more deeply and constantly the divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must know the history of the Church of which we are members. We must understand the meaning of the priesthood of God which has been given to us. We must know the divine teachings of the Holy Bible, the Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price. How beautifully do they teach the words of Shakespeare:

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a God! (Shakespeare, *Hamlet* Act II, Sc. 2.)

FAITH IN REVEALED WORD

Think of what your message can become as you go forth to teach. But it is going to require of you some sort of planning toward an end. Your minds must become more sensitive to the revealed truths of God as never before. Your faith in your work must deepen from day to day. Let me call to your minds the words of the first two verses of the first chapter of the Book of Mormon:

I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. (1 Nephi 1:1-2.)

What a noble tribute to education these words are. Lehi had become an educated man in his day, and his son pays him loving tribute. So you must study the words of Holy Writ every hour of the day and remember the admonition of the first teacher to the American Indians, called by some the apostle John Eliot:

Work, with faith in Jesus Christ can accomplish anything.

"WORDS OF WISDOM"

What a directive purpose the Prophet Joseph Smith gives us in the words as found in the 88th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

... seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God. (Verses 118-119.)

From the beginning of the history of the Church, Joseph Smith organized schools of learning. He became a student and a member of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew classes established in the Kirtland Temple. He established the University of the City of Nauvoo, encouraged the building of the Seventies' Hall of Science. In volume five of the *Times and Seasons* is found this brief, but noble statement:

Among the improvements going forward in this city, none merit higher praise, than the Seventies' Library. The concern has been commenced on a footing and scale, broad enough to embrace the arts and sciences, everywhere: so that the *Seventies* while traveling over the face of the globe, as the Lord's "Regular Soldiers," can gather all the curious things, both natural and artificial, with all the knowledge, inventions, and wonderful specimens of genius that have been gracing the world for almost six thousand years. (p. 762; January 1, 1845.)

REFINEMENT AND CULTURE

The early history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was one of refinement and culture. The people became lovers of good literature. Even when they were camping on the frozen ground of Iowa as they began their exodus to the far West, they read their sacred books and before the campfires they knelt in prayer. We are told that in one of the camps was a copy of *Mile. Cottin's* beautiful story, entitled "Elizabeth." It was so sought after that some read the book by the light of the moon. They were sustained by day and by night by

... keeping up the songs of Zion, and passing along Doxologies from front to rear when the breath froze on their eyelashes.

Jane Bicknell Young, the wife of Joseph Young, sang to her children the "Song of the Silent Land":

Into the Silent Land!
 Who shall lead us thither?
 Clouds in the evening sky more darkly gather
 And shattered wrecks lie thicker on the strand.
 Who leads us with a gentle hand
 Thither, oh, thither.
 Into the Silent Land.

They trained themselves to read and to think, but they had no set regulations for their studies. They embraced only guiding principles. They knew nothing of set rules and methods which would have limited their imaginations and initiative, which are so important in the successful presentation of great truths. One of the first things that President Brigham Young did after the advent of the pioneers to Utah was to issue an epistle—and this in 1847—which reads as follows:

It is very desirable that all the Saints should improve every opportunity of securing at least a copy of every valuable treatise on education—every book, map, chart, or diagram that may contain interesting, useful, and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children, and cause them to love to learn to read; and also every historical, mathematical, philosophical, geographical, geological, astronomical, scientific, practical, and all other variety of useful and interesting writings, maps, etc., to present to the general church recorder, when they shall arrive at their destination, from which important and interesting matter may be gleaned to compile the most valuable works on every science and subject, for the benefit of the rising generation. We have a printing press, and any one who can take

good printing or writing paper to the valley will be blessing themselves and the Church. We also want all kinds of mathematical instruments, together with all rare specimens of natural curiosities and works of art that can be gathered.

FIRST LIBRARY

In 1851 the first extensive library was brought by ox teams to this state. It had been purchased in New York City by Dr. John M. Bernhisel and was a wonderful collection of books. There were the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Homer, Juvenal, Lucretius, Virgil, Euripides, Sophocles, Plato, Montaigne, Tacitus, Spenser, Herodotus, Goldsmith, and many others of the great masters of the world's best literature. The library received copies of the *New York Herald*, *New York Evening Post*, the *Philadelphia Saturday Courier*, and the *North American Review*. Of the scientific works there were Newton's *Principia*, Herschel's *Outlines of Astronomy*, and Von Humboldt's *Cosmos*. The treatises on philosophy included the works of John Stuart Mill, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Emanuel Swedenborg.

Time will not permit my going into the cultural aspects of the early days of the Church. The Latter-day Saints were a cultured people from the first, and they indicated this in their lives. The inventory of the educational resources of Utah have been what Dr. Samuel T. Dutton, of Columbia University, has pointed out. These resources are: First, homes, churches, schools, and libraries; second, newspapers, magazines, museums, drama, industry, and government; third, those intellectual and ethical aptitudes of the people which make it possible for them to be quickened and influenced in the right direction.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF PIONEERS

The pioneers were always striving to understand the arts and sciences, for they sensed keenly the power of all truth. They knew the human constants—hunger and labor, seedtime and harvest, love and faith—which entered into their lives from the very first. They built this Tabernacle in which we are worshiping today. They continued establishing schools and colleges and established a theatre in the wilderness which in time became recognized by the artists of the London stage as well as the famous dramatists of America. Mr. M. B. Leavitt has written in his *Fifty Years of the American Stage*:

Sweeping as the statement may seem, I do not believe that the theater has ever rested on a higher plane, both as to its purpose and its offerings, than at Salt Lake City, the Capital of Mormondom.

Utah today has become a great state. Ellsworth Huntington has recently written in his book, entitled *Civilization and Climate*:

The proud position of Utah is presumably the result of Mormonism. The leaders of that faith have had the wisdom to insist on a thorough system of schools, and have obliged the children to attend them. The "Gentiles" have in self-defense been forced to do equally well, and the result has been admirable. Whatever one may think of Mormonism as a religious belief, it must be credited with having accomplished a remarkable work in spreading a moderate degree of education almost universally among the people of Utah.

Count Hermann Keyserling, the noted German philosopher and historian, came to Salt Lake City a few years ago and afterwards wrote in his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* these words:

The Mormons have achieved a civilization hardly attained by any other people. In barely half a century they have changed a salt-desert into a garden. They are moreover admirable citizens, law-abiding, honest, and progressive.

MISSIONARIES TO TEACH WORLD

You missionaries of Jesus Christ, our Savior, are taught the divine precepts of the religion of the Master, and you go forth in all the world to teach. Out of the faith of your fathers you take to peoples all that is holy and pure and of good report. Your zeal and self-devotion shall be increased. Your heavenly aspirations, your human sympathies, your endless deeds of charity will bring you the hearts of the people. You need never hesitate, for you have entered upon your many duties and responsibilities, your trials and discouragements "with the zeal of Peter and the gentleness of John." Well may you read the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith as he wrote in the Articles of Faith:

We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things. (Thirteenth Article of Faith.)

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I am sure I never fully realize how much I need help until I actually arrive at this moment and this place, and I earnestly hope that I shall have it.

ADVICE GIVEN TO MOSES

I should like to read as preface to the few remarks that I shall make, some verses from the eighteenth chapter of Exodus:

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.