

Friday, October 1

First Day

was a very good friend of his. The story that we got in this letter was that during the time that this man has been the district supervisor in his ward, they have never had less than ninety percent of their families visited.

Then I heard another one from up in the Portland area. I saw a man in a wheel chair who had been brought in to every session of the conference. The stake president said, "I would like to introduce you to this man. He is a one hundred percent ward teacher."

When I shook hands with him and congratulated him, I said, "How do you do it?"

He said, "Well, I have to be carried into the homes. They have to carry me out again. I can wheel my chair from one home to the next, but it is a wonderful experience. I would not miss it for anything, and I just love to do my ward teaching."

Sometimes I think, brethren, somebody ought to break our ankles or our arms to help us appreciate the possibilities we have. I read the story of the two men down in the El Paso Stake who said they drive 120 miles every month to visit two families, but they always have one hundred percent ward teaching visits.

You hear stories like this wherever you go. I have heard men, when asked, "What are you doing in the Church?" say, "I am *only* a ward teacher," and I have said, "What do you mean by saying you are *only* a ward teacher? What you ought to do is swell up with pride and say, 'I am a ward teacher, and I am doing my teaching, and I am grateful to the bishop for the opportunity he has given me of serving in this great Church and kingdom.'"

I feel, brethren, that we have to feed the spiritual body just as we have to feed the physical body, if we want to

keep it alive, and here is a great opportunity to perform that service. I know some of us feel that we do not amount to very much, and I remind you of the story of the elephant and the mouse. You have probably heard it.

The two of them together crossed a rickety old bridge. When they got on the other side, the mouse looked up into the eyes of the elephant and said, "Boy, didn't we shake that bridge?"

Well now, maybe we are just the difference in what it takes to make this program shake, or make it go. Brethren, we express our appreciation and gratitude for what you have done. I hope you can see with us the great possibilities of getting into every home every month. We will strengthen this Church as it has never been strengthened before, and that is my testimony to you, and I bear it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric has just concluded speaking.

The Choir and the Congregation will now sing one verse of "O Ye Mountains High," under the direction of Brother J. Spencer Cornwall.

Elder Hugh B. Brown will speak to us following the singing.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O Ye Mountains High."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Hugh B. Brown will now speak to us, one of the Assistants to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Mark E. Petersen, of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER HUGH B. BROWN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY DEAR brothers and sisters: Bishop Carl Buehner and I, being first to speak in this conference, are perhaps somewhat like two boys just coming out of the dentist's chair. We look

through our tears rather pityingly at those in the outer office who are waiting for their turn.

We have all been inspired this morning by the stirring appeal of our Presi-

dent, and by the reports we have heard. We have all been encouraged in our work. I hope what I shall say will not seem to be a discord. President McKay closed with the words, "Let loyalty to the marriage covenant pervade the home." We who are favored with the privilege and charged with the responsibility of speaking at the general conferences of the Church wonder through the months what phase of the gospel, what subject we should discuss. Because of some work I have been asked to do, there is only one subject I can think of to talk about, and on that I am very poorly qualified.

In introduction, may I read some scripture which I think is pertinent:

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. (Gen. 2:18; 1:27-28.)

And in another scripture:

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh.

What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Mark 10:7-9.)

And again:

Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. (1 Cor. 11:11.)

Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence and likewise also the wife unto the husband. Paul speaking:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church. (Eph. 5:22, 25.)

Inasmuch as many of this congregation are holders of the priesthood, I remind all of us that we submit ourselves unto the Lord in righteousness and because of righteousness. This requirement of the wives to submit to their husbands presupposes righteousness on the part of the husbands.

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

And in order to obtain the highest a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. (D. & C. 131:1-3.)

In the Old Testament scripture, the prophet said on one occasion: ". . . to your tents, O Israel," (1 Kings 12:16) and again, "Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes," referring to their tents or homes and their need of support.

Throughout the world today there is confusion, apprehension, danger. In our own land we are spending billions to fortify and defend our country and protect our homes. Not only are we stockpiling armaments and atom bombs and other instruments of war, but we are also building a radar system, sky high and continent wide, extending across Canada and up into the Arctic Circle, all with the idea, basically, of defending our homes.

Sometimes we, as individuals, feel weak and helpless in the face of all this and wonder what we might do to help. May I call your attention to the fact that right in the inner citadel of our defensive system, the home, which is the very bulwark of our strength and solidarity, right there the enemy is making inroads which truly are frightening. In what I have to say on this subject, I hope no one will feel that I am chastising or blaming or condemning. I think I realize, because of recent experiences, that there are many innocent victims of desertion and betrayal. My heart goes out to many lovely women who are left to raise their children alone, and certainly to them we say a word of encouragement, and we pray God's blessings upon them that they may be given strength to carry this added burden. And yet we must say some things about this evil—its source and possible conquest.

In the last issue [October 1954] of the *Reader's Digest*, the startling statement is made that "one thousand times every day in the United States a judge's gavel falls and with two words, 'divorce granted,' somebody's love story comes to an end." And may I add, some home

Friday, October 1

First Day

becomes a casualty. One thousand of them a day in the United States, 365,000 in a year! May I say, regretfully, that the Intermountain States in this list are above the average in the number of divorces granted. May I also say that even among those who are married in the temple, the serpent, who first made his appearance in the Garden of Eden, creeps in and continues his attempt to separate man and woman against the decree of God that they should be one flesh.

According to statistics there is one divorce for every three marriages in the United States. What would we think if 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ percent of all the ships that set sail on the ocean were doomed to shipwreck and to failure? And what would the board of directors of the company do if the cause of that failure could be traced to the captain and the mate, who could not agree and work together? Many divorces start before marriage.

We who wrestle with this problem have traced some of the causes, and in many cases they lead back into the childhood homes of the young couples, who are now divorcees. We believe, brethren and sisters, as has been so eloquently said this morning, that proper parental example and training in the home would help to stem this tide of divorce. Parents should teach their children by example and by precept the sacredness of the marriage covenant, should teach them that there is no joy in all the world comparable to the joy that comes through happy wedlock. But like all blessings, this joy is predicated upon obedience to law.

Parents, who fail to teach their children and to demonstrate to them what happy wedlock can mean and does mean, are sowing where their children must reap. If they fail here, the ancient edict will operate; viz.: the sins of the parents shall be visited upon the children.

Fathers should teach their boys that there is no freedom except through obedience to law. Children should be reared in disciplined homes where rules are obeyed and the rights of others are respected. Parents should "reprove betimes with sharpness" and then show an increase of love. The child that is pampered in the home will expect to

be pampered after marriage. Among the seeds of divorce one of the most prolific is over-indulgence. It grows into extreme selfishness.

There are certain weaknesses in all of us which we say are inherent. I shall not attempt to list them but refer to one or two that men and women should recognize in themselves and overcome before their spouse discovers and magnifies them.

I think now of self-control. Many of the cases which I review started with uncontrolled appetites and tempers, leading often to cruelty, mental and physical. When in a temper the tongue may be venomous. The Apostle James said, ". . . it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." (James 3:8.) That is only potential, but it is often true. The tongue, with which we say our prayers and pledge our troth is sometimes used to wound those we love best. "Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds; we can't do that when we're flying words."

A middle-aged couple on the farm had a violent quarrel at breakfast time. Later in the day they started for town in the buggy, with a fine team of horses to sell their vegetables and eggs. As the horses trotted along, Mary said, "John, why can't we travel together like these horses do? They don't quarrel and fight." John said, "Mary, we could if there was only one tongue between us."

Oh, the unkind things we say to those we love.

We have kind words for the stranger
And smiles for the sometime guest,
While oft to our own
The bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best!

Of course, and this is the saddest part of what I have to say, there are evil intruders, more deadly sins, which strike at the very foundation of our homes. Infidelity, love's counterfeit, is the most disintegrating influence that can enter a man's life. It is to the home what treason is to the nation. Lust is fatal to love. It sometimes causes men in military service to destroy the very home which they would die to defend on the battlefield.

In the *U.S. News and World Report*, there is an article on "Why Teen-agers Go Wrong." Divorce is high on that list, and it is reported that one-half of all the adult criminals begin as juvenile delinquents, and most juvenile delinquents come from broken homes. Let people who are considering divorce pause and consider possible consequences.

But let us think of some positive aspects of this subject. I should like for the next minute to talk to the young people who may be listening in: to tell them that though this enemy is extant, and though they must meet situations where they must face and overcome difficulties, they can train and prepare themselves for this glorious experience with the same promise of success as awaits the well-trained and disciplined person in any field of activity. Marriage is life at work.

I speak, first, of love. I am not thinking of that flutter of the heart or the droop of the eyelash which you young folks may identify as such, that may well be the beginning of love, but I am thinking of the love that "suffereth long and is kind, that envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; the love that beareth all things, endureth all things, the love that never faileth." (See I Cor. 13.) And I remind you that the Master who loved most of all, endured the most and proved his love by his endurance. Yes, "there is beauty all around, when there's love at home."

I speak next of prayer. The husband, who will kneel every day in the home and thank God for his wife and list her virtues in his supplication to be entered on the credit side of the family ledger will overlook or be unmindful of her little weaknesses—he will never seek the divorce courts. The woman who kneels with her children in the

home and humbly thanks God for a kind, loving, and wonderful father and husband, even though at times that prayer may be only a wish, it still will impress upon the souls of the children an image and hold before them an ideal which they will try to realize in themselves. Quoting Sister Benson on the TV program recently, "The family that prays together stays together."

Young people of the Church, read the seventy-sixth section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Here is the prize which you may earn and enjoy, with God's help. You who have been baptized and receive the holy Spirit, you who have testimonies of Jesus, who keep the commandments and overcome by faith, and are sealed by the holy Spirit of promise, shall become priests and kings of the Most High and dwell in the presence of God and Jesus Christ forever and ever.

Your bodies shall become celestial whose glory is that of the sun. You shall have joy in your posterity here, eternal family union and association hereafter, immortality, eternal life, and eternal increase.

God help us that we may put on the whole armor of God, having our loins girt about with truth, and having the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the sword of the spirit, and go forward in the fear of God and protect our homes. Yes, to your tents, or homes, O Israel, lengthen the silken cords of love and strengthen the stakes of faith and righteousness to the glory of God and our own salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Hugh B. Brown, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

AS A POSTSCRIPT to these stirring things which we have heard this morning, may I say that in my humble opinion, one of the foundation stones

of success in the home is companionship in the home, and that companionship must begin with husband and wife.