

Saturday, October 6

Second Day

Thou [God] hast placed us here on earth
And withheld the recollection
Of our former friends and birth.

(Eliza R. Snow.)

Some day that recollection and those friendships will be given back to us, but in the meantime, what a wonderful stimulation to know that life is not an accident or an afterthought or a result of blind chance! The great plan of salvation was designed by God our Father for our benefit. We have been working toward the goal of eternal exaltation through a long period of pre-mortal existence. Then we walked by sight. We knew God. He is our Father. We lived with him. We saw his glorious, resurrected celestial body. We felt the wonder of his celestial mind and the delight of his wonderful personality. We wanted to be like him. We knew we must follow his example. We must learn obedience. We must learn to walk a little way by faith. We must pass the final test of mortality where we are free to choose for ourselves. We must be educated and proven and sanctified and redeemed.

And when we have finally proved ourselves worthy of exaltation, then eternity will be the measure of life's length; celestial glory will be the measure of its breadth; to be like God will be the measure of its depth.

Our salvation is made up of so many individual thoughts and acts and hours

of effort, certainly it would be the height of foolishness so much to dread to throw mortal life away all at once, but then deliberately to throw away eternal life a little at a time. It has been said that few, if any, will ever lose their salvation by a blowout. Mostly salvation is lost by a series of slow leaks—a little indecision, a little indifference, a little procrastination, a little slothfulness.

Disobedience may cut down life's length by producing spiritual death. Lethargy may reduce its breadth and intensity. Sin may destroy its depth, its godliness, its joy. Ignorance may thwart its purpose.

Brothers and sisters, the gospel has been given to help us increase the dimensions of our lives. That was also the mission of the Savior of the world who said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10.) "... all that a man hath he will give for eternal life," (See Job 2:4) is still the greatest bargain in the world. May God help us to spend our lives effectively to that end, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, has just been speaking to us. We shall now hear from Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy.

ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG

Of the First Council of the Seventy

YESTERDAY THERE was a story read to you by Elder Clifford E. Young concerning Peter and John in the court of the temple healing a lame man who asked for alms. May I finish the story for you:

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

But when they had commanded them to

go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight

of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:13-20.)

It is that last phrase about which I wish to speak. I should like to apply it to children. It is the burden of the Church, if any such thing can be a burden, to testify of things "seen and heard." How are we to teach children? They do not know all that an adult should know, but they should have no doubt as to where adults stand.

Every boy has a right to get the feeling that his father and his mother and his priesthood teacher, his Sunday School teacher and his scoutmaster, or anyone with whom he comes into association in the Church, knows of a surety of things "seen and heard." Every girl has a right to the same assurance that her parents and leaders know of things "seen and heard." Young folks themselves do not know yet, but confidence which they must develop comes because those closely in touch with them constantly bear witness to them in act, in deed, in word, that they know of things "seen and heard," the things seen and heard mentioned by Peter and John; the things mentioned by Nephi in the first chapter of the Book of Mormon in talking about his father Lehi, of the things he saw and heard; the glories of the gospel and of Jesus Christ and of all the things "seen and heard" of him and of the things Joseph Smith "saw and heard."

Children are not well taught by just being told. When I was a young man, at one time I worked on a ranch in Idaho for a large cattle outfit. Fences were more of a curiosity than now. The first morning I went to work for them (and I was green at it) the boss sent the man who took care of the "remuda," the horses, out to get them before daylight. I was curious to know how those cowboys were going to rope and saddle their horses because I could see no corral. I assumed the "punchers" were going to have a rare time chasing them down. But as day broke, in they came, fifty or sixty head of horses at a dead run, and they came to a corral I had not noticed. Stakes had been driven in a large circle on the prairie, each stake

protruding about eighteen inches above the ground. In the top of each stake was an eyelet, and threaded through the eyelet was a rope; wings went out from a twenty-foot entrance, perhaps one hundred feet on both sides. These horses came into the enclosure at a full gallop. The rope did not reach to their knees, and yet not a horse stepped over it. The punchers went into that little makeshift corral and roped their animals, saddled and bridled them, mounted and rode the buck out of them, and not a horse jumped over that rope out of the corral.

I asked the foreman why that was, and he said, "They know better." I did not learn until later what "better" meant, but the horses through fear first and habit second had long since learned where they could go and where they could not, and what they could do and what they should not do about stepping over that rope.

Well, children are not horses, or even like horses, and we cannot teach them by fear because that has a bad effect upon them, but teach them we can and teach them we must.

May I give you half a dozen homely and homey suggestions which to me seem simple, in relation to teaching children? Before I give them to you, may I say that teaching is an attitude. One does not learn by the words spoken, but rather by the attitude and spirit in what they are spoken. One does not always learn by action, but by the happiness with which the action is performed. And the lesson must be repeated over and over again all the time the child is growing up. Surely the Lord knew what he was doing when he said, in effect, "I am going to give you these children for twenty years or so, before they mature, and in that twenty years repeat with them what they must know well." Twenty years is a long time to a child. You have plenty of time to give them the habit of not stepping over the rope without having them fear it.

First, let us revive that happy custom of taking our meals together. Let us abolish the snack bars in our kitchens and establish a table around which all may sit, and let Father have break-

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fast with his children as well as supper and let them sit there for a few moments after each meal and have conversation about things about which Father and Mother would like to talk. That custom is going out of our existence rapidly. It is a powerful thing; it will work wonders on children.

Second, when Father comes home at night, I suggest to him that he really resist this temptation and put the paper in a hidden place until the children have gone to bed. The newspaper has no place in the home where children are until the father has spent the evening with them. And it is like reading for fifteen minutes a day—if you spend fifteen minutes or twenty minutes with each child according to his years in doing things which are interesting to him and being a companion to him, you have come nearer to fulfilling your obligations as a father. If you leave it up to the mother, and get behind the newspaper, I think you have committed a sin, because the child is neglected, and you have not done your duty. So be firm; put the newspaper under the mat until after the children have gone to bed.

Third, be sure to spend time with each child, according to that child's age and interests. With a three-year-old girl, if you have to, get down and play paper dolls. With a seventeen-year-old son, who wants to go to the Brigham Young-University of Utah game, that is where you should be (unless you have to be in this priesthood meeting).

The point is, by the time the child is twenty, he should be so companionable with his father that he can talk to him about anything he wants to. The way to do it is to be companionable at every age of his life, from the beginning. That is why it is important to learn how to handle a baby, fathers, and do all the things that a baby requires.

Fourth, it is a poor parent who is not up or awake when the children come home from late parties or late dates. Then is the time to invite them to talk over what happened; to enjoy the things which were good and to be counseled on avoiding the things which were sorrowful; to counsel wisely about the things which they might have done

which were wrong. This practice, kept up all the days of his childhood, will be a great deterrent for a child who is anxious to stay out longer than he should. My mother sat up for me, and I did not have the nerve ever to keep her waiting too long. I knew she was there. It helped me. It will help all the children.

Fifth, no parent in this Church is doing his duty unless he makes the Sabbath what it should be. It should be a happy day together, with the whole family participating. The first thing in the morning, Father and Johnny go to priesthood meeting, and Father should take Johnny there, not Johnny take Father. They should discuss things on the way there and coming home, too. Each one should feel that the other is equal to him, and the father should take particular care that Johnny understands his priesthood. The Aaronic Priesthood is vital. This is successful not so much because of what is said but because of the unsaid emotions and feelings engendered.

And then, parents encourage the children, and themselves as much as they can, to go to Sunday School and to the auxiliaries. But above all things, the whole family, if it is going to do what it ought to do, must go to Sacrament meeting. Father and Mother should lead the way, the children following close after and staying there until it is dismissed. If one child is too small, one can go out with him, walk him up and down until he gets the kinks out of his legs, or if a small child is crying, one may have to take it home; but the family understands that at the proper hour, all are in Sacrament meeting together.

Now those suggestions followed carefully with assiduousness will bring others. I have not talked about many things that should happen in the home, but they will happen: prayer, love, all of the things which go with it.

May I conclude by reminding you of the first thing that I said, things "seen and heard." How necessary it is for a parent to bear that witness! I have an aged great-grandmother, long since dead, who in her ninety-seventh year was approached by one who had lost faith, and thinking perhaps that the grand-

mother, too, had lost some, said to her, "You knew the Prophet. What did you think of him?" This aged woman had endured the vicissitudes of the seventies' trek from Kirtland to Missouri, had suffered through Haun's Mill with her infant child in her arms, had counted the long miles across the plains, and then had lived through years of poverty in Utah. She smiled as she looked at this person, and I think disappointed the person, too, because this is what she said: "We all knew that he was a Prophet."

So we all do know that he was a Prophet, but do our children know it? Do our children know that we know it? That, I think, is our greatest obligation as we face life with these little ones who are given to us to rear to adulthood.

My testimony is like my great-grandmother's: I know that Joseph Smith was a Prophet and that he saw and heard glorious things. I know that he held the keys, and I know that he passed them on to his successors, even down

to President McKay and those who assist him. That is my witness to you, in the name of Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy has just addressed us. The congregation now will sing, "Praise To The Man Who Communed With Jehovah." Elder Richard P. Condie will lead us.

After the singing, Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin will address us.

Singing by the Combined Choirs and the congregation, "Praise to the Man Who Communed with Jehovah."

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric will now speak to us. Bishop Wirthlin will be followed by Elder Mark E. Petersen.

BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

Presiding Bishop of the Church

MY BELOVED brethren and sisters, I want to bear you my testimony that I know Joseph Smith was a prophet selected by God for the purpose of establishing the Church and preparing the people for the second coming of Jesus the Christ.

The following revelation was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, wherein the Lord said:

The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones. . . . (D & C 1:19.)

The Church was established with a membership of six people, and in that day it was thought by many it would be only a short time until the Church would be destroyed, particularly after the life of the Prophet had been taken. Today, the membership of the Church is approximately 1,375,000, indicating to the world that it may have been weak

in the beginning of its establishment, but out of it the Church has become strong and powerful because of the people who accepted the gospel.

In connection therewith, the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price were given to the world through revelation, and in every case, there still may be found in the thoughts of many the weakness of things, but these weak things are becoming strong and going forth and breaking down the mighty and strong ones in the world.

The Prophet Joseph never had the opportunity of attending great schools or universities. He was one of the common ones that the Lord selected because the Lord knew it would be possible to give him the assignments of establishing the Church and teaching the world the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was about to be given to mankind.

I think of the great missions of the