

credit for us to resist something we do not crave or long for. The man who grows most by resisting is the man who resists what he craves, and who will say, in the strength of the gospel, "I will stop it. I will resist it."

"It is easy enough to be virtuous  
When nothing tempts you to stray,  
When without or within no voice of sin  
Is luring your soul away.  
But it's only a negative virtue  
Until it is tried by fire;  
And the life that is worth the honor of  
earth  
Is the life that resists desire."

(Ella Wheeler Wilcox)

May God grant that as we are seeking the further establishment of the kingdom of God, that we may instruct our young people, and the members of the

Church everywhere, to resist temptations that weaken the body, that destroy the soul, that we may stand truly repentant as we were when we entered the waters of baptism; that we may be renewed in the true sense of the word, that we may be born again; that our souls might bask in the light of the Holy Spirit, and go on as true members of the Church of Jesus Christ until our mission on earth is completed and God receives us and rewards us according to our merits.

May this be our lot, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Our next speaker will be Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve.

## ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

In following this moving opening address by President McKay, I am sure that you who are here will forgive me and understand if I am more aware of those who are not here, who listen and look in many far places through the modern means that have been given us. I am grateful for choice friends out there, friends not of my own faith, whom I have learned to respect and cherish, and for whom I have a sincere affection. I am grateful for the conviction that has come in mingling with them that there is much that we have in common—all men: great truths, great objectives, common problems and so much that pertains to all of us in the living of life, and I have learned to respect the beliefs of others and would ask the privilege at this time of telling something of my own.

In doing so I am well aware of a responsibility. All of us have a responsibility for all of our influence with others, for all of the ideas we let loose, for the total effect of our teaching and our influence on all others. I am well aware, also, of the weight of witnessing sobering truths that touch upon the lives of other people.

Yet I feel somewhat as suggested by the celebrated sentence which is found

in the John Knox house in Edinburgh, Scotland, which says, "I am in the place where I am demanded of my conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it, whoso list."

I am persuaded, also, by an utterance of another great man, Tolstoi, who said, "If we would only . . . testify to the truth as we see it, it would turn out at once that there are hundreds, thousands, and even millions of men just as we are, who see the truth as we do, are afraid as we are of seemingly to be singular by confessing it, and are only waiting, again as we are, for someone to proclaim it."

I should like to proclaim it, to confess it, to share it, and humbly to testify of it, and leave with you, my beloved friends widely scattered over the world, the witness of the truth as I find it implanted undeniably within my own soul.

Life is a great search for all of us. We all have unanswered questions, and I am grateful to witness to you this day that in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as restored to earth in this day and dispensation, I have found, in the faith of my fathers, the road that leads to the answers to life's compelling questions—the road along which the search lies,

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that gives purpose and meaning to life, a great sense and assurance of the ultimate objectives and of the everlasting continuance of truth and intelligence and personality, and of sweet association with loved ones and all that means the most—a gospel which gives freedom: freedom for the search, freedom for the seeking of truth, freedom for learning, indeed, not only freedom for it but also a solemn charge to pursue it.

All this I find in this faith that my fathers embraced when, blessedly, young men as missionaries found them in far places and witnessed to them these truths to which they responded and by which their lives and the lives of their children and their children's children, even unto this generation, have been blessed. I am grateful for these assurances: for the everlasting assurances, for a gospel, for a faith which encompasses all truth, all time, and all eternity, all those now living and all who shall live and all who have ever lived, all of our Father's children in the great encompassing arms which seek to lift the lives of all his children and to lead us to everlasting life with our loved ones.

Out in a far place this day we are blessed and privileged to have a son who is one of some six thousand missionaries of this Church, full-time, these being mostly young men, with many others besides who take part of their time for this purpose, knocking on doors, making appointments, answering invitations, seeking to share this great thing that has come into their lives and of which they have an unshakable conviction.

It is not improbable or not impossible at least, that some within the sound of my voice now would sometime respond to a knock at the door where our son or someone else's son would seek to share with them these truths, with only one motive in mind: that they feel an obligation which the Lord God has given, to pass on that which has given meaning and purpose to their lives. I would plead with you to open the doors—the doors of your minds and your hearts, and listen to what they have to say, and then decide—for there is always freedom for the search.

I think the young men who found my forebears, in effect must have said to them something such as a message Cromwell once sent to some with whom he would reason and persuade from a certain course and to a certain course: "I beseech you . . . think it possible you may be mistaken."

The great beauty of this gospel is its everlasting significance—and except for these eternal assurances each day we live would mean a shorter time with those we love and a shorter time for all the things that mean the most.

"Life," said Arthur Brisbane, "is a short walk along a narrow thread . . . beginning and ending in a mysterious unknown. Hope keeps us balanced as we walk the narrow line. Life is short as we see it, but in reality it is just beginning, and never ends—and, long or short, it is all we have."

Since life is all we have, and since, blessedly, it is everlasting, and since the journey is long, a searching is indicated, always—for truth, for that which will bring peace and purpose, and for an awareness of the meaning of all that we are and of all that the Lord God, who gave us life and who made us in his image, intends for us.

I would witness to you, my beloved brethren and sisters, world-wide, of the certainty of my soul as to the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the literal Son of God, who died that men might live; of the gospel that he left for the salvation and exaltation of all of us, which, over the centuries, was changed and lost, as to its fulness and authority; and that the heavens again were opened, that the gospel was restored with the divine authority to administer in its ordinances; that this is the Church of Jesus Christ, with prophets and apostles; that the voice of God again is heard; that the prize is great; that the search is worth the searching; and I would plead for an audience for that message with an open heart and mind.

May God bless all of us in seeking to know his will, in the keeping of his commandments, and in pursuing the search toward the finding of the ultimate answers of life and salvation and the sweetness of everlasting association with those we love, with those who mean the most, in Jesus' name. Amen.