

the spirit of charity and love for each other. May we overcome our evil habit of gossiping, of saying unkind and unsavory things about each other.

On the other hand, may we say nothing but that which is kind and generous about all people. May our lives be filled with patience, brotherly kindness, and compassion toward each other at all times and under all circumstances. Under those conditions we would rightfully be children of God with his love in our hearts. Then our lives would be actuated by godliness.

Permit me to suggest that we husbands cease criticizing our wives, because if we criticize our wives it weakens our love for them. Also, it tends to kill their love and respect for us.

I would give the following admonition to wives: Respect your husbands. Do not criticize your husbands. If you indulge in such practices it results in bringing about disunity, kills your spirituality, and tends to break up your

homes. Perhaps the final result may be the loss of your eternal salvation.

Let each of us walk in the path continuously that Jesus marked out, having our hearts filled with charity and love toward our fellow men. May we keep all of God's commandments, walking by every word that proceedeth forth from his mouth. If we will do these things, we shall have an abundance of joy in this life and eternal life in the presence of our Savior after we have completed our missions here upon this earth.

May our Heavenly Father bless us that we shall always live as he desires that we should live, I humbly pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy. Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER WILLIAM J. CRITCHLOW, JR.

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, my brothers and sisters:

Where could you find sweeter voices than these voices from Ogden and Northern Utah which have sung for us this day? I have heard them before, I hope to hear them again. I am proud of them.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely
players:
They have their exits and their en-
trances;
And one man in his time plays many
parts."

—Shakespeare,
As You Like It, Act II,
Scene 7, lines 139-142.

Through the years thousands of our young men and women and many elders, too, have been called to play heroic roles in the great Drama of Life. I have enjoyed these past two years the privilege of setting apart many of them, —missionaries of the Church—sending them forth to perform on the stage of life with a blessing.

The Drama of Life has many acts. Few of them, however, are as thrilling as the act entitled "A Mission." Let me sketchily review for you a few scenes in an act which I witnessed, just to show how exciting this "Mission Act" can really be.

The opening scene was called "Miles Zero."

In the missionary's first letter to his folks he wrote:

"Dear Dad: I'm up at Miles Zero on the Alaskan highway in Dawson Creek where it is costing me one hundred dollars a week for board and room. . . ."

His dad replied immediately, "Dear Son: Get off the Alaskan highway! Park Avenue, New York, should be cheaper. Miles Zero is too rich for my blood."

The dad's letter and another letter from the son crossed in the mail. The son's letter began:

"Dear Dad: The Lord has blessed me already. A man committed suicide in his room. It was so ghastly that no one would rent it. I offered the landlord forty dollars a month. He took me up—

so I moved in with my companion who is sharing the forty dollars. All my problems are solved."

Months passed.

Then, in one of his regular letters, the son said, "I have twenty-two prospects about ready to join up, but no place to baptize them. Peace River will be frozen over till June, and before then I shall be due for a transfer. Wish I could use a bathtub. They have some large tin ones up here. . . ."

Weeks passed.

In another letter the son wrote: "Lucky me. The Lord has blessed me again. Two of my choice prospects, the banker and the head of the Masonic Lodge, who is also the president of the Power Board went six hundred miles down to Edmonton, and I baptized them. That's two down, only twenty more to go. My president is pleased. He is transferring me to Bella Coula, wherever that is. Up here, there are two kinds of water—liquid and frozen, also two kinds of prospects—hot and cold. I'm terribly afraid that some of my twenty remaining prospects will 'freeze up' before liquid water and a baptismal font become available. I shall regret losing them, but I'll pick twenty up in Bella Coula. Wish me luck."

Five years after the curtain fell on this son's "Mission Act," I was sent to a conference in Calgary, Canada, and in one of the sessions of the conference I listened to the stake president praise, as he released, his stake mission president who had baptized twenty converts "right here in Calgary." He called on him to speak. I copied these words from a tape of his talk.

"Seven years ago one Sunday in a converted hut at Miles Zero on the Alaskan highway I met a young man who was to be instrumental in changing the course of my life. He was big, six feet. He had a big grin and hands that were always moving. You could tell he had the spirit of the gospel. I had met many men before, but never had I met a man who could teach the gospel the way this man did. He would both fast and pray, and I remember that one time he fasted three days and nights, going without food and water and praying on behalf of the people he was teaching. He taught the gospel with an inspira-

tion that only one who had the guidance of his Father in heaven could bring. He baptized me. I have a great love for that young man. Elder Critchlow, take back to your son a confirmation of the love we have for him. In a way to pay the debt tell him that many here within the sound of my voice, whom I have had the privilege of teaching have come into the kingdom of God—through your son."

Those words "through your son" were ringing pleasantly in my ears—still I heard the president who leaned toward me to whisper: "He (the mission president) baptized twenty people here in Calgary."

Suddenly, my memory was flooded with a maze of words—words which my son had written years before. Slowly, they assembled into fragments of broken sentences: "That's two down—twenty more to go—I'm afraid my twenty prospects will freeze up before liquid water is available. . . . I regret losing them. . . . I'll pick them up in Bella Coula—Wish me luck."

Well, he didn't pick them up in Bella Coula.

They were picked up in Calgary by one of the "two down" who picked up the "twenty more to go"—"through your son."

Families that have never had a missionary in the field have missed one of the grandest blessings that could come into their homes. Ask the mother who impatiently awaits her missionary son's letters, who gleefully reads lines in them over the back fence to neighbors and over the phone to relatives and friends.

Ask the proud father, the brother, or the sister about the sweet feeling they experience when they kneel together each day in family prayers to ask a blessing for their missionary. Before Bobby left for his mission the family skipped its prayers occasionally, but while he was in the field—so far, far away from home, they skipped fewer prayers because Bobby might need the protection and the help of a loving Heavenly Father. Never was the family knit more closely together.

Recently I told a stake president he needed six thousand stake missionaries. "Be reasonable," he said, "I've only six thousand members in my stake."

Friday, October 7

First Day

"Right, exactly right," I replied, "and every one of those members is a missionary."

Every member of our Church is a missionary. Without the formality of a setting-apart we should be so set-apart from the ways of the world that we can teach the gospel, which is our Father's way of life, by the very lives we live. Without the oral word of mouth preaching, the example of our living will always be effective teaching. A sermon seen is better than a sermon heard.

Example has more followers than reason and is more forcible than precept.

Yes, the world's a stage;

So is the Church a stage;

And all its members merely players. . .

They have their exits and their entrances;

And each member in his time is expected to choose and play a noble part.

Come up here with me on this stage of life and, over the glare of the footlights in this World Theater let's take a peek at the audience watching us play our parts in the great Drama of Life.

Down there in the parquet whom do you see? Over the glare of the footlights I quite distinctly see my wife, my children, my neighbors, my friends across the town and across the country, my vocational associates, my associates in the Church Offices. All who know me, be it ever so well or ever so slight, seem to be in this World Theater. And they're watching, oh, so critically. Yet if I play my role well—the role of a Latter-day Saint—I'm sure there will be some applause. But if I slip out of character—even for a moment or so—some of them, like patrons of any theater, at times, might sneer, perhaps hiss. These translate into one of the ugliest words in the English dictionary—"hypocrite."

May our merciful Heavenly Father help me, help you to play our chosen roles so well that we may deserve the plaudits and the praise, at least the respect of those who watch.

Now look up to the balcony . . . the glare of the footlights, whom do you see there? On the very first row I see my mother. My father is beside her, my brother beside him. Behind them, I believe, my grandparents. One man among them with sideburns and a lock of

curly brown hair looks like a picture I've seen of Captain James Brown who led the sick detachment of the Mormon Battalion into Salt Lake Valley. He's my great-grandfather. These obviously are the dead. I can almost hear them say:

"We are the dead,

Short years ago we lived, felt dawn,
saw Sunshine glow. . . .

To you from failing hand the torch
we throw

Be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die,

We shall not sleep."

—adapted—"In Flanders Fields" McCrea.

I don't really believe, of course, that my father and mother and my grandparents are peeking through the veil, observing every scene in which I act, but sometimes I wonder. Just in case, I had better act, I ought to act, yes, I want to act so that they with a feeling of pride will smile and applaud my scenes.

I love my parents and my grandparents. They are not dead. They live. Sometimes I think I almost hear, or rather feel, their prayers for me! Surely they must be praying and pulling for me, otherwise I would not have been so blessed. Again, I ask a merciful Father in heaven to help me and to help you to play our scenes so well that we may fittingly deserve applause from the balcony of the dead.

Look again, this time to the gallery. Over the glow of the footlights I see faces very indistinctly. I recognize none of them. These, something tells me, are the spirits yet to come and be embodied on this earth; they who must come to take our places. I wonder if they do not watch with interest the Drama of Earth Life, and if they are not earnestly praying that we will play our roles well, for they must come to dwell in the environment we are creating for them. Once upon a time our Heavenly Father's children on this earth became so wicked that he washed them and their wickedness off the stage with a great flood so that these spirits might inherit a decent environment. This gallery of spirits will certainly applaud if we play our parts well.

High up above the stage in this World Theater is a box. Look up. The glare of the overhead floodlights obscures its

occupant. This box is reserved for the Author of the play—the Drama of Life. He not only is the Author, he is also the Critic and the Judge. How glorious could be that day if in its morning—the morning after the curtain falls—his press would announce: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

Yes, the world’s a stage, so is the Church a stage, and you and I are merely players. We’ve chosen noble roles in the Drama of Life. Let’s play them well.

We can preach a better sermon with our lives than with our lips. We can do more good by being good than by preaching good. Let us so act that our principle of action shall become a law, not only for the Church, but also for the whole world. Eventually it will be. May that time be soon, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

BISHOP JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

Presiding Bishop of the Church

President McKay, my brothers and sisters, to be here upon this occasion is most inspirational to me as I am sure it is to you. As I came into this remarkable building, the events that took place at the time of Brigham Young and those who were with him came to my mind.

The marvelous revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph on November 1, 1831, is one that all of us can give consideration to, particularly at this time when the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph:

“And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

“And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.” (D&C 1:4-5.)

This revelation calls the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and particularly the apostles in this day as well as in the time of the Prophet Joseph, to go into the world and preach the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Under their direction missionary work is being done in the world today, and I am sure that all enjoy divine guidance as they meet this great assignment.

President David O. McKay:

Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, has just concluded speaking. The Relief Society Singing Mothers and Congregation will now join in singing, “How Firm A Foundation.” Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen will lead us in the singing, after which Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin will address us.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, “How Firm A Foundation.”

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve.

This morning President McKay told us of the leadership of certain individuals in the world who, if they had their way, would destroy our knowledge that God lives and that Jesus Christ is his Son. I am sure they will never be successful. The Lord in his way will handle such individuals.

Of the great men who have gone in the past, I think particularly of Brigham Young and the twelve who were called to preach the gospel to the people in Great Britain. They were poor men. They started the long trip to England without the funds to pay their way. While they did not have enough of this world’s goods, they knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and they were willing to bear testimony to the world that God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared to the Prophet Joseph. With that testimony in their souls, they accepted that great assignment.

At the time Brigham Young left, he was a very sick man. He said, “I could not walk thirty rods to the river.” His family, too, was ill. His wife had just given birth to another babe, and she was in poor health. However, Brigham