

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

The presence of this choice group of young people from the LDS Institute at Utah State University in Logan, and the remembrance of President McKay's meaningful address which devoted itself in part to youth at the opening session Thursday—in which he spoke of gratitude and guidance and faith and inspiration—suggest that I pursue some thoughts along these lines, if I may, on perhaps eight or ten topics each one of which could well be the subject of a sermon.

I should like to introduce what follows with some of Longfellow's eloquent lines, as he addressed himself to a group of young people upon returning, after fifty years, for a reunion of his college class:

"How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams
With its illusions, aspirations, dreams!
Book of Beginnings, Story without End,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!"

Because it is a story without end, the book of beginnings is exceedingly important, and I should like to suggest to these young people here and you out there, wherever you are, to the farthest reaches of time and distance, first that you seek counsel. Do not try to go it alone in life. Seek the guidance that President McKay spoke of, of prayer, the guidance of parents, of those who would lead you well in all decisions.

I should like to plead with you to have faith. The Lord will not leave you alone. Have faith in freedom, in the future, in God, in yourselves, in things to come, and in the wisdom of preparing well. (It has been well said that "Yesterday is a cancelled check; tomorrow is a promissory note; but today is cash.") Have faith in tomorrow, but use well today.

May I suggest that you keep flexibility in life, along with a steadfast firmness. Life does change. Many things change. We have to learn to change in some things, and we have to learn to distinguish between what we should

change and what we should not change—for the basic fundamentals are still irrevocably there. We cannot change principles or conduct without the consequences that come from conduct, no matter what changes there are on the face of things. Keep flexibility with firmness: watching the spirit as well as the letter of the law, not quibbling, not relying on technicalities; pursuing those things which lead to health and happiness, peace and a quiet conscience; learning to live with the light which the Lord has placed within us; and in all things moving as we need to, to adjust to surface considerations, yet standing firmly fixed in the principles and commandments and in the things of honor and justice and eternal truth and right that God has given; living in truth and decency; never giving way to sin or to cynicism; keeping control of ourselves, our thoughts, our actions, our utterances.

May I plead with you, also, keep a balance in life.

I am proud of what the seminary system of the Church is doing and the institutes from which these young people have come, and other organizations of the Church that help to balance the material considerations of life with the things of the Spirit.

Never become narrowly educated, but broadly so, feeding all sides of yourselves, reading and becoming acquainted with good books, with great minds and great men of the past; becoming acquainted with scripture and reading scripture itself. Do not be satisfied to read books about scripture or books about books, but go to the prime and the primary sources. You do not catch much of the spirit of Shakespeare merely by reading commentaries on Shakespeare. You capture it by reading Shakespeare, and so it is in large measure with scripture. Keep balanced in your lives and starve no side of yourselves.

Now, as to a willingness to work: Nothing ever does itself. Nothing ever memorizes itself. Nothing ever accomplishes itself—without the requisite

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effort. Carlyle said, "Men do less than they ought, unless they do all that they can." It is not enough just to try; we have to succeed. The Lord expects us to see things through.

May I plead with you one other thing? That you share the gospel and these great gifts that God has given. Call it referral, call it sharing the gospel, or whatever you will—that which we have, which others have helped to give us, we have an earnest obligation to share. Will you young men, wherever you are, point your lives towards missions, and you parents help them so to point? There is an old proverb which says, "When you drink of the water, don't forget the spring from which it flows."

Our lives are not our own. So much of others has gone into the making of all of us, into teaching, into training, into all that we have inherited, into all that God has given, and especially above all, the gospel. Earnestly we have an obligation to share it with others.

Would you look wisely toward your choices in marriage and remember that there is nothing that a good marriage so much needs as it needs character and common convictions? Respect and character and common convictions will compensate for many other things; nothing else will compensate for these. Love will not last long without respect and character and common convictions. Remember this, and make no hasty or shortsighted decisions.

May I suggest that you go all the way with the gospel, keeping all the commandments, for they all came from the same source. I do not know who in mortality, among men, would have the wisdom to choose one commandment, or several, and set aside some others. This would be presuming to set our wisdom against that which God has given. Go with his way all the way.

May I suggest humility and never the pride of learning. Be patient. There may be some seeming discrepancies. Do not worry about them. Eternity is a long time. I have a great respect for learning, for academic endeavor and the university atmosphere. I have spent many years of my life in one way or an-

other going to or in being associated with some great institutions of learning. I have a great respect for science and scientists and for the search for truth. But remember this: science after all (even when it is true and final and factual) is simply man's discovering of a few things that God already knows and controls in his ordering of the universe. We are, after all, a bit like Newton who said of himself that he was like a child handling a few pebbles on the shore while the great, limitless, eternal sea was before him. God has not told us all he knows. We believe in continuous revelation. Be patient. Keep humble and balanced in all things.

Keep courage. Do not feel sorry for yourselves. Whatever you do, do not feel sorry for yourselves. You live in a great age of great opportunity. I remember the words of one very sharp and shrewd observer who said, "Whenever I hear someone sigh and say that life is hard, I am tempted to ask 'compared to what?'" What are the alternatives? No one ever promised us it would be easy. It is a schooling; it is an opportunity; it is a learning period, and a wonderful one. Despite all the disappointments and difficulties, the great and ultimate rewards are beyond price.

Keep faith. "And, if you keep my commandments," the Lord God has said to us, "and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.)

Now, it will not be long, in reality, in these quickly moving days when you, my beloved young friends, will be taking over from us. I started with some lines from Longfellow. I should like to offer some others at this point from the same meaningful poem that he wrote on the fiftieth anniversary of his college class:

"And ye who fill the places we once filled
And follow in the furrows that we tilled,
Young men whose generous hearts are
beating high,
We who are old, and are about to die,
Salute you; hail you; take your hands
in ours,

And crown you with our welcome as
with flowers!"

When we sing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," my beloved friends, it is not just for a prophet of the past, but with a great gratitude in our hearts for the prophet of God that he has given us in this day, for whose leadership I acknowledge with you my gratitude to God, and also the literal divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the appearance of him and his Father to a Prophet of the last dispensation, even Joseph Smith.

I have a great respect for all men and their beliefs, but think it not a

strange thing that in a kingdom, the kingdom of God, there should be specific requirements and commandments, and a way that God has given for our realizing the highest happiness and peace and progress.

May we follow that way, may we share it, may we keep faith, I pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve. Our concluding speaker will be Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

When I was a little boy in Primary and Sunday School there was one song we sang almost more than any other. One verse and chorus go like this:

"O Galilee! sweet Galilee! Where Jesus
loved so much to be;
Oh Galilee! blue Galilee! Come, sing
thy songs again to me.

"And when I read the thrilling lore
Of him who walked upon the sea
I long, oh, how I long once more
To follow him in Galilee."

And at last after many years, that longing was fulfilled, and I saw his beloved Galilee. Would you like to make a little hurried trip with us to the land of milk and honey, the land our fathers loved?

We stand on the steepened hill rising north from the blue, blue sea of Galilee. We are hundreds of feet below sea level. It is winter, and the air is crisp, and our top coats are little enough. Our guide points out locations, at least some of which are authentic. Here, he says, sat the multitude while the Master expounded the never-dying "Sermon on the Mount." Below us lies the sea he loved. It is smaller than we expected. We can see the whole of it in one glance. It is not unlike a great heart in shape or function for its fluid has

been the life blood of millions of people through many ages.

This is the sea of miracles. We see it calm and placid, and again, rough and boisterous. Countless fish from it have fed countless peoples. It was crossed numerous times by the Savior in little boats, in larger ships; and in its cool waters, tired feet were cooled. Its wild waves were calmed by his single command: "Peace, be still!" He walked on its surface; he preached from its shores. Not far to our left gathered the thousands whose hunger was satisfied on the miracled increase of loaves and fishes.

And we can almost see the disciples gathering up twelve baskets of residue after 5,000 had fed on five loaves and two fishes. We seem to see the four special fishermen with their nets and boats. Here Peter grappled with a fish which had in its mouth a coin for taxes. Down there he walked on the water; and when his faith waned, it was supplemented by that of the Lord. With our Testament open we read of the ministry of Christ, for this was the scene of much of it. We ask for the cities in which he lived and performed so many miracles, for we remember that in this area of but a few miles much of his work was done, much of his ministry was accomplished. We would like to walk through the triplet cities