

rects all of the members of the Church to proclaim the gospel: “. . . I give unto you a commandment, that every man, both elder, priest, teacher, *and also member*, go to with his might, with the labor of his hands, to prepare and accomplish the things which I have commanded.

“And let your preaching be the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, . . .” (D&C 38:40-41. Italics added.)

I testify to you, my brethren and sisters, in the name of Jesus Christ,

that this is the Lord’s work, and I pray that we may go forth in it and fulfil the commitment of extending the gospel in a continuing manner unto the children of the world, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve and former president of the European Mission, has just addressed us. Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker.

ELDER STERLING W. SILL

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, I appreciate very much this semiannual privilege of having a part with you in the general conference of the Church. In thinking about the purpose that brings us together, I recalled a recent full-page newspaper advertisement which, with the exception of the name of the sponsoring lumber company down in the lower right-hand corner, the entire ad was a blank but for two small words in the middle of the page, which said, “Build Well.”

Then I thought of the interesting application made of this important idea by the Apostle Paul when he said to the Corinthians, “. . . ye are God’s building . . . [therefore] let every man take heed how he buildeth. . .” (1 Cor. 3:9-10.)

The greatest responsibility that is ever entrusted to any human being is that of building his own personality. The first soul that anyone should bring to God is his own soul. President McKay recently pointed out that the purpose of the gospel is to make men better. The primary objective in the mission of Jesus was to provide the world with better men and women. God himself has said, “. . . this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39.) It is God’s work to build character, ability, and Godliness into the lives of his children. Any influence that works against that purpose is evil, and whenever we build evil into our lives, we are tending toward failure.

In a survey recently made at Stanford

University, it was discovered that ninety-four percent of all workers who were fired from their jobs lost out for some reason not even remotely connected with job competence. They lost their jobs because they were lacking in basic fundamental character. The specific reasons given for the termination of their employment included such things as dishonesty, disloyalty, disobedience, hate, immorality, selfishness, sloth, and wrong thinking. These are also the traits that cause our crime waves, our delinquency scourges, and our cold and shooting wars. Building these traits into our lives also accounts for so many people finding themselves at the end of that broad road leading to eternal destruction.

I talk with a great many people every year who are unable to solve their problems. And I am certain that ninety-four percent of all of our troubles come because someone disobeys God’s commandments. Nations as well as individuals could live successfully and happily if they could just learn to follow the tested principles of righteousness.

Recently I was in the office of a building contractor who was erecting a multi-million dollar building. He had spread out before him a set of drawings which he called a blueprint. And I was impressed with this idea that any builder can erect the most magnificent building that the greatest architect can conceive, if he just knows how to follow the blueprint. And then I tried unsuccessfully

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to think of any idea in the world more important. The best sculptor is the one who can most accurately reproduce in marble the image that he sees before him. The good cook follows the recipe. The pharmacist can utilize the many years of training of the most famous doctors from the best medical schools, if he just knows how to follow a prescription. Someone has said that science is just a collection of successful formulas. But the most important application of this great idea comes in the field of religion.

The outstanding intelligence of heaven was sent into the world and gave us the greatest success formula ever given. This is also made up of two words which also mean "Build Well." Jesus said, "Follow me." And every life must finally be judged by how well it carries out that single instruction.

Almost all of our problems come because we can't follow. We can't follow Jesus in his faith or in his devotion or in his ability to avoid the entanglements of sin. Judas lost his life both here and hereafter because he couldn't follow. Our great leadership is of small consequence if we stumble in our following.

A part of the most important sermon of Jesus was intended to help us develop good fellowship in building our lives. He said, ". . . whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:24-27.)

If we need a blueprint for success drawn in a little smaller scale, we might reread that great literary classic entitled, "The Three Little Pigs." You may remember that the first little pig built his house of straw; the second one built his house of sticks; and the third little

pig built his house of bricks. When the difficulties began, the only little pig that was safe was the one who had been wise during the building period.

The chief business of our lives is to build a house that will bear the weight of eternal life. And the wise King Solomon gave us a helpful proverb in which he said, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." (Prov. 9:1.) Some of the houses of our lives fall because they are built upon the wrong foundation; but others fall because they are insufficiently pilared. Solomon said that wisdom's house had seven pillars. Seven is a number frequently used to represent completeness. Solomon didn't specifically say what these seven pillars were, but if you would like to have an interesting experience, select the seven pillars that you think would most effectively support your life's building. I would like to name seven that the gospel suggests to me.

The first is industry. Nothing is ever denied to well-directed effort, and nothing is ever achieved without it. Faith without works is dead. But character, spirituality, and even repentance without works is dead also. Leonardo da Vinci once said, "Thou, oh God, doth sell us all good things at the price of labor." The primary consideration of our lives, even on judgment day, will be given to our works. Next to my belief in God I believe in industry.

The second pillar of the house for wisdom to build is courage. Jesus went around saying to people, "Fear not." "Be not afraid." "Why are ye troubled?" "Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" So frequently our house falls because we lack the courage of our convictions. We are too much afraid of circumstances; we are afraid of people and what they will think.

The third pillar is faith. Jesus said, ". . . all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23.) We don't always understand that faith is the moving cause of all action. It is not only the chief pillar of success, it is also its very foundation.

The fourth pillar of wisdom's house is obedience to God. The Psalmist reminds us that, "Except the Lord build

a house, they labour in vain who build it: . . ." (Psalm 127:1.)

Recently a member of the Church told me that he was going to quit smoking. I asked him why. He said he was afraid of getting lung cancer. I thought, how much superior his motive would have been if he had decided to give up his evil because God had said, "Tobacco is not good for man." (See D&C 89:8.)

Many years ago a neighbor of mine used to say over and over again that he did not want his children to follow the Church blindly. He wanted them to do their own thinking, to stand on their own feet, and break their own trails. And that is exactly what they have done. Now twenty-five years later every one of them is bogged down in the quicksands of his own mistakes. The most successful journey is made possible when we first make sure where we want to go and then get a good set of road maps and stay right on the highway until the destination is reached. I have a relative who, when she reads a novel, always reads the last chapter first. She wants to know where she is going to come out before she gets started. That is a pretty good idea for building our lives.

Nothing could please me more than to have my children follow the Church in every detail; for I know that God has prepared the road maps, and that they lead to the most satisfactory of all destinations.

The fifth pillar to support our life's house might be genuineness. Emerson once said that one of our biggest sins was pretense. Mostly we are like pennies trying to pass ourselves off for half dollars. Among the greatest joys of life are the joys of being: the joys of being genuine, the joys of being true blue, the joys of knowing within one's self that he is not a phony. An honest man is the noblest work of God. This discord which we so frequently permit to develop between deed and creed is at the root of innumerable wrongs in our society, and it gives institutions and men split personalities.

Mohandas K. Gandhi once said that there were 999 people who believed in honesty for every honest man. I suppose that it would be next to impossible

to find even one man who did not believe in honesty. And yet we remember poor old Diogenes who went around Athens with a lighted lantern in the middle of the day trying to find just one honest man.

We have heard Dr. Goodell's story of the house dishonesty built. It tells of a very wealthy man who had as a part of his household a young woman to whom the entire family was devoted. She was courted and finally married by a young building contractor.

Then this wealthy man engaged the contractor to build a house for him. He had the most famous architect draw the plans. Then laying the plans before the builder, he told him that he wanted him to construct the finest house of which he was capable. He made clear that money was not an object. He pointed out that the specifications called for only the finest materials. Everything must be of the highest quality. But the builder had a little dishonesty in his heart. Thinking to make an extra profit, he built a cheap foundation. He used third grade lumber where he thought it would not be noticed. He adulterated the paint and slurred over the plastering. He used imitation materials for the roofing.

When the young man handed over the keys of the finished building to his wealthy benefactor, he was told that this house was his wedding present. It was not very long after the young couple moved in that the inferior foundation began to crack; the rains seeped through the roof and discolored the walls. Then throughout the rest of their lives the builder's family and himself were continually reminded of his dishonesty. What a different house he would have built if he had known that he was going to spend the rest of his life in it!

But each of us is presently building the house in which we are going to spend eternity. And while we are thinking about the immortality of the body, we should also give a little thought to the immortality of the memory and the immortality of the personality. If we are forced to spend eternity thinking about our own misspent lives, then we may understand a little more clearly what Paul meant when he said, ". . . let

every man take heed how he buildeth. . . ." (1 Cor. 3:10.)

The sixth pillar of wisdom's house is right thinking. Whether good or bad, everything we think goes into the building. In Grenville Kleiser's book, *Training for Power and Leadership*, he says, "Nothing touches the soul but leaves its impress. And thus little by little we are fashioned into the image of all we have seen and heard, known or meditated upon. If we learn to live with all that is fairest and purest and best, the love of it will in the end become our very life."

What a strength this pillar can become, if we always keep wisdom and reason in control of our thinking.

The seventh pillar supporting wisdom's house is love. This is the pillar on which the two greatest commandments rest. Someone was once asked what commandment in his opinion came next in importance to love. And he replied that he didn't know there was one.

We are all free to hew out as many pillars as we desire for the support of this great structure that Paul refers to as "God's building." And where could we find a more challenging comparison? For we are not only created in the image of God, but we have been endowed with a set of his attributes, the development of which is one of the purposes for which we live.

God has instructed us to use only the finest materials. He cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, because he knows its terrible destructiveness in people's lives. Therefore, God has provided that every man should carry within himself the very things that he seeks. If you need the kind of faith that will move mountains, you need only look within yourself, for God

has already implanted in your own heart the seeds of faith, waiting only for you to make them grow. If you need courage and love for the greatest accomplishment, you can develop that which you have already been endowed. God laid out the silver, gold, and other precious things in the earth, but he put his own potentialities into his children and has made their development our greatest responsibility, for as Edwin Markham has said:

"We are all blind until we see
That in the human plan;
Nothing is worth the building
That does not build the man.

"Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilded goes.
In vain we build the world
Unless the builder also grows."

May God help us to "build well" is my humble prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve Apostles. The Chorus and Congregation will now join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, For A Prophet," conducted by Kurt Weinzinger. Elder Romney will speak after the singing.

The Congregation joined with the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses in singing the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, For A Prophet."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brothers and sisters, I have in mind this morning saying a few things about "The Oath and Covenant Which Belongeth to the Priesthood." The inspiration for these remarks came to me recently while I was working

with a committee on a program for the commemoration of the one hundred thirty-third anniversary of the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

As I heard President McKay speak about that day, 132 years ago when six