

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

men gathered in the home of Peter Whitmer to organize the Church, I recalled that ten months prior thereto the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had received from Peter, James, and John the power by which they would organize The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That power was the Melchizedek Priesthood—the greatest power that has come to the earth in any dispensation, the power which will outlast and control the great powers now being discovered by men.

By way of confession and avoidance to the charge that these remarks might be more appropriate in a priesthood meeting, I assure you mothers and sweethearts that when you receive the exaltation for which true Saints earnestly strive, you will be with a Melchizedek Priesthood bearer who has magnified his calling. Therefore, anything you can do to encourage your loved one to magnify his priesthood will repay you a thousandfold.

Traditionally, God's people have been known as a covenant people. The gospel itself is the new and everlasting covenant. The posterity of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob is the covenant race. We come into the Church by covenant, which we enter into when we go into the waters of baptism. The new and everlasting covenant of celestial marriage is the gate to exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Men receive the Melchizedek Priesthood by an oath and covenant.

A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. An oath is a sworn attestation to the inviolability of the promises in the agreement. In the covenant of the priesthood the parties are the Father and the receiver of the priesthood. Each party to the covenant undertakes certain obligations. The receiver undertakes to magnify his calling in the priesthood. The Father, by oath and covenant, promises the receiver that if he does so magnify his priesthood he will be sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of his body; (see D&C 84:33) that he will become a member of ". . . the church and kingdom, and the elect of God," (*ibid.*, 84:34) and receive the ". . . Father's kingdom; therefore," said the Savior, "all that my Father hath

shall be given unto him." (*Ibid.*, 84:38.)

It is of such—that is, those who receive the priesthood and magnify it—so I believe, of whom the following was written: "They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things—

"They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory;

"And are priests of the Most High, after the order of . . . the Only Begotten Son. Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God—" (*Ibid.*, 76:55-58.)

These transcendent blessings the Father promises the receiver of the Melchizedek Priesthood by an oath and covenant which he says ". . . he cannot break, neither can it be moved." (*Ibid.*, 84:40.) But these blessings, as has already been indicated, do not come by ordination alone. Ordination to the priesthood is a prerequisite to receiving them, but it does not guarantee them. For a man actually to obtain them, he must faithfully discharge the obligation which is placed upon him when he receives the priesthood; that is, he must magnify his calling.

Now let us consider for a moment just what magnifying one's calling in the priesthood means. Speaking to the assembled bearers of the priesthood at the time the "oath and covenant" was revealed, the Lord said, ". . . I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you." (*Ibid.*, 84:42. Italics added.) This has always been an extremely impressive and sacred statement to me, to think that the Lord has given his angels and his heavenly hosts charge concerning those who receive the priesthood.

Then, addressing the elders, he continued: "And I now give unto you [you bearers of the priesthood] a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.

"For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God." (*Ibid.*, 84:43-44.)

It is compliance with this charge which entitles the bearer of the priesthood to the blessings and rewards offered by the Father in "the oath and

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covenant which belongeth to the priesthood."

The status of one who receives the priesthood and then breaks the covenant is explained by the Lord in this language: ". . . whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come." (*Ibid.*, 84:41.)

With such a penalty prescribed for breaking it, one might be prompted to question the advisability of accepting the obligations of the covenant; that is, he might question it until he reads the verse which follows the statement of the penalty. There he learns that those who do not receive the oath and covenant are not *much*, if any, better off than are those who receive it and break it. For in that verse the Lord says: "And, wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 84:42.)

Such is the sober import of "the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood." You can read it in full just as the Lord gave it in the 84th section of the Doctrine and Covenants beginning with the 33rd verse.

It is apparent from this revelation that the only way a man can make the maximum progress towards eternal life, for which mortality is designed, is to obtain and magnify the Melchizedek Priesthood. With ". . . eternal life, . . . the greatest of all the gifts of God" (*ibid.*, 14:7) depending upon it, it is of utmost importance that we keep clearly in mind what the magnifying of our callings in the priesthood requires of us. I am persuaded that it requires at least the following three things:

1. That we obtain a knowledge of the gospel.
2. That we comply in our personal living with the standards of the gospel.
3. That we give dedicated service.

As to the importance of a knowledge of the gospel, the Prophet Joseph Smith said that "It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance." (*Ibid.*, 131:6.) That he had in mind ignorance of gospel truths is evident from the fact that on another occasion he said: "A man is saved no faster than he gets

knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power than many men who are on the earth. Hence it needs revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God." (DHC 4, 588.)

There is no knowledge other than knowledge of the things of God that will save us. "Ye must grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth," the Lord said to the brethren in the infant days of the Church. (D&C 50:40.)

In the revelation given to President Brigham Young at Winter Quarters in January 1847, the Lord said: "Let him that is ignorant learn wisdom by humbling himself and calling upon the Lord his God, that his eyes may be opened that he may see, and his ears opened that he may hear;

"For my Spirit is sent forth into the world to enlighten the humble and contrite, and to the condemnation of the ungodly." (*Ibid.*, 136:32-33.)

Fourteen years earlier the Lord had thus counseled the brethren: ". . . I give unto you a commandment that ye shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth.

"And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

"Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; . . ." (*Ibid.*, 88:76-78.)

One of the best ways to learn the gospel is to search the scriptures. Our purpose in urging all bearers of the Melchizedek Priesthood to read the Book of Mormon during 1961 was that they might learn more about the gospel. One cannot honestly study the Book of Mormon without learning gospel truths, because it contains ". . . the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also; . . ." (*Ibid.*, 20:9.) So impressed was the Prophet Joseph with it that he "told the brethren that the Book of Mormon

was the most correct book of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other books." (DHC 4, 461.)

I am very happy to advise you that I have reports from 332 stake presidents to the effect that in their stakes there was a combined total of 59,740 bearers of the Melchizedek Priesthood who read the Book of Mormon through during 1961. I am sure that each of these men can truthfully testify that his knowledge of the gospel was increased by his reading.

But learning the gospel from books is not enough. It must be lived by one who would magnify his calling in the priesthood. As a matter of fact, getting a knowledge of the gospel and living it are interdependent. They go hand in hand. One cannot fully learn the gospel without living it. A knowledge of the gospel comes by degrees. One learns a little, obeys what he learns; learns a little more, obeys that; and repeats this cycle in an endless round. Such is the pattern by which one can move on to a full knowledge of the gospel.

John, the Beloved, says that this was the way Jesus attained a fulness. He wrote: "And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at first, but received grace for grace;

"And he . . . continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness." (D&C 93:12-13.)

Jesus prescribed the same process for us in these words: ". . . if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace." (*Ibid.*, 93:20.)

And in another scripture: "And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

"He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things." (*Ibid.*, 93:27-28.)

I cannot understand how one can read these words without having his heart filled with joy.

Jesus further points out that the

commandments we are required to keep are given in the scriptures, and adds: "If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments." (*Ibid.*, 42:29.) And ". . . unto him that keepeth my commandments I will give the mysteries of my kingdom, and the same shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life." (*Ibid.*, 63:23.)

Many of the commandments concerning our personal conduct are to be found in the forty-second section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which the Prophet Joseph specifies "as embracing the Law of the Church." Every priesthood bearer should be familiar with this revelation and with the instructions given in section fifty-nine and in section eighty-eight, particularly verses 117 to 126. Indeed, a priesthood bearer with serious intentions of so magnifying his calling as to merit the blessing of the "covenant which belongeth to the priesthood" should be conversant with all the instructions given to guide us in our personal conduct—both those recorded in the scriptures and those being received currently by the living prophets. One can scarcely hope to be fortified "against the wiles of the devil" by putting "on the whole armour of God" (see Ephesians 6:11) unless he knows what that armor is.

But the commandments do not pertain alone to one's personal conduct. They put on every bearer of the priesthood the stimulating responsibility to render service—service in carrying the restored gospel, with all the blessings of the priesthood, to the peoples of the earth; and service in comforting, strengthening, and perfecting the lives of one another and all the Saints of God.

The nature of this service is spelled out in detail in the revelations and by the living prophets. The burden of it the Lord has laid upon his priesthood. It can be done properly only by men who are magnifying their priesthood; who know the gospel, conform their lives to its standards, and who enthusiastically give dedicated service in the spirit of the divine proclamation that ". . . men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many

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things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

"For the power is in them, . . ." (D&C 58:27-28.)

Such men are magnifying their callings, and they shall obtain the rewards promised by the Lord in the "oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood." That each of us may be found in this choice group, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses will now favor us with "O Clap Your Hands," conducted by Elder Kurt Weinzinger. The benediction will be offered by Elder Boyd LeRoy Fugal, president of Timpanogos Stake, after which this Conference will be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

I think I will take just a minute to thank these boys and girls for their presence here today. It is always a most pleasing feature of our Conferences to have with us students from our leading educational institutions in the state and adjoining states.

I believe I will tell something about you that you do not know. It is said that—

You never can tell what our thought will do

In bringing you hate or love,
For thoughts are things
And their airy wings
Are swifter than carrier dove.
They follow the law of the universe,
Each thing must create its kind;
And they sweep o'er the track
To bring you back
Whatever went out from your mind.

If that is true of thoughts it is true of acts. Here is what some students of the Brigham Young University did to

a conductor on one of our railroads. I have not his permission to read it, but I am going to.

"It is with pleasure that I tell you that on the evening of January the third 1962, going west on the California Zephyr, I met the nicest group of students that I have had the pleasure of visiting with in many years. While checking the train I came to a coach loaded to capacity with young men and women that I later learned were going to Provo to attend the Brigham Young University. I was amazed to find that a coach loaded with 60 or more young people, as this one was, could be so quiet and orderly, compared with some of the other groups we have handled which had the aisles littered with beer and whiskey bottles, with blinds torn from the windows, with water fountains plugged and the water drained all over the floor, the air blue with tobacco smoke and the entire train in an uproar, this group was eating candy, reading, writing letters, playing musical instruments, visiting with friends, and believe it or not, some were even studying. (laughter) It would be very hard to find another group containing as many perfect ladies and gentlemen."

Congratulations. Thank you for your presence this morning and your inspirational singing and you will be with us this afternoon, but I took time now to thank you for fear we might not have time at the close of the meeting. We are proud of you. Please give us your closing number and then President Boyd LeRoy Fugal of Timpanogos Stake will offer the benediction.

As a concluding number, the Combined Choruses sang the selection, "O Clap Your Hands."

President Boyd LeRoy Fugal of the Timpanogos Stake offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2:00 p.m.