

Sunday, April 7

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fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (*Ibid.*, 7:17-18.) President McKay does not build the kingdom of Satan, he builds the kingdom of God. He teaches the same gospel and doctrines that Jesus Christ and the apostles taught.

Our prophet has asked us all to be missionaries—every member a missionary. That's the way to build this Church. Wouldn't it be great if all two million each brought one soul into the Church. How many of you brought one new member into the Church last year? The prophet asked us to do it under the inspiration of the Lord because the Lord knows how to build his Church.

What if it meant your life if you did not bring a soul in this coming year? You'd have him or her, wouldn't you?

ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved associates in the work of the Lord. Within the hour all who are assembled here will be journeying to their homes. I am reminded in this thought of an experience at a newsstand the other day. I walked about observing the magazines. I was intrigued by the number of those devoted to the restyling and beautification of our homes. Done in four-color printing on good paper, their titles alone were enough to excite the imagination in the direction of improvement, and their contents was a most compelling display of suggestions on how to dress up the old place or plan for a new one.

Then my eyes drifted to the news magazines. Boldly printed on the cover of one of these was a shocking question: "Will city streets ever be safe again?" Inside I read a provocative interview between the editors of the magazine and the president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Stanley R. Schrotel of Cincinnati. The interview describes what we have read so frequently of late—the rising tide of assault, robbery, and other serious crimes inflicted on unsuspecting people by criminals, who, for the most part,

You'd bring your soul in. This is just a little way for the Lord to test and tell whether we love our neighbor as ourselves. We'd do pretty nearly anything to save and preserve our own lives.

I bear witness that God lives, that David O. McKay is his prophet and mouthpiece. It is good to be in your presence. May the Lord bless each one, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, one of the Assistants to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. He is just recently from Scotland, that's why he was so brief.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

are young men, many of them yet in their teens. News stories indicate that one cannot safely walk the streets of some of our proudest cities. This is not only in the United States; the same problem is also felt across the world.

I quote from the interview with Chief Schrotel:

"Q. Are you saying that parents are to blame, really, for juvenile delinquency?"

"A. I'd have to say that there is a woeful need today for greater strength in the home, greater respect for parents as the authority symbol, and more parental guidance."

I find only one interpretation of this—serious failure in the homes of the people. There is failure in cultivating those virtues which lead to respect for law, respect for associates, even respect for self.

Other symptoms, less dramatic, but equally far-reaching in their consequences, are found in the rising toll of domestic tragedies, the broken homes, the children cast adrift from the ties that should give security and stability to their lives. Add to this the cases of warped integrity, of malfeasance, of

dereliction of duty, and we have a sordid and miserable picture.

Paul of old declared to Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." He said nothing of atomic bombs or inter-continental missiles or death-dealing submarines.

Rather, they shall be perilous because ". . . men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, . . .

"Without natural affection, . . . despisers of those that are good, . . ." (2 Timothy 3:1-3.)

The police chief lists some of the things he would do to curb this distressing problem. He includes stricter law enforcement and more prison sentences. I would not presume to question his formula as an expediency, but I think it is not a basic and enduring solution. The tide will be turned only as the principles governing the behavior of the people are altered.

Honesty, character, integrity do not come of legislation or police action. Only as we build back into the fiber of our lives the virtues which are the essence of true civilization will the pattern of our times change. That building process must begin in the homes of the people. It must begin with recognition of God as our Eternal Father, of our relationship to him as his children, with communication with him in recognition of his sovereign position, and in supplication for his guidance in our affairs.

Prayer, family prayer in the homes of this and other lands, is one of the simple medicines that would check the dread disease that has eroded the fiber of our character. It is as simple as sunshine and would be as effective in curing our malady. We could not expect a miracle in a day, but in a generation we would have a miracle.

A generation or two ago family prayer in the homes of Christian people throughout the world was as much a part of the day's activity as was eating. As that practice has diminished, our moral decay has ensued.

I feel satisfied that there is no adequate substitute for the morning and evening practice of kneeling together—

father, mother, and children. This, more than heavy carpets, more than lovely draperies, more than cleverly balanced color schemes, is the thing that will make for better and more beautiful homes.

There is something in the very posture of kneeling that contradicts the attitudes described by Paul: proud, ". . . heady, highminded." (*Ibid.*, 3:4.)

There is something in the very practice of father and mother and children kneeling together that evaporates others of those qualities he described: ". . . disobedient to parents, . . .

"Without natural affection, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 3:2-3.)

There is something in the act of addressing the Deity that offsets a tendency toward blasphemy and toward becoming lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

The inclination to be unholy, as Paul described it, to be unthankful, is erased as together the family thank the Lord for life and peace and all they have.

The scripture declares: "Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things." (D&C 59:7.) And again: ". . . in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 59:21.)

In remembering together before the Lord the poor, the needy, and the oppressed, there is developed, unconsciously but realistically, a love for others above self, a respect for others, a desire to serve the needs of others. One cannot ask God to help a neighbor in distress without feeling motivated to do something oneself toward helping that neighbor. What miracles would happen in the lives of the children of America, and of the world, if they would lay aside their own selfishness and lose themselves in the service of others. The seed from which this sheltering and fruitful tree may grow is best planted and nurtured in the daily supplications of the family.

I know of no better way to inculcate love for country than for parents to pray before their children for the President and the Congress or the Queen and

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the Parliament of the land of their citizenship.

Recently I have seen on billboards in some of our cities a statement which reads, "A nation at prayer is a nation at peace." I believe this. I hope this is more than a catchy motto. I am satisfied that we shall not have peace unless and until we request it in the name of the Prince of Peace.

I know of nothing that will ease family tensions, that in a subtle way will bring about the respect for parents which leads to obedience, that will affect the spirit of repentance which will largely erase the blight of broken homes, than will praying together, confessing weaknesses together before the Lord, and invoking the blessings of the Lord upon the home and those who dwell there.

I have been impressed by a statement made by a man long since dead, the father of one of the great men who sits on this stand. James H. Moyle wrote to his grandchildren concerning the family prayer of his own home. He said: "We have not gone to bed before kneeling in prayer to supplicate divine guidance and approval. Differences may arise in the best governed families, but they will be dissipated by the . . . spirit of prayer. . . . Its very psychology tends to promote the more righteous life among men. It tends to unity, love, forgiveness, to service."

In 1872 Colonel Thomas L. Kane, the great friend of our people in the days of their distress in Iowa and at the time of the coming of the army to this valley, came west again with his wife and two sons. They traveled to St. George with Brigham Young, stopping each night in the homes along the way. Mrs. Kane wrote a series of letters to her father back in Philadelphia. In one of these she said:

"At every one of the places we stayed on this journey we had prayers immediately after the dinner-supper, and prayers again before breakfast. No one was excused . . . the Mormons . . . kneel at once, while the head of the household, or an honored guest prays aloud. . . . They spend very little time in ascriptions, but ask for what they need, and thank Him for what He has

given. . . . (They) take it for granted that God knows our familiar names and titles, and will ask a blessing on (a particular individual by name), . . . I liked this when I became used to it."

Oh, that we as a people might cultivate this practice which was of such importance to our pioneer forebears. Family prayer was as much a part of their worship as were the meetings convened in this tabernacle. With the faith that came of these daily invocations, they grubbed the sagebrush, led the waters to the parched soil, made the desert blossom, governed their families in love, lived in peace one with another, and made their names immortal as they lost themselves in the service of God.

We have reached the tragic point in our history where evidently we cannot invoke the blessings of God in our schools, but we can pray in our homes. The family is the unit of society. The praying family is the hope of a better society. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, . . ." (Isa. 55:6.)

I was touched last fall by the heart-breaking statement of a young man in Japan. He said, "I have been here for months. I can't learn the language. I dislike the people. I am depressed by day and weep at night. I wanted to die. I wrote my mother and pleaded for an excuse to return home. I have her reply. She says: 'We're praying for you. There is not a day passes that all of us do not kneel together in the morning before we eat and in the evening before we retire and plead with the Lord for his blessing upon you. We have added fasting to our prayer, and when your younger brothers and sisters pray they say, 'Heavenly Father, bless Johnny in Japan and help him to learn the language and do the work he was called to.'"

This young man then went on to say through his tears, "I will try again. I will add my prayers to theirs and my fasting to their fasting."

Now, four months later, I have a letter from him in which he says, "A miracle has happened. The language has come to me as a gift from the Lord. I have learned to love the people

in this beautiful land. God be thanked for the prayers of my family."

Can we make our homes more beautiful? Yes, through addressing ourselves as families to the source of all true beauty. Can we strengthen our society and make it a better place in which to live? Yes, by strengthening the virtue of our family life through kneeling together and supplicating the Almighty in the name of his Beloved Son.

This simple practice, a return to family worship, spreading across the land and over the earth, would in a generation largely lift the blight that is destroying us, and it would restore in-

tegrity, mutual respect, and a spirit of thankfulness in the hearts of the people. That we of this great Church, the kingdom of God, may be faithful in setting an example before the world in this practice and in encouraging others to do likewise, I humbly pray, as I leave with you my testimony of its virtue, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Brethren and Sisters, we are nearing the end of another great conference. I am impressed with the thought that everyone who has attended, either in presence or by listening in, no matter where he or she may be, must leave this conference with a greater determination to be a better man or a better woman; a better citizen of the town, county, or nation than he or she has ever been before.

Brother Bernard P. Brockbank has just said that it is good to be in the presence of good people. He gave a sermon in that sentence. "It is good to be in the presence of good people." Every man and every person who lives in this world wields an influence, whether for good or for evil. It is not what he says alone, it is not alone what he does. It is what he is. Every man, every person radiates what he or she is. Every person is a recipient of radiation. The Savior was conscious of that. Whenever he came into the presence of an individual, he sensed that radiation—whether it was the woman of Samaria with her past life; whether it was the woman who was to be stoned or the men who were to stone her; whether it was the statesman, Nicodemus, or one of the lepers. He was conscious of the radiation from the individual. And to a degree so are you, and so am I. It is what we are and what we radiate that affects the people around us.

We cannot go from this great conference without an added responsibility to contribute to a better life around us. As individuals, we must think nobler thoughts. We must not encourage vile thoughts or low aspirations. We shall radiate them if we do. If we think noble thoughts, if we encourage and cherish noble aspirations, there will be that radiation when we meet people, especially when we associate with them.

That is true of the individual. It is true of the home, as we have heard in this conference from Brother Gordon B. Hinckley. Our homes radiate what we are, and that radiation comes from what we say and how we act in the home. No member of this Church—husband, father—has the right to utter an oath in his home or ever to express a cross word to his wife or to his children. You cannot do it as a man who holds the priesthood and be true to the spirit within you by your ordination and your responsibility. You have to contribute to an ideal home by your character, controlling your passion, your temper, guarding your speech, because those things will make your home what it is and what it will radiate to the neighborhood.

I am reminded of a remark made by a man who came here and attended the board meeting of the United States Steel Company in 1946. You will remember—some of you in this audience,