

gaged in the Lord's work. God lives, and Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer. I know this to be true. The heavens have been opened, and prophets have been raised up. Joseph Smith was indeed a great prophet raised up to perform a mighty work in establishing God's kingdom in this dispensation. And we have a great prophet at the head of the Church today, our beloved President David O. McKay. All mankind would do well to heed his counsel and advice. I bear this testimony to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He who has just addressed us is Elder Franklin D. Richards, grandson of Brother Williard Richards who was with the Prophet during the Prophet's last days.

A number of television and radio stations have just joined us. We welcome all those who have tuned in for this Conference session. We shall now hear from Elder Robert L. Simpson of the Presiding Bishopric. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton.

BISHOP ROBERT L. SIMPSON

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

I am a father. I share this popular title with millions. I would like to do some thinking with all of the fathers within range of my voice this morning, and we sincerely invite the rest of the family to listen in. Dads, do you realize that we have had one of the truly great compliments of the ages bestowed upon us? It has been wisely stated that "to be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved."

As choice young spirits have been sent into our charge, the sacred trust that I refer to has been bestowed by Heavenly Father. I would like to have all fathers join me this morning as we contemplate the obligations associated with this great blessing of fatherhood.

Obligations and Blessings

Who among us fathers would not thrill at the prospects of our son recording of us as a boy prophet recorded more than 2500 years ago: "... having been born of goodly parents" (1 Nephi 1:1), or perhaps this recording from the pen of our modern-day Prophet, Joseph Smith, Jun., as he said, "... I love my father and his memory; and the memory of his noble deeds rests with ponderous weight upon my mind, and many of his kind and parental words to me are written on the tablet of my heart. . . .

"Words and language are inadequate to express the gratitude that I owe to God for having given me so honorable a parentage." (DHC 5, see pp. 125-126.)

Such an expression of gratitude from

one of our sons could hardly be expected, much less appreciated, without some real effort on our part in order to merit it.

So how about it, dads? Let's put our heads together for just a few minutes and determine some ways to improve our contribution to the partnership we have with God the Eternal Father in guiding the destiny of human souls, in this case, our sons.

Love, the Prime Ingredient

Let us place first things first and mention love as the prime ingredient. I rather think that Heavenly Father would like the idea of love heading our list, for his Only Begotten, the Savior of the world, had unlimited capacity for love. This single trait of love was most typical of his brief mortal ministry.

In this day the Lord has revealed his will to us concerning our approach to one another, and I cannot think of a single reason why it should not apply especially to the father-son relationship. He speaks of using our power and influence, "... only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—" (D&C 121:41-42.)

In acknowledging God's patience with the children of Israel, Nehemiah described God as "... ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger,

and of great kindness." (Neh. 9:17.)

The Savior became upset and overwrought on at least one very trying occasion. Do you remember the episode in the temple as he drove out the money changers? This is compatible with his continued advice as he justifies you and me: "Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy"; (D&C 121:43.)

"Follow the Leader"

All boys seem to have a favorite game. They play it most of the time without even realizing it. It is called "Follow the Leader" and, dads, whether we like it or not, this is the way it is. So maybe we had better decide right here and now to lead right. Can we constantly break promises and teach our sons integrity? Speak an occasional falsehood and expect undeviating truth from them?

When was the last time you found your son looking up at you with that look of complete admiration and confidence? To them, dad is perfection, and we should do nothing to betray the trust and faith that is theirs in us.

We now find ourselves in a great age of acceleration, a turn to the left or right, however slight, can be of great consequence. Surely a five degree deviation traveling down the road behind old Dobbin was not a serious miscalculation, and there was plenty of time to pull the reins and set things right. Traveling down the modern highway of life calls for strict attention to detail, for a slight deviation of our course can spell disaster in the fraction of a second. Ours is the most volatile age in the history of the world. How important it is that we train well to follow the white line, to hold fast to the iron rod spoken of by President Tanner.

Respect Free Agency

Our sons are sent to us from our Heavenly Father's presence as free agents to be taught and persuaded—yes, to be forced and driven like cattle—never! It was established even before the foundations of the earth what the

pattern should be. In that great council attended by you and me along with the hosts of heaven, we are told that Satan's plan of force and dictatorial power was rejected. Instead a plan of freedom and personal choice was decided upon, and so it must be in all of our human relationships. We have often heard, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."

Persuasion Not Compulsion

No, dads, let's face it. The methods of compulsion and dictatorship are not compatible with the Lord's plan, but rather kindly persuasion through love and patience as expressed by the poet:

"Know this, that every soul is free,
To choose his life and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth is given
That God will force no man to heaven."

—William C. Gregg

Communication, Many Forms

Now getting back to the horse that wouldn't drink, someone has said, "Well, he just didn't know he was thirsty," so we had to convince him. Here we get into the area of communication. If there is one major problem in the world today, it is a lack of proper communication. It is not only the cause of international unrest, but also family disunity.

At this very moment, communication satellites circle the globe, and experimental testing goes on at a feverish rate so that nations will be able to talk to nations both audibly and visually in our day. To eliminate gross misunderstanding that might trigger an atomic bomb without true cause, we read of a hot line from Moscow to Washington, and you can be sure that understanding would be checked very thoroughly before anyone pushes a button that would send the world reeling into an atomic war.

Are we taking as much pain to see that our family communications are unrestricted and static free? Have you ever had the experience of a hurried word that was misunderstood only to find out later that feelings resulted due to a misinterpretation of the true meaning?

I heard of a father who decided to

Sunday, April 5

Second Day

leave the car home on Sunday morning so he and his boy could enjoy a brisk walk to church. Even more stimulating than the exercise which they both needed very much was the opportunity for casual conversation and the resulting understanding that grew between them. A new warm father-son relationship that had been slipping away rather rapidly was firmly reestablished.

Are we too busy for a Pack meeting, dads? Too little time for a few minutes of ball throwing before dinner perhaps? Is it inconvenient for you to rough it for just one night at a Fathers' and Sons' outing? Maybe we are just too busy—yes, even with church work—sometimes we might become too busy.

Any red-blooded father would throw back his shoulders and say, "I'd give my life for my family," but, dads, are we willing to give up our favorite TV show in the meantime? How about it, dads, are we just a little selfish sometimes when it comes to putting first things first? Let's think in terms of the little day-to-day niceties and not so much about the spectacular gesture "some day." Just as surely as night follows the day, no man will ever make the big sacrifice without first the little sacrifices along the way.

From the beginning of time, dad has been designated as the head of the family. This is further amplified in the teachings of the priesthood. The father who holds the priesthood becomes the president or the head of his family unit as long as he maintains himself worthy of that sacred trust. As president of this most important corporation in the eyes of the Lord, all fathers must find time to give to it.

Time is always so precious. Can we ever find all the hours necessary to earn a living, do our church work, and be a good father? The answer is yes, but not without some organization and planning. As we seek for every available minute to accomplish our important responsibilities, may I pass on just one idea given me by a father who utilizes the dinner hour as a time for better family communications, not in a direct businesslike way but rather in an indirect but preplanned way. The dinner table discussion is guided skillfully into those areas thought most

important by mother and dad. The children are not even aware of what is happening, and with proper forethought on some subjects that would be of interest to all, plus perhaps a thought-provoking question to get things moving, this family found itself deeply engrossed in interesting, stimulating conversation with a greater feeling of unity than ever before. It is interesting to note that the mother of this family reports a wonderful by-product of the plan. Conversation became so engrossing and so involved that it completely eliminated the bickering and contention that was usually a part of the dinner hour.

For Boys

Now in all of our talking during these past few moments, most has been said about father and son. Practically everything expressed could also be said about mother and daughter or father and daughter, and as far as that goes, mother and son. As a bishopric, we are always impressed with President McKay's kindly admonition. As we find ourselves at times carried away with the boys' programs of the Church, he leans forward with that twinkle in his eye and in a very kindly way reminds us, "And, brethren, girls of corresponding ages," and so we would remind all of the brethren not to forget girls of corresponding ages.

For Girls

Today is a wonderful day, made possible through thousands of intelligent people with proper attitudes. The world today is the product of mothers and dads of yesterday. Our thinking, our judgment, our spirituality are largely the product of their good example. Now on the horizon we see tomorrow sparkling and bright, offering a challenge to our sons and our daughters, a challenge that exceeds anything the world has ever known. The attitudes, the leadership, the spirituality of that day will be in direct measure a reflection of the effectiveness of the parental guidance we offer today.

To Boys

Boys, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long

upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exod. 20:12.) Dads, let's not wait for the more convenient time that never seems to come. Give that boy the guidance that only you can give as Heavenly Father intended it. Don't think about the great day way off in eternity sometime when you will give your life. That boy will settle for a few minutes here, and an hour there, and every once in a while perhaps a full day. An unknown poet has said it better than I:

"What is this gift you will give your boy?

A glamorous game, a tinsel toy,
A whittling knife, a puzzle pack,
A train that runs on a curving track?
A Boy Scout book, a real live pet?
No, there's plenty of time for such things yet.

Give him a day for his very own—
Just your boy and his dad alone:
A walk in the woods, a game in the park,
A fishing trip from dawn to dark;
Give him the gift to thrill any lad

The total companionship of his very own dad.

Games are outgrown, and toys decay,
But he'll never forget if you give him a day!"

May we provide this time as our Heavenly Father would have us, I pray in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Robert L. Simpson of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church.

A number of television sets are just changing now, and we will listen to about a minute and a half of organ recital.

We do not know how many millions of people have tuned in on this Tabernacle session. You may guess. A new audience is now listening to us.

We shall hear now from Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve.

ELDER THEODORE M. BURTON

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Literal Resurrection

Few things in this world of ideas and men have been so thoroughly accepted and so implicitly believed as was the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ by his disciples. Their belief in the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ led his disciples, rather than to deny him, to give up their very lives. Men do not give up their lives for an idea or concept unless they know in their hearts that the idea is true and worth such sacrifice. The disciples believed and were convinced of the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ. They understood this resurrection to be a reuniting of body and spirit to form an eternal soul, never again to be separated by death.

A question might well be asked: "What happened to the Spirit of Jesus Christ during the period when his dead body lay in the tomb awaiting its resurrection?" Though his body was confined to the tomb, his Spirit was free.

What did Jesus do from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning when the two Marys came to the tomb and found it empty?

The great Apostle Peter, who later became the leader and spokesman for the Church, gave a very clear statement of what happened as he wrote:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

"By which (that is, in the spirit) also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein (which means during the days of Noah) few, that is, eight souls were saved by water (meaning by baptism)." (1 Peter 3:18-20.)