

Sunday, April 5

Second Day

we are not concerned as he seems to be as to whether he is "up there" or "out there" or whether this is a three-storied universe. We know that he lives, that he can and does appear to men. In fact, the whole structure of Mormonism is based on revelation. The Father and the Son were revealed to a young man in the state of New York in 1820, and since that time many glorious revelations have come to reassure us in our faith that he lives. He declared it to be his work and his glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. This is our answer, then, to the question whether it is possible for modern men to accept the true Christian faith. It was established by Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time and restored by him in the Fulness of

Times. Hence, we do not share the fear, uncertainty, and confusion mentioned by Dean Inge or the Bishop of Woolwich. We call attention to the biblical image of God in which he is identified as personal, eternal, unchangeable, and everlasting, to which we humbly bear witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

He to whom we have just listened is President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency. Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

ELDER BOYD K. PACKER

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

There has lingered in my mind since yesterday morning a sentence from the inspired voice of President David O. McKay. "Pure hearts," he said, "in a pure home are always within whispering distance of heaven." This touched my heart. From it, and from the whispered prayer of a little youngster this morning, I took assurance and found an unexpected preface for the subject, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, . . ." (Mark 10:14.)

An associate of mine had a little girl undergo surgery. They arranged for one of the parents to stay with the little youngster during the period of recuperation—for a hospital can be a strange and a frightening place for a little youngster who is injured or ill.

Coincidentally she shared a room at the hospital with another little girl just the same age who had also undergone surgery. During the long, painful hours following the operation, this little girl struggled almost convulsively against the pain, pleading incessantly for her parents. "Mister," she would beg, "will you please go find my mommy?" My friend, and in turn his wife, found themselves more at the bed of this little girl than of their own child, for she seemed to need them more.

Finally in the evening hours her parents appeared. They hurriedly visited for a few minutes in a casual way and then nervously observed that they had a social engagement and left the little youngster to face her agony alone.

How well they had taught the lesson—how enduringly they had impressed upon the pliable little mind that she was an intrusion into their lives. How unfortunately typical they are of many parents who unwittingly, unconsciously, merely endure their children.

It has been my privilege in the past to speak to young people and to fathers. Today I address my remarks to mothers of little children and recall for their contemplation these words from the Gospel of St. Mark:

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (*Ibid.*, 10:13-14.)

A Sacred Influence

While the responsibility to guide little children belongs to both parents,

motherhood carries with it a special sacred influence. The program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will not pre-empt your privileges, Mother. It is structured to strengthen you as a mother. None of it is calculated to diminish your influence in the home. But since there are good mothers—and better mothers—it is patterned to strengthen the very quality of your motherhood. There is a "Home Partnership" spirit in all that is done. How important it is that every mother be enthroned as a queen in her home, teaching the principles of life and salvation to her little ones.

It is a common practice for parents to purchase insurance policies and open savings accounts that the children may attend college or fulfil missions. It is generally a good thing to do. But, mothers, in all of your looking into the future, you may do well to look to the present. For premiums must be paid on character, too, not just monthly or quarterly or semiannually, but moment by moment, day by day, year in, year out. Character must be built little by little "... giving line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little; ..." (D&C 128:21.)

Teaching the Gospel to Children

It is not always a solemn and sobering obligation, this teaching of the gospel to the little children; they have a way of making it pleasant. One mother in South Carolina told me of her youngster who was contesting with a neighbor child over the question, Which is the only true church? Her child finally said, "Well, we have a prophet at the head of our Church." The other child conceded finally with the thought, "I guess ours is a non-profit organization."

There is a trend in the world today—and unfortunately in the Church—for women to want to be emancipated. And we wonder at times—emancipated from what? From domesticity? From motherhood? From happiness? And to what are you in slavery? Your children? It is neither necessary nor desirable for the mother of little children to become a drudge or to be relegated to a position of servitude. It is not, however, uncommon to see women—interestingly enough many in the financially well-

to-do category—over-surfeiting themselves with activities outside of the home at the expense of their little children.

I have never known a mother to regret in the closing years of her life a sacrifice made for her children or to begrudge the cost of guiding them to fine Christian citizenship.

On the other hand, we find almost universal remorse for neglect of family in the growing years or for over-indulging children, which is symptomatic of the most serious type of neglect.

Mothers, do not abandon your responsibilities! Be reverently grateful for your little children.

For Children Impaired

I speak a word to mothers who have little children who are handicapped, children whose little bodies were born incompletely formed or whose little minds are limited. No one knows the depth of agony that you have suffered. By way of consolation, I read from the Doctrine and Covenants:

"Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.

"For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand." (D&C 58:3-4.)

I recall the inspiring words of Elder Lee's message yesterday on this subject and suggest that blessings will be extended to mothers such as you who have given tender and affectionate love to handicapped children. Trials such as these bring a reverence for life, a new depth of compassion and motherhood.

For Fostered Children

There are lovely mothers, also, who have fostered children born by other women. To such the privilege of motherhood is twofold more precious. And there are many mothers whose love extends beyond their own family. In elementary school I learned a great lesson in this regard. There were in that school several youngsters from a family which was not blessed with an attentive mother at home.

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During the school year they were afflicted with impetigo, a common disease of the skin which is now very easily cured. Because they were not bathed and because their clothing was not clean, it quickly spread across their bodies.

The principal of the school asked that my mother, who was the room mother for our class, visit the home in the hope that she could encourage the type of care that these children so badly needed. "The woman's touch," he said, "may be most helpful here."

Although she responded to the request, she failed in her mission, for she found circumstances in that home were pitiable. Well I remember the invitation to bring these little youngsters home from school with us. And, I remember that they were bathed; medication was applied to their little bodies; they were dressed in our clothing; and in the early evening sent to their own home, the next day to return for the same treatment. Night after night after night I remember my mother scrubbing endlessly with a bottle of disinfectant and then boiling clothing against the possibility that her own family might become infected. But her mother's heart would not turn them away, for these were little children, and they were suffering.

The demands made upon mothers, the weariness, the worry, the endless vigil, all take their toll. But there comes to you a special beauty transcending even that of the blushing bride. Such beauty is alluded to in these lines by an unknown poet entitled simply "Beauty."

"Beauty"

"Two pines were born on a hillside grove.

One protected, grew straight and tall. It bore no time or weather marks. Its figure was slim and virginal.

"The second showed clearly that time had passed,

For it stood where the winds stormed by. Its arms knew the tortuous weight of snow.

Its face knew the sting of the sleet-filled sky.

"The first tree, so youthfully beautiful Was a picture the world could all see. But the artist who climbed to the hillside grove

Always painted the other tree."

This morning I was compulsively drawn to turn and look over my shoulder to see Sister McKay sitting, her face almost framed by the white orchids that had been set there next to her chair. And to the credit of those who sent those flowers I say that they came near to being as lovely as Sister McKay.

The Sphere of Mother

Mothers, teach your children in the home the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sustain your husband in his presidency of the home. Draw from the Priesthood Home Teaching program, from the Relief Society, and the other auxiliary agencies of the Church the assistance to bless your family.

Teach your daughters the essentials of homemaking. Teach them to be virtuous. Train your sons for service in the mission field. Teach them to be worthy. Teach them to know that the President of the Church is a prophet of God.

It is easy, mothers, for us to love you, because you see the Lord loves you. Earn, mothers of little children, the witness that Jesus is the Christ, for he lives. The gospel of Jesus Christ is true. In testimony of this, I give you my witness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will now address us.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

I bear testimony to you, my brothers and sisters, that I, like others who have

talked in this conference, know that this is the kingdom of God, that this is his