

## ELDER THORPE B. ISAACSON

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, President Brown, President Tanner, President Smith, my beloved brethren of the General Authorities, my dear brothers and sisters: I would like to testify to you that these brethren are servants and prophets of God our Eternal Father. I know today we miss Elder LeGrand Richards, Apostle LeGrand Richards. I say "apostle" intentionally because truly he is an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have missed his sitting here by the side of Brother Romney for these three days. I visited with him this morning. He is home and looks very fine. He sends his love to the people, the Saints, and thanks you for your prayers. He does love the Saints, and I can say to him, "We love you, too, LeGrand. You are a great soul."

The first and great commandment is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Matt. 22:37, 39.)

**My Neighbor**

Now, just who is your neighbor? We are living in a somewhat complex society, when things sometimes are not quite as they seem. And now as we are facing a state and national election, perhaps we should conduct ourselves and our public statements and accusations a little differently than we have done in the past.

The Lord has said:

"Judge not, that ye be not judged.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (*Ibid.*, 7:1-3.)

**The Opposition's Candidate**

We have two great American political parties in this country—the Republican Party and the Democratic Party—and I

believe that most citizens believe in the two-party system and desire to preserve it. Sometimes we speak about the opposition candidate as if we would like to destroy one or the other political party. Recently, I heard two men speaking about a certain candidate of the opposite party to which they belonged. One of the men said, "If he runs, before he is through, we will ruin him." Some of us can recall where men have been practically ruined because of treacherous political campaigns. I wonder if any political office is worth that price. Certainly, we can talk principles and policies without degrading the integrity and even the good name and the family reputation of any candidate of either party.

As citizens of this great country and members of both major political parties, we can be thankful for belonging to a nation under God and for a faith which, if practised, can see us through any hour of trouble. The atmosphere of hate and intolerance will likely be partly responsible for sad events occurring in this choice country—a choice land!

**Respect His Good Name**

We should all be thankful and grateful that this government is an inspired form of government and our personal rights and liberties will continue unabated. Ours is a free country, and freedom requires people to think for themselves and develop their own abilities. Tolerance and respect for the opinion of others should be cherished and practised. Each of us could learn to distinguish between men and their ideas, to disagree without being disagreeable, and to take no pleasure in ruining any man or his good name or his future because most of us, if not all of us, have guilt enough—each in his own way.

Perhaps there is a great lack of tolerance. We should not debase and deprive those with whom we may differ by character or custom but realize that there is a time and place for everything.

The courage to defend the right does not give one the right to destroy those who disagree. The world is in constant conspiracy against brave men. Moral courage has been to a greater or less extent missing or lacking in the American life.

Competition in America is keen but that does not justify the attempt to ruin a man's good name in order to achieve, nor does it justify short cuts in our taking advantage of the other fellow.

Should Americans set themselves one against another in bitterness and suspicion? Are we developing tolerance, moral courage, patience, etc., or have these virtues become de-emphasized in American life? To what degree would we go to defeat another?

#### Protect His Honor

Some years ago an article written by President David O. McKay was published, entitled "Protecting One Another's Honor." It might be well for each one of us to adapt this article to ourselves. Today that should be emphasized and practised. Yes, it should even become part of our own life. May I quote some statements from that article. President McKay states, and I quote:

"To defend one's country is a worthy deed! Patriotism is a virtue. In protecting the good name and holding inviolate the word of their country, men in the service of their country may rise to the heights of true nobility. . . .

"The same virtue is possessed by him who with unwavering integrity protects the honor and good name of his friends and associates [yes, even his competitors]. It is the best within him expressing itself.

"In upholding the good in others he makes better his own soul. He that looks for the good shall find it; and he who protects another's good name makes bright his own.

"But the opposite is true as well. If every man is the keeper of his brother's good name, he who proves false to his trust weakens his own good character, stains his own soul. There is a mean element in human nature which 'feeds fat' upon seeing weaknesses and faults in others—which secretly gloats upon

others' failures. The more one yields to this meanness, the meaner one becomes. . . .

"It is from this base side of humanity that spring slander and backbiting, . . . gross evils in society that produce discord, distrust, and devilishness—that cause . . . sorrow and broken hearts. . . . Families are broken up because of distrust aroused by faults magnified and virtues overlooked. Ties of friendship are broken, societies and organizations weakened by dissension and ill will, and even governments undermined because men fail to defend the honor and good name of their colleagues and governing officials. Much of this is the result of the failure to look for the good and not for the bad in others.

#### Gossip's Tongue

"Looking for the good does not mean being blind to the bad. Human nature is full of weaknesses and frailties; . . . But in organized society . . . there are means established whereby weaknesses may be corrected and evils overcome. They are only made worse when magnified and multiplied by gossip's idle tongue. It is a deplorable fact that the eye of the gossip and the slanderer sees not only no good in others, but sees 'evil where no evil exists.' Ofttimes, many evil, vicious things that are circulated exist only in the imagination of . . . evil-thinking minds. How sordid must be that person's soul who would defame the honor and good name of an innocent friend or neighbor!

"True religion as exemplified in the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches that every man should be the defender of his brother's good name. It goes even further by requiring everyone to overlook another's trespasses:

"'. . . ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.' (D&C 64:9.)

"To pray for power to see things as they are, not as others imagine them to be; to cherish charity in our hearts for our fellow men; to realize that, next to love, sympathy is the divinest attribute of the human soul, and to manifest it for all things, both great and small; to

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strive by righteous endeavor to hasten the day when men of all nations shall live as brothers—these are some of the ideals of life which should be emphasized by all men everywhere. . . ." (*The Instructor*, Vol. 95, June 1960, pp. 177-178.)

"In a world where sorrow"

Most men have plenty of trouble anyway. Why should we add to the humiliation, embarrassment, sorrow, and worry of another? Yes, most men are already carrying a heavy load. Why should any one of us wish to add to that already heavy cross? May we put aside bitterness, hate, jealousy, and quit judging the other fellow! If we could have courage to come to the rescue of the man who is being attacked when he is not present to defend himself, we could save the heartbreaks of one another.

May I quote from William George Jordan:

"The second most deadly instrument of destruction is the gun—the first is the human tongue. The gun merely kills bodies; the tongue kills reputations and oftentimes ruins characters. Each gun works alone; each loaded tongue has a hundred accomplices.

"The havoc of the gun is visible at once, the full evil of the tongue lives through all the years. . . ."

### Crimes of the Tongue

"The crimes of the tongue are words of unkindness, anger, malice, envy, bitterness, harsh criticism, gossip, lying and scandal. Theft and murder are awful crimes, yet in any single year the aggregate sorrow, pain and suffering they cause in a nation is microscopic when compared with the sorrows that come from the crimes of the tongue.

"At the hands of a thief or a murderer few of us suffer, even indirectly. But from the careless tongue of friend, the cruel tongue of enemy, who is free? No human being can live a life so true, so fair, so pure as to be beyond the reach of malice or immune from the poisonous emanations of envy. The insidious attacks against one's reputation, the loathsome innuendoes, slurs, half-lies by which jealous mediocrity

seeks to ruin its superiors, are like those insect parasites that kill the heart and life of a mighty oak.

"Scandal is one of the crimes of the tongue, but it is only one. Every individual who breathes a word of scandal is an active stockholder in a society for the spread of moral contagion. He is instantly punished by nature by having his mental eyes dimmed to sweetness and purity, and his mind deadened to the sunlight and glow of charity.

"A few words lightly spoken by the tongue of slander, a significant expression of the eyes, a cruel shrug of the shoulders, with a pursing of the lips—and then friendly hands grow cold, the accustomed smile is displaced by a sneer, and one stands alone and aloof with a dazed feeling of wonder at the vague, intangible something that has caused it all.

"For this craze for scandal, sensational newspapers of today are largely responsible. [I am not referring to our newspapers.] Each newspaper is not one tongue, but a thousand or a million tongues, telling the same foul story to as many pairs of listening ears. The vultures of sensationalism scent the carcass of immorality afar off. From the uttermost part of the earth they collect the sin, disgrace and folly of humanity, and show them bare to the world.

"They do not even require facts, for morbid memories and fertile imaginations make even the worst of the world's happenings seem tame when compared with their monstrosities of invention. These stories, and the discussions they excite, develop in readers a cheap, shrewd power of distortion of the acts of all around them." (*The Kingship of Self-Control* by William George Jordan.)

When we look at other men, we may think they have no problems, that they have no worries, no sadness; but someone said, "Do not judge another man until you have walked in his shoes for a while!"

"Nay Speak No Ill"

"Nay speak no ill; a kindly word  
Can never leave a sting behind;  
And, oh, to breathe each tale we've  
heard

Is far beneath a noble mind.  
 Full oft a better seed is sown  
 By choosing thus the kinder plan,  
 For, if but little good is known,  
 Still let us speak the best we can.

"Give me the heart that fain would  
 hide,  
 Would fain another's faults efface.  
 How can it please the human pride,  
 To prove humanity but base?  
 No, let us reach a higher mood,  
 A nobler estimate of man;  
 Be earnest in the search for good  
 And speak of all the best we can.

"Then speak no ill, but lenient be  
 To other's failings as your own.  
 If you're the first a fault to see,  
 Be not the first to make it known,  
 For life is but a passing day;

No lip may tell how brief its span;  
 Then, O the little time we stay,  
 Let's speak all the best we can."  
 —Anon. Hymns, Church of Jesus  
 Christ of Latter-day Saints,  
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May God bless us that we may do  
 so, and that we shall never add to the  
 worries of a friend or a brother, I pray  
 in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson, Assistant  
 to the Twelve, has just addressed us.  
 Elder John Longden, Assistant to the  
 Twelve, will be our next speaker. He  
 will be followed by Ezra Taft Benson  
 of the Council of the Twelve.

### ELDER JOHN LONGDEN

#### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Much has been said about the resur-  
 rection of Jesus Christ during this con-  
 ference, and for several weeks past by  
 many peoples of the Christian faith as  
 the Easter season has been commemo-  
 rated. The resurrection, we testify, is a  
 reality. Every testimony-bearing mem-  
 ber of this Church gives this witness.

Today, I should like to speak about a  
 reality yet to come—the second coming  
 of Jesus Christ. The signs and events  
 preceding his second coming are clearly  
 taught in the scriptures and furthermore  
 are being fulfilled now.

By way of review, while the Savior  
 was upon the earth on one occasion he  
 met with:

"The Pharisees also with the Saddu-  
 cees came, and tempting desired him  
 that he would shew them a sign  
 from heaven.

"He answered and said unto them,  
 When it is evening, ye say, It will be  
 fair weather: for the sky is red.

"And in the morning, It will be foul  
 weather to day: for the sky is red and  
 lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can dis-  
 cern the face of the sky; but can ye not  
 discern the signs of the times?" (Matt.  
 16:1-3.)

I well remember as a boy in England

hearing this statement many times,  
 "Red sky at night, sailors take delight.  
 Red sky in the morning, sailors take  
 warning."

Later, the Savior sat upon the Mount  
 of Olives; the disciples came unto him  
 privately, saying: ". . . Tell us, when  
 shall these things be? and what shall be  
 the sign of thy coming, and of the end  
 of the world?"

"And Jesus answered and said unto  
 them, Take heed that no man deceive  
 you.

"For many shall come in my name,  
 saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive  
 many.

"And ye shall hear of wars and  
 rumours of wars: see that ye be not  
 troubled: for all these things must come  
 to pass, but the end is not yet.

"For nation shall rise against nation,  
 and kingdom against kingdom: and  
 there shall be famines, and pestilences,  
 and earthquakes, in divers places.

"And then shall many be offended,  
 and shall betray one another, and shall  
 hate one another.

"And many false prophets shall rise,  
 and shall deceive many.

"And because iniquity shall abound,  
 the love of many shall wax cold.