

Tuesday, April 5, 1965

Third Day

Work of Elijah for the Living and the Dead

So the work of Elijah was not confined to the living or to the dead. It was a universal mission both for the living *and* the dead whereby the way was opened for all who will to hearken and obey and so receive the glory reserved for those who love the Lord. As Jesus told John the Beloved:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20.)

So the knock is at the door. Any man who *really* loves his wife and his family will not rest until he can qualify himself by acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ and by righteous living to take his wife and family with him into the temple of the Lord and

there have them sealed to him forever under the sealing power of the priesthood, which was brought again to earth by the hand of the Prophet Elijah that our hearts may be filled with these great promises made to the fathers and that we may be sealed into the family of Jesus Christ and through him to be brought into the presence of God the Eternal Father.

I testify of the truth of these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve, has just addressed us. Elder Eldred G. Smith, patriarch to the Church, will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

We have heard much concerning family unity in the home during this conference. Truly this is a family church.

Evidences of Disintegration

I, too, am concerned at the far too many divorces and temple cancellations and signs of disunity among members of the Church. The gospel should be the greatest means of uniting the family.

I can't understand how anyone who has been married in the temple and understands the meaning of celestial marriage, which is for time and all eternity, can get himself in such a condition as even to consider divorce.

Evidences of Salvation and Survival

I am pleased with the increasing reports of success in missionary work as a result of teaching families. The fundamental purpose for which this earth was created was to establish individual families forever. The family is the only organization which is eternal.

In the beginning God said, "It is not

good for man to be alone." (See Gen. 2:18.)

Learning To Be Perfect

One of the fundamental purposes of this life is to have experiences whereby we may learn to be perfect. Man is not perfect without the woman, nor is the woman perfect without the man.

The Lord said unto Adam and Eve, as he drove them from the Garden of Eden, that they might learn obedience by their own experience.

He said "they," not the singular pronoun but the plural. We are given many varied experiences in this life to prepare us to live together forever. These experiences should bring an ever increasing love for each other. This includes learning to be patient with each other, to develop increasing tolerance, consideration, and kindness. Love is eternal and knows no bounds and has no measurable limits.

Priesthood and motherhood go hand in hand. Neither is complete without the other. Both are eternal. A perfect family requires the proper fulfillment

of both. This life is to help us fulfil these two responsibilities, that we may exercise them through eternity.

Priesthood and Perfection

Priesthood is patriarchal, which means "of the father." A married man is the patriarch of his home and is responsible to bless members of his family. The exercising of this privilege could be a means of preventing many broken homes. We think of a priesthood holder as one who should bless or christen his children, baptize and confirm them, and perform the other ordinances of the gospel in behalf of members of his family. We forget that it is not required to have some other ordinance such as christening and confirming attached thereto to enable the father to bless members of his family. His responsibility is not only to bless his children, but his wife is an important member of his family too. Yes, we think of blessing the wife when she is sick, but if the relationship between husband and wife becomes a bit strained, wouldn't it be a good thing for the husband to give his wife a blessing for the purpose of increasing the unity and love for each other?

I remember an experience I had when a good sister who wanted a special blessing came to my office. When I asked her why she wanted a special blessing, she refused to tell me. I learned from her that her husband was a member of the Church and held the Melchizedek Priesthood, so I spent considerable time trying to teach her the principle of priesthood order, where the father in the home should bless the members of the family, and concluded a long discussion of teaching her this principle, by having her go home to get her blessing from her husband instead of from me.

Sometime later she returned to my office, refreshed my memory of this experience, and said she left my office very resentful. Here I thought I had done a good job in teaching her this principle of priesthood order, so I had to ask more questions to find out what had happened.

She said the reason she refused to tell me why she wanted a blessing

was that she wanted the blessing because there wasn't the proper relationship between her and her husband, and then I had sent her home to get a blessing from her husband. So naturally she was a little bit resentful.

Then she added, "That was one of the finest things that ever happened." She said she went home, she prayed about it, she thought about it, and then finally she mustered enough courage to ask her husband for the blessing. Of course it shocked him, but she was patient; she let him think it over a bit, ponder about it, and pray about it; and finally he gave her a blessing. Then she added, "There has never been such a fine relationship in our home in all our lives as we have had since he gave me that blessing."

Naturally I could see what had happened. This is a two-way street. First she had to clean her side of the slate and humble herself. Then she asked him for the blessing, and he had to humble himself and clean his side of the slate. Then he sealed the blessing upon her which they had fulfilled by living the law upon which the blessing was predicated. This is priesthood order.

"Brethren magnify Priesthood"

Brethren, magnify your priesthood. Bless your family, your children and your wife. When we follow the order which the Lord has laid out for us, we cannot fail. I believe this practice would save many teetering marriages and increase the unity in many homes.

It is usually the wife who is trying to save the marriage. This is a two-way street. It requires the efforts of both.

Too many couples are living lives of "quiet desperation." I don't know who used that term first, but it is so expressive. Some go through life just tolerating each other rather than correcting the trouble. Do something about it. Exercise the priesthood which is in your home.

First, each must have a desire to get along with each other. Each must be willing to do something to make amends. Each must be willing to forgive and forget. Wipe the slate clean of all unpleasant memories.

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Ask the Father for help. Ask him to bless your efforts with success. Ask together, as well as separately in individual prayers. Kneel together and pray vocally together.

When you are married you must learn to do all things together. You are no longer single individuals.

The joy and happiness that comes from sharing this life together, living the gospel in its fulness, is worth all the effort you put into it, and it will be rewarding in this life and through all eternity.

May we all strive to this end in prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Eldred G. Smith, patriarch to the Church. Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker, and the Logan Institute of Religion Choir will sing, "Praise the Lord," by Cyril Jenkins, and conducted by James L. Bradley. The benediction will be offered by Elder Karl R. Lyman, formerly president of the Florida Mission, after which this conference will be adjourned until 2 o'clock this afternoon.

ELDER LeGRAND RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, in your presence this morning I would like to express my gratitude to my Heavenly Father for my membership in his Church, and for what it means to me and my family, and for the pattern of life that it gives us to live by, and for the thousands of faithful Latter-day Saints who are such wonderful friends everywhere I go in the Church. This is the greatest brotherhood in all the world.

Many of you know that I have spent many years in missionary service, and I thank the Lord for this great arm of his Church. As we heard here today in the statistics that were given, there are over 16,000 at the present time engaged in this missionary work, one of the most unselfish contributions for the blessing of humanity that this world has ever known. And as we labor among the people and see what the gospel does for them, that is when we really realize what a marvelous thing this work is.

A Man Anew

I would like to make reference today to a few of my experiences. When I was president of a mission, a brother was on his way home from doing his branch teaching, and he saw my light burning, and he belled on, and said,

"President Richards, I was just wondering, as I was going home, when I saw your light, if you would be interested in knowing what I was thinking." And I told him I certainly would. So he came in. He said, "I was thinking of who I was, and what I was when the Mormon elders came to my home, and who I am today and what I am, and I just can't believe that I am the same man." He said, "I have changed so much. I don't think the same thoughts. I don't have the same habits. I don't have the same ideals to live by. I have completely changed." Isn't that what the Apostle Paul meant when he said that we are buried with Christ in baptism and that as he arose to the glory of his Father that we should come forth and walk in a newness of life, knowing this first, that our old man of sin is buried with him? (See Rom. 6:4.)

You can go all over this Church and apply that to all who have come in in faith and have entered into the waters of baptism and have taken upon them the name of Christ our Lord. According to the statistics here today we had nearly 100,000 converts during the last year, people who have left the teachings of their youth and joined this Church because they found something in it that they did not already possess in their own churches.