

Saturday, October 2

Second Day

Responsibility of Children

This then is the challenge! What a great one it is—not only to be willing to answer for our own actions but to teach our children that they must be willing and have the courage to answer for their actions. Many of the evils that beset the world today can be traced to this weakness.

Too many people today are passing the buck, not willing to own up to their own responsibility.

If we, as parents, will teach our children to have a sense of responsibility, a willingness to answer for their actions, we will be a blessing to them, and they in turn will be a blessing and a delight to all with whom they associate.

I am grateful for my responsibilities as a parent. I am grateful for my responsibilities in the Church. I know

it is true. I know without a shadow of a doubt that God lives, that Jesus Christ gave his life that we might live. I know that God has a mouthpiece on earth today in the person of David O. McKay.

I humbly pray, my brothers and sisters, that all parents will sense their responsibility toward their children and that they will carry that responsibility in a pleasing and acceptable manner to our Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric has just spoken to us.

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us.

ELDER ELRAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters: With all my heart I wish to express appreciation to this wonderful chorus of students from the Brigham Young University for having sung those two highly appropriate numbers. It is as if they had expressed the prayer that I have had in my heart, "Shed forth thy Spirit, O Lord," and then that very humbling hymn which they sang so beautifully, "I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me."

In what I shall say, I have in mind particularly you who have yet to act upon two momentous questions: Whom shall I marry? Where shall I marry?

There are many ways of doing things; but surely, in anything we do, there's no better way than the right way. And the Lord's way is always the right way. And fortunately, he has made his way very plain. Seldom is our problem one of knowing what is right, but rather in having the wisdom and the will to do what is right.

Far-reaching Consequences of Marriage

In my opinion, the most consequential event in your life takes place when you are united as husband and wife. It is bound to have a far-reaching effect upon your future. Like the ripples caused by a pebble cast upon a placid pool, the decision you make in regard to where, with whom, and by whom your marriage ordinance is administered will affect not only you, but the lives of many others, especially your children. In fact, it will likely affect generations to come.

In a matter of such vast importance, it is imperative that sober thought be given to your marriage long before it takes place. It is not merely for biological, social, or economic reasons that two people are united in matrimony. The purpose of marriage is far more sacred and more far-reaching than that.

We must realize, first of all, that marriage is a holy relationship de-

signed by our Heavenly Father for the divine purpose of perfecting us and those who follow us. This is done in part by the husband and wife learning to love and respect each other as they should and in rearing children in the manner prescribed by the Lord.

Dearest Possessions

After all, a person's dearest possessions are his loved ones—his companion and his family. In the hearts of most of us there exists a deep spiritual affinity for our loved ones. It is natural to enjoy each other now and to look forward with assurance to a grand reunion with them in the resurrection. True love is not earthbound. It is as eternal as our spirits, which never die. A continuing association in this life and in the next with those we love should be the great desire of every person. It is the ultimate! It is the greatest achievement in mortality!

It was President George Albert Smith who said this: "Fathers, I do not care how much property you have, what honor you may attain to—it is immaterial to me whether your names are written in the records of history because of your accomplishments. . . . The greatest blessings [you can ever acquire] are your boys [sons] and your girls [daughters]." (*The Church News*, February 22, 1947, p. 8; *The Improvement Era*, January 1965, p. 27.)

But such an eternal relationship with our loved ones does not come about automatically, as some have supposed. It must not only be planned for; it must be *earned*.

Do you realize that only when you have lived in harmony with all the laws and ordinances of the priesthood, which include those administered in holy temples, that you can expect to find yourselves prepared to dwell in what I sometimes refer to as the "Kingdom of Families"?

Abide Celestial Law

In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord has said: "And they

who are not sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom.

"For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory." (D&C 88:21-22.) And it is in that kingdom where husbands and wives will continue as such and where we may be surrounded by our loved ones, if we are willing to "pay the price."

Our heritage of doctrine in this Church and of knowledge and of authority to act in the name of the Lord is tremendous. How fortunate it is that after its absence from the earth for hundreds of years the Lord has revealed anew the principle of the covenant of eternal marriage and has restored the divine authority to administer it. It is here. It is yours to embrace! With the knowledge that it is the Lord's way and therefore the right way, no Latter-day Saint with a concordant spirit would deviate from it. Some may say, "Why not try a civil marriage first and if it works then later on go to the temple?" But surely the time to be married right is when you marry. Can we consign the Lord's prescribed way to a secondary position? We cannot. When you consider the incomparable blessings and the promises that may be realized in a marriage that may be perpetuated through the eternities ahead of you as compared with a temporary association, your desire, your determination should be to take hold of and *insure* these blessings and promises.

If ever there was a time to be realistic and to act in the light of things as they are, if ever there was a time to "use your heads," so to speak, it is when the thought of marriage first enters your mind, and from that point on to strive to become worthy and prepared to enter into that holy place and there receive the blessings that the Lord has awaiting for the faithful.

The necessity of this is emphasized in the words of President Joseph F. Smith who explained so clearly: "Un-

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less a man and wife are married by the power of God and his authority, they become single again, they have no claim upon each other, after death; their contract is filled . . . and is therefore of no force in and after the resurrection. . . ." (The Improvement Era, July 1902, p. 716.)

This means that those husbands and wives who do not accept this heaven-sent gift will come forth in the resurrection separately, with no claim upon each other and with no claim upon their children. Think of it! To pass by this would be to pass by the greatest of all gifts that God can offer us—the means to eternal happiness.

The Power of Covenants

It is comforting to know that death need not long separate husbands and wives and that death will not separate them if the sealing received in the temple is approved by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the Holy Ghost. Moreover, death does not deny parents from associating with their children if they are born in the covenant previously made by their parents in the holy temple or if they are sealed in holy temples as families, provided, of course, that all remain faithful to the end.

Such ". . . children are legal heirs," said Brigham Young, "to the Kingdom and to all its blessings and promises, . . ." (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 1946 ed., p. 195.)

When two souls have a true love for each other—a genuine, tender affection, not merely a physical attraction—when they are really united in spirit, having the same lofty ideals, the same beliefs, the same standards, trusting each other, confiding in each other; when there is sincere recognition of honor, virtue, and devotion; when such people are joined together through the sealing power and the ordinances thereof, their marriage, if continued on such a basis, should give them assurance and comfort in the thought that even though death may part them, yet in the resurrection they shall come forth and live in the family relationship forever.

In all kindness may I remind you that this is *your* earthly life that you are living *now*—yours. You will live it but once! There will be no rerun. There will be no repeat performance. What you do now in this life determines where you will be in the life to come. It is *your* future, *your* destiny, that you are molding.

Plan Marriage by the Right Course

You made good in that pre-earth life, of which we have heard today. You must not now "fumble the ball" on the eighteen or twenty year line. When you do take a wrong course, you are undoing the work of your prior existence, for there you struggled for ages to reach mortality where you now are.

My beloved friends, young men and young women, God bless you to keep your lives clean and wholesome, that you may go to him in prayer and ask him to guide you in choosing your mates, and when chosen, that you may both live so that you may enter the house of the Lord in worthiness, for there is no better way than the right way; and the Lord's way is always the right way. A marriage begun the right way starts you on the course to happiness, to the sweetest joy known in this life and throughout the eternities.

To this I bear testimony and pray for all of us the blessings of the Lord to continue and to be increased according to our merits, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Brother Kurt Weinzinger will lead the congregation and choir in singing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

After the singing, Bishop Robert L. Simpson of the Presiding Bishopric will speak to us.

Will you all stand please?

The Congregation joined with the Combined Choirs in singing the hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints."