

honor of being a "priesthood man." That is the great lesson I have learned tonight again as I have listened to the testimony of President McKay, who has exemplified these very principles in deed.

May we be the priesthood bearers we have been called to be is my hum-

ble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy will be our next speaker.

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle

Of the First Council of the Seventy

Many times, brethren, I have rushed to this session of conference to sit where you sit. Many times I have listened with great care to the instructions that were given in the priesthood meeting. I wonder if you realize, now that I am here, how much I need your faith and prayers and the Spirit of the Lord in order to say something that will be helpful and beneficial.

This is a glorious sight to see fathers and sons sitting in priesthood meeting together. There isn't any better place to be than in priesthood meeting tonight.

To begin with, I want to testify that President McKay is a prophet. To sit here and be instructed by a prophet in this day is the greatest privilege that you and I could have.

How to reduce juvenile delinquency

I am pleased to receive an assignment to speak about a matter of particular interest to me—how to prevent juvenile delinquency. I want to share some experiences and illustrations—building blocks—and you fit them where they belong.

I want to begin with an experience that may at first seem extraneous to this subject. To me it seems to be most fundamental. The other evening Sister Tuttle and I visited a great man who has not been able to attend this conference, Elder Harold B. Lee. As we were taking our leave, I casually mentioned that I surely did love my wife. Whereupon he said, "Continue to tell her; tell her often. If you have a happy wife, you will have a contented family."

Generous manifestations of affection

I remembered President McKay's counsel about this, too. In his usual effective way he made his point by telling a story about two Scotsmen. One of the men had lost his wife. His friend, trying to console him, said, "She was a good wife." To which the bereaved husband replied, "Aye, and that she was; and I came near telling her so a time or two." Brethren, don't be "Scotch" with the expression of your love for your wife. It is such a little thing, but it takes thought, and it takes effort on our part to tell our wives that we love them. It is the mother who sets the tone in the home and the spirit of the family. If she is edgy, insecure, frustrated, we ought to look to ourselves, brethren, to let her know that she is loved. If she is calm, secure, and loved, she sets this mood in the home.

I don't know who wrote this, but I would like to share with you a little clipping that was in my book:

"You are a great little wife, and I don't know what I would do without you." As he spoke he put his arms around her and kissed her and told her he loved her. And she forgot all the care in that moment. And forgetting it all she sang as she washed the dishes, and she sang as she made the beds. And the song was heard next door. And the woman there caught the refrain and sang also, and two homes were happier because he had told her that sweet old story, the story of the love of a husband for a wife. As she sang, the butcher boy who delivered an order heard it and he went out whistling on his way. And the world heard the

whistle. So because he kissed her and praised her and told her he loved her, the song came and the influence went out and out."

Help the working mother

I would like to say a word about working mothers, brethren. I know I am not talking to working mothers. But I am talking to some fathers whose children have working mothers. You are the ones who cause, or at least permit, mothers to work. Brethren, before you count the profit of such an endeavor, count the cost. In our affluent society many of us cannot distinguish between luxuries and necessities. Too often mothers work to pay for luxuries that are not worth the cost.

Evidence of mother's love

Of our seven children, one little boy is not yet in school. On one of those infrequent days home, I heard the front door open and the little five-year-old called, "Mommy." In one of the other rooms, my wife answered, "Yoo hoo, here I am." The door closed and he toddled back out to the sandpile. I thought about that. He did not need to talk to her. He did not want anything. He was just checking in. And I have thought of this since, brethren; what if she had not been there?

How plaintive that cry for mothers who work. And I am not talking about widows or women who because of necessity must become a breadwinner, and I am not talking about women who have no children in the home at this particular time. Brethren, before you count the profit, count the cost of a working mother. Stable, secure, well-balanced individuals are not accidental. They are the result of prayerful, concentrated attention to parental responsibilities.

What being a father includes:

Now I would like to say a word about the relationship between fathers and sons. Sons' problems are just like those of adults: they are afraid they won't be noticed, loved, or wanted. Have you ever had any boys about

nine years old who sometimes would rather be paddled than ignored? Fathers, how do you get close to sons? Let's face it, brethren, some of us have not learned how to be good fathers. We are selfish. We have not matured in the ability to give of ourselves. Some are able to give their children money and some influence.

We need to understand the true meaning of fatherhood, which is more than just the biological function. We need to learn to give of ourselves. We need to learn to give our time to our sons. I suppose there isn't a more precious commodity for any of us to give than to give time to our sons and daughters. It isn't as easy as it used to be when a father and son worked together on a farm, or where a son became an apprentice to his father and learned his trade working at his side in a shop. Now we have to make opportunities to be physically present together.

I have a friend who is the father of a 13-year-old son and four daughters. He said that he had devised a "work project" on which he and his son were working one Saturday. They were talking about this and that and finally the conversation lagged a little bit and his son said, "Dad . . . Dad, how old do you have to be to get a testimony?" "Well," my friend said, "that is when the work stopped and we sat down and had a man-to-man chat." And he added, "We decided then and there that we would continue these chats, and that we would be away from the girls, alone, to talk about things that really mattered."

Fathers, sons, make occasions to be together

Brethren, I think we are going to have to make occasions to be together. Teachers do not replace fathers; neither do Scoutmasters. They are very helpful and vital, because we do not live alone, but they do not replace fathers. I know you love your sons, and your sons think you do, but when did you last demonstrate your concern and interest? When did you last go and shoot baskets, or play catch with your son? Are your homes getting so nice

that you can't play marbles on the front-room rug? When did you last help your son with his lessons? When did you attend a basketball game or some other sport in which he played? Do you know what position he plays, father? Have you talked about how he might improve his game?

How many of you can name the school classes your daughter takes—not in order—just any old way? When did you last demonstrate your love and your concern for your children? When did you last have a scuffle with your boy? Have you ever noticed that there are times when nothing else will do but to “take on” your tribe and “lick ‘em”—or vice versa? If they are too big, then you divide them up. If they are in that stage, the least you can do is referee. And then have you noticed that night after family prayers, as they file by to kiss their mother and shake hands with their father, that the boys linger a little and say, “Dad, that was fun. You’re a great guy. When can we do this again?”

Brethren, this takes time. You have to change clothes. You have to be home. You have to be thinking about your boys. You can’t be thinking about some pastime where you go out alone, or play with your friends. This is overcoming selfishness. It’s being a father—truly being a father—with great concern about your sons.

You have heard the story of the father who was playing in the backyard, with his children piled high on his back. His neighbor observed, “You’re going to have an aching back tomorrow, brother.” To which he replied, “No doubt, but better an aching back tomorrow, than an aching heart in the future.”

Who is going to teach your son the facts of life? How are you going to do it, brethren? I know a father who deliberately set up a teaching experience with his son. He planned a horseback ride into the mountains. The father came home as early as he could get away that day. The son had the horses saddled and loaded with mother’s lunch and the sleeping bags. They rode up the canyon as far as they could that night. They tethered

the horses by a spring, ate their meal, and climbed into their sleeping bags early. This gave them time to lie there and look at the stars and talk.

That was the night this father found out more about his son than he had known before. That was the night his son learned more from his father than he had known before. The father talked with his son about these feelings inside the human breast and why they were there, and told him that they were good and that the Lord put them there for a sacred and holy purpose, and that they were not to be experimented with. They had a good talk that night. The son remembers those lessons. The father remembers them, too. Demonstrate your love, father, by telling your son these things about himself.

We have always tried to live on a little farm. We have just a few acres, as much as my other income will support. We have had animals and fowl to try to help teach the lessons of life to the children. And it has been of great benefit.

I would like to share with you part of a letter received recently from our oldest daughter, which indicates the value of this kind of life:

“As I think back on some of the choice moments we have had together, I realize how they have helped me to understand our special relationship. I remember in Pleasant Grove when I woke up as you were going out to be with Ginger [that’s our mare] while she was having her colt. You explained a few of my simple questions about life’s processes, and we marveled as the newborn colt stood up so soon. . . . Then in my more mature years you were near to comfort in times of heart-break and seemed to understand so readily my boyfriend problems. Your shoulder was always ready for my tears.”

We have been blessed with seven children. Early in their lives they said, “Daddy, tell us a story.” I agreed to, but I set up some conditions. I said, “Children, I will do that, if you will first put on your pajamas, hang up your clothes, clean off the shelves, vacuum the front room, sweep the sidewalk, etc. etc.” (I don’t suppose you

have ever done that.) It was impossible for them to do all that before they went to bed.

I am grateful for my sweet wife. She would say, "Ted, tell them a story now. Soon they won't be asking you." Well, time passes quickly and now the first three don't ask anymore. The other four do, however. So we have had "a story" in our home for more than seventeen years. It is a continued story. It has the same title, but different episodes each time. We have woven Book of Mormon stories into it, and stories about honesty and courage. We have enjoyed a lot of hair-raising experiences together just because we have had "a story" in our home.

Brethren, do not deny yourselves the privilege of a quiet hour telling bedtime stories to an innocent-eyed child.

Fathers, sons, seek counsel together

Now you sons, let me say something to you. Your father cannot get close to you if you will not help. Closeness isn't all one way. Sometimes you are nigh impervious to our attempts to get close to you. You need to be with your dad. Seek opportunities to do so. Spring days are coming soon. Watch your father. Someday, when he gets his old clothes on and goes out to spade up the flowers or rake the lawn, you get the other shovel or rake—without being asked. Don't be so lazy. Go out and be by his side and work with him. (Now don't do it this next week or he will suspect you. Do it when he has forgotten this counsel.) Be close to him, and then you will have an opportunity to say what Robert McKay said to his father tonight. Tell him that you love him, and tell him thanks for all that he has done for you and for all that he means in your life.

Now there will be days when some discipline is needed. Let me tell you a story that illustrates why we put brakes on you, and why we sometimes hold you down.

A father was out with his son flying a kite. He had let nearly all of the string out. As the son saw the kite go higher and higher, he said, "Dad,

Let it fly clear up to the sky!" This wise father, seeing an opportunity to teach a great lesson, replied, "Oh, no, son. If we were to let go of the string the kite would fall down immediately. Son, remember that we have to keep a hold on it to keep it up. Sometimes the things that hold you down are the things that hold you up!"

Now, sons, we love you, but we also know you. Ofttimes we know far better than you do when to hold you down, how late you are to stay out, when you are to come in, and when to do many other things. We won't deliberately make any mistakes.

May the Lord bless you, fathers and sons, priesthood holders. We have all that the world has, plus the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord expects much of you—to set and maintain a high moral standard in a world where morals are rapidly deteriorating. May the Lord bless you with vision, with the desire and power to be a worthy father and to be a worthy son, I humbly ask, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Condie will now lead the congregation and chorus in singing, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

We suggest that the groups, wherever they may be, join in the singing.

Singing: "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

President Tanner

President Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, and a counselor in the First Presidency, will now speak to us.

If Don Lind is in the audience, we are very happy to welcome him, and we would appreciate it if you would wend your way up here while President Smith is speaking. There is a chair here you can occupy.