

President N. Eldon Tanner

Of the First Presidency

President McKay, we feel happy and blessed to have you with us this morning. On behalf of the First Presidency, I should like to greet all those assembled in this great Tabernacle and those who are listening in this morning.

As we were commemorating at Easter time the death and resurrection of our Savior, I was greatly impressed again with the words: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

Then I was reminded of the answer the Savior gave to the lawyer, who temptingly asked him:

The great commandment

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:36-40.)

From this statement it is evident that love is the greatest thing in the world. Then referring back to the early scriptures, I found, as recorded in Leviticus 19:16-18, the Lord, in speaking to Moses, gave this commandment:

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people. . . .

"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart. . . .

"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. . . ."

Then in Deuteronomy we read:

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

"And thou shalt teach them dili-

gently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deut. 6:5-7.)

When Christ came to the earth the law of Moses was in effect, an example of which was "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But the Savior said:

A new commandment

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:34-35.)

The Lord also gave us what is often referred to as the Golden Rule. It is found in Matthew 7:12.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

If we are to have this love of which the Savior spoke, and which he emphasizes as being the most important thing in life, it must begin in the home and then carry into our daily lives. A happy marriage is never handed to a couple on a silver platter, but it is something we have to build continually. If each will think of the other's convenience, comfort, needs, and happiness, and determine to see the best in each other, try to understand and express love for each other, there will be true love and harmony in the home.

Yes, the only slogan we need in order to be happy in our home is: Love Each Other—three simple words. Apply the ingredients of love. Sacrifice for each other. Make each other happy. If this were always uppermost in our minds, we would have very little trouble indeed. If there is love between the father and the mother, there will be love between the parents and the children and among the children. One cannot over-emphasize the importance and value of being courteous,

kind, considerate, and polite in the home.

Love, the fulfilling of the law

Have you ever seen anything sweeter than the family that loves one another? Where there is true and perfect love in a family, such commandments as "honour thy father and thy mother," "thou shalt not steal," "thou shalt not bear false witness," are quite unnecessary. Love is really the fulfilling of the law.

As we look back over our life, whether it be short or long, we realize that the thing that gave the greatest joy was doing something for someone else because we loved him. Let us express our love to God and to our fellowmen now, while we can, by our every act and word, for "we shall not pass again this way."

The most difficult thing for us seems to be to give of ourselves, to do away with selfishness. If we really love someone, nothing is a hardship. Nothing is hard for us to do for that individual. There is no real happiness in having or getting, but only in giving. Half the world seems to be following the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists of having and getting, and in having others serve them, but really it consists of giving and serving others.

Just a few days ago, early in the morning, I had an experience that really touched my heart, and was an evidence of great love. A woman called me to say that she had just received word that her grown son had been killed in an auto accident in the East, where he lived. She said that her husband, the father of this boy, was in another city carrying on some very important and serious business negotiations, and that she did not want to disturb him while he was thus involved. In our conversation I agreed to call someone who was with the father so that he might be informed as soon as the negotiations were concluded. To me her action was an outstanding example of love and unselfishness and interest in her husband's welfare to the extent that she was prepared to suffer alone.

We cannot apply or fulfill all at once the Golden Rule that the Savior gave to us, but by seriously trying, we will find greater joy, success, satisfaction, and friendship as we go through life, and enjoy the love of others and the Spirit of our Father in heaven. If we will always look for the best in others, in our friends, in our neighbors, in our wife, in our husband, in our children, they will turn out to be the most wonderful people in the world. On the other hand, if we are looking for their weaknesses and faults and enlarge upon them, these same people may become even despicable.

Sometimes as I move among people I am almost convinced that it is human nature to magnify the weaknesses in others in order to minimize our own. We sing these words in one of our hymns:

"Let each man learn to know himself;
To gain that knowledge let him labor,
Improve those failings in himself,
Which he condemns so in his neighbor.

"How lenient our own faults we view,
And conscience's voice adeptly smother,
Yet, oh, how harshly we review
The self same failings in another! . . .

"Example sheds a genial ray
Of light which men are apt to borrow,
So first improve yourself today
And then improve your friends to-morrow."

(Hymns, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 91.)

Let us always remember that men of great character need not belittle others or magnify their weaknesses. In fact, the thing that makes them great is the showing of love for and interest in their neighbors' success and welfare.

As we try to apply the Golden Rule we must realize that love will not permit us to hold grudges or ill feelings. These canker the soul and crowd out love. We hurt ourselves by holding grudges and ill feelings. We hurt and sometimes destroy the person about whom we are bearing tales. We would

not think of stealing from or injuring physically one of our associates, friends, or neighbors, but we do even worse by stealing his good name. It is not uncommon to see people—clerks in stores, secretaries in corporations, individuals in clubs and in affairs of church and state—talking about and criticizing one another, trying to enlarge on their weaknesses with the idea of belittling them in the hope that their own weaknesses might be minimized or overlooked. If we really loved one another as the Lord loves us, there would be none of this friction, but confidence and happiness would reign.

Apply the principle of love

I should like to join with each and every one of you in taking stock of ourselves to see if we are actually really striving to apply the principle of love toward those with whom we are associated. Are we patient, kind, generous, humble, courteous, unselfish, showing no temper, guileless, and sincere? Do we try to put ourselves in the other person's place, whether he be a merchant, a clerk, secretary, a caretaker, one of another religion or race, or a man in prison, and then act toward him as we would like to be treated were we in his place?

Let us never forget that the Lord gave us this commandment to love God and to love one another and apply the Golden Rule. We cannot love God without loving our neighbor, and we cannot truly love our neighbor without loving God. This applies to you and to me, and if each of us applies it to himself, we need not worry about the other.

Some time ago a friend of mine related an experience that I should like to pass on to you. He said:

"My father's cousin and my father lived in the same community and were competing in the construction business. There grew up over the years a very keen and bitter rivalry between them. This was triggered in the beginning in the bidding of construction contracts, and later in our city political affairs where they opposed each other in very spirited elections.

"Our immediate families inherited this situation upon the death of my father, for we boys seemed to take over where Dad left off. It was quite a strain on the members of his family and ours even to be civil to one another, even in our Church callings where he served as bishop of one ward and I in another, and later in the high council where we were both members. When we came together it seemed that Satan took over, and I am sure he did, for haven't we been told that where contention is, the Spirit of the Lord is not?

"This situation continued to fester. Suddenly I found myself with a call to put aside all worldly things and go to preside over a mission. This was a thrilling experience to contemplate, and yet I subconsciously had a most uneasy feeling about it. I kept asking myself: 'Are you really worthy to accept such an important call?' I was living the Word of Wisdom, I was a full tithe payer, I was faithful in all my Church activities, I was morally clean, and yet this uneasy feeling persisted.

"I set about immediately to get my business and personal affairs in a condition where others could handle them while we were gone. While returning home from my office one afternoon, it really happened. I didn't hear a voice, but just as clearly as if a voice spoke to me something said: 'You must go to your father's cousin and get things straightened out. You cannot go on this mission and teach the gospel of love when this terrible feeling exists between you.'

"I drove to his home, and with great fear and trepidation went up and rang the doorbell. There was no answer. After waiting a few minutes I went back to my car and said silently, 'Lord, I made the attempt. I am sure this will be acceptable.' But it wasn't. This uneasy feeling still persisted. I prayed earnestly about it.

"The next day as I sat in a funeral service, my cousin came in and sat across the aisle from me. The Spirit moved me to ask him if I could see him at his home after the service. He agreed. This time I went with calm-

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ness and tranquility in my soul because I had asked the Lord to prepare the way for me.

"When I rang the doorbell he invited me into the living room and congratulated me on my mission call. We talked a few minutes about things in general, and then it happened. I looked at him with a feeling of love, which replaced all the old bitterness, and said: 'I have come to ask forgiveness for anything I have ever said or done that has tended to divide us and our families.'

"At this point tears came into our eyes, and for a few minutes neither of us could say a word. This was one time when silence was more powerful than words. In a few minutes he said: 'I wish I had come to you first.' I replied: 'The important thing is that it is done, not who initiated it.'

"At this moment we had a rich spiritual experience, which caused us to purge our lives and our souls of those things which had separated us, which has resulted in our having proper family relationships.

"Now I could go on my mission and teach the true meaning of love, because for the first time in my life I had experienced its deepest dimension, and now I could honestly say that there wasn't a person in the world that I didn't love and appreciate. Since that day my life has never been the same, for it was then that I learned in a most positive way as I had never understood before the injunction of the Master to his disciples when he said: 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.'" (John 13:34.)

This same dimension of love is so beautifully portrayed by Leigh Hunt in the story of Abou Ben Adhem:

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised
its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed;
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!
Let us all strive to live worthy to have our names listed among those who love their fellowmen, and so prove our love for God. God does live. Jesus is the Christ. Through him we have the restored gospel, which offers us immortality and eternal life.

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This is my humble testimony to you, and I leave my blessings with you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Singing by Choir: "How Great the Wisdom and the Love."

President Hugh B. Brown

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Build Thee More Stately Mansions O My Soul."

Singing by Choir: "Build Thee More Stately Mansions O My Soul."

President Brown

Many stations have just tuned in on this conference, and we wish to extend to them a hearty greeting.

Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us, after which the Choir will sing the hymn, "O My Father."