

"Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, which I have sent mine angels to commit unto you;

"Taking the shield of faith where-with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of my Spirit, which I will pour out upon you, and my word which I reveal unto you, and be agreed as touching all things whatsoever ye ask of me, and be faithful until I come, and ye shall be caught up, that where I am ye shall be also. Amen." (D&C 27:15-18.)

God bless our men in the military service and those who anticipate that call. The Church does love you. The

Lord is guiding us in preparing help for you. Of this I bear witness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

The chorus will now sing "Redeemer of Israel." The congregation will please stand and join with them.

The congregation and chorus sang the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us on the subject, "Home Teaching and the Family Home Evening."

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve

This subject and this assignment have come to me because of the fact that the home teaching program with which I am connected has been assigned some responsibility with respect to the home evening program.

My objective is twofold: one, to call your attention to what the Lord has said about the responsibility of Church members to teach the gospel in the home, and two, to point out some things that can be done in the home through home teaching to inspire and encourage the members of the Church to hold and conduct home evenings in the home.

To endeavor to so instruct this great audience is indeed an awesome responsibility. Think of it for a moment. As mentioned by President Dyer today, there are perhaps 150,000 listening to this meeting, men and boys, every one of them holding an office in the priesthood of God. Each, by reason of accepting ordination, bears a divine charge to visit the homes of Church members and exhort them to attend to all family duties and to individual duties.

We have all heard of home teaching, and we have all heard of home evenings, but we do not all do home teaching, nor do we all hold home evenings, notwithstanding the fact that both of these activities are divinely instituted to help us teach the gospel in the home.

Pattern for gospel teaching

Because no one can be saved without a knowledge of the gospel, the Lord himself set the pattern as to how it should be taught in order that everyone can be taught. He himself came to his son Adam and taught him the gospel, and directed him to teach his children. The record says that "Adam and Eve . . . made all things known unto their sons and their daughters. . ." (Moses 5:12.)

They instructed their sons and daughters to follow their example. We know that the faithful ones of them did so, because we read that Jared, the sixth generation from Adam, taught his son "in all the ways of God." (Moses 6:21.) We know that the unfaithful did not teach their children,

because the Lord said that the blood of those who were drowned in the flood would be required at the hands of their fathers. The basis on which the Lord holds the parents responsible for untaught children he explained to Ezekiel when he told him that when he gave notice and the watchmen did not warn the wicked that they would be destroyed, the blood would be required at the hands of the watchmen. (See Ezek. 3:18.)

I have here the scriptures as to how Moses taught the children of Israel to teach their children, of how King Benjamin taught the people of the Book of Mormon days to teach their children, and so on down through the various dispensations. I shall not take time, because of the lateness of the hour, to go through these scriptures. Furthermore, the scriptures that are binding upon us are the ones the Lord has given us in these latter days. He has never required his people of one dispensation to rely solely upon the teachings he gave to former dispensations. But he has revealed his law, given his commandments anew in every dispensation. And in this dispensation the commandments that we are bound by are those in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Modern instruction

In 1831, while the Prophet Joseph was "reviewing the commandments" to be sent to Zion, the Lord gave this instruction:

"... inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes . . . that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

"For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized." (D&C 68:25-26.)

Failure to teach children

The Lord's follow-up on this commandment 18 months later must have

shaken the presidency and bishop. Explaining that "every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning," but that because of their "disobedience, . . . [and] the tradition of their fathers, . . . that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth . . .," the Lord continued:

"But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth.

"But verily I say unto you, my servant Frederick G. Williams. . . .

"You have not taught your children light and truth, according to the commandments; and that wicked one hath power, as yet, over you, and this is the cause of your affliction."

I wonder how many of us today are suffering afflictions because we fail to teach our children.

"And now a commandment I give unto you—if you will be delivered you shall set in order your own house, for there are many things that are not right in your house.

"Verily, I say unto my servant Sidney Rigdon, that in some things he hath not kept the commandments concerning his children; therefore, first set in order thy house.

"Verily, I say unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., . . .

"You have not kept the commandments, and must needs stand rebuked before the Lord;

"Your family must needs repent and forsake some things, and give more earnest heed unto your sayings, or be removed out of their place. . . .

"My servant Newel K. Whitney also, a bishop of my church, hath need to be chastened, and set in order his family, and see that they are more diligent and concerned at home, and pray always, or they shall be removed out of their place." (D&C 93:38-50.)

The failure of parents to teach their children affects not only them and their children but whole civilizations.

Such failure contributed to the wickedness that brought on the flood; it contributed to the fall of ancient Israel, and to the destruction of the Book of Mormon peoples. I read recently that the renowned author "Edward Gibbon, back in 1788, set forth

in his famous book, 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' five basic reasons why that great civilization withered and died," and that the first of these reasons was "the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis for human society."

Home Evening inaugurated

All our leaders in this dispensation have counseled parents to teach their children. The First Presidency of the Church, in 1915, advised and urged "the inauguration of a 'Home Evening' throughout the Church, at which time fathers and mothers may gather their boys and girls about them in the home, and teach them the words of the Lord. . . .

"If the Saints obey this counsel, we promise that great blessings will result. Love at home and obedience to parents will increase, faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influences and temptations which beset them." (*The Improvement Era*, June 1915, pp. 733-34.)

I suppose this statement and the following I will read from President McKay give as good a definition of a home evening as we have in the scriptures. In April 1964, President McKay said: "No other success can compensate for failure in the home." (*The Improvement Era*, June 1964, p. 445.)

In 1965, as an aid to parents in teaching their children, the weekly Family Home Evening Program was inaugurated. Introducing the manual, President McKay said:

"These lessons for 'Teaching and Living the Gospel in the Home' are offered as helps for the weekly home evening. . . .

"Earnestly we urge parents to gather their families around them, and to instruct them in truth and righteousness, and in family love and loyalty. The home is the basis of a righteous life, and no other instrumentality can take its place nor fulfill its essential functions. The problems of these difficult times cannot better be solved in any other place, by any other agency, by any other means, than by love and

righteousness, and precept and example, and devotion to duty in the home." (*Family Home Evening Manual*, 1965, p. iii.)

Pursuant to this counsel, many families have adopted and faithfully pursued the Family Home Evening Program. Others have yet to move into it and qualify for the promised blessings.

Purpose of home teaching

Some of the things that can be done through home teaching—and this is really the purpose of this talk tonight—to inspire obedience to the commandment to teach the gospel in the home, and particularly to hold the home evening as directed, are as follows:

To the stake presidents:

1. That under the leadership of the stake president, there be in every stake an evening—other than Sunday—designated and exclusively reserved as home evening. I recently heard a former stake president who said the bishops in the stake he had presided over did not even answer the telephone on this evening. When it rang, one of the children would gently say, "We are holding home evening. Are you?"

2. Let each stake president see to it that he himself regularly conducts a weekly home evening with his own family, and that he inspires each of his counselors, clerks, high councilors, and all members of his stake council to do likewise.

I had written in these remarks: It will be in order for Representatives of the Twelve to emphasize this matter in their regions. I was very happy day before yesterday to hear President Tanner tell these Regional Representatives directly to hold their own home evenings and then take it up with the stake presidents.

3. That in their monthly oral evaluations, stake presidents motivate bishops and branch presidents to implement the family home evening program in their own homes and in their wards and branches.

Now to the bishops:

4. Let every bishop and branch president not only conduct a weekly

home evening with his own family, but also so teach, exhort, and inspire his counselors, clerks, and ward council members that they follow his example.

5. That in their monthly oral evaluations with their priesthood leaders, bishops and branch presidents accomplish three things: One, inspire these leaders to conduct home evenings with their own families. Two, motivate them to inspire home teachers to hold home evenings with their own families, and to encourage the families they visit to hold home evenings. Three, bishops should, at these interviews, receive a report from each priesthood leader on the status of home teaching in the families for whom he is responsible.

6. Let every home teacher (a) regularly conduct with his own family the kind of a home evening he would be proud to have the families he visits use as an example, and (b) carry into the homes of the families he is assigned to visit such teaching, encouragement, and spirit as will inspire them to observe home evening. The home teacher should also render a complete report on each of his families to his priesthood leader each month in their interviews.

Youth targets of evil one

Such is the care we must exercise, brethren, as we watch over the Church, if we are to prevail "against the wiles of the devil.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:11-12.)

The world is ripening in iniquity.

"... all flesh is corrupted before [the Lord]; ... the powers of darkness prevail upon the earth. . . ." (D&C 38:11.)

Satan, our enemy, is making an all-out assault upon righteousness. His well-marshaled forces are legion. Our children and youth are the targets of his main thrust. They are everywhere subjected to wicked and vicious propa-

ganda. Every place they turn, they are buffeted with evil, cunningly devised to deceive and to destroy every sacred thing and every righteous principle.

True principles ridiculed

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is scoffed at. God, they are told, is dead. The principle of repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost are ridiculed.

Morality in general and chastity particularly are outmoded. Man—so our children are told—is an animal, the product of biological evolution; his generative powers are not sacred and God-given for the purpose of bringing God's spirit children into mortality, and therefore to be exercised within the limits divinely prescribed, as the gospel teaches, but they are playthings to be exploited and prostituted for the gratification of sensual and lustful desires. Courage, honesty, loyalty, patriotism, law and order—these and other elements of the divine nature are no longer revered as virtues.

Children to be strengthened

If our children are to be sufficiently strengthened to stand against this satanic onslaught, they must be taught and trained in the home, as the Lord has directed.

Let every priesthood bearer, in the majesty and power of his calling, set in order his own house; let him regularly observe home evening and otherwise bring up his "children in light and truth" (D&C 93:40); let him accept a home teaching assignment and so faithfully visit, exhort, encourage, and inspire his families that they follow his example. Then will the children of Zion be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and then will the Church begin to "arise and shine forth, that [her] light may be a standard for the nations." (D&C 115:5.)

That every priesthood bearer will rise to the challenge given us by the Lord when he said, in the words already quoted by Brother Packer:

“. . . gird up your loins, and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand. . . . that where I am ye shall be also.” (D&C 27:15, 18), I

humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Hugh B. Brown will be our concluding speaker.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

First Counselor in the First Presidency

We have had two days of almost constant meetings. I know you are all rather weary at this hour, so I shall not take much time. I have enjoyed very much the meeting tonight; and realizing the numbers of men who are listening in, I am wondering if I can add a word. I hope we have taken to heart the very worthwhile and important messages that have been given by the brethren throughout the conference. Tonight especially, when President McKay had such an inspiring message for us, and then to hear these young boys respond to the call so well, so efficiently, so humbly, was an inspiration to all of us. To hear Elders [Lysle R.] Cahoon, Packer, and Romney discuss their special assignments is a challenge to every man who holds the priesthood.

I was especially impressed when Elder Packer mentioned military men. I have had a little experience in that field, and I think I would like to tell you a story with relation to it, a story that may be not so well known here in the United States because it happened in Canada.

A sense of humor

First, I think I would like to say to the young men who are listening and who are present that I wish you would cultivate a sense of humor.

In the army while in the first world war, one of our boys who was a pretty good fighter was challenged in England to a fight. This young man, our Mormon boy, had the habit of smiling all the way through a fight. One of the men whom he was pitted against was champion, and during the fight he said to his attendants between rounds, “I

can't lick that guy unless I can knock that grin off of his face.” He was not able to do it. That smile represented a courage of cold steel, and the Mormon boy won the battle.

Story of Canadian recruitment

Now as to the story: In 1906 the government of Canada passed a law that was known as the Militia Act, comparable to the home guard here. They sent out into all the provinces a call for men to take training preparatory to what Lord Roberts said was sure to come, a world war. A young man was sent to Cardston to recruit some of our men. This young fellow was the son of a prominent military man. He had been raised with a silver spoon in his mouth, evidently. He was one of those fellows who had a jaunty moustache and a little swagger stick, and he wore a monocle, a one-eye glass. He was a most objectionable fellow in the eyes of our young men. In fact, his monocle reminds me of another story.

I was standing one day between Picadilly Circus and Leicester Square talking to an American officer during the first world war. We saw a man coming down the sidewalk with his hat on one side, swinging a swagger stick, a Charlie Chaplin moustache, and a monocle. I said to the officer, “I wonder why those fellows wear a one-eye glass instead of two.”

“Well,” he said, “I'll tell you. A guy like that can see more with one eye than he can comprehend.”

Well, such was the man who came out to recruit the Mormon boys. He spent two weeks in Cardston. He was sent out to organize a squadron of