

ELDER JOHN LONGDEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

As we approach the end of this sacred, spiritual feast we have attended, including, of course, the Primary and Sunday School conferences, I am sure we are all of one heart; we now await anxiously the blessing of our revered Prophet, President David O. McKay, so I should like to suggest as my thought that all of us must be better, more dedicated, more knowledgeable, more tolerant, more truly spiritual leaders of men. As we have listened to our great leaders during this conference, I venture to say we have all made resolutions to be more valiant in the service of our Master.

Zone of influence

Those who know me best have heard me say before that each of us has our own zone of influence. How am I using my influence? How are you? Are we leading our fellowmen up the path to higher, greater achievements? Or are we despoiling our leadership qualities by helping others in the paths of folly, unbelief, bitterness, and unhappiness? We lead by example.

In a tribute paid to a great statesman who is no longer with us, one of his fellows who knew him best said of him: "He was a great leader of men. He stood boldly by the things he believed to be right." I'm certain this is true of this man.

Always, when I hear tributes like this, I find myself applying them to the great men I sustain as prophets of God. Today, and in past years, this same tribute and much more can be said of the men who are prophets in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Each of these great men has given us, in the past days, so much food for thought. Each, in his own right, is a great leader. How are we at following leadership?

Example of custodian

May I share a rich experience with you? Not too long ago, when I was on the campus of one of our Church

schools, a professor called my attention to a man close by. He said he was a custodian there. He didn't have a college degree, but he and his wife had been blessed with seven children; each of them had earned a college degree. Each had found a companion of his choice, and had married in the temple. The sons had all filled honorable missions for the Church.

As the professor left, I introduced myself to this gentleman. In the course of the conversation, he related this story to me:

A few days before, he found a wallet. In order to find some identification, he opened it and discovered some pornographic pictures. Rather than turn it over to the lost and found department, he personally called the young man who owned the wallet, and when he came to claim it, the custodian showed his own wallet to the young lad. It contained a picture of his wife, their children, and grandchildren; he said, "This is the kind of wallet I would like to see you accumulate."

The young man, quite ashamed, removed the pictures from his wallet, tore them up, and threw them in the wastebasket. A good leader, this caretaker? "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:21.)

False concepts

A young lad with some problems came to my office to seek advice. I discovered that in his home, his school, and even in his church, he had not been really touched by a good leader. He complained that some of his peers had not acted as they had spoken, yet here was a precious soul, a spirit child of God, who instinctively wanted better things of life.

I believe young people generally are basically endowed with a desire to please their peers, to believe in a supreme being, and it is most simple for the real young to pray to him and express heartfelt wishes, thoughts, and

desires. It is when their peers give them false concepts of life, when adults disappoint them by their actions, when the lack of our own integrity shows through, that the very young begin to form wrong opinions and start wrong practices, thus ending up on wrong paths.

Warfare with evil

I quote from a discourse given by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in the general priesthood meeting of October 1954. To me, it is an enthralling thought that the priesthood of the Church of Jesus Christ is the army of the Lord, "the Army to which the Lord looks to carry on his great warfare with evil. . . .

"We are to fight . . . the foes of righteousness, we are to fight a life and death struggle for ourselves, not only, but for those who are associated with us, for the membership of the Church." (*Conference Report*, October 1954, p. 78.)

The power of Jesus Christ

President David O. McKay, one of the greatest leaders of men of all time, our living Prophet, said:

"The greatest power in the world today, and the power that is needed to thwart the schemes of the adversary, is the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. "That man is greatest who is Christ-like, and what you think of Christ is largely what you will be."

In the opening remarks of this conference read by Brother Robert McKay, President McKay challenged us to "bravely and heroically choose a better course of life." So, whoever we are, wherever we may be, whether young or old, may we determine to be better parents, better citizens, better members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better leaders of men.

With deep emotion and thanksgiving, may I add my testimony of the divinity of this great work to those already expressed, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER PAUL H. DUNN

Of the First Council of the Seventy

President McKay, my beloved brothers and sisters: This is always a very humbling experience. I too seek the faith of your prayers in my behalf. I have been most uplifted, as I have sensed you have, by the great messages of this conference, the sweet testimonies that have been borne, the great truths that have been emphasized again.

These experiences and messages have brought to my attention, as it relates to our responsibility, an experience I had a few years ago while serving as a religion teacher on the University of Southern California campus.

Incident at PTA convention

Because of my particular position in directing the institute program, I was invited by that great institution to participate in what was known as a

PTA convention discussing the problems concerning our youth. I suppose I was invited as a member because of the great work that this Church does for its young people.

I remember that the president of the university himself was sponsoring a little luncheon to be held before the conference. As I entered the cafeteria, there assembled around the table were those who would participate in the meeting that was to ensue. I had not met my colleagues who were to discuss the problems of youth with me, and this was a chance for us to get acquainted. I noticed when I went in to take my seat that there were appropriate name cards identifying each one of us and that I was to be seated next to a full navy commander.

As we sat down, the navy commander leaned over and said to me, "You're the Latter-day Saint, aren't