

me power to lend a helping hand to others." There is a sound philosophy in the paradoxical saying: ". . . Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:25.)

Perfecting the individual

Keep as a guiding principle the consciousness that the ultimate purpose of life is the perfecting of the individual. This implies an intelligence directing creation, and to me it implies a divine personality, a beneficent Father.

I love the young people, and my heart goes out to them. May God keep them true to the faith and bless them that they will be able to withstand the temptations that constantly beset their paths. To the youth of the Church I say, go to your Father in heaven in prayer; seek the advice of your parents, your bishops, and your stake presidents.

To the members of the Church everywhere I say, live honest, sincere lives! Be honest with yourselves, honest with your brethren, honest with your families, honest with those with whom you deal—always honest. The very foundation of all character rests upon the principles of honesty and sincerity.

Be true to the Church. Be true to your families—loyal to them! Protect

your children and guide them, not arbitrarily, but by example.

Eternal truths apply today

I bear you my witness that the teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ contain the true philosophy of living. I make no exception. I love them. There are men who say that they are not applicable to this day, but I say they are as applicable today as they were when he spoke them; and, because they contain eternal truths, they will be applicable through all time.

God help us to understand these eternal truths; and may he give us power to live them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Hugh B. Brown

Thank you, Brother Robert, for an impressive reading of a great message.

And now, President McKay, with one voice this vast audience wishes to say to you, Thank you for that inspiring message, and may God's choicest blessings be with you always.

We shall now hear from Elder Robert L. Simpson, first counselor in the Presiding Bishopric of the Church, after which we shall have a congregational song.

BISHOP ROBERT L. SIMPSON

Of the Presiding Bishopric

● My dear brethren and sisters: I feel great spiritual strength in the presence of these wonderful patriarchs who attend our conference here this morning. We love you, we appreciate you, and we feel confidence in your wonderful calling.

These few thoughts that I share with you this morning are directed primarily to a large group of men who are perhaps beyond the range of my voice. Nevertheless, I speak to them with all the sincerity and fervor of my soul, hoping that somehow perhaps a few may be reached.

A satisfying experience

As we visit the stake conferences

each week, few experiences are more satisfying than that little nudge on the arm from the stake president as he points out some good brother just taking his place on the third row, and then he whispers a few choice comments about some recent changes in that man's life. Sometimes it is about response to a faithful and patient home teacher; frequently, about the faith and prayers of a patient wife being answered in a glorious way. Too often the change has come about following adversity. Some are adversities that might have been avoided, but most important of all, he is back. He is on course again. He is feeling the joy of service to others, perhaps to some other

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wonderful men who need the same kind of helping hand that was extended toward him at that right moment. There are far too many who trod the futile path that leads to nowhere.

Hopelessly lost

An air traffic control tower recently established radio contact with a plane that was streaking across the radar scope, obviously not on proper course. The pilot was asked to report his situation. The controller's voice seemed urgent. The pilot responded to the tower with this classic observation: "We are making wonderful time, but we are hopelessly lost."

I wonder how many men there might be in the world who are making wonderful time but without direction. Of what value is speed if the direction is without purpose? Someone has written: "A destination is a fine thing to have. If a man does not know to what port he is steering, no wind is favorable to him; and if he doesn't know where he is now, he cannot very well set a course. How hard he rows, or how good his engine is; these do not count in his favor unless he has a good definition of his objective. Hard work is often robbed of its reward by poor planning."

A child's song

I was touched by the story of one highly successful business executive who recently responded graciously and humbly to a call to serve in his elders quorum presidency. Upon being asked the direct question: "What brought you back?" he responded, "Well, I have never told anyone before, but this is what happened:

"One morning while shaving, I overheard my six-year-old son singing from the next room. He was singing a little song I had heard him sing dozens of times before, 'I Am a Child of God'; but somehow that morning when he came to the part that says, 'Lead me, guide me, walk beside me, Help me find the way,' I had the feeling that he was singing directly to me. I just stood there and listened. Within seconds, my whole life seemed to pass in

review; and it really came home with full force that some changes had to be made, especially when he came to the part, 'Teach me all that I must do, To live with him some day.'

This good man confesses today that these simple words from the lips of his own child reached his heart as a personal plea. The plea was from a child of God who had been placed in his custody to be delivered back some day into Heavenly Father's presence. He concluded his answer to this question by stating that he decided then and there that he had something important to do, something more important than anything else in the world for a little fellow who still loved his daddy in spite of many personal failings.

Effect of church hymns

While on the subject of church songs, let me tell you briefly about a man who was attending a patio party one Sunday afternoon at the home of a business associate who happened to live next door to an LDS meetinghouse. As the sacrament meeting got underway, the strains of the organ could be clearly heard over the back fence and seemed to be somewhat incongruous to the tinkle of ice being placed in the cocktail glasses. There were some uncomplimentary jokes and the usual snide remarks about religious fanatics, when all of a sudden the strains of the opening song broke the warm summer afternoon air. It was "Come, Come Ye Saints." The party tempo was warming up, and by now, the church music was all but unnoticed—unnoticed by all but one, a man whose grandmother had walked across the plains pulling a handcart. His mind withdrew from the party. For the first time in many years, he spent some minutes in sincere reflection concerning his birthright.

About ten minutes later, the sacrament song came drifting across the back fence. Unknowingly, a chorister, inspired in her calling, I am sure, had selected, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives." And way down deep, he knew it, too, but it had been a long, long time. From that moment on, he was

attending a patio party in body, but mentally and spiritually he was far above and beyond his environment of the moment.

It was almost an hour later, just about the time that he had lapsed back into the party mood, when the closing song, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet," reached his ear and mellowed his heart to the point of submission. Isn't it odd that a man should start his way back while attending a cocktail party? "The Lord moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." Incidentally, that man is probably here in this meeting today, a fine leader in the church, doing what the Lord would have him do.

The road back has been described by some as long and tedious and hard, but this is only as you stand at the starting end of that road. Those who have made the journey find that after the first difficult step, the road is sweet and pleasant to travel; the end rewards are beyond description.

Help of home teachers

God bless the home teacher who goes the extra mile, who confirms his love for the families he teaches with genuine interest and follow-up. May I tell you about a pair of home teachers who felt impressed to discuss some recently published findings on lung cancer with a brother who had been plagued with the cigarette habit all of his adult life. As the home teachers said good-night, the brother expressed appreciation for their message and concluded with, "I will try to quit again, starting right now. I hope I can make it this time."

These home teachers could have been like most of us and waited until next month's visit to see if he succeeded, but they did not. They came by the very next morning at 6:45 a.m., unannounced and unexpected. They expressed keen interest in their visit the night before and especially in his expressed desire to stop smoking. They went on to tell this brother that they had decided to fast and pray for him that day. "We will be thinking about you all day today, and not only that,

we will meet you here at your bus stop tonight to see how you made out."

This man could not help but succeed. "These two wonderful home teachers are going to be fasting and praying for me. They are going to be thinking about me all day. Tonight they are going to meet me at the bus stop." He wanted to have a right answer for them. He did. With help, he succeeded. He came back.

The glorious road back

Just within the past few weeks a 73-year-old man took that glorious road back after 50 long years of indifference. There were many tears on that occasion, tears of joy—yes, his and especially those of a loving companion who had waited those 50 long years for this most glorious moment. The tenderness of that occasion was mute evidence to the sanctification of that moment by a kind and loving Heavenly Father who stands always prepared to say, "Welcome back, my son."

Oh, that thousands might put aside their stubborn pride! Oh, that thousands might find the courage for that first giant step back! Oh, that thousands of fine upstanding men with great potential might place themselves in the hands of the Lord, for as he has said: ". . . my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." We testify to you that it is! Oh, that thousands might give way to their real, deep-down inner feelings, for as President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., has said: ". . . God has placed in every man's heart a divine spark, which never wholly goes out; it may grow dim, it may become hidden, almost smothered by the ashes of transgression; but the spark still lives and glows and can be fanned into flame by faith, if the heart is touched."

Those of you who sit reluctantly in the wings, find your patriarchal blessing, dust it off, and read it again; contemplate deeply the Lord's personal message given to you alone by these wonderful men who are attending this conference, the patriarchs of the Lord. There is yet time. It's never too late to pick up the pieces.

I feel confident that one of the Lord's

favorite greetings is "Welcome back, my son." May we find the way back where we belong is my humble prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. Amen. ○

President Hugh B. Brown

The Combined Choruses and the congregation will now join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

The congregation and chorus then joined in singing the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Loren C. Dunn of the First Council of Seventy will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve.

ELDER LOREN C. DUNN

Of the First Council of the Seventy

● I knew an athlete some years ago who had tremendous talent. He had almost perfect physical coordination. In fact, he was so good he would not train, yet his talents still exceeded the talents and abilities of those around him.

It was demoralizing sometimes for those who had to follow every training rule in order to bring themselves to a peak of physical performance, only to have him exceed them because of his natural abilities.

But I happened to be at the stadium one afternoon a few years later when this athlete, who had progressed rather rapidly in a very promising sports career, had what some might call his moment of truth. He was playing with people who had talents as great as he did, and as the pace of the game picked up, the pressures began to mount.

He reached inside himself for that great second effort that he always had, but it became obvious that this time he could not marshal all that he needed. That afternoon marked the beginning of a gradual decline, which finally found him retiring from the game years before he should have retired. His original decision to disregard the rules of preparation had, in the end, cost him many years of performance.

Challenges to standards

Many times we see people around us who violate the patterns of living and the rules that we have been taught to

live by, and they seem to do it without any ill effects. On the surface it would seem that it may not make any difference whether we live these rules or not, because those who violate them appear to suffer no consequences. In all ages, it seems, there have been challenges to those who believe in virtue, honesty, and high moral standards—challenges to those who accept these standards as God-given and that they ultimately will carry their own reward.

"We are always in the forge, or on the anvil," said Beecher; "by trials God is shaping us for higher things."

These challenges come from many different directions. For instance, there are those who expound the so-called new morality and say that it matters not if a person participates in free love, nor does the marriage contract mean that husband and wife should be faithful to each other. But those who believe this are wrong, and time, which is running out on them if they don't change, will prove them wrong.

Self-mastery not indulgence

"There are some things which never grow old-fashioned," says President McKay. "The sweetness of a baby is one. The virtue and chastity of manhood is another. Youth is the time to lay the foundation for our homes. I know there are those who tell you that suppression is wrong," he continues, "but I assure you that self-mastery, not indulgence, is the virtue that con-