

Church speaks out boldly against the common evil of this day—the deliberate limiting of families by birth control. It teaches, rather, the sacred obligation resting upon husband and wife to bring children into the world.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

“As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

“Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. . . .” (Ps. 127:3-5.)

### Church program assists home

The Church counsels members to set aside one night each week to meet in a home night, to study and have fun and regulate the home affairs. Only those who follow this wise counsel know how eagerly youngsters respond to such an occasion.

The Church sends home teachers to visit families at least monthly. They carry a message of encouragement. They are a second witness in the home.

To assist families, the Church has organized a wide range of activities where young people can find wholesome companionship and personal development for all ages.

It is a cardinal teaching of the Church that the man is the head of the family. He is to be the breadwinner. It teaches him how to preside in that home through his priesthood power. It teaches that the wife is to be a companion to her husband and stand by his side. There is to be no confusion as to the roles of husband and wife. Children are to identify with a strong, manly father. They identify with a lovely mother who sustains and supports but does not usurp the leadership of the father. The

mother is queen of the home. The Church teaches that womanhood is glorified by motherhood. President McKay has said, “Wherever a woman is, or whatever a woman does, she is at her best, her divinest best, at home! There is the center of her power.”

### Challenge to the family

The family as an institution is under tremendous pressure. It is important to know, therefore, that the family is a problem-solving unit. The husband and wife cannot generate more problems than they can solve if they will follow the counsel the Lord has given. The solution to family problems is not separation, but repentance.

Couples are to continue to court, to pray, to be one. They are to keep alive the magic and thrill of romance and learn how to express love. Couples young and old must learn to communicate with one another. This one thing alone can solve most marital problems.

The challenge to the family is great. We are here to practice successful family living. Proper family living makes heaven on earth and develops Gods in embryo. Success in the home leads to the abundant life with our Eternal Father. May we all seek, ever more earnestly, for the eternal riches of a wholesome, honorable home, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. ○

### President Alvin R. Dyer

We have just listened to Elder A. Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy.

We shall now hear from Bishop Victor L. Brown, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

## BISHOP VICTOR L. BROWN

Of the Presiding Bishopric

● My brethren and sisters, I am grateful to be with you today and to have been taught by these wonderful brethren. I pray for an interest in your faith and prayers that I might say

something that will have meaning.

A few weeks ago while I was traveling abroad, a headline caught my eye. It was a report of a gathering of many thousands of young people in the state

of New York. It was not a report that most Americans would be proud of. A reporter describing some other like gatherings pictured them in these words:

"En masse, the gaily bedecked faithful presented an unsettling aspect, a ragtag mosaic of humanity suggesting anything from the Children's Crusade to the Vandals sacking Rome."

### Lesson on eternal life

As I read the report and contemplated the deplorable exhibition, I could not help but recall a conversation I had had with my 15-year-old son, a junior high school student. He said to me, "I am a different person now than I was at the beginning of school." I asked in what way, to which he replied, "I have a testimony that the gospel is true, which I did not have before." This had been his first year in seminary. I asked what the highlight of the year had been. He replied without hesitation, "The lesson on eternal life." He said the only thing wrong was the time had been too short—they had only spent two weeks studying the subject.

I must admit I was surprised that a 15-year-old teenager would show such interest in this profound subject. Being curious as to the reaction of other young people of this same age, I arranged a visit with a group of them. They were of the same opinion. The plan of life and salvation had affected them and many of the other students in a similar manner. It was interesting to note that these young people were thrilled with the knowledge that they had existed as intelligences and then as spirit children of their Heavenly Father before they were born into this life. They expressed a great relief to know that there were rewards and blessings resulting from righteous living that would last far beyond this life into the eternities. To them this gave real meaning and purpose to the establishment of personal goals in life. This knowledge seemed to startle them into a realization that their individual conduct would have a significant effect on what happened to them not only in this life but in the life after death.

It seems that the lesson taught by Jacob, the brother of Nephi, as recorded in the Book of Mormon became more meaningful to them:

"But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever." (2 Ne. 9:18.)

### Free agents

Even at this young age, I believe they understood this life to be just a moment in eternal life and that this is a probationary period during which each person proves himself. It seemed very encouraging to them to know that they were free agents with respect to choices in life—the kind of free agents spoken of by Lehi:

"Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself." (2 Ne. 2:27.)

And Jacob said: "Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life." (2 Ne. 10:23.)

### Contrast between groups

The contrast between these two groups of young people is obvious. One is trying to escape from life; the other is anxious to be involved in life. I do not wish to delve into the reasons why one group has chosen captivity and the other liberty, but rather pray that I may be directed to say something that will cause those who have chosen captivity, as well as those who are now at the crossroads of making their choices, to consider carefully their eternal future.

It is my testimony that every person born into this world is a spirit child of God, that we did in very deed live with our Heavenly Father before taking a mortal body. This same knowledge is available to all, young and old, if they have a sincere desire to obtain it. A proper understanding of where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going should give each of us an inner feeling of security and personal worth.

### A period of probation

As my young friends have learned in their seminary class, this is a life during which we prove ourselves. It is a period of probation during which we earn our place in the eternities. The Lord said of this: "And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation. . . ." (D&C 29:43.)

His whole purpose in coming to earth and submitting himself to be crucified on the cross was to loose the bands of death for all men—the righteous and the unrighteous—for he said: ". . . this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) Beyond this, however, he taught us that there are many mansions in his Father's house and that he would prepare the way for us. He describes these mansions or degrees of glory by referring to the universe—the brightness of the sun representing the highest degree of glory; the brightness of the moon, the next degree; and the stars, the lowest degree. Eternal life means achieving the highest degree, which is the celestial kingdom, or in other words, returning to the presence of our Father in heaven. This lesson deeply touched the hearts of the young seminary students with whom I visited.

### Gift of eternal life

Of all the blessings the Lord has given us, this is the greatest. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read: "And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.) This being true, it would behoove all men

to so order their lives as to be worthy of exaltation.

We further learn from sacred scripture what must be done to attain eternal life:

" . . . For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.

"And then are ye in this straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received . . . the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way ye should receive.

"And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this straight and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save.

"Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life." (2 Ne. 31:17-20.)

### Stability provided

These lessons—where we came from, why we are here, where we are going—have touched the hearts of many young people. They have provided a stability, a feeling of security, a feeling of humility and yet personal worth, that give purpose and direction to their lives. This knowledge helps them to rise above the confusion, strife, and evil that are so prevalent in the world today.

I pray that the Lord will bless young and old alike that they too may come to the knowledge that these things are true, which I testify to you as being true, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○