

your own. It was given to you by your earthly parents, as well as by your heavenly parents. And when you act contrary to the wishes of your earthly and heavenly parents, there is sorrow.

Hearts of parents everywhere were touched by the anguished cry of a governor of one of our states whose son was arrested for stealing. This man said, in speaking at a PTA meeting, that there is no greater blessing that parents can have than to have all their children living good lives. "If you have that great blessing," he said, "you should thank God every day of your lives." All good parents feel this way about their children. David Klein, in an article entitled "Is There a Substitute for God?" printed in the *Reader's Digest*, says: "And yet the questions remain. Anyone who can contemplate the eye of a housefly, the mechanics of human finger movement, the camouflage of a moth, or the building of every kind of matter from variations in arrangement of proton and electron, and then maintain that all this design

happened without a designer, happened by sheer, blind accident—such a person believes in a miracle far more astounding than any in the Bible. To regard man, with his arts and aspirations, his awareness of himself and of his universe, his emotions and his morals, his very ability to conceive an idea so grand as that of God, to regard this creature as merely a form of life somewhat higher on the evolutionary ladder than the others, is to create questions more profound than those answered." (*Reader's Digest*, March 1970, p. 55.)

Be not deluded, brethren; know that truth is eternal. Believe in God. And be eternally grateful that God believes in you. To this truth I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, will now address us.

Elder Henry D. Taylor

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

● My beloved brethren, bearers of the Holy Priesthood:

I appreciate the opportunity of speaking to you concerning the Welfare Plan of the Church. I would like to present what I consider to be some of the fundamental principles of this program.

Reason for establishing Welfare Plan

In announcing the plan, the First Presidency explained the reason for its establishment, stating that it was their desire to set up a system whereby undesirable practices and procedures would be eliminated. Idleness, which they branded as a curse, would be done away with; a dole, which they classified evil, would be not only abolished, but virtues such as independence, thrift, industry, and self-respect would also be established among the people

once again. They pointed out that it was the aim of the Church not only to take care of the people, when and if necessary, but also to help the people "to help themselves." And finally, they expressed hope that the principle of work would be so emphasized as to assure its reenthronement as a ruling principle in the lives of the church membership.

It will be observed that idleness is denounced and work is glorified in this announcement. The Lord intended that man should work and not be idle. To our forefather, Adam, he said: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." (Gen. 3:19.) Later the Lord said to the Church on February 9, 1831: "Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer." (D&C 42:42.)

Basic principle of Church welfare

It is a basic principle of Church welfare that the responsibility for one's own economic maintenance rests (1) upon himself, for the world does not owe him a living, (2) upon his family, and (3) upon the Church, if he is a faithful member thereof. (*Welfare Handbook*.)

The Welfare Program stands ready to help those who cannot help themselves or who cannot obtain sufficient aid from family members, but no Latter-day Saint should anticipate that anyone, other than himself, will provide for his own needs.

Preparation to meet needs

Each of us might profitably ask ourselves the question: "What can I do to make preparation to care for my own needs?" Among other things we could do are these:

1. Secure an adequate education. Learn a trade or profession that will enable us to obtain steady, remunerative employment sufficient to care for ourselves and our families.

2. Live strictly within our income, and save something for "a rainy day."

3. Avoid excessive debt. Necessary debt should be incurred only after careful thought, prayer, and getting all the best advice possible. We would keep well within our ability to repay. Wisely, we have been counseled to "avoid debt as a plague."

4. Acquire and store a reserve of food that will sustain life; acquire clothing; and build a savings account on a sensible, well-planned basis that could serve us well in times of emergency.

Church members should be self-sustaining to the extent of their own powers. No true Latter-day Saint will, while physically able, voluntarily shift from himself to others the burden of his own support. So long as he can, under the inspiration of the Almighty and with his own strength and labor, he will supply himself with the necessities of life.

Assistance by family

A Church member who is unable to

provide for himself should then look to his family for assistance. No person should become a charge upon the public welfare or the Church as long as his relatives are able to care for him. All Church members should accept the responsibility, insofar as they are able, to care for the needy among their own kin. The apostle Paul understood and taught this doctrine in these words: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Tim. 5:8.) A member of the First Presidency once aptly declared: "I think my food would choke me if I knew that while I could procure bread, my aged father and mother or near kin were on public relief."

Key figure in Welfare Plan

When a person is unable to provide for himself, and his family, likewise, is unable to assist him, he may then turn to his bishop, who represents the Church; and if he meets the necessary requirements, he may receive assistance.

The bishop, father of the ward, is responsible for the spiritual and temporal well-being of every member of his ward. He is the key figure in the Welfare Plan. It is his duty, and his only, to determine who shall receive Church assistance and to what extent. The Lord has given him this mandate.

Major resources

The bishop has at his disposal two major resources from which to draw in his responsibility of caring for the poor:

1. Commodities that are placed in the bishops storehouses. These commodities generally are produced on agricultural projects and processed in canneries owned by the members of wards and stakes. The agricultural projects and canneries are referred to as "permanent welfare projects."

2. The other major resource at the disposal of the bishop is the fast-offering funds. These contributions come from members of the Church who abstain from two meals each month and pay to the bishop the equivalent cost of these meals or a

generous contribution in cash. The bishop uses these funds to provide for the cash needs of welfare recipients and to pay rent, utilities, hospital, and medical bills.

Opposition to a dole

One of the features that distinguishes the Church Welfare Plan from all other relief programs is the requirement that those physically able are urged and expected to work within the limits of their ability for the Church assistance they may receive. The Church is strongly opposed to a dole of any kind, which is interpreted to mean receiving something and giving nothing in return. We shun hand-outs or gratuities.

Priesthood assistance

There are many ways that we as holders of the priesthood can assist the bishop in his welfare responsibilities:

It is the privilege and duty of you deacons to visit the homes of the members of the ward each month and receive their fast-offering contributions, which are turned over to the bishop.

As you home teachers visit your assigned families, you can be alert to discover any illness, unemployment, or emergency that might result in need for Church assistance.

The members of priesthood quorums or groups should assist the bishop in the production of materials for the use of the bishop in carrying out their storehouse program. In meeting this responsibility, the bishop has the right

to call all members of his ward, including high priests, seventies, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons. None is exempt.

Concern for the poor

From the very beginning the Lord has constantly shown deep concern for the poor; and in the instructions regarding the Law of Consecration, he expressed again his concern for the needy when he said: "I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

"And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine.

"But it must needs be done in mine own way. . . ." (D&C 104:14-16.)

It is my testimony, brethren, and I bear it to you, that the Welfare Program is the Lord's way of providing for his needy Saints in this our day. It is an inspired plan that has come as revelation through the Holy Ghost to our Prophet, the Lord's mouthpiece, here upon the earth. To this I testify, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President N. Eldon Tanner

Brother J. Spencer Cornwall will now lead the chorus and congregation in singing, "Praise to the Man."

The congregation then sang the hymn, "Praise to the Man."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

● President Smith, who is presiding at this meeting and all through the conference, has asked me to conduct, and he has now asked me to say a few words to you this evening.

I am always thrilled and inspired when I meet with the priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is the priesthood of

God; and to hear the lovely singing we have had this evening, and the fine talks to which we have listened, thrills me and inspires me more and more.

The power of God

The priesthood is the power by which all things were created and the power by which God has done those things