

President Harold B. Lee

The Tabernacle Choir has just sung, "Now We Sing Thy Praise."

Elder Spencer W. Kimball, Acting President of the Twelve Apostles, will be our concluding speaker.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Acting President of the Council of the Twelve

My beloved brothers and sisters and friends: Much is being said of deep crime which darkens heaven's windows. We shudder at immoralities deep crime which darkens heaven's windows. We shudder at immoralities which terrify us. We nearly panic at the divorce frequency and broken homes and delinquent children about us. But perhaps sometimes we should stop to reflect that all are not criminals, all are not bad, and all are not rebellious.

Painting of portrait

More than once I have repeated an experience I had in getting my portrait painted.

In the temple on the fourth floor is the room of the Council of the Twelve Apostles with large chairs in a semicircle. Here important meetings of that body are held. Around its walls are portraits of the Brethren. When I came to this service, I looked upon them with admiration and affection, for these were truly great men with whom I was associated.

Sometime later authorization was given by the First Presidency of the Church for my portrait to be added to the others.

Lee Greene Richards was selected as the artist, and we began immediately. I sat on a chair on an elevated platform in his studio and tried very hard to look handsome, like some of the other brethren.

With paints, brushes, and palette ready, the artist scrutinized my features and daubed on the canvas alternately. I returned many times to the studio. After weeks the portrait was exhibited to the First Presidency and later to my wife and daughter.

It did not pass, and I was to submit to a redoing.

A glimpse of heaven

The angle was changed, the hours—many of them—were spent, and finally the portrait was near completion. This particular day was a busy one like most others. I suppose I was daydreaming, and quite detached from this world. Apparently he had difficulty translating my faraway gaze onto the canvas. I saw the artist lay down his palette and paints, fold his arms, and look straight at me, and I was shocked out of my dreaming by the abrupt question: "Brother Kimball, have you ever been to heaven?"

My answer seemed to be a shock of equal magnitude to him as I said without hesitation: "Why, yes, Brother Richards, certainly. I had a glimpse of heaven just before coming to your studio." I saw him assume a relaxed position and look intently at me, with wonder in his eyes. I continued:

"Yes. Just an hour ago. It was in the holy temple across the way. The sealing room was shut off from the noisy world by its thick, white-

painted walls; the drapes, light and warm; the furniture, neat and dignified; the mirrors on two opposite walls seeming to take one in continuous likenesses on and on into infinity; and the beautiful stained-glass window in front of me giving such a peaceful glow. All the people in the room were dressed in white. Here were peace and harmony and eager anticipation. A well-groomed young man and an exquisitely gowned young woman, lovely beyond description, knelt across the altar. Authoritatively, I pronounced the heavenly ceremony which married and sealed them for eternity on earth and in the celestial worlds. The pure in heart were there. Heaven was there.

The greatest success

"When the eternal marriage was solemnized, and as the subdued congratulations were extended, a happy father, radiant in his joy, offered his hand and said, 'Brother Kimball, my wife and I are common people and have never been successful, but we *are* immensely proud of our family.' He continued, 'This is the last of our eight children to come into this holy house for temple marriage. They, with their companions, are here to participate in the marriage of this, the youngest. This is our supremely happy day, with all of our eight children married properly. They are faithful to the Lord in church service, and the older ones are already rearing families in righteousness.'

"I looked at his calloused hands, his rough exterior, and thought to myself, 'Here is a real son of God fulfilling his destiny.'

"'Success?' I said, as I grasped

his hand. 'That is the greatest success story I have heard. You might have accumulated millions in stocks and bonds, bank accounts, lands, industries, and still be quite a failure. You are fulfilling the purpose for which you were sent into this world by keeping your own lives righteous, bearing and rearing this great posterity, and training them in faith and works. Why, my dear folks, you are eminently successful. God bless you.'"

My story was finished. I looked up at the portrait artist. He stood motionless in deep thought, so I continued: "Yes, my brother, I have had many glimpses of heaven.

Home of stake president

"Once we were in a distant stake for conference. We came to the unpretentious home of the stake president at mid-day Saturday. We knocked at the door, and it was opened by a sweet mother with a child in her arms. She was the type of mother who did not know there were maids and servants. She was not an artist's model, nor a society woman. Her hair was dressed neatly; her clothes were modest, tastefully selected; her face was smiling; and though young, she showed the rare combination of maturity of experience and the joys of purposeful living.

"The house was small. The all-purpose room into which we were welcomed was crowded and in its center were a long table and many chairs. We freshened up in the small bedroom assigned to us, made available by 'farming out' to the neighbors some of the children, and we returned to this living room. She had been very busy in the kitchen. Her husband, the stake president, soon returned from his day's labors and

made us welcome and proudly introduced us to all of the children as they returned from their chores and play.

Supper made ready

"Almost like magic the supper was ready, for 'many hands make light work,' and these numerous hands were deft and experienced ones. Every child gave evidence of having been taught responsibility. Each had certain duties. One child had quickly spread a tablecloth; another placed the knives and forks and spoons; and another covered them with the large plates turned upside down. (The dishes were inexpensive.) Next came large pitchers of creamy milk, high piles of sliced homemade bread, a bowl at each place, a dish of fruit from storage, and a plate of cheese.

"One child placed the chairs with backs to the table, and without confusion, we all knelt at the chairs facing the table. One young son was called on to lead in family prayer. It was extemporaneous, and he pleaded with the Lord to bless the family and their schoolwork, and the missionaries, and the bishop. He prayed for us who had come to hold conference that we would 'preach good,' for his father in his church responsibilities, for all the children that 'they would be good, and kind to each other,' and for the little cold shivering lambs being born in the lambing sheds on the hill this wintry night.

"A very little one said the blessing on the food, and thirteen plates were turned up and thirteen bowls filled, and supper proceeded. No apologies were offered for the meal, the home, the children, or the general situation. The conversation was con-

structive and pleasant. The children were well-behaved. These parents met every situation with calm dignity and poise.

Love and harmony visible

"In these days of limited families, or childless ones, when homes often have only one or two selfish and often pampered children, homes of luxury with servants, broken homes where life moves outside the home, it was most refreshing to sit with a large family where interdependence and love and harmony were visible and where children were growing up in unselfishness. So content and comfortable were we in the heart of this sweet simplicity and wholesomeness that we gave no thought to the unmatched chairs, the worn rug, the inexpensive curtains, the numbers of souls that were to occupy the few rooms available."

I paused. "Yes, Brother Richards, I glimpsed heaven that day and many days, in many places." He seemed uninterested in his painting. He stood listening, seemingly eager for more, and almost involuntarily I was telling him of another flight into heavenly situations.

Heaven in Navajo hogan

"This time it was on the Indian reservation. While most Navajo women seem to be prolific, this sweet Lamanite wife in their several years of marriage had not been blessed with children of her own. Her husband was well employed. These new converts to the Church were buying their weekend groceries. As we glanced at the purchases in the large, well-filled basket, it was evident that only wholesome food was there—no beer, no coffee, no cigarettes. 'You like Postum, do

you?' we asked them, and their reply touched our hearts: 'Yes, we have had coffee and beer all our lives, but since the Mormon missionaries told us about the Word of Wisdom we use Postum, and we know it is better for the children and they like it.'

"'Children?' we asked. 'We thought you were a childless couple.' This brought from them the explanation that they had filled their home with eighteen Navajo orphans of all ages. Their hogan was large but their hearts even larger. Unselfishness—the milk of human kindness! Love unfeigned! These good Indians could shame many of their contemporaries who live lives of selfishness and smugness."

I said to the artist: "Heaven can be in a hogan or a tent, Brother Richards, for heaven is of our own making." I was ready to return to the picture but apparently he was not so inclined. He stood and listened intently.

Temple at Laie

"This time I was in Hawaii in the beautiful little temple at Laie. It was a missionary group. The spirit was there; the proselyters could hardly wait their turns to bear testimony of the Lord's gospel. Finally, the little Japanese missionary gained the floor. By the pulpit in her stocking feet she knelt reverently, and with a heart near bursting with gratitude for the gospel and its opportunities, she poured out her soul to heaven.

"Heaven was there, my brother, in that little room, in that sacred spot, in that paradise of the Pacific with those sweet, consecrated young soldiers for Christ."

I continued: "Heaven was in my

own home, too, Dr. Richards, when home evening was held. Through the years the room was filled with our children, when each, eager for a turn, sang a song, led a game, recited an Article of Faith, told a story, and listened to faith-promoting incidents and gospel teaching from parents who loved them.

Heaven in Europe

"Again, I found heaven in Europe:

"Elder Vogel was a local convert German boy of great faith. His parents refused to assist him in the mission which he so desired to fill. A kind American member helped with a monthly check to assist with the mission expenses. He enjoyed his work and all went well for a year and a half. One day a letter came from the wife of his sponsor, advising that her husband had been killed in an auto accident and it would be impossible to send any more money.

"Elder Vogel kept his disappointment hidden and prayed earnestly for a solution. As he and his American companion, Elder Smith, passed a hospital one day, a solution to his financial problem was born in his mind. The next day he made an excuse and was gone for a time. When he came back he said little but went to bed early. When asked the reason, he said he was a little extra weary. A few days later Elder Smith noted a small bandage on the arm of the German brother, but his question was passed off lightly.

"Time passed and Elder Smith became suspicious of the periodical bandages until one day, unable to keep his secret longer, Elder Vogel told him: 'You see, my friend in America is dead and can no longer give support to my mission. My

parents are still unwilling to help me, so I visit the blood bank at the hospital so I can finish my mission.' Selling his precious blood to save souls! Well, isn't that what the Master did when he gave his every drop in the supreme sacrifice?

Heaven a condition

"Do you believe in heaven, Brother Artist?" I asked. "Yes, that is it. Heaven is a place, but also a condition; it is home and family. It is understanding and kindness. It is interdependence and selfless activity. It is quiet, sane living; personal sacrifice, genuine hospitality, wholesome concern for others. It is living the commandments of God without ostentation or hypocrisy. It is selflessness. It is all about us. We need only to be able to recognize it as we find it and enjoy it. Yes, my dear brother, I've had many glimpses of heaven."

Portrait completed

I straightened up in my chair and posed again. The artist picked up his palette and brushes and paints, did some touching up of the portrait, and sighed contentedly as he said, "It is completed."

In due time it was placed with those of others of the Brethren in the Council of the Twelve room on the fourth floor of the Salt Lake Temple, where it hangs to this day.

The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches men to live righteously, to make the family supreme, the home inviolate. It moves the characters of its adherents toward faultlessness. It is the true way. If lived rightly it will ennoble men toward Godhood.

May the true gospel of the Master reach into the lives of all of us, I pray. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Harold B. Lee

We have just listened to President Spencer W. Kimball of the Twelve Apostles.

We express our thanks and appreciation to the General Authorities who have spoken to us and have borne such remarkable testimonies, and to the Tabernacle Choir for their usual inspirational music.

We are grateful to the owners and managers of the many television and radio stations who have offered their facilities as a public service to make proceedings of the conference available to millions throughout North America, South America, the Far East, and many other areas of the world.

This session has been carried by direct wire from the Tabernacle over direct oceanic cables to a large number of members and friends assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, France, Holland and Austria.

We shall conclude this sixth session of the conference with the Tabernacle Choir singing "148th Psalm—Lord Who Hast Made Us for Thine Own," after which the benediction will be pronounced by Elder Arturo R. Martinez, former president of the Mexico North Central Mission, and this conference will then be adjourned until 2:00 this afternoon.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "148th Psalm—Lord Who Hast Made Us for Thine Own."

The benediction was offered by Elder Arturo R. Martinez, former president of the Mexico North Central Mission.

The conference was adjourned until 2 o'clock p.m.