

Sunday, April 9

"World, O world, of muddled men,
Seek the Peace of God again:
In the humble faith that kneels,
In the hallowed Word that heals;
In the courage of a tree,
In the rock's integrity;
In the hill that holds the sky,
The star you pull your heart up by;
In the laughter of a child,
Altogether undefiled;
In the hope that answers doubt,
Love that drives the darkness out. . . .
Frantic, frightened, foolish men,
Take God by the hand again."

—Joseph Auslander

I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. I pray for all of us that we may have the joy that comes in that knowledge, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Twelve.

The congregation will now join with the Choir in singing "Come, Come Ye Saints," following which we shall have a brief interlude listening to the Choir.

The Choir and congregation sang "Come, Come Ye Saints."

The Choir then sang "I Stand All Amazed."

President Tanner

To those of the television and radio audience who have just joined us in this sixth session of the 142nd Annual Conference of the Church, we are convened in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah.

We shall now hear from Elder David B. Haight, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie, of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder David B. Haight

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

I humbly ask an interest in your faith and prayers as I occupy this historic pulpit.

Broken homes

A few days ago a heartbroken young man came into my office. It was evident from his appearance and troubled look that he was seeking help. He had been a student at the Brigham Young University, married for two years, and now his wife was requesting a divorce. They had a young son.

Filled with remorse, he told me how he had been unsuccessful in holding numerous jobs, had tampered with drugs, had taken a so-called treatment at a commune-type ranch, and had not assumed his responsibility of providing for his wife and infant son.

As I visited with him, I found he

had never worked at a paying job or assumed any responsibility prior to his college and marriage. His parents had separated. This young man was the product of a home where the parents ignored the teachings of the Church.

Influence of family

I know of another young man who recently returned from Vietnam. He told of the close bond of love in his family. He said, "My buddies tried to persuade me to go into Saigon and 'live it up.' This went on day after day, but I kept thinking of my family and their influence and the memories of our family home evenings and of my patriarchal blessing. It seemed to give me the courage I needed to resist them."

He then said, "I got out my blessing

and read it and reread it. It promised me a temple marriage if I was worthy. After a while, my buddies were impressed with my conviction. They started to respect me and then wanted to know more."

Building on sand

The Savior warned mankind of what could happen to our homes if we failed to heed his counsel. He said:

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:24-27.)

Couldn't you imagine that if a family purposely built their house on sand, their neighbors would come running to their aid, would probably warn them and try to persuade them not to make such a critical error? But we are actually witnessing this tragic mistake taking place. Some houses are being built on sand.

Teaching our children

We all know of families that seem to be unified with love for one another, respect for the parents, active in church assignments; but as the children grow older, the roof seems to start leaking, the family grows apart, their beliefs now seem to differ. The rains of other influences are beating and beating hard on their homes.

"And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked," said King Benjamin; "neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God . . . and serve the devil. . . . But ye will

teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another." (Mosiah 4:14-15.)

Remember, this scripture says to *teach our children*. How can we teach them if we don't get together as a family (and not just as a place to exchange the car keys)?

Family night

All over the world Monday evening has been set aside by the First Presidency as family night. A night of participation, involvement, and wholesome fun. The importance of the family unit cannot be overemphasized. Every home in the Church has been instructed to build a solid foundation for sound citizenship and active church participation.

Some of my warmest memories are of my childhood home. My parents were concerned with the activities of each child. They planned fun evenings at home. We would watch the honey candy boil, then pour it out so it could cool, and then we would all stand around and pull it into strings so we could cut it and enjoy it. This was great fun!

I remember our family around the piano singing and trying to learn harmony. It was at these home nights that I had my first experiences with the children's stories of the Bible.

The activities and teaching at family home evening can be the vehicle for the building of strong faith and character.

One sure solution

You are aware, as I am, of the comments of juvenile court judges, law enforcement officers, social workers, and educators who seem to unanimously indicate that there is only one sure solution to our present moral challenge. They all point to the home, not more laws. They say, "If only the *father* would take command! If only father and mother unitedly would guide their children with love and affection!"

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The evidence is overwhelming and the need so critical for a strong bond of respect and admiration in our homes. The trend is growing more acute daily. Latter-day Saint parents must analyze the foundation on which their homes are being built, for the rains of evil are descending. Parents must prayerfully prepare for their particular family needs.

Trust officers

Banks hold in trust valuable worldly assets of individuals. They are entrusted with things of value that belong to someone else. How well equipped are we as parents to be the trust officers of the most precious of God's possessions—innocent young spirits? They are in your charge during eighteen or twenty of these critical years. This is your opportunity and responsibility to help them gain a testimony and prepare for celestial life.

But chances are it will not happen accidentally. Dad and Mom are the trust officers, the planning officers, and the careful organizers of a family master plan. They establish family goals and determine the best methods of achieving these family objectives.

To hold regular and effective family home evenings takes desire and some hard decision-making on the part of parents. Our homes are all different, with different challenges, different personalities; but parents must have the determination and the will to make some personal sacrifices so as to really make it work.

Henry Ward Beecher wrote: "We are not born as the partridge in the wood, or the ostrich of the desert, to be scattered everywhere; but we are grouped together, and brooded by love and reared day by day in that first of churches, the family."

Pressures on youth

We are all aware that our youth are being pressured from all sides with bizarre sensationalism that attempts to

present a new morality—even a non-family concept—that is in complete opposition to the true teachings of the gospel. The words to some of the rock music, some of the films, and the pictures in some of the magazines indicate with a resounding ring that the rains are pouring, not just on your neighbor's family, but also upon yours.

Now, if some of you are finding resistance in getting your families together each week and are tempted to give up, please find strength in these words of Elder Marion G. Romney: "It is not enough to do our best. Unless we do all we can, we do less than we ought. We must succeed in doing what is necessary. Unless we get the job done, it is not enough."

Stronger family foundations

A few days ago we witnessed a little family, with the grandmothers and grandfathers and some of the uncles all united to participate, as a loving father conferred the Aaronic Priesthood on his oldest son. This was a special and sacred occasion and an opportunity to teach and strengthen this little family's foundation.

Elder James E. Talmage wrote: "We regard children literally as gifts from God, committed to our parental care, for whose support, protection, and training in righteousness we shall be held to a strict accounting." (*The Marriage Institution* [pamphlet, Church Historian's Department], pp. 4-5.)

Wisdom of Church leaders

With our own God-given desire and intelligence, we will find solutions to today's pressing issues, but we must be willing to draw from the wisdom and the strength of our Church leaders, who continually seek and receive divine guidance.

Years ago President Joseph F. Smith gave us an answer and a promise when he said, "If you will gather your children around you once a week and instruct them in the gospel, they will not go astray."

The prophet Nephi's counsel applies today as it did in days of old. He admonished:

"... remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer . . . that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, . . . when all of his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you . . . because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation

whereon if men build they cannot fall." (Hel. 5:12.)

May this be so with your family, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder David B. Haight, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I asked the Lord what he would have me say on this occasion and received the distinct and affirmative impression that I should bear testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.

I have what is known as "the testimony of Jesus," which means that I know by personal revelation from the Holy Spirit to my soul that Jesus is the Lord; that he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; and that he has restored in this day the fullness of his everlasting truth, so that we with the ancients can become inheritors of his presence in eternity.

Source of a testimony

Now a testimony comes from the Spirit of God. There is no other source. And when a testimony is borne, it has to be borne by the power of the Spirit. And so I desire and pray fervently that I may be guided by that power on this occasion, so that what I say will be the mind and will and voice of the Lord.

I desire to bear testimony to myself, to you as members of the Church, and to all the world. As I speak by the power of the Spirit, if my testimony is to sink into your hearts and be in you a well springing up unto eternal life—

if your hearts are to burn within you, so that you will know of the truth and divinity of the words spoken—you must be guided by the power of the same Spirit, and so I pray that your hearts may be opened and that your souls will burn within you and you will know of the verity of what is said.

I shall take the liberty, both by way of testimony and to set the tone for what is involved, to read these words of my own composition:

I Believe in Christ

I believe in Christ, he is my king;
With all my heart to him I'll sing;
I'll raise my voice in praise and joy,
In grand amens my tongue employ.

I believe in Christ, he is God's Son;
On earth to dwell his soul did come;
He healed the sick, the dead he raised,
Good works were his, his name be praised.

I believe in Christ, O blessed name,
As Mary's Son he came to reign
'Mid mortal men, his earthly kin,
To save them from the woes of sin.

I believe in Christ, who marked the path,
Who did gain all his Father hath,
Who said to men: "Come, follow me,
That ye, my friends, with God may be."