

Sunday, April 9

### Example of parents

Parents, is your example the example you want your children to follow? Do you teach self-control in your home? Do you teach divine principles so that the godlike qualities of your children can be manifest in their lives?

The home is the place to teach love for God and knowledge of God, and for people to know God and to pray to a God that they know.

President Harold B. Lee has said, "The most important work you will do for the Church will be within the walls of your own home." I repeat, "The most important work you will do for the Church will be within the walls of your own home."

May we recall again these words of the Prophet David O. McKay: "No

other success can compensate for failure in the home." And may I add: No other success can compensate for failure to know the living God and the living Jesus Christ in your home and with your family.

Parents, your children are from God. There is no other answer from God. They have divine potential, and it is your responsibility to help them to know and love God, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, their Savior.

I say this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

### President Harold B. Lee

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

### Elder Sterling W. Sill

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

#### "Medicine for the soul"

Over the door of the library in the ancient city of Thebes, an Egyptian king once carved an inscription that said: "Medicine for the Soul."

Like all thoughtful people, this wise ruler understood that if the mental, spiritual, and emotional health of his people was to be properly cared for, it must be constantly nourished. And because ideas, ideals, and ambitions can be most effectively supplied through books, this great king had provided an ample literary storehouse as a place where his people could get the necessary help for thinking good ideas, building up proper attitudes, vitalizing their faith, motivating their ambitions, and increasing their righteousness, that they might help themselves to save their souls.

This idea of a mental and spiritual storehouse still provides one of our most constructive opportunities. It is reported that there is a physician in

Birmingham, Alabama, who goes around writing prescriptions for people, to be filled not at drugstores but at bookstores. He knows what all of us know, that our most serious sicknesses are our soul sicknesses.

One of the tragedies of our times is the increase, to epidemic proportions, of the psychosomatic diseases brought on by our sins and emotional disturbances. As someone has pointed out, we never get stomach ulcers because of what we eat; we get stomach ulcers because of what is eating us. And as we are presently being eaten up by our ignorance, our sins, and our weaknesses, we are suffering some staggering moral death-and-disability losses.

#### Great literature

One of the most effective cures for all of our present-day problems is found in the literary remedy that comes from thinking uplifting thoughts and living the great principles of the gospel.

The science of writing has probably made books our greatest invention. Writing is preserved speech; it is potential ambition. By effective study we can acquire knowledge, build faith, and develop an enthusiasm that will lead us to any desired accomplishment.

It was the Savior of the world who said: "Man shall not live by bread alone. . . ." (Matt. 4:4.) And because of the wonders of our day, every family may have its own library of great books, including the word of God himself. But before anyone can be benefited by any of our great literature, he must effectively believe in it.

### Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln once said, "What I want to know is in books." The two most powerful books in Lincoln's life were, first, the Holy Bible, which even in his youth he hungrily devoured before the open fire, and second, *The Life and Memorable Actions of George Washington* by Mason L. Weems.

Washington was able to serve as Lincoln's ideal, and out of his heart Lincoln said, "Washington is the mightiest name on earth, long since mightiest in the cause of civil liberty, still mightiest in moral reformation. On that name a eulogy is expected that cannot be. To add brightness to the sun or glory to the name of Washington is alike impossible. Let none attempt it. In solemn awe pronounce the name, and in its naked, deathless splendor leave it shining on."

### Precious possessions

Someone has pointed out that books are among life's most precious possessions. They are the most remarkable creation of man. Nothing else that man builds ever lasts. Monuments fall, civilizations perish, but books continue. The perusal of a great book is as it were an interview with the noblest men of past ages who have written it.

Charles Kingsley once said, "There is nothing more wonderful than a book.

It may be a message to us from the dead, from human souls we never saw who lived perhaps thousands of miles away, and yet these little sheets of paper speak to us, arouse us, teach us, open our hearts and in turn open their hearts to us like brothers. Without books, God is silent, justice dormant, philosophy lame."

John Milton once said, "Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them." (*Areopagitica*.)

### Wonder of writing

The great wonder of writing and reading is indicated by the experience of an early-day explorer in the dark continent of Africa. He desired to send a message to a friend many miles away, and it was arranged for a trusted native to be his messenger. The native watched as with his pen the explorer made some marks on a piece of paper, which had no significance to him. Then the explorer gave the native the letter for delivery.

After traversing the many miles of wilderness, the native put the message in the hands of the one for whom it was intended. The native discovered that as soon as the recipient had studied the paper, he immediately knew exactly where the explorer was and what his problems were. He knew all about his health and as much about the needs that prompted him to send the letter as though the explorer had come in person.

The miracle involved in this mysterious communication so impressed the native that he fell down on his face and worshiped the paper.

### The words of God

But what should be our enthusiasm when we can clearly read and understand those important papers recording

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the words of God as they came out of the fires of Sinai? Or what about those papers containing the vitalizing thoughts expressed in that greatest of all discourses, the Sermon on the Mount?

Just before the resurrected Christ ascended to his Father, he gave a thrice-repeated instruction to his chief apostle, saying, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:16.) That important responsibility for feeding the flock is also in force among us. But our personal salvation is a joint enterprise, and the responsibility for feeding our souls is one of the primary do-it-yourself projects that God himself has put into our hands. This great Egyptian king had provided the library, but the people were required to take the medicine themselves.

Our present state of malnutrition is not because of any famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but it is for the hearing and the obeying of the word of the Lord. That is, our many soul-deaths do not occur because a remedy is not available; it is only because we are failing to take that medicine which has already been provided and has already proven its effectiveness.

### An ocean of truth

Emerson pointed out one phase of our problem when he said, "On the brink of an ocean of life and truth, we are miserably dying. Sometimes we are furthestest away when we are closest by." So frequently that is true.

Think how near they were who lived contemporaneously with Jesus. He walked among them. They heard him speak. And yet they were so far away that they said, "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Matt. 27:25.) And so it has been and so it may be with us. We are so near and yet we may be so far away. We live on the edge of an ocean of knowledge, but each must take his own steps that will bring him there.

On one occasion Lowell Thomas, the great radio commentator and broad-

caster, was telling about the large amount of money that people spend each year to send their messages out across the major radio networks. And someone said to Mr. Thomas, "What is the greatest message that you have ever had a part in broadcasting? Or," they asked, "what is the greatest message that you could conceive as being broadcast to the people of the world?" And Mr. Thomas said, "The greatest message that I can conceive would be that God had again spoken to his people upon the earth."

### God has spoken

We conduct a lot of Gallup polls among us. We like to know what the Democrats and the Republicans think. We are interested in what the labor unions and the economists think. But above all other interests, we ought to know what God thinks. God is the Creator of the universe. He is the Father of our spirits and the designer of our destinies. Above everyone else he knows the purpose of our lives and which approach will bring us to the most satisfying success.

One of the greatest good fortunes of our day is that God has not only spoken to the people upon the earth, but he came in person in the greatest manifestation of his being ever known in the world. And not only did he come in person, but he caused that his message should be written down in three great volumes of new scripture outlining in every detail the simple principles of the gospel of Christ. So again, as of old, we hear that life-giving, authoritative pronouncement: "Thus saith the Lord."

If we would all hear and follow, the Savior of men would be able to realize his greatest prayer made nineteen hundred years ago when he looked out beyond his own day and said to his Father: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10.)

### Most urgent needs

Our present most urgent needs are that we should read more and understand more and think more and do more and be more and live more. Jesus emphasized his own mission by saying, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10.) We must not allow the holy scriptures to sit on our shelves unopened while we continue to starve to death spiritually because we fail to practice those great success laws on which the eternal exaltation of our souls depends.

May God help us to be more grateful

for those thrilling, lifesaving truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and may he help us to wholeheartedly eat the bread and more freely drink the waters of life that in his abundance our souls might live.

For this I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. □

### President Harold B. Lee

We have just listened to Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve.

We will now hear from Elder John H. Vandenberg, newly sustained as Assistant to the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder John H. Vandenberg

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

This morning as I walked into the Tabernacle, one of the attendant brethren said to me, "Bishop, I am looking forward to hearing your speech this afternoon." And then he added, "You are the last one."

I suppose he had in mind that this great conference has brought so many things, so many good things—the testimonies of the prophets, seers, and revelators, exciting changes, and testimonies of the brethren that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ—to the extent that our cups truly run over.

### Experience in Bishopric

What a blessing it is to set a course and work diligently at it. This past decade I have had the privilege of working with two wonderful men. You have seen the good works and heard the good words of Elder Robert L. Simpson and Bishop Victor L. Brown. This isn't a parting or a farewell, but I will always cherish the experience I have had in working with these two wonderful men of God. God bless them, and God bless the Church for their service.

I know that we are led by revelation.

It comes to us through the prophet of God, Joseph Fielding Smith. I have thought a good deal about this, because I know that he is a prophet and that his counselors serve God as they serve with President Smith.

### Interest in peace

In thinking what I might say at this conference, I wasn't aware that this change in my assignment was coming. I was down in Hawaii recently, and a young Hawaiian girl approached us and greeted us with both arms uplifted, holding up two fingers of each hand. I asked her what the sign meant, and with a broad smile she immediately replied, "Peace."

In traveling the highways, we often observe passing automobiles in which young occupants display the same sign at windows. We see the word *peace* painted on walls, fences, sidewalks, and, at times, in psychedelic colors on vehicles.

We wonder at the apparent interest in peace by the current generation. Is it any different from that of generations past? What do we mean by this expres-