

Elder Marion D. Hanks

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

It is my purpose today to bear testimony to some who have special needs, and to those who have accepted commission from the Lord and covenanted with him to try to help satisfy those needs.

As Christ taught the gospel to the people of this hemisphere, he asked them, ". . . what manner of men ought ye to be?" and answered, "Verily I say unto you, even as I am." (3 Ne. 27:27.)

As Christians, we accept that instruction reverently as our guide and our goal.

Mission of Christ

We know that Christ loves his Father. He came into the world to do the will of his Father, knowing the part he was to play, the price he would have to pay.

He loves us, and for us he fulfilled his mortal mission with suffering so intense and so deep as to cause him to bleed at every pore. With his blood he bought us, brought us the gift of immortality, and made possible for us all good and lovely things now and eternally.

He was gracious but he was not timid. He taught men the truth about his Father, the living God, and testified of him and of his own atoning mission, even though many who had followed him thereafter no longer walked with him. He cried repentance and was baptized of John in Jordan, and taught all men to do likewise, and promised the obedient and faithful the blessing of the Holy Ghost.

Worth of souls

Christ knows the worth of souls.

He came as Isaiah had prophesied and as he affirmed in the synagogue in Nazareth: ". . . to preach the gospel to the poor; . . . to heal the brokenhearted, to preach de-

liverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke 4:18.)

He taught the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin and the lost son, and he lunched with accused Zacchaeus; admonished men to emulate the compassionate act of the demeaned Samaritan—"Go thou and do likewise." He exalted the humble Publican, who, in contrast to the self-righteous Pharisee, "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13); and he confronted the accusers of the repentant woman.

So closely is he tied with his fellowmen that in one of the most powerful parables he taught that bread given to one of the least of his brethren is bread given to him, and so is any kindness or act of grace or mercy or service. To deny help to one of the least of his brethren, he said, was to deny him.

Message of hope

His message is one of hope and promise and peace to those who mourn the loss of loved ones: "And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." (John 16:22.)

To the lonely and the hopeless and those who are afraid, his reassurance reaches out: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:15.)

Christ understands. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is

able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17-18.) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15.)

He prayed to the Father for those who were not obedient, and he wept.

He called little children to him and blessed them, and wept.

He taught us to pray.

These and much more he taught and did. They represent the manner of person he was.

The Divine Redeemer

Of course he was more: he was the Divine Redeemer, the Savior of all mankind, the Firstborn in the spirit and the Only Begotten in the flesh. He was the Prince of Peace. He "came into the world . . . to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness; That through him all might be saved. . . ." (D&C 76:41-42.)

What he did for us we could never do for ourselves, and his example of love and service and sacrifice and seeking first the kingdom of God is our guidestar and our path.

What does he expect of us?

At his call, commissioned with his holy priesthood, being his agents, on his errand, we are under covenant to represent him faithfully and to do the will of the Father.

Our opportunities

All about us are opportunities.

There came the other day the story of the small boy who had lost his pet and who in tears beseeched his anxious mother for help. She reminded him lovingly that she had tried as hard as she could to find the pet without success. "What more can I do, son?" she asked. "You can cry with me," he said.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.)

A cherished friend who works with little children who have difficulties told me recently of a nine-year-old girl who has lived in 17 foster homes. She needs someone to cry with her, and laugh with her, and teach her, and love her.

Not understood

There are so many who are not—or feel they are not—understood. Recently our family visited with a dear friend, Sister Louise Lake, who has lived her gracious, sharing life in a wheelchair for more than a quarter of a century.

Perhaps because our 12-year-old son was with us, Sister Lake told us of another 12-year-old with whom she became acquainted in a rehabilitation center in New York where she was working. The boy had been blind and for most of his 12 years had lived a sad existence, thought to be uneducable, incapable of learning. Then he was given a chance, thank the Lord, and a marvelous spirit and fine mind were discovered. He told his friend that he had thought all his life that being blind was the worst thing that could happen to one—until he met Campy. Campy was Roy Camparella, great athlete, who at the height of his career was rendered physically helpless in an automobile accident. The blind boy said he had decided after meeting Campy that his condition was worse than not being able to see. "But there is something even worse than that," he said. He talked of feeling his way down the hall at the hospital, hearing the scuff of feet as people passed him by. "There is something worse than being blind or crippled, and that is to have people not understand you," he said. "I guess they think that because I am blind I can't hear or speak either."

Friendship of God

There is one who always understands, and those who seek to become the manner of person he is must seek to understand. We are never really alone when we love God and accept the friendship of his loving Son. I think of the mother of 14 children who was asked if she had a favorite. "Well," she said, "if I do, it's the one who is ill until she gets well, or the one who is away until he gets home." So it seems to be with the Lord.

After a meeting with our servicemen at DaNang in South Vietnam, we talked with a senior pilot who had come very close to death that day and who was still shaken. He had a request to make, and he made it shyly, not wanting to impose. "I wonder if you might have just a minute when you get home, Brother Hanks, to call or write a note to my 12-year-old son to tell him that I am all right and that his dad is thinking about him. He was ordained a deacon last Sunday without his father there, and I want him to know how much I love him."

Those nearest us need love also.

Remembering God's mercy

There are so many who grieve and are weighted down because they have not behaved in a way their own conscience can approve. To them the Lord still speaks through his prophets ancient and modern. Recall the words of Jacob to his brethren: "And now my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things, let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off. . . ." (2 Ne. 10:20.)

In the last recorded letter of the great prophet Mormon to his son Moroni are written the lamentings of the prophet over the wickedness

of the people, described in the record to be "without principle, and past feeling." Mormon's final testimony to his beloved son included this marvelous admonition and explanation of the effect Christ's gifts should have in all of our lives: "My son, be faithful in Christ; and may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto death; but may Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death [and his resurrection], . . . and his mercy and long-suffering, and the hope of his glory of eternal life, rest in your mind forever." (Moro. 9:25.)

Lift for the repentant

Christ in our lives is not meant to grieve us or weigh us down into death because we have been imperfect. Through him we may be lifted up by accepting his gifts and his mercy and long-suffering. These blessings we must seek to keep in our minds always. "For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?" (Mosiah 5:13.)

They who would follow him and be the manner of person he is will, as he did, lift up the repentant who suffer and sorrow for sin, and bless them with love and forgiveness.

Of course, all honest men on occasion feel their weakness and groan in the face of their inadequacies and ignorance and pride. Even Job, that good and godly man who possessed a faith which all his afflictions could not shake, bore this witness at the conclusion of his ordeal, when, seeing God, he said, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Where-

fore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:2, 5-6.)

Doing as Christ did

But Christ will lift us up and help us to become as he is as we do as he did; as we love our Father and give him our lives; as we love each other and all men, and learn to live and teach his word; believe in the worth of souls and let our lives be the warrant of our earnestness; mourn with those who mourn, and bring hope to them; understand and comfort those who weep; cry unto the Lord.

"Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you.

"And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and

visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith." (Al. 34:27-28.)

God bless us to look up and to look around and to kneel down, and to be worthy, and to become the manner of person he is, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Harold B. Lee

Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Council of Twelve, has just spoken to us. I am sure you will see revealed his sensitivity to the needs of others, which qualifies him for the great assignment that he has today working among these folks who need so much.

Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

Elder S. Dilworth Young

Of the First Council of the Seventy

When I decided to choose a subject for this moment, I discovered I did not have enough words in the English language to properly express my true feelings, but it is the only language I know and so I shall have to use them and hope that the prayer of Brother Burton, which he offered at the beginning, will be applied to me as well as to you.

The Lord Jesus Christ

It is my purpose to speak of the Lord Jesus Christ.

From the depths of my soul I know that he has established the

Church in these last days so that I may partake of the blessings of his kingdom on earth, to the end that I may inherit the eternal joy of dwelling in his presence when I have completed my work here, if I can prove faithful. He did not intend this to be my privilege alone. In his infinite love he reaches out to all of my family, all of my kin, to all of your families and kin, and to all of the people on the earth.

I know that I cannot know him as he is unless he reveals himself to me. That is the great hope—to penetrate the veil and see and know him as he is. Yet I do know some