

to live and a different task to fill. Some tasks may be more important than others, but you—a son or daughter of God—are just as important to God as anyone else.

I think the song written by William Clayton is as important for our encouragement today as it was to the pioneers.

*"Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor
fear;*

But with joy wend your way.

*Though hard to you this journey may
appear,*

Grace shall be as your day.

'Tis better far for us to strive

Our useless cares from us to drive;

Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—

All is well! All is well!

*"Why should we mourn or think our lot
is hard?*

'Tis not so, all is right.

*Why should we think to earn a great
reward,*

If we now shun the fight?

Gird up your loins; fresh courage take;

Our God will never us forsake;

And soon we'll have this tale to tell—

All is well! All is well!"

—Hymns, no. 13.

May the Lord bless each one of you to accomplish your goal in life, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Harold B. Lee

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch of the Church.

The congregation and the choir will now join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

After the singing Elder William H. Bennett, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

The congregation sang the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

President Lee

Elder William H. Bennett, Assistant to the Twelve will now address us. He will be followed by Elder A. Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder William H. Bennett

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

At one of the stake conferences to which I was assigned, a home teacher was invited to be a speaker at the general session on Sunday morning. He began by telling about a man who accidentally fell into the waters of the Niagara River some distance above the falls. As he was carried downstream by the current, he called out repeatedly, "Which way to shore? Which way to shore?" There were people along the banks on both sides of the river who saw and heard this man but they were slow to act. They noticed that he could swim and was keeping himself afloat, so they concluded that he was engaged in

some kind of a publicity stunt and gave him no further attention. However, when he reached the point where he was precariously close to the falls some of the people along the banks went into action and tried to get ropes to him to pull him from the water. But they had waited too long and he went over the brink of the falls and was killed. When his body was recovered and identification made, the horizons of those along the banks of the river were pushed back and their understandings improved and increased. Yes, the man could swim, but he could not swim with purpose or direction because he was blind.

Involvement

That illustration used by a home teacher to motivate the members of his stake to become more actively engaged in discharging their responsibilities in doing missionary work with their nonmember friends and neighbors had a missionary thrust; but I found many other messages there also. There are many people in the world today who are in distress, and who, in their hearts, are calling out, "Which way to shore?" All too often those of us who are around them do not even hear them, or if we do, we do not respond because we allow ourselves to become so busy doing this, that, or the other, that we are not tuned in properly, or perhaps it is because we just don't want to get involved.

Let me say, my brothers and sisters, that if we want to save individuals, to save the souls of our Father's children, we must be willing to get involved and to help others get involved in meaningful ways also.

Some of those who are calling out for help are the honest in heart who are earnestly seeking the truth, but they do not know where to find it. They fit into the category referred to in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 123, verse 12, which reads as follows:

"For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it."

Our responsibility

My brothers and sisters, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has the truth, the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, restored to the earth in these the last days through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Furthermore, this Church has received a charge from the Lord to proclaim the restored gospel message to all the world. Obe-

dient to that charge the Church is carrying out a vigorous missionary program in many countries of the world. In addition, the members of the Church everywhere have been challenged to do missionary work with their nonmember friends and neighbors, and to do a better job of living the gospel, so that their lives are shining examples of the gospel of Jesus Christ in action. This will open the doors to the honest in heart and the teaching of the precepts can then be done most effectively.

An invitation to others

We say to the honest in heart everywhere: Listen to our message; give it prayerful, careful consideration, and then seek a witness from on high through the power of the Holy Ghost that our message is true. There is just too much at stake to do otherwise. We make some strong claims in our Church; we do not apologize for that. We have that responsibility. We have the truth. We are proclaiming the truth. Give it careful, prayerful consideration.

Some of those who are calling out for help are confused and disturbed by this complex, somewhat contradictory world in which we live, a world that has many crosswinds and crosscurrents, and even some eddies and whirlpools that can entrap and destroy. Let us remember that. Many of these people are yearning for the inner peace and joy that really can come only through love of God and love of fellowmen and from keeping God's commandments. We have been promised in Deuteronomy, in chapter 4, verse 29, that if we seek the Lord diligently we shall surely find him, and these are the words:

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

Remember that, you, the honest in heart, wherever you may be and listen to our message.

Those who need help

In some cases those who are seeking help are young people who are the products of broken homes or who have been raised under conditions where force has been used instead of love and where there is contention and strife and bickering and quarreling, instead of unity and harmony. It has been my privilege to work with young people all my life, and I know that oftentimes young people who are raised under such conditions frequently lack purpose and direction in their living.

Some who need help are in bondage to sin and seemingly cannot break those bonds without help from others. Many of them are crying out in their hearts for assistance. Some of them haven't yet reached the stage where they have truly repented, and they need assistance in that, too. Others are having difficulty reconciling science and religion, perhaps because they have pulled the horizons in too close, and haven't brought into the picture all they should bring into the picture in order to see relationships clearly, to interpret correctly, and draw sound conclusions; and perhaps because they have used man's measuring sticks instead of God's measuring sticks.

Some who need help are disillusioned because they have been taken advantage of by dishonest individuals. Then there are those who do not have loved ones or friends, and who are lonely and discouraged, and need the hand of fellowship extended to them.

Blessings of the Church

My brothers and sisters, how fortunate we are to have the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness, and the marvelous programs of this Church, and a living prophet, a true prophet of God to guide us and direct us in these troubled times. I say to you, my brothers and sisters, that *the gospel of Jesus Christ is the way to shore and to safety, to happiness in this life and to eternal life and*

eternal joy in the life to come. It can light the way for all who will open their eyes, their ears, and their hearts. But it isn't enough for us to just look and listen. We must listen and apply. We must act. This has been stated very effectively by the poet, Longfellow, in his poem, "Psalm of Life," which is one of my favorites. I should like to repeat part of that at this time:

*Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!*

*Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.*

*Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.*

*Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.*

Gospel to be lived

Let us remind ourselves, my brothers and sisters, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is to be lived, not just read about or talked about or thought about. It is to be lived. That is when it takes on its great power in the lives of men and women, and in building the kingdom of God. As we learn to do that, my brothers and sisters, we are blessed, for the Lord has said, "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.)

As we are able to perfect our lives, the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ become more and more meaningful, and we experience that inner joy and peace for which there is no substitute.

Now we all know we do not have to obey the laws of God or keep the

commandments because we have our free agency, but I should like to emphasize that none of us have our free agency to determine the consequences of the choices we make, because laws operate, and along with the exercising of our free agency, we become accountable and responsible for our acts.

The scriptures are replete with examples of what happens when people do not heed the words of the prophets and do not keep the commandments. Let your minds recall what happened to the wicked when the flood came in the days of Noah, of what happened when Jerusalem was destroyed, and what happened to the Jaredites and the Nephites in Book of Mormon days because they did not keep the commandments and did not listen to the voices of the prophets.

Blessings through obedience

I think we should also remember that the scriptures, and even the pages of secular history, are replete with examples of what can happen when people do keep the commandments of God. Those great blessings have been referred to in various ways during this conference.

Reference was made, I believe, in the welfare meeting this morning to Enoch and the righteousness of the people who were associated with him. Let me just read verse 67 from chapter 7 of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price:

"And the Lord showed Enoch all things, even unto the end of the world; and he saw the day of the righteous, the hour of their redemption; and received a fulness of joy."

There are many other things that could be said, but let me just summarize some of the things that have already been said pertaining to the great blessings that come through keeping the commandments and obeying the laws.

President Lee in his opening message talked about *self-respect*. That is a great blessing we can get if we really keep the commandments and we won't

have self-respect unless we do. Other great blessings I should like to mention are: a clear conscience, inner peace, the companionship of the Holy Ghost to guide us and direct us, and the blessings promised to those who keep the Word of Wisdom.

The Word of Wisdom

The Word of Wisdom has had special meaning in my life because of my involvement in athletics, my interest in education, and the appreciation I have had for good health. Let us remind ourselves of the promises given in verses 18 to 21 of the 89th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

"And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

"And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

"And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them."

What great promises! My brothers and sisters, let me just end by emphasizing the great blessings of eternal happiness, eternal joy, and eternal life, and those are related of course; they are tied together. They cannot be separated.

I leave you my testimony, my brothers and sisters, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the way to shore, and to safety, and to happiness here and to joy eternally. I bear testimony that God does live, his Son Jesus Christ lives. The gospel of Jesus Christ is true, and we have a true and living prophet guiding us today, pointing the way under guidance and direction from on high in the troubled conditions under which we live. I leave you that testimony, my brothers and sisters, in all humility, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.