

many members have compounded that faith again and again. Faith called forth faith and a mighty work moves forward.

Our salvation and the salvation of all of our Father's children will be determined by our obedience to the counsel of the living prophet. May we arise and exercise greater faith in God.

I bear witness that this work is true and that President Kimball is a living

prophet. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **President N. Eldon Tanner**

We have just listened to Elder A. Theodore Tuttle of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

## **Elder Marion D. Hanks**

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

We have said many times that we believe young people learn more from our conduct as parents and adults than they do from the lessons we deliberately undertake to teach them. They acquire the quality of integrity not so much from pronouncements as from observing and associating with people in whom integrity is the established norm. Young people are apt to imitate what we really are, not what we say we are or even what we may believe we are. No lesson is more important than the example of a life of integrity, of solid honesty, of responsible citizenship.

### **Obligation to our children**

But this is not to question the vital importance of the privilege we have as parents and adults to share our knowledge and understanding, our deeply held convictions, with our children and others of the young generation, nor does it excuse us from the sacred obligation to do so. The lessons we learned at mother's knee remain clear and dear to us. The understanding gained from father's counsel sinks deep in the soul.

We have the responsibility not to deny our children, for whatever reason, the chance to learn from us those principles which form a foundation for whatever is good in us.

Those familiar with the scriptures are aware that many of the most power-

ful and personally helpful teachings of the sacred records are from parents to their own children, often from fathers to sons.

### **Fathers' instructions**

It has been particularly vital to me, since I did not have the blessing of knowing my own father before he died in my infancy, to discover what it was that parents, fathers especially, were anxious to have their sons learn, to feel the deep intensity of their desire to make known in thought and feelings to their own children what had become so greatly important to them.

One powerful and motivating example of a father's instructions to his children is the series of chapters in which Alma shares with his sons the profoundest lessons of his own life. From his experiences, good and bad (for he had both, like the rest of us), there were certain crucial convictions which he was anxious to teach. Of three such matters this humble man speaks in a strong and tender testimony to his son Helaman (Al. 36), and repeats the witness to his other children.

### **Alma's testimony**

"My son," he said, "thou art in thy youth, and therefore, I beseech of thee that thou wilt hear my words and learn

of me; for I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day.

"And I would not that ye think that I know of myself—not of the temporal but of the spiritual, not of the carnal mind but of God." (Al. 36:3-4.)

"... [for] it is the Spirit of God which is in me which maketh these things known unto me; for if I had not been born of God I should not have known these things.

"... and never, until I did cry out unto the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, did I receive a remission of my sins. But ... I did cry unto him and I did find peace to my soul." (Al. 38:6-8.)

"And I have been supported under trials and troubles of every kind, yea, and in all manner of afflictions; ... and I do put my trust in him, and he will still deliver me." (Al. 36:27.)

"And now, my son, I have told you this that ye may learn wisdom, that ye may learn of me that there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ. Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness." (Al. 38:9.)

### Lesson of repentance

That was this father's first great witness to his sons: that he knew, in the only way men can know—that is, through the Spirit—that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that through him the penitent can be born again.

There is a second matter of which Alma testified to his son—that from the time of his own witness from the Lord, he said, "I have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of that exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

"... my son, the Lord doth give me exceeding great joy in the fruit of my labors;

"For because of the word which he has imparted unto me ... many have been born of God, and have tasted as I have tasted, and have seen eye to eye as I have seen; therefore they do know of these things of which I have spoken, as I do know; and the knowledge which I have is of God." (Al. 36:24-26.)

Because he knew, many others had received the same blessing. He had become a willing and effective instrument in the hands of God to bring others to a knowledge of the truth.

But this was not enough for Alma, as indeed it is not for any man who has a witness by the Spirit and loves someone very much. Thus, he had a third vital message to deliver:

### Know for yourselves

"But behold, my son, this is not all; for ye ought to know as I do know." (Al. 36:30.)

Of course! It is not enough for any loving father that he has the witness himself, nor enough that he has helped others to gain a knowledge of true principles. He cannot be truly content unless those he loves best also know. It is with every true father as with Israel of old:

"If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." (Gen. 43:14.) And with Judah:

"How shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me?" (Gen. 44:34.)

These, then, were the vital matters which Alma had to be sure his sons understood. He taught them many related truths, many wonderful principles, but none more important: He knew! Through the graciousness and mercy of God he knew!

Through him others had been taught. But this was not enough; his son too must know! That same testimony I bear today to my own son and daughters. I do know that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ. Because I know, some others have had a chance to learn.

But this is not enough, my children; you must know for yourselves.

### Blessing of forgiveness

And there is something more I would add that you must know. Alma understood in a special, personal way the marvelous blessing of the forgiveness of God. It is recorded that in his youth there was in the land a climate of unbelief, of spiritual darkness: "Many of the rising generation . . . did not believe the tradition of their fathers.

"They did not believe what had been said concerning the resurrection of the dead, neither did they believe concerning the coming of Christ.

"And now because of their unbelief they could not understand the word of God; and their hearts were hardened.

". . . they would not be baptized; neither would they join the church . . . [nor would they] call upon the Lord their God." (Mosiah 26:1-4.)

Alma, son of a prophet, and his friends, sons of a righteous king, partook of the spirit of rebellion and used their special gifts and talents to destroy faith. "He [and they] became a great hinderment to the prosperity of the church of God; stealing away the hearts of the people; causing much dissension . . . giving a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them." (Mosiah 27:9.)

They experienced after a time the suffering and sorrow that inevitably follow such a course. Through God's mercy and because of the fasting and prayers of their fathers, priesthood leaders, and the people, and after sore repentance which involved torment and pain so keen and intense as to almost destroy them, they learned, too, the blessing of repentance and forgiveness, and the healing power of faith. They turned their lives around, were forgiven, and thereafter devoted full energy to try to rectify their misdeeds in doing good.

### Alma's companions

There is a wonderful description in the record of the program through

which these former companions on the wrong road had now become "strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God.

"But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God." (Al. 17:2-3.)

### Go to with might

It is important now, as it has always been, that every man go to with his might, "take righteousness in his hands and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth. . . ." (D&C 63:37.)

". . . every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness." (D&C 38:41.)

### Each individual must know

And let each of us remember that among our neighbors are those of our own households who must know for themselves.

Alma's father had a witness, but that was not sufficient for Alma.

Enos's father knew and taught him, but not until Enos's "soul hungered" and he cried to his Maker in mighty prayer and supplication did he gain the witness.

The summation of this testimony to you from the past and from your father, my son, is this: That I know that God lives and that we are his children. You and I are contemporaries in the eternal sense. I understand and know that our Heavenly Father delights in exercising loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, and that he will sustain his children in their joys and in their afflictions. Because this knowledge has come to me from God through the Spirit, others also know and have tasted

of the sweetness and joy of that knowledge.

But you too must know.

### Blessings

Knowing, you will be a better man than you could otherwise be, a better man than your father. You will be, as one wrote 600 years ago, more concerned to possess true humility and live a virtuous life and thus please your Heavenly Father than to discourse profoundly about him. You will prefer to "feel contrition than to know how to define it." (Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1940, p. 2.)

God bless you, and all sons and daughters everywhere, that each of you will seek to fashion a life of service and sacred devotion, give genuine love, and choose that course of discipleship that may require yet all we have to give. May your life be rich through personal experience with that love of God which is manifested through Christ Jesus and from which nothing but yourself can separate you. God bless you to be actively engaged in a good work, but not be content to let the gospel light be hidden under a bushel of activities designed to keep you harmlessly busy, but that

you will find and feast on the bread of life and share it.

I testify that God lives, and Jesus is the Christ, and this is his work. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Twelve, has just addressed us.

The Congregation and Choir, under the direction of Sister Anna B. Skidmore, will now join in singing, "How Firm a Foundation."

After the singing, Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve will speak to us.

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The Relief Society Choir joined the congregation in singing "How Firm a Foundation."

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### President Tanner

Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Sterling W. Sill, and he will be followed by Elder Cook, a newly-appointed General Authority.

## Elder James A. Cullimore

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My dear brethren and sisters, I would like to say something about family home evening this afternoon. As President Kimball addressed the Stockholm Area Conference, he pointed out the great need of home teaching and family home evenings to help neutralize the ills of the world. He said: "The spirit of the times is worldliness. Hoodlumism is common. Supposedly good youth from recognized good families express their revolt in destructive acts. Many defy and resist the law-

enforcing officers. Respect for authority, secular, religious, and political, seems to be at a low ebb. Immorality, drug addition, and general moral and spiritual deterioration seem to be increasing, and the world is in turmoil. But in our time the Lord has offered his ageless program in new dress and it gives promise to return the world to sane living, to true family life, family interdependence. It is to return the father to his rightful place at the head of the family, to bring mother home from social life