

As a young man, he embraced the gospel and was promptly disowned by his parents. This motivated him to make the long, hard trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Some years thereafter he received a call from President Brigham Young to serve a mission in Switzerland. He readily accepted. So that he could go, he sold all of his possessions. My great-grandmother sewed salt sacks at a penny apiece to support her family in his absence.

I should like to conclude with a declaration of my great-grandfather as my deepest conviction and join his words and mine together as an everlasting witness. Leopold Wirthlin said in sincerest humility, "I know that when I discharge my duty properly I feel blessed, and that when I am negligent, I am not happy. Therefore, as members of the Church, we should watch ourselves closely and see to it that we are discharging our duties faithfully."

May I add to his words these of my own: I know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ and that the Father and Son appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Through him the true and everlasting gospel was restored among us,

that we might attain the heights of a glorious exaltation as the beloved children of our Heavenly Father. To this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

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

After the singing, Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will address us.

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

President Tanner

Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Eldred G. Smith

Patriarch to the Church

In the very beginning, God placed Adam on the earth and gave him dominion over the fish and the fowl and the cattle and over all the earth. Now this would seem like an exalted position for some people today, but even though Adam had dominion over all the earth, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone," (Gen. 2:18) and he gave unto him the woman, Eve, to be a companion and a helpmeet. Then God gave unto them the first great commandment, to multiply and replenish the earth.

First family unit

We are not told how long they lived in the Garden of Eden before they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and were cast out of the garden to start their mortal existence. The point I want to make clear is that God himself established the first family unit. Marriage is not an institution developed by man which can be outgrown and cast aside in the course of human progress. All that is nearest and dearest in our lives is

associated with our families. Love has its center here, and where love is, there we find happiness also.

Truly it is not good for man to be alone. The Lord in his wisdom has provided a way for man to be happy on this earth, and to continue that joy on through all eternity; the greatest joy and happiness comes through the family unit. It has been so through all mortality. Then why will it not be so in the next life? This family unit is so important that the Lord has made it known to us that all the families of the earth must be sealed together. By the time of the end of the millennium, all of Adam's posterity who accept the gospel must be sealed together as one family by the power of the priesthood, which is the power to seal on earth, and it shall be sealed in heaven, and to bind on earth, and it shall be bound in heaven.

God is just

Every person who comes to the earth must have an opportunity to receive all the blessings of these sealings if he will accept them, sometime before the end of the millennium. There could not be a just God if it were otherwise. These sealing blessings are obtained, first, through the ordinance of baptism into the church of Jesus Christ. Then the wife is to be sealed to the husband for time and all eternity, and those children who are born outside of this wedlock must be sealed to their parents, that they may receive the blessings as though they were born under the new and everlasting covenant.

Those who have died without this law may have the privilege of receiving this blessing by proxy. That is where our responsibility comes in. We must first teach the gospel to the living. Then we must gather the records of those of our families who died without the law, that this great and important work can be done for them.

Let us quote the Prophet Joseph Smith in Section 128 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

Work for the dead

"Let me assure you that these are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as Paul says concerning the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect." (D&C 128:15; see also Heb. 11:40.)

When Paul was teaching the principles of the resurrection to the Corinthians, he clinched his point by stating:

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:29.)

This shows that in the days of Paul there was a practice of vicarious baptism for the dead.

Turning of hearts

One of the first instructions given to the Prophet Joseph Smith by Moroni was the quotation from Malachi 4:5-6. Moroni quoted it thus:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (Joseph Smith 2:38-39.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith has said:

"The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us, is to seek after our dead." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 356.)

This means that this baptism and sealing work must be done for all of God's children who will accept it—not just for those who live on the earth now who are members of the Church, but for all of our ancestors and all who have

lived on the earth who will accept the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Keys restored

The Lord is bringing about this great task by first restoring the keys and priesthood authority. This was done in the Kirtland Temple in April 1836, when Elijah restored the sealing keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Then he has sent special spirits to earth who have been retained to come forth in this choice dispensation—valiant, strong spirits who would accept the gospel. These are now being sent into all parts of the earth. These choice spirits accept the gospel when it is presented to them. Then, from that nucleus, others of their families and friends accept the gospel. They come to the temples of the Lord and perform their own sealing, then vicariously do the sealing for their ancestors.

The Lord assists

However, the Lord is doing still more to assist this work. He has sent other choice spirits into the world who have been blessed with special knowledge and training to develop scientific means and equipment to speed up the work and make possible the otherwise impossible task of collecting, sorting, storing, and checking of names to prevent duplication and to organize this work. This is next to miraculous. Everything the Lord can do to make it easier for us is being done. Are you taking advantage of these helps?

Do we appreciate these blessings? Many converts would willingly spend great efforts and sums of money to obtain the opportunity of being sealed to their parents and consider it well worth the effort.

Seek diligently

Then we need to gather all the records of our ancestors that we possibly can. I do not mean just a half-

hearted attempt. Seek diligently, constantly, and prayerfully. Do not wait for a convenient time—a convenient time may never come. Do not put it off until old age when we are not able to do anything else. We never know what tomorrow will bring, and we must see that the work is done of completing the sealing of each family group. There is no one who can escape the responsibility of this work. We will not be excused because we thought an aunt or some other relative was doing the work.

One young lady, a genealogist, was asked the question, "What if you find an undesirable character in your family tree, such as a pirate or convict or the like?" She answered, "My responsibility does not concern how he lived, but just that he lived and died. After all, I owe my existence to him, and my only way of paying that debt is to do the baptism and sealing work for him. It will be up to him to accept it."

Responsibility for family research

This is a responsibility for each of us. Not one of us can be made perfect without this work. I doubt if the Lord will accept the excuse that we are so busy with other church work that we cannot spend a part of our time in genealogy. Any part of this we do not do, which we should do, must be done by someone else, for it must be done. If we shirk our responsibilities, how can we expect to receive the blessings?

To those scattered around the world, may I say a word of encouragement? Be of good cheer, be diligent, trust in the Lord, and he will help you. You were probably placed where you are to do a special work in gathering records or to fulfill a special missionary assignment. If you will let him, the Lord will give you success in your work and much happiness in so doing.

Many good members of the Church have many records lying on the shelf. They have gathered records but have not yet sent them in to have the temple work done for them. Get those

records into the temples. Many may be waiting on the other side for that work to be done. Let's follow President Kimball's slogan, "Do It." I think this could be a good slogan for this conference—"Do It."

May His blessings be upon all those who are diligent in this work, that we may prepare the way for his coming,

for I testify to you that this is His work, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Marvin J. Ashton

of the Council of the Twelve

A friend of mine recently shared what he considered to be a choice learning experience. It was provided by his young son. Upon returning home from his day's work, this father greeted his boy with a pat on the head and said, "Son, I want you to know that I love you."

Love is a process

The son responded with, "Oh Dad, I don't want you to love me, I want you to play football with me." Here was a boy conveying a much-needed message.

The world is filled with too many of us who are inclined to indicate our love with an announcement or declaration.

True love is a process. True love requires personal action. Love must be continuing to be real. Love takes time. Too often expediency, infatuation, stimulation, persuasion, or lust are mistaken for love. How hollow, how empty if our love is no deeper than the arousal of momentary feeling or the expression in words of what is no more lasting than the time it takes to speak them. A group of college students recently indicated to me their least favorite expression to come from us as the older set is, "If there is ever anything I can do to help you, please let me know." They, as do others, much prefer actions over conversation.

We must at regular and appropriate intervals speak and reassure oth-

ers of our love and the long time it takes to prove it by our actions. Real love does take time. The Great Shepherd had the same thoughts in mind when he taught, "If ye love me, *keep* my commandments" (John 14:15; italics added) and "If ye love me *feed* my sheep" (John 21:16; italics added). Love demands action if it is to be continuing. Love is a process. Love is not a declaration. Love is not an announcement. Love is not a passing fancy. Love is not an expediency. Love is not a convenience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" and "If ye love me feed my sheep" are God-given proclamations that should remind us we can often best show our love through the processes of *feeding* and *keeping*.

Not words only

From another boy a few years older, old enough to be confined in a state penitentiary a few hundred miles from here, we can learn more about the process of love. In his moving letter, just received within the past few days, he makes an effort to analyze what led to his present situation and all of the accompanying agonies. He writes, "My dad never seemed to love me and yet he made big deals of saying 'I love you' and kissing and all, but I learned that 'I love you' meant you didn't have to do anything. I mean we were never forced to do chores regularly, given no morals, spiritual training at all. To this very day