

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

I don't know what principles my parents stand for."

From this friend, whom I have never met, may I share again the one phrase, "'I love you' meant you didn't have to do anything." I refer to him as a friend because he has given me his helpful thoughts and I share these comments with you on this occasion hoping they might be helpful to you too.

### Feeding and keeping

From the father's viewpoint can't he be credited with *feeding* and *keeping*? Perhaps he had kept the family adequately stocked with food supplies. Also, hadn't his son been the beneficiary of having a roof over his head, protected from the elements day and night over the years? In responding, I would point out to this mother and father and others that *feeding* is more than providing food. No man can effectively live by bread alone. Feeding is the providing by love adequate nourishment for the entire man, physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually. *Keeping* is a process of care, consideration, and kindness appropriately blended with discipline, example, and concern. Keeping is more than providing four walls and a roof. All of us need to be constantly reminded it takes a heap of living and loving to make a house a home.

### Showing love

How do we best show our love? How do we prove our love? Peter was effectively taught by the master teacher how he could best prove his love. "This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

"He saith to him again the second

time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John 21:14-17.)

### Prove your love

When were you last fed by a family member or friend? When were you last given nourishment for growth and ideas, plans, sorting of the day, sharing of fun, recreation, sorrow, anxiety, concern, and meditation? These ingredients can only be shared by someone who loves and cares. Have you ever gone to extend sympathy and comfort in moments of death and trial, only to come away fed by the faith and trust of the loving bereaved? Certainly the best way for us to show our love in keeping and feeding is by taking the time to prove it hour by hour and day by day. Our expressions of love and comfort are empty if our actions don't match. God loves us to continue. Our neighbors and families love us if we will but follow through with sustaining support and self-sharing. True love is as eternal as life itself. Who is to say the joys of eternity are not wrapped up in continuous feeding, keeping, and caring? We need not weary in well-doing when we understand God's purposes and his children.

### Performance important

Undoubtedly our Heavenly Father tires of expressions of love in words only. He has made it clear through his prophets and his word that his ways are ways of commitment, and not conversation. He prefers performance over lip service. We show our true love for him

in proportion to our keeping his words and the processes of feeding.

Let me share with you two examples, not too uncommon, of people who, hour by hour, day by day, and month by month, have taken the time to love one another. I say these examples are not too uncommon because, gratefully, all around on a daily and continuing basis, we see true love in action. I'm thinking first of a mother who, through death, suddenly was left without a husband. With her were three sons ranging in age from early teens to almost missionary age. Through the years by example and hard work she has independently provided finances, encouragement, and unity. The feeding and keeping processes have resulted in the development of three great missionaries, students, husbands, and fathers. One recently remarked, "Mother has always taken the time to show her love." This mother continues the true processes of love today as her sons pursue higher education and the opportunities of their own families.

### Love is enduring

Some time ago we were attracted to the skills and attitude of a local building contractor. His desire for perfection and his pride in his work led me to ask questions and get acquainted. As a young man he was left as the sole supporter of several younger brothers and sisters. Formal education was of necessity terminated at the eighth grade. Shortly after his brothers and sisters were able to make their own ways, he married. One year after marriage his wife was afflicted with what was to become a long pattern of serious illness. For twenty-five years as her health steadily worsened, he cared for her and their two sons. Operations were performed and expenses ran high, but he worked, cared, and loved without reservation. After the visit I knew I had met a man. Yes, love does take time. Love is enduring, and here was a "not so ordinary" man whose conduct demonstrated to

me that he knows the true processes of love in keeping, feeding, and sharing under all conditions.

### Good examples

What a pleasure it is also to witness all along life's paths others—people not driven by tragedy, crisis, or loss—practicing the basic principle of true love. In the usual routines of life often courtesy, consideration, and kindness are best exhibited in the little day-to-day meaningful expressions that denote real love. I'm now thinking of a father I know who takes every appropriate occasion to give his time to his son, often just taking walks and discovering nature's secrets and giving the boy a chance to have his dad all to himself. Think of the mothers you know who have fun teaching their daughters how to bake and cook. There are other mothers who teach their sons to love to read by reading to them and with them. An older brother teaching his younger brother how to start a stamp collection, a sister helping a brother prepare a talk are additional evidences of love in action. I know we may think "how insignificant, how ordinary," but these and others represent the basics in feeding and as a result, fun and happiness.

Let me share others—a coach wanting more than a win for his boys; a mother or father willing to stay up until after date time to talk to a daughter or son when they are in the mood to visit and discuss; a big sister helping a younger sister with her campaign plans; a family helping each other get off on a trip. Another evidence of the routine love we appreciate can be found in a college-age girl writing letters regularly of encouragement to a missionary and keeping herself "special" for marriage to the right young man at the right time in the right place. We also commend the example of fathers who daily teach their children the lesson of true love as they constantly love their mothers. Very often a helping hand with mundane things, such as doing the dishes or even

taking a turn at putting the children to bed, exhibits more true love than the sweet expressions made to sound hollow because of inadequate follow-up. Those who truly understand love know it must be basically simple, continuing, and sincere.

### Many opportunities

The opportunities for showing love for God through the home, neighborhood, mission field, community, and family are never-ending. Some of us are inclined to terminate our love processes in the family when a member disappoints, rebels, or becomes lost. Sometimes when family members least deserve love, they need it most. Love is not appropriately expressed in threats, accusations, expressions of disappointment, or retaliation. Real love takes time, patience, help, and continuing performances. I'm thinking of a prospective elder, for more than thirty-five years completely inactive, now feeding me as my home teacher. "What brought you back, John?" I asked.

"My wife just wouldn't give up on me and my home teaching companion seated here with me tonight just kept 'nudging' me in the right way." John is happy and anxiously engaged in the work today because two people in particular know what love is all about.

### Love requires time

Love of God takes time. Love of family takes time. Love of country takes time. Love of neighbor takes time. Love of companion takes time. Love in courtship takes time. Love of self takes time.

Whether we are a young son, not wanting to hear of love, but preferring to see it in action, a prisoner, a student, a mother, a father, daughter, or the stranger, we need and deserve more than the declaration, "I love you." Let us resolve to take the time to give of ourselves in putting love into appropriate action and performance. God,

too, needs more than words. He is made happy by our feeding, keeping, and continuing.

### True love

I pray our Heavenly Father will help us to learn the truth that meaningful love is a continuing process that will bring joy and happiness to all participating parties. May we take the time to show our families, our friends, the stranger, our prophet, and our God that our declarations of love are backed up by performance by our daily lives, that we know for love to be acceptable to God and man it must be continuing and originate from within.

I pray our Heavenly Father to help us to remember that true love does take time. God help us to take the time to enjoy the blessings of *feeding, keeping, and caring*. I leave you my witness that this Church to which you and I have membership is true. It has been restored and preserved through the eternal love of a living Heavenly Father and our Savior Jesus. This I say in the worthy name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve.

On behalf of all who have listened, we express thanks to those who have rendered the singing during the sessions of this General Conference. Especially now, we express appreciation and our sincere thanks to the members of the Tabernacle Choir for once again having given so generously of their time to bring us the beautiful and inspirational music heard in this conference.

We are deeply grateful to members and conductors of other choirs and organists who have performed during the conference.

At this time too, on behalf of all of us, I should like to express to Peter Lassig our appreciation of these won-

derful flower arrangements that he has prepared. He is our gardener here on Temple Square.

We thank all who have contributed in various ways to success and inspiration of this conference, especially the General Authorities, who have delivered such timely and inspiring messages.

We appreciate the attention given by the local and national press representatives, and by representatives of radio and television, in reporting the sessions of this conference.

We thank our city officials for the cooperation given at this conference; the city traffic officers for their courtesies and efficient handling of the increased traffic; the Fire Department and Red Cross, who have been on hand to render service throughout the conference.

We are grateful to the Tabernacle ushers for seating the great audiences of

these conference sessions in such a courteous manner.

We again express appreciation to the owners and managers of many radio and television stations, who have given public service time to carry the sessions of this conference from coast to coast in the United States, to Hawaii, Alaska, Mexico, Central America, Canada, and Samoa; and by satellite to Australia, the Philippines, and countries of South America.

It will now be our privilege to listen to our beloved president and prophet, Spencer W. Kimball, after which the Tabernacle Choir, directed by Jerold Ottley, with Robert Cundick at the organ, will render, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

The benediction will then be offered by President Rudolf K. Poecker, former president of the Germany Dusseldorf Mission, following which this conference will stand adjourned for six months.

## President Spencer W. Kimball

Brethren and sisters, it has been a glorious conference these three days, during these eight sessions. The Brethren have spoken from their hearts; they brought to our attention many of the great truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master.

### An inspiring conference

We hope that the leaders and the members of the Church who have attended and listened to the conference have been inspired and uplifted. We hope you have made copious notes of the thoughts that have come to your mind as the Brethren have addressed you. Many suggestions have been given that will help you as leaders in the perfection of your work. Many helpful thoughts have been given for the perfection of our own lives, and that, of

course, is the basic reason for our coming.

While sitting here, I have made up my mind that when I go home from this conference this night there are many, many areas in my life that I can perfect. I have made a mental list of them, and I expect to go to work as soon as we get through with conference.

You have heard the Brethren speak with great strength of the principles of the gospel. You heard Brother Benson in his inspired sermon tell us that the immutable laws of God remain steadfast in the heavens above; when men and nations refuse to abide by them, the penalty must follow. They will be wasted away. Sin demands punishment. He said further, "Therefore, as humble servants of the Lord, we call upon the leaders of nations to be humble and humble themselves before God, to seek