

Friday, October 1

First Day

cinders out of your wounds, and take one more step.

"I dare you!"

The last report I had on Cliff Cushman indicated that he was missing in action in the Vietnam war.

Saving souls

The Church is engaged in the greatest work in all the world—saving the souls of our Father's children. It is important that each member know his or her duties and be dedicated and committed in carrying them out in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. It is important that all concerned have vision of the total job to be done and his or her role with respect thereto. It is important that we marshal all the resources and get them working together in a corre-

lated way so the Church can reach its full potential in helping the Lord bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Our goal is perfection for all of God's children who will listen, accept, and live the gospel.

May we be successful in this, our greatest responsibility, is my humble prayer, in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just listened to Elder William H. Bennett of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of the Seventy will be our next speaker. He will be followed by President Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Marion D. Hanks

Of the First Council of the Seventy

The poet has supplied a line that will suffice me today, though there is much I would wish to say. "We shall not cease from exploration," he wrote, "And the end of all our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time."

I come again to the work of the Seventy with greater capacity to appreciate the significance and sacredness of a calling which the Lord in the revelation talks of in terms of "special witnesses." (D&C 107:25.) There could be no holier commission.

"What do ye more than others?"

In his great sermon this morning, Elder Hunter referred us to the Savior's quotations in His response to Lucifer,

from scriptures which in His day were already ancient.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill" (Matt. 5:21), He said. "But I say unto you . . ." (Matt. 5:22), and then He broadened the issue; He spoke of matters which those who listened recognized as applying to them. Probably they had not been guilty of killing, but had they been angry with a brother without cause? "It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Matt. 5:27). But had His hearers offended God by entertaining this sin in their own hearts?

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

"But I say unto you, That ye resist

not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matt. 5:38-39.) It had been said of old that one should love his neighbor and hate his enemy, but Christ said that the disciple is to love his enemies, bless others that may curse him, do good to and pray for them which hate or spitefully use him. (See Matt. 5:43-44.)

There are actions that are plainly evil, and with these the true Christian must have no part. But the obligation is greater than that. "What do ye more than others?" (Matt. 5:47) was His question.

Rejoicing

I thought of this as I sat once with a choice person who had been wronged, and in her anguish and anger had herself subsequently acted in error. Her sins were serious, innocent people had suffered, and the road back was difficult. But that was past. In contrition and humiliation she had followed the course to full forgiveness and had received it. There was a serenity of spirit and a sweet radiation of peace about her that made me think of parables of lost sheep and coin and son, and the language in them concerning the joy and rejoicing in heaven over "one sinner that repenteth." (Luke 15:7.)

I said, "You really do understand the joy and rejoicing in heaven, don't you?"

"Yes," she said with a warm smile. Then, not accusing and not condemning, "Brother Hanks, why isn't there more rejoicing in the ward where I live?"

I have pondered that question in my mind and heart.

Paul wrote of such an one: "Ye ought . . . to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps [he] should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

"Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." (2 Cor. 2:7-8.)

The Lord expects more

The Lord expects more of the disciple than ordinary response to need, to opportunity, to commandment. He expects more humility, more hearkening, more repenting, more mercy and forgiving and faith, more service and sacrifice.

He taught the lesson many times in many ways. The Samaritan in the parable understood something the priest and the Levite seemed not to know; Where there is a need, I personally have a responsibility to help. There is little use asking who is my neighbor; *I am neighbor* to my neighbor in need. (See Luke 10:30-37.)

In another parable the despised publican understood what the self-righteous Pharisee was not willing to learn: That every one of us needs the mercy of God and will receive it, and be exalted, if we truly humble ourselves before the holiness of God and do His will. He whose obedience or humility is more for the gallery than for God, who seeks to exalt self and not Savior, is not acceptable to Him and shall be brought down. (See Luke 18:10-14.)

Loftier expectations

I was moved with the personal meaning of all of this the other evening when we sat with a group of mentally retarded people and their families and friends. I pondered how much of the strength and time and faith of the Lord had gone into helping handicapped people! The sick, the blind, the lame, the leper, the lost, the emotionally or mentally or spiritually disturbed—these He blessed. Little wonder that Joseph Smith would say, "All the minds and spirits that God ever sent into the world are susceptible of enlargement." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 354.)

It came to me forcefully that God expects that His handicapped children will be given an opportunity for that enlargement, and that His disciples will

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accept the great responsibility to be concerned that they are. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2.)

"What do ye more than others?"

All through the scriptures the loftier expectation is expressed by the Lord and His apostles: Believe, repent, obey the ordinances, walk in the light of the Spirit, endure in faith—yes! But also, manifest your discipleship in civility, in gentility and tender compassion, in kindness and consideration, in patience and forbearance and refusal to condemn, in forgiveness and mercy.

In the book of Romans we read that the disciples are charged to "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." "Weep with them that weep." "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." "Walk honestly." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (See Rom. 12, 13.)

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Rom. 13:8-9.)

True disciples

There are many true disciples who "do more" than some others of us. I think of a choice lady born with a severely handicapped body and a wonderfully capacious and gracious spirit who, as she accepted an honor for her special contributions to other handicapped persons, spoke of an incident of her childhood. Playmates had called her names that reflected on her physical condition and caused her pain and tears. When she reached home her

father held her in his lap in his big strong arms and wept with her as he explained that he had anticipated that day, and that it would be a crucial one for her, and could be an opportune one if she would learn the lesson that could make her life fruitful and happy. "Sweetheart," he said, "what the children said about you is true, but it wasn't fair and it wasn't kind. You do have a hump on your back and some other serious problems. But that isn't your fault. It isn't your parents' fault or Heavenly Father's fault. It is one of those things that happen in this yet imperfect world. What the boys and girls said is true, but it wasn't fair and it wasn't kind. If all your life you will try to be more fair and more kind to others than some of them may sometimes be to you, then you will be happy, and your life will be full and useful."

"That," she said, "is what I have tried to do—just be more fair and kind to others than some of them have sometimes been to me."

Love God and each other

Pierre de Chardin wrote, "The day will come when after harnessing the weather, the winds, the tides, gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and on that day for the second time in the history of the world man will have discovered fire." (In *Toward the Future*.)

In Alfred Noyes' *Watchers of the Skies*, there is a conversation between a friend of the learned astronomer Tycho Brahe and a king who has just learned that the earth moves, is a "sky-tossed ball," and in apprehension speaks: "If earth so lightly move, what of my realm? Oh, what shall now stand sure?" "Naught," was the answer, "in all this world but love. All else is dreamstuff and shall not endure." (Alfred Noyes, *The Torch-Bearers Watchers of the Sky*, New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1922, p. 75.)

All the law is comprehended in this, that we love God and each other.

In the conclusion of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, there is a line worthy of meditation. Brutus, his life near its end, looks upon the body of Cassius and says, "Friends, I owe more tears to this dead man than you shall see me pay." Then, "I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time." (Act 5, Scene 3.)

Show compassion

All of us, I am sure, will find time to shed our tears. It may be in sorrow and lamentation that we have not measured more nearly to the standard of the Lord's expectation in our concern and compassion for each other—that in learning and speaking much about Him we have never been suffused with the warmth of His loving heart, have never really been His disciple in matters that meant so much to Him.

Our tears will be tears of gladness and rejoicing if somehow, amidst all the

exhortation and admonition, all the searching and the seeking and the running to and fro, we have begun to understand what He meant when He asked of us, "What do ye more than others?" and have lifted our lives therefore to greater concern for each other, to more forgiving and comforting and confirming of our love toward the sorrowing soul, to more honesty and diligence, to more fairness and kindness, and to more joy and rejoicing in the ward where we live when a beloved son or daughter comes home again.

God grant that we may make it so. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

President Ezra Taft Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will be our concluding speaker.

President Ezra Taft Benson

Of the Council of the Twelve

Humbly and gratefully I stand before you this afternoon. As president of the Council of Twelve Apostles, I want all to know that we as the Quorum of the Twelve are pleased and in full accord with the action taken this morning in enlarging the First Quorum of Seventy and the reorganization of the First Council of the Seventy.

Our heritage

As we approach the end of our nation's Bicentennial celebration, it is ap-

propriate that we consider our heritage, our citizenship in this great nation, and our membership in the restored church of Christ.

I pay fervent tribute to the forebears who made this possible—the Founding Fathers of this republic and our Mormon pioneers. I pay tribute to their faithful deeds, their noble lives, and their lasting lessons of faith in God, courage, industry, self-reliance, and integrity.

We stand today as beneficiaries of their priceless heritage to us, a heritage