

wife, Gwen, who is one of our Heavenly Father's most noble handmaidens: she has sustained me with an unflinching devotion; she is full of love and faith and possesses a great love of the gospel. She has been an inspiration to me, and I love her with all of my heart. I appreciate and love each of our six children, a son-in-law, and our first grandchild. Their righteous lives have brought nothing but joy and happiness to us.

May I extend a special love and greeting to my son who is in the Language Training Mission and who will leave Tuesday for Padova, Italy.

I bear to you today, my brothers and sisters, my testimony—for which I am grateful—that the Lord Jesus Christ lives, that this is his work, that President Spencer Woolley Kimball is indeed the Lord's prophet upon the earth, and I love him. I pledge to him, to my Brethren of the General Authorities, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I will serve with all of my heart, might, mind, and strength. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

The Choir and congregation will now join in singing, "Come, Come Ye Saints." After the singing, Elder Robert E. Wells of the First Quorum of the Seventy will address us.

The congregation joined the Mormon Youth Chorus in singing the hymn, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

President Tanner

Elder Robert E. Wells, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Supervisor of the Chile-Argentina-Uruguay-Paraguay Area, will address us.

He will be followed by Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Robert E. Wells

My dear brothers and sisters, I pray that you and I might be united by the Spirit, uplifted together, and rejoice in the beautiful things of the gospel. I have in my pocket a silver dollar. On one side it says, "in God we trust." We have been taught by the prophets to trust in the Lord, to trust as did young David when facing the giant Goliath. Now, there is another side to that coin. Would that it read, "and God can trust in you." The Lord wants us to trust in him, but he also wants to be able to trust in us. One of our great prophet leaders said, "To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved" (David O. McKay, "Character," *True to the Faith*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, p. 274).

Trust

One of the principal purposes of this life is to find out if the Lord *can* trust us. One of our familiar scriptures says, "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abr. 3:25). We are destined to be tried, tested, and proven during our sojourn on earth to see if we are trustworthy.

The Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that to attain the highest blessing of this life, we will first be tested and proved thoroughly until the Lord is certain that he can trust us in all things, regardless of the personal hazard or

sacrifice involved. The Lord loves all of his children, but he can trust some more than others. It is far better when he can both love *and* trust each one of us.

It has been said that one measure of a man is not how much he is worth, but rather how much he can borrow, how much he can be trusted with someone else's money. I feel that the banker's formula for measuring trust has a direct application to spiritual trust. Just as a banker measures a person's *character, capacity, and capital*, so the Lord might measure our character, our capacity, and our spiritual capital (or spiritual reserves) to identify those in whom he might trust the more.

Character

Character is part of trust. If there is any doubt as to the borrower's character (his ethics and morals that lead him to meet his obligations on time no matter what sacrifice is required), there will be no trust and no loan will be granted.

The Lord needs to know if he can trust us to do the right thing in every situation. Joseph of Egypt had a fine position as Potiphar's principal steward. Then the wife of Potiphar attempted to entice him to sin. Joseph was far from home and family. He was a trusted slave, but still a slave nonetheless. No one would know or care about his morals. To spurn the woman would certainly bring severe complications to his life, but he was true to his noble character. He fled sin, was caught, and imprisoned. He paid a price for his purity; yet to have done otherwise would have been a tragic flaw in his character. Nephi's strength of character led him to obey a commandment. He could easily have been slain by the wicked Laban. Yet to not obey, when he had the testimony that the Lord would open the way for him to obtain the plates, would have been a flaw in his character. The Lord could trust Joseph and Nephi.

A person of high character testifies and then lives in harmony with his testi-

mony. Martin Luther, at the Diet of Worms, demonstrated this principle of being true to oneself: "I cannot and [I] will not recant, for it is neither safe nor expedient to act against conscience. Here I take my stand; I can do no otherwise, so help me God!" (Quoted in "The Building of Human Character," *Gospel Ideals*, David O. McKay, Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953, p. 354.)

Joseph Smith describes Paul's character: "He saw a light, and heard a voice; . . . some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad. . . . But all this did not destroy the reality of his vision. He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise." Then Joseph adds his testimony regarding his own vision, revealing his own strength of character; "I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it." (Joseph Smith 2:24-25.) Joseph Smith was a man of great, noble character that the Lord knew he could trust, no matter what the sacrifice.

President David O. McKay said: "Man's chief concern in life should not be the acquiring of gold, or of fame, or of material possessions. It should not be the development of physical prowess, nor of intellectual strength, but his aim, the highest in life, should be the development of a Christlike character." (McKay, *True to the Faith*, p. 32.)

Active membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints builds a Christlike character. Serving a full-time mission builds a Christlike character in whom the Lord can trust.

Spiritual capacity

Now, capacity is also part of trust. The capacity which the banker looks for in his client is that proven ability to perform as promised. The capacity the Lord looks for in us is that ability to perform to the degree that we become profitable servants unto him. The Lord has given us talents, gifts, and blessings.

He expects us to magnify them and to use them in the service of others if he is to trust us.

The servant who received five talents returned ten and received the praise "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21). The servant who had received two talents returned four talents, and he received equal praise with the first. However, the Lord chastised the slothful servant that received one talent for not multiplying that which had been given to him. The principle is clear: The Lord likes to see capacity double; he likes to see his servants double that which has been given to them—in talents or in responsibilities. It is evident that President Kimball, our great president, also likes to see things double. He likes to see double the number of missionaries, double the number of new faithful members coming into the Church, double the attendance at sacrament meeting, and so on. I believe that each one of us has a sacred responsibility to multiply our capacity and our performance in every measurable way. If we do so, the Lord can better trust our capacity as his servants.

There are many areas besides Church service in which we could make a sustained effort to increase our capacity. We should strive to increase our technical capacity in our daily bread-winning labors. We should strive to improve our capacity as parents and teachers. We should multiply our capacity as member-missionaries in asking the Golden Questions and in sharing with everyone. We should improve our capacity as informed citizens, as Christian neighbors giving service to others. The Lord can trust us according to our capacity. He can trust us in proportion to what we have done with that which he has given us. Active membership in the Mormon church builds both spiritual and temporal capacity. Serving a full-time mission develops personal capacity that the Lord can trust.

Spiritual capacity is also part of trust. The banker looks at capital as both a reserve which the client has available with which to meet emergencies, as well as a measure of the client's commitment to the venture. On the spiritual side of the coin, we might say that the Lord is looking for *both* a spiritual reserve in the individual with which he would meet life's emergencies, as well as a measure of the person's commitment to His kingdom.

Spiritual reserves

Spiritual capital in a sense is an investment each has made in righteous living. It is an asset—in reserve—upon which we may draw in time of need. How do we develop spiritual capital and reserves? We need to make an investment in time studying the scriptures and the words of our living prophets; an investment in more meaningful communication with our Father in Heaven; an investment in service to others; an investment in unconditional, unselfish love of others; an investment in missionary labor, which lays up in store blessings and forgiveness of our sins; an investment in being wiser parents and more obedient children; an investment in doubling our performance in every calling. These investments will provide such spiritual capital and reserves that the Lord can truly trust us to overcome the temptations and frustrations of the world.

Our forefathers built great spiritual reserves by investing in sacrifice. They could face any challenge because they knew that their individual lives were in order and that they were the favored ones of heaven because of the sacrifices they made in giving up everything that was dear to them in order to follow the prophet. They suffered persecutions. They went out as missionaries, leaving families behind. They left producing farms and well-built homes to go out into dry deserts or cold mountains to begin again. The Prophet Joseph said "that a religion that does not require the

sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation" (*Lectures on Faith*, comp. N. B. Lundwall, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, p. 58).

Active membership in Christ's church builds strong spiritual capital and reserves. Serving a full-time mission builds unwavering spiritual capital and reserves.

Trust and love

I read from Doctrine and Covenants 124:20: "My servant . . . may be trusted because of the integrity of his heart; and for the love which he has to my testimony," he adds, "I, the Lord, love him."

I solemnly testify as a witness that

God lives and loves us; that Jesus Christ, his divine Son, stands glorified and exalted at the head of this church which bears his holy name; that the legal and authorized mouthpiece of the Lord here on earth is our living prophet who guides this great and divine church which was restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone of the First Quorum of the Seventy, who has just been released as President of the Texas San Antonio Mission, will now speak to us.

He will be followed by Elder J. Thomas Fyans, a President of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone

And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst." (D&C 84:80.)

Time for serving the Lord

For the past two years our family has served a mission in Texas. It has been glorious and fulfilling beyond all expectations. When we first arrived, Sister Featherstone went to the Lord and said: "We don't have much time. Please let me learn quickly so that the work will go forth."

Later she said, "The Lord has answered my prayers. He taught me several great lessons. One of those lessons came after the first three or four weeks

in the mission field. I was unable to find a few minutes each day to repair to a quiet spot. When I was home I would take about forty-five minutes in the afternoon and go out and curry down my Arabian horse. I would retreat into a world of my own for those few minutes."

She could not find time for even a few minutes for herself in the mission field. She went to the Lord and knelt in prayer and said, "Please, Heavenly Father, help me to find some time for myself while I am here."

And she said that just as clear as anything in this world the words came into her mind, saying, "My daughter, this is not your time; this is my time." We have attempted to work with all our energy while we were on his time. And that work standard is compared to our work standard and not someone else's.

Let me share with you some of the "faith" experiences of the messengers with whom we have served.