

the woman, "Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She answered "No man, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." (See John 8:1-11.)

Jesus did not condone adultery; there is no doubt about His attitude toward proper moral conduct. He chose to teach with love—to show the scribes and Pharisees the need of serving the individual for her best good, and to show the destructive forces of trickery and embarrassment.

Jesus demonstrated to us that under all circumstances there is a proper way to show love.

Perhaps our taxi driver has learned to apply the same Christian principle in his life when he wisely said, "You know, love is very important if it is done right." The Savior's conduct would entitle all of us to conclude also that love is right when it is channeled to proper areas and given the right priorities in our lives.

We live in a complex world. There are many forces calling out, "Love me." A sure way to set our guidelines for that which we choose to serve and learn to love is to follow the admonition of Joshua: "As for

me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15.)

Let us look to our own lives. We serve that which we love. If we sacrifice and give our love for that which our Father in Heaven asks of us, it will help us set our footsteps upon the path of eternal life. Again I conclude, what we serve we learn to love, and what we love takes our time, and what takes our time is what we love.

May God help us to love the right, love the truth, and love areas of service that are rewarding and eternal, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Marvin J. Ashton, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Oh Say, What Is Truth?" After the singing, Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will address us.

The choir and congregation sang "Oh Say, What Is Truth?"

Elder Loren C. Dunn

I have been inspired, as I know you have, with the singing of this lovely choir, and I think especially of their song at the beginning of this meeting, "True to the Faith." It is faith that I would like to speak about this afternoon.

Individual faith

We have been referred to as a believing people. Certainly individual faith is the foundation stone of the gospel and the quality which is most important to us as individuals.

Joseph Smith said, "Faith is the assurance which men have of the existence of things which they have not seen, and the principle of action in all intelligent beings. . . . [It] is the first great governing principle." (*Lectures on Faith*, comp. N. B. Lundwall, Salt Lake City: N. B. Lundwall, n.d., pp. 7, 10.)

And Jacob teaches that the Lord commands all men that they must have "perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the Kingdom of God." (2 Ne. 9:23.)

As a principle of power and of

action, and as the key to our salvation, our individual faith, then, becomes of absolute importance to us.

Paul admonished us to "be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.)

"If ye can no more than desire to believe," said Alma, "let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words." (Alma 32:27.)

Moroni says, "Dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith." (Ether 12:6.)

There are many steps a person can take to develop the gift and power of faith. In the next few minutes I would like to suggest six of these steps.

"Believe in God"

Number one: Faith is the ability to recognize the Lord as all-powerful and the giver of all blessings.

As King Benjamin put it:

"Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all things which the Lord can comprehend." (Mosiah 4:9.)

Sometimes we compartmentalize. We pray about one thing and worry about something else. We seem to limit the ability of the Lord to help us in every aspect of our lives.

John A. Widtsoe tells us the following:

"For several years, under a Federal grant with my staff of workers we had gathered thousands of data in the field of soil moisture; but I could not extract any general law running through them. I gave up at last. My wife and I went to the temple that

day to forget the failure. In the third endowment room, out of the unseen, came the solution, which has long since gone into print." (*In A Sunlit Land: The Autobiography of John A. Widtsoe*, Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1952, p. 177.)

Faith, then, is the realization that the Lord can help us with all things.

Follow promptings

Number two: Faith is the ability to do what we are prompted to do, and when we are prompted to do it.

A few years ago when we were presiding over the Sydney Mission, I was earnestly seeking a blessing from the Lord. The mission had done well but was pausing on a plateau, and we needed to move ahead once again.

On one particular day I was fasting and praying that the Lord would lead us to a new level of achievement. In the midst of my prayers came the clear impression to seek out my son and give him a blessing. I followed the prompting and found my son, whom I am close to, in another part of the house, attending to his high school studies.

I said, "How are things going?"

He answered, in typical teenage fashion, "Why?"

Not knowing what else to say, I asked, "Do you want a blessing?"

He looked at me in stunned silence for a few seconds and then said, "Yes."

The inspiration that followed from that blessing proved to be of great importance to both my son and me. It was an experience that neither of us will forget.

Yet this would have been lost had I stopped to question why the Lord was turning me to my first responsibility, my family, when I was seeking a blessing for the mission.

Live laws of God

Number three: Faith is the ability to live the laws of God that control the blessings we are in need of. While we should not keep the commandments just to receive blessings, nevertheless, the blessings are there.

Harold B. Lee tells the experience of praying very hard for a material blessing he needed badly. He states that one day while he was praying for this blessing, he remembered that he had recently received some income that he had not yet tithed. It was as if, he said, the accusing voice of the Lord was saying: You want a blessing from me but you have not been obedient to the laws upon which such blessings are based. ("Faith," address delivered at Brigham Young University, 28 Jun 1955, tape in Historical Department Archives.)

He said that he went and paid the tithing on that income, and then he again sought that particular blessing of the Lord.

Build an "ark"

Number four: Faith is the ability to act "as if."

In his teachings, Paul said:

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen . . . prepared an ark to the saving of his house." (Heb. 11:7.)

President Kimball gives us this insight to Noah and the ark:

"As yet there was no evidence of rain and flood. . . His warnings were considered irrational. . . How foolish to build an ark on dry ground with the sun shining and life moving forward as usual! But time ran out. . . The floods came. The disobedient . . . Were drowned. The miracle of the ark followed the faith manifested in its building." (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972, pp. 5-6.)

Many years ago during the dark days of World War II, Elvon W. Orme, the president of the Australia Mission was invited to a faithful widow's house for Sunday dinner. Rationing had taken its toll, and many of the good foods had long since disappeared from the shelves of the local stores.

When the president arrived, he was shocked to find a table filled with foods that were in short supply and had not been seen for months.

"I can't eat this," he said, almost embarrassed that he was taking it out of the mouth of a widow.

"I'm afraid you'll have to," she said. "You see, I listened to the Brethren years ago and put in my year's supply, and this is the only kind of food I have."

She showed the faith to act "as if" by storing food, and the faith produced a miracle in the time of need.

I wonder how many Saints will be able to withstand the disaster of their own personal flood by showing faith in the advice of modern prophets and building an ark of family preparedness.

Believe in people

Number five: Faith is the ability to be charitable and to believe in people.

The Savior of the world is the foremost example of this love. After having been rejected and despised, he asked his Father to forgive those who crucified him because "they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

Joseph Smith is another example. After living a life filled with trials and betrayals, he said as he was going to Carthage:

"I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but . . . I have a conscience void of offense toward . . . all men." (*History of the Church*, 6:555; italics omitted.)

I knew a man once whom I respected very much and who had this quality. On one occasion, a beggar came from out of town and appeared at his door and asked for money. My friend said, "I have an old barn that needs painting. If you want to paint it, I'll pay you for it." They went out to look at the barn, and then the man was sent to England's paint store and arrangements were made for him to pick up the paint he needed.

The barn was painted, and the man was paid and left town. Shortly after, Mr. England called my friend and said that the man had picked up far more paint than was needed to paint the barn. In short, my friend had been taken.

Yet, he took the opportunity to teach his sons a lesson.

"Had I known what he did, I would have stopped him," he said. "But we have our painted barn, and the painter, whatever his problems, will always know that there was someone willing to believe in him."

Faith cannot be nourished in a heart that has been made hard by continued cynicism, skepticism, and unforgiveness.

A person who cannot see the good in people not only destroys his own faith, but also becomes a basically unhappy person.

Follow inspired leaders

Number six: Faith is the ability to allow ourselves to be guided by the priesthood.

Paul teaches us this important truth:

"And he [the Lord] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." And here he tells us why these priesthood leaders have been given to the Saints: "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure

of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:11, 13.)

Priesthood leaders, all leaders who have been called by revelation under the hands of the priesthood, have been given to us so we can come to a unity of the faith, to the end that we might know the Savior and have his image in our countenance and become like him, "that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world." (D&C 1:20.)

Years ago, President Joseph Fielding Smith, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, attended a stake conference where a relatively new stake president had been called. A man repeatedly came up to President Smith and asked him for counsel concerning a personal matter. Finally, President Smith said he would see the man, provided the new stake president could be there. As the man unfolded his situation, the stake president was prompted with what the person needed to do. Yet President Smith listened to the brother and surprised everyone by saying, "I have no counsel for you." The man was surprised, and he left. After he had gone, President Smith turned to the stake president and said, "I knew how to counsel that man, but I was also prompted to know that he would go against the counsel. So rather than condemn him for going against the counsel of the priesthood, I told him nothing."

From this we learn that it is not enough to seek the direction of those whom God has called to lead us—but we must come with a willingness to follow the counsel of inspired leaders in order to develop our faith.

Beacon and foundation stone

Latter-day Saints need to believe. They need to take every opportunity to develop faith, both in their own lives and in the lives of others.

Faith is a part of our heritage.

Those who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ are the blood of Israel, and characteristic of the house of Israel is the ability to believe. Some have referred to it as "believing blood."

My faith is both a beacon and a foundation stone. It is born of the Spirit and enriched by a multitude of prayers and promptings. It lifts my soul upwards. It opens my heart to peace and joy. It nourishes and reaffirms those things that I fully know. My faith is such that I know God lives. I know he lives and Jesus is the Christ and Joseph Smith was a true prophet and we sit in the midst

of apostles and prophets today.

May the Lord bless us with faith as we go forward in our lives, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Kimball

Elder Loren C. Dunn, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

Elder Angel Abrea, who was sustained this morning as a new member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Angel Abrea

Gracias

A few days ago, when I received a phone call at the mission home in Rosario, Argentina, and President Kimball extended to me this calling, Sister Abrea and I were not only touched emotionally, but also overwhelmed by the tremendous responsibility. A feeling and a word immediately filled me. The feeling, gratitude; the word, *gracias*—thank you.

Thank you to those two lady missionaries who, almost thirty-eight years ago, arrived at my door and brought the good news of the gospel. Thank you to my dear mother, who took me to Primary, to each meeting of the Church, with whom I read for the first time the Book of Mormon, and who even now, by means of her activity and faithful life in the Church, continues to set for me an example worth emulating.

Thank you to my father, who I know has accepted the word of the gospel and baptism beyond the veil, who, when I was a youth of eleven years, sat with me at my bed one

Sunday morning and said to me, "Angel, if you are going to be a member of the Church, you will always have to comply with everything that it asks of you. You have accepted a commitment, and you should honor it."

Thank you to my beloved wife, who has helped and sustained me, always full of faith and love for the gospel, a constant inspiration in my life.

Thank you for my three daughters, who, because of their love and dedication to the Church, are a pride, joy, and happiness in my life.

Thank you to my leaders and teachers, who, many times under unfavorable circumstances, have done their part. Thank you to the hundreds of missionaries who have made possible the development of the Church in the countries of South America. And especially thank you to the parents of those missionaries who have sent their sons and daughters to unknown countries, perhaps with fear and anxiety, but with the surety that they would be doing what the Lord required at the time.