

require expensive and extensive travel should be eliminated.

These are but a few of the ways of reducing the financial burden on the people.

Clearly we are preparing for the day when the higher law, that of consecration, will again become the financial law of the Church through which we will properly take care of the poor. Until that time, it is our responsibility and blessing—as a matter of fact, our covenant—to give generously from our surplus to bless the poor.

We stress the teaching of personal and family preparedness as the first principle of the welfare services program. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each stake president and bishop

to make sure that excessive financial demands are not made upon the people which will weaken their financial security and make it impossible for them to take care of their own needs.

May the Lord bless us to be wise and sound stewards in blessing the people with our teachings and our leadership, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church, has just addressed us.

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker.

Elder David B. Haight

Scott Hall is an unusual young man. His father, Garth, is an assistant coach for the Brigham Young University football team.

Recently Scott asked his mother for a white shirt.

"But you have all of these other beautiful colored shirts. Why do you want a white shirt?" asked his mother.

"I just have to have a white shirt," he said.

"But why?" his mother asked.

Scott replied, "I can't be a missionary without a white shirt."

Scott is two years old.

Expansion of the Church

The story of the expansion of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world not only is a miracle but is "as the stone . . . cut out of the mountain without hands [that] shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth." (See D&C 65:2.)

Recently a California family, driving through St. George, Utah, on vacation, was attracted by the unusual architecture of the St. George Temple. They walked around the building, admiring its beauty.

Having a little time to spare, the parents entered the information center; their two young children crossed the street to sit under the shade of a tree near our meetinghouse.

A teacher, calling the children in to Primary and seeing the two young visitors, said, "Come on in to Primary." They went in.

The parents, now finished at the information center, started looking for the children. After searching for nearly an hour, they saw them come out of the chapel.

The father said, "We've been looking all over for you. Where have you been?"

They replied, "We've been to Primary."

"Primary! What's Primary?"

"Primary is where you learn

about Jesus; and, besides, Daddy, you shouldn't be smoking!" Their father just about swallowed his cigar.

He remarked, "Let's get on our way. We're way behind schedule."

The children said, "We can't go."

"Can't go! Why not?"

"We are in a play."

"A play?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied, "and the play isn't until next week, and we have to stay all week for rehearsals."

The family stayed in St. George for a week!

The children rehearsed; the parents were taught the gospel; and the whole family was baptized.

The truth of our message—the impact of its spiritual influence upon hearts *previously prepared*—is the greatest influence for good in the world.

Senior Classman Kevin Scott was assigned to preside over a dining table of ten freshmen midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy. Seniors at the Naval Academy at Annapolis assist in training new midshipmen not only in tactics, but also in courtesy and discipline.

During the dinner Senior Scott requested that each midshipman give his full name, his hometown, and his state.

One of the freshmen answered, "Midshipman Ernest Ward Sax, sir, from Salt Lake City, Utah."

Senior Scott said, "Are you a Mormon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Does that mean you do not smoke or drink liquor or coffee?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you have a copy of the Book of Mormon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you read it?" was the next question.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you loan it to me?" requested Scott.

"Yes, sir."

An unusual but friendly relationship developed, with an exchange of books and pamphlets between young Midshipman Sax of Salt Lake City and Senior Classman Scott of North Carolina.

Annapolis graduate Kevin Scott is now a Marine lieutenant in flight training in Florida. Newly baptized Kevin Scott is the ward mission leader, the "spark plug" of the ward missionary effort. He is now testifying to others about the restoration of the gospel and enthusiastically encouraging our members to spread the message.

Midshipman Ward Sax, now in his second year at Annapolis, is the son of a caring Mormon family, a young man who honored his priesthood responsibility.

Young generation of champions needed

As I look at a map of the world—its vastness, its billions of people—and ponder the responsibility our Lord has placed upon the young Aaronic Priesthood bearers, I marvel at how the Lord has placed each of you in families or special circumstances at this particular time.

America and every country in the world desperately need a young generation of champions—champions of truth, of honesty, of purity, of high moral standards, of faith in a living God.

Our Lord counseled us to "seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all . . . things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33.) As you study the scriptures, pray to understand them, and live in harmony with their inspired teachings, then you will grow in wisdom and strength.

You hold sacred priesthood keys, rights, and responsibilities. A troubled world is waiting to hear from you. What will you say? How

will you say it? Will the world know that you know for sure where you are going?

Paul taught his young friend Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.)

The Lord has placed in our hands the divine power and authority to act in all things, to preach the gospel and perform the ordinances of salvation by which men are sealed up into eternal life. You *are* different from the rest of the world.

While Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon with Oliver Cowdery as the scribe, they went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord regarding baptism. While calling upon the Lord, "a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light" and laid his hands upon them and ordained them, saying:

"Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins." (JS-H 1:68-69.)

Joseph Smith received direction to baptize Oliver Cowdery and Oliver to baptize Joseph. Then the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred upon each.

The heavenly messenger "said that his name was . . . John the Baptist, . . . and that he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John, who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which . . . would in due time be conferred on" Joseph and Oliver. (See JS-H 1:72.)

You hold this same sacred authority to declare repentance, to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to assist the bishop, and to be concerned for those needing special encouragement.

Restoration through Joseph Smith

Our Lord has used young men your age in many miraculous ways.

Jesus taught and confounded the priests in the temple when only twelve.

David, the young shepherd boy, with complete faith in the Lord, met the Philistine giant, Goliath, on the battlefield. With a prayer in his heart and unafraid, David took a stone out of his bag and, whirling the sling around his head, flung the stone at Goliath, and it sank deep into his forehead. Goliath fell to the earth. A young boy's courage and faith in God had saved the Israelites. (See 1 Sam. 17.)

Joseph Smith at age fourteen read in James: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) Later he said:

"Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man. . . . It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. . . .

"I retired to the woods. . . .

"I kneeled down and began to offer up the desire of my heart to God." (JS-H 2:12, 14-15.)

Thus began the events that led to the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ when God the Father and His Son appeared to the boy, Joseph.

Values and truths are ageless

Beloved young friends, much of our future rests with you. You are needed—not to be weak, but to be strong. You can hold high the beacon of light in a darkened world as you testify of a living God.

You have our love and encouragement. We believe in you. We are not out of touch with you and your challenges. We have "walked in the same moccasins." We dated lovely girls and know that associations with them can be uplifting, wholesome, and a beautiful experience.

Live so your memories can bless the full length of your life. Live for

that glorious day when you will go to the holy temple for eternal blessings and joy. Resist the temptations and pressures of those who might urge you to stray, to use marijuana or beer or hard liquor. You understand how deadly they become to your body and then to your spirit. You must not succumb. You are different. Pornography, filthy literature and movies, vile language, and suggestive music are not part of your life. They can destroy you.

We know you are maturing in a world promoting a quest for fun, excitement, material possessions, immediate gratification, and an attitude of "do it now." Develop the strength to defer gratification—to understand there is a time and season for everything and a maturing process that is part of God's eternal plan.

We remind you of values and truths that are ageless and eternal—like "duty, truth, justice, and mercy." They "become the measure of decision. . . . The straight and righteous path is the shortest and the surest." (Walter Lippman, "The Fascination of Greatness," *New York Herald Tribune*, 7 Sept. 1943.)

Following the sensational Brigham Young University basketball victory over Notre Dame, Danny Ainge's father was asked if his son might break his professional baseball contract for a better offer in basketball. His father replied, "Danny has a contract. Honor and integrity are more important than money."

Jesus taught, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.)

Your character is yours alone to build. No one can injure your character but you.

Life is a competition not with others, but with ourselves. We should seek each day to live stronger, better, truer lives; each day to master some weakness of yesterday;

each day to repair a mistake; each day to surpass ourselves.

Elder Howard W. Hunter's grandson attended tithing settlement with his father some time ago. The bishop indicated his pleasure in the young lad's wanting to pay a full tithing and asked him if he thought the gospel was true. This seven-year-old boy, having paid his full tithing of fourteen cents, said he guessed the gospel was true, "but it sure costs a lot of money."

We learn in our youth to pay an honest tithing. The Lord requires one-tenth of what we earn. If you work as a bagger in a grocery store, the money you are paid for every tenth bag of groceries you carry out to a car belongs to the Lord. Pay your tithing monthly or weekly as you are paid. Never be in debt to the Lord. Spiritual and temporal blessings will be yours as you carefully honor this commandment.

A learning experience

Football came to our country town later than most. The school board had neither the money for equipment nor a coach. Then the great day arrived. Our high school principal was able to buy twelve inexpensive football outfits, except the expensive cleated football shoes (we used our basketball shoes), and our coach was recruited from the faculty because he had witnessed a game.

We learned a few simple plays, how to tackle—or so we thought—and set off for our first game with Twin Falls, the previous year's Idaho state champions.

We dressed and went out on the field to warm up. Their school band started to play (they had more students in the band than we had in our entire high school), and then through the gates came their team. The twelve of us—a full team of eleven plus one all-round substitute—watched in amazement as they kept

coming through the gates—all thirty-nine of them in full uniform.

The game was most interesting! To say it was a learning experience is rather mild. After two plays we didn't have any desire to have the ball—so we would kick it, and soon they would score. When they got the ball, they would run a baffling play and score. Our problem was to get rid of the ball—it was less punishing.

In the final minutes of the game they became a little reckless. A wild pass fell into the arms of Clifford Lee, who was playing halfback with me. He was startled, not knowing for sure what to do—until he saw the "Dallas Cowboys" thundering after him. Then he knew what to do. He was fast. He wasn't running for points, but for his life! Clifford made a touchdown; six points went up on the board. The final score—106 to 6! We really didn't deserve the six points, but with our torn shirts and socks and our bruises, we took them anyway.

A learning experience? Of course! An individual or a team must be prepared. In all things success depends upon previous preparation.

A new world opened

My father was our bishop, but he died before I received the priesthood. I remember so clearly being ordained a deacon. A new world opened up for me. I was now living on a higher plane. As I would hear people say, "You hold the priesthood," it was not easy to fully comprehend. But with humble teachers, we began to understand that as dea-

cons we had been given blessings and authority to do sacred things.

As quorum officers we accounted for all of our members and would see that they were all at church. We enjoyed being together. We chopped wood for the elderly and the widows, filled the coal bins at church, cleaned the meetinghouse every Saturday afternoon, swept the steps, raked the gravel yard, saw that the sacrament trays and lace sacrament cloths were clean and fresh, and had real pride in the appearance of our little meetinghouse.

We were part of the Church and the Church was part of us. We knew it; we felt it! We held the priesthood of God! Understanding teachers guided us and helped us broaden our vision and our ever-expanding role as young men; but more important, they helped prepare us to be called in our youth to be servants of our Savior. He needs every one of you young men who hold the priesthood. I testify that this work is true. I do it humbly, in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Rejoice, the Lord Is King."

The choir and congregation sang "Rejoice, the Lord Is King."

President Marion G. Romney

Gospel covenants

In our priesthood meeting last October we considered "The Oath

and Covenant Which Belongeth to the Priesthood." (See *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, pp.43-45.) Tonight I have in mind calling attention to some spe-