

sheep, one must know who and where they are.

5. Proper assisting requires love, empathy, and the restoration of dignity.

6. Finally, welfare services requires planning, obedience to basic gospel principles, and above all the willingness to serve as our prophet serves, with unconditional love.

May God help us to give of ourselves with wisdom that they may receive with dignity. Truly, "God makes no junk." We are His children. He loves us and wants us to love

ourselves, our families, and our neighbors in a meaningful way. I am pleased with this great arm of the Church. It is an inspired way of life. It is the implementation of eternal principles for the welfare and benefit of all mankind. It is welfare services. To this I leave my witness, testimony, and love in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney speaks without announcement.

President Marion G. Romney

"Building character in the givers and receivers"

It is now my responsibility to say a few words about living welfare principles. For over forty years I have studied and taught the principles of the Church welfare program. I love its principles and know they constitute the capstone to a Christian life. I appreciate what has been said by those who have just spoken to us this morning. They have demonstrated the effect living welfare principles has on us individually and collectively.

In 1936 President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., said, "The real long-term objective of the welfare plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers, rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them and bringing to flower and fruition the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this church." (Special Meeting of Stake Presidencies, 2 Oct. 1936.)

Most of us have experienced the joy of observing someone who has been in need of help receive that help and, consequently, become self-sustaining. Many of us have become

witnesses to the truth that the poor can be exalted when they are administered to in the Lord's way.

Today, however, I would like to direct my comments to the effect living welfare principles has on the giver, as opposed to the receiver. Repeating President Clark's statement of 1936, "The real long-term objective of the welfare plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers." The Lord doesn't really need us to take care of the poor. He could take care of them without our help if it were his purpose to do so. "I, the Lord," he said, "stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

"And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine." (D&C 104:14-15.)

Care for others and develop Christlike love

It would be a simple thing for the Lord to reveal to President Kimball where the deposits of oil and precious ores are. We could then hire someone to dig them out and we could float in wealth—and we would float in wealth

right down to Hades. No, the Lord doesn't really need us to take care of the poor, but *we* need this experience; for it is only through our learning how to take care of each other that we develop within us the Christlike love and disposition necessary to qualify us to return to his presence.

That one cannot be a true disciple of Christ without significant giving is dramatically emphasized in the revelation received by the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, on June 7, 1831. In this revelation, the Lord directed twenty-eight of the elders to travel two by two from Kirtland to Jackson County, Missouri. They were to go by different routes, preaching the gospel as they went. You will recall that they were destitute in those days and had to travel through primitive country. Joseph Smith and his immediate companions "journeyed by wagon and stage and occasionally by canal boat to Cincinnati, Ohio," then to Louisville, Kentucky, and on to St. Louis by steamer. "From this city on the Mississippi, the Prophet of God walked across the entire state of Missouri to Independence, Jackson County, a distance of nearly three hundred miles as traveled." (George Q. Cannon, *Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1958, p. 117.) I call these facts to your attention that you may have in mind the background against which the Lord said to these men as they started, "Remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple." (D&C 52:40.) Imagine that! These elders were nearly destitute and the Lord said, "Remember . . . the poor and the needy."

That the commandment to give is directed to all people is emphasized by King Benjamin when he said to the poor, "And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, that ye remain from day to day; I mean all you who deny the

beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts that: I give not because I have not, but if I had I would give.

"And now, if ye say this in your hearts ye remain guiltless, otherwise ye are condemned; and your condemnation is just for ye covet that which ye have not received." (Mosiah 4:24-25.)

The "pure love of Christ"

Once we are convinced that we have an obligation to give, we must learn that to render service in the proper spirit is of first importance. Mormon, speaking to those who give for the wrong reasons, said, "For if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing.

"For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness.

"For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God." (Moro. 7:6-8.)

Only by voluntarily giving, out of an abundant love for his neighbor, can one develop that charity characterized by Mormon as the "pure love of Christ." (Moro. 7:47.) In Mosiah we read: "And . . . Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, every one according to that which he had; if he have more abundantly he should impart more abundantly; and of him that had but little, but little should be required; and to him that had not should be given.

"And thus they should impart of their substance *of their own free will and good desires towards God.*" (Mosiah 18:27-28; italics added.)

Lose yourself in service

Some may ask, "How do I obtain these righteous feelings in giving?"

How do I overcome giving grudgingly? How do I obtain the 'pure love of Christ?' To those I would say: Faithfully live all the commandments, give of yourselves, care for your families, serve in church callings, perform missionary work, pay tithes and offerings, study the scriptures—and the list could go on. As you lose yourself in this service, the Lord will touch and soften your heart and gradually bring you to the feelings with which he blessed the people in King Benjamin's time, which prompted them to say, "Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually." (Mosiah 5:2.)

This charity in its perfection is demonstrated by the Lord in everything that he does. The Lord revealed to Moses the numerous worlds which have been created and said, "For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man. . . .

"And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words." (Moses 1:35, 38.)

After revealing to Moses the vastness of his creations, the Lord gave Moses some insight into his reason for doing all this when he said, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) Hence, we see the complete unselfishness of our Father in Heaven. His whole work and glory is to bring eternal life and happiness to his children. Should not our whole purpose in this life, therefore, be made up of righteous service one to another? If not, how can we ever hope to be as he

is? As we individually become filled with the "pure love of Christ" (Moro. 7:47), we collectively evolve into a church which is "pure in heart" (D&C 97:21). We can therefore become as the people of Enoch of whom was written, "The Lord blessed the land . . . and . . . called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them." (Moses 7:17-18.)

Of the Nephites who survived the cataclysm which accompanied the crucifixion of Jesus and thereafter lived the program, the record says, "And it came to pass . . . the people were all converted unto the Lord . . . and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.

"And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift. . . . And surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God." (4 Ne. 1:2, 3, 16.)

Why were these people so happy? Because they were free of the shackles of selfishness and had learned what the Lord knows—that ultimate joy comes only through service.

Exalts the poor and humbles the rich

Becoming a people which is collectively pure in heart is not an impossible dream or an idealistic goal. We know this because the Lord has commanded us to become such, and the Lord gives "no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them." (1 Ne. 3:7.)

When we reach the state of having the "pure love of Christ," our desire to serve one another will have grown to the point where we will be

living fully the law of consecration. Living the law of consecration exalts the poor and humbles the rich. In the process, both are sanctified. The poor, released from the bondage and humiliating limitations of poverty, are enabled as free men to rise to their full potential, both temporally and spiritually. The rich, by consecration and the imparting of their surplus for the benefit of the poor, *not by constraint, but willingly as an act of free will*, evidence that charity for their fellowmen characterized by Mormon as "the pure love of Christ." (Moro. 7:47.) This will bring both the giver and receiver to the common ground on which the Spirit of God can meet them.

A people who shall live the gospel to its fulness

It is the mission of the Church of this last dispensation to develop another people who shall live the gospel in its fulness. This people are to become "pure in heart," and they shall flourish and be blessed upon the mountains and upon the high places. They shall be the Lord's people. They shall walk with God because they shall be of one heart and one mind, and they shall dwell in righteousness, and there shall be no poor among them.

Let us have these things in mind and let us go forward with this great program. Welfare principles are eternal. The welfare program is built upon

the principles of the law of consecration. I know from my own experience that this is the Lord's work. It is to prepare us to become like Christ. If you will think of the most holy, sacred place you have ever been, you will remember that the final thing we are all to do is to be able and willing to consecrate all that we have to the building up of the kingdom of God—which includes caring for our fellowmen. Doing this, we will hasten the advent of the Millennium. God grant that we do not fail, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney

The first general session of the 151st Semiannual General Conference of the Church will convene in this Tabernacle at ten o'clock this morning.

We will sing in closing hymn no. 66, "How Firm a Foundation," following which the benediction will be offered by Elder Derek A. Cuthbert of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The congregation sang "How Firm a Foundation."

Elder Derek A. Cuthbert offered the benediction.
