

There are so few nowadays who are really willing to work. We must train our children and ourselves to give, in work, the equivalent of the pay we receive and perhaps just a little extra.

There are so few who will come a bit early to get organized for the day, or stay a minute after to tidy up the work bench or the desk for tomorrow's work.

The attitude that demands compensation and benefits in excess of the value of labor has come near destroying the economy of the world. Now, however, many workers quite willingly accept reductions in pay just to keep their jobs. That spirit of doing a little extra would have prevented the crisis had it been evident earlier.

The gospel—formula for success

Family responsibilities and tight budgets sometimes prevent us from obtaining all the schooling we desire.

We can, however, improve ourselves. The only tuition required is the time it takes, the work required, and the desire to build into our lives the ordinary virtues so much in demand and so short in supply.

I hope you have not been too disappointed that I have not presented some "great thing" for you to do, some elaborate formula for career planning, rather than such ordinary things so obvious, so close to us, that they are often overlooked.

There is a formula. The Lord said, "Verily I say unto you, that every man who is obliged to provide for his own family, let him provide, and he shall in nowise lose his crown; *and let him labor in the church.*" (D&C 75:28; italics added.)

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the formula for success. Every principle of the gospel, when lived, has a positive influence over your choice of an occupation and on what you will achieve. The counsel to labor in the Church has great value. Living the gospel will give you a perspective and an inspiration that will see you successful however ordinary your work may be or however ordinary your life may seem to others.

God bless the members of this Church, that you can be happy with who you are and where you are, that you can improve yourselves. We pray that God will bless those who are struggling now with unemployment, with the loss of their employment, with the fear of that loss. May he bless us that we can build into our lives those principles of reliance and integrity that have been part of the gospel from the very beginning, for the gospel is true. Of this I bear witness, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Romney spoke without announcement.

President Marion G. Romney

Some fifty years ago, when the Church launched its welfare program, President Heber J. Grant stated, as was quoted by the former speaker: "Our primary purpose was to set up, in so far as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence,

industry, thrift and self-respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1936, p. 3.)

Gospel principles remain constant

We've all heard that quoted many times, but do we fully understand its significance? Bishops, are any of your people idle? Are all of your members independent, industrious, thrifty, and do they all have self-respect? Are any members receiving assistance as a dole? Are we helping our members to help themselves, or are we just taking care of the people? Finally, do our members understand the significance of work? If you don't feel good about your answers, you will understand why we keep emphasizing President Grant's statement.

I remember that when my brother was called to be a stake president, he came to me and said, "Now, tell me all about this welfare program." He asked many questions. After answering them, I said, "You have been in dozens of meetings where I have addressed all of these questions, haven't you?" He answered, "Yes, I'm sure that's true, but I wasn't a stake president then."

I believe the attention many of us pay to gospel principles fluctuates as our circumstances in life change. However, the principles remain constant and are true, whether or not we live up to them. The consequences of *not* living these principles also remain constant.

American work ethic

A few years ago I read a lengthy book dealing with the reasons for the fall of the Roman Empire. That fall, in large measure, was due to the purchasing of votes with unearned benefits, such as entertainment, circuses, and food. The government's actions built up in the people an expectation and demand which eventually could be kept down only by the establishment of a dictatorship. Many of our members live in countries where this history has repeated itself. In the United States, our treasured American

work ethic is waning and the purchasing of votes with unearned benefits is dangerously common.

I used to hear the story, when I first came under President Harold B. Lee's influence in the welfare program, about a man whom they could not get to work. He wanted to be taken care of. The Church or government, so he thought, owed him a living because he had paid his tithing and taxes. He did not have anything to eat and refused to labor to care for himself. Out of desperation and disgust they decided they might as well take him to the cemetery.

On the way, one man said, "We can't do this. I have some corn I will give to him."

So they explained this to the man, and he said, "Is it husked?"

They said, "No."

He said, "Well, then, drive on."

This would not be humorous if it were not so close to the truth. You cannot save a man who has such an attitude, and a nation made up of men and women with similar attitudes is vulnerable to the problems which led to the fall of Rome. The saddest day of a person's life is when he sits down to work out a means whereby he can live thereafter without his own effort. One of the most demeaning things a government can do is to teach people that the government owes them a living.

The Lord's economic system

By contrast, ever since the Church was organized, it has encouraged its members to maintain their own economic independence and to work for what they get, to produce that which they consume. I thought it might be helpful to remember what the Church has done since its inception to give life to the principles stated so well by President Grant.

Church welfare principles have always been with us. Although President Grant's statement came in 1936, you will note he said that "independ-

dence, industry, thrift, and self-respect [should] be *once more* established." Also note that he said work should be *re-enthroned*, not *enthroned*. If time permitted, we could begin when Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden and found the earth cursed *for their sake*. (See Gen. 3:17.) We could trace these principles through biblical and Book of Mormon times. However, in the interest of time, we will limit our comments to a few things done in this, the last dispensation.

Within a year after the organization of the Church, the Lord had revealed his economic system, and it was practiced in Missouri. The first "welfare program" of this dispensation was the United Order, under which a person consecrated all that he had to the Church and received back that which was necessary to provide for his family according to their wants and needs. The portion of the property retained by the Church was used in one of two ways: first, if a person was able-bodied, he was given the means whereby he could earn a living; second, if a person was incapable of working, his needs were met.

As individuals worked in their various jobs, the surplus generated over and above the needs of their family was turned in to the Church. This surplus was also used to give more people jobs and to take care of the needy. As the Saints arrived in Missouri, many were destitute. The program provided these people with the opportunity to work and earn their own living. They were not given a handout, but they were given a job.

After the United Order

The United Order was discontinued by commandment in 1834, but its basic principles were practiced in Nauvoo. For example, in an orderly immigration, some 5,000 converts came to Nauvoo from Great Britain. The more wealthy members gave of

their means to assist the poor in both their transportation to America and in helping them obtain work after they arrived. The economy of Nauvoo was based primarily on agriculture and construction. The largest construction project was the Nauvoo Temple, which provided jobs for many of its members. One traveler is quoted as saying there was no pauperism in Nauvoo because those without subsistence were provided with work by the Church.

The Church also provided town lots for those people unable to buy one for themselves. Many Nauvoo residents were able to provide the largest part of their basic necessities from their own plots, which normally were one acre in size. They cultivated extensive gardens and often kept chickens, a milk cow, and several pigs, which they would get in exchange for several days' work.

The whole objective behind giving help in Nauvoo was to enable people to be self-sustaining as soon as possible, by providing an avenue for work and production.

After arriving in Salt Lake City with Brigham Young, the Church became completely responsible for its own economy, since it was isolated from any other society. There was no room here for the idler because survival literally depended on work.

Brigham Young's philosophy regarding work and employment can be seen in a statement he made in August of 1860: "The reason we have no poor who are able to work is because we plan to set every person to work at some profitable employment, and teach them to maintain themselves. If a person is not able to take care of himself, we will take care of him. . . ."

"If a Bishop will act to the extent of his calling and office, and magnify it, there will not be an individual in his Ward that is not employed to the best advantage." (In *Journal of Discourses*, 8:145-46.)

Depression of 1890s, economic conditions

As conditions changed, so did the program. By 1880, the relatively independent economic kingdom had to be abandoned as Utah became nationalized. The Church sold many of its economic enterprises, and its leaders ceased to direct the economic affairs of Church members. Utah had become an integral part of the national economy—hence, the dawning of a new era in the manner in which the Church could help employ its members. It is interesting to note that just as the Church became dependent on the nation for its economy, the nation entered the depression of the 1890s.

During the depression, the Church established employment bureaus to aid its members in finding employment. Costly efforts were also made to bolster the economy. Assistance was given to such industries as sugar, salt, and coal.

Throughout the early 1900s, the Church's efforts regarding work and employment were directed to helping members find jobs. For example, in the 1920s, bishops were charged with the responsibility of finding employment for needy ward members. They were instructed to appoint a special person within each ward to be concerned with employment problems and discuss the problems in quorum meetings. This was very similar to the program Elder Fyans explained to us this morning.

Welfare program of 1930s

Those who could not take care of themselves were given appropriate assistance. However, the emphasis was always on self-sufficiency. When the depression of the 1930s came, the members of the Church found themselves in a situation altogether different. There were no jobs, and many people were out of work. The government stepped in to alleviate this problem, but some of their methods

promoted idleness because there was a dole involved. It was in this climate that President Grant announced the welfare program for that day. A model of production projects was announced six months earlier in a letter dated April 21, 1936 to the stake presidents and bishops, which stated in part:

"The following is a suggestive outline for a . . . project for each ward in the Church in the beet-growing districts of Utah and Idaho, . . . to take care of the unemployed members of the Church:

"The Bishopric of each ward [is] requested to select and secure at once 100 or more acres of land suitable for sugar beets. . . .

"Then the Bishopric could divide up the acreage, . . . according to the size of the family, to do the hand work; namely, the thinning, the hoeing, irrigating, keeping the beets clean, the pulling and topping, and loading the same into the wagon at the time of harvesting. . . .

"The laborers should receive an advance payment at the time of thinning, hoeing and irrigating, and when the work is done so that they may be able to live during the summer while the crop is growing. . . .

"If this unemployment is to be solved, it must be done by all the people working together and helping each other to find employment, and if the start is made this season, more preparation can be made for another season and the project expanded so that it will become of material benefit and absorb a large percentage of the unemployed."

Programs added

Once again, the purpose of this program was to help people to help themselves and to get them actively involved in work or production. Since that time, many programs have been followed, a few of which are the following:

Deseret Industries was set up to employ the unemployable, as well as

supply clothing and household goods at a low cost. An organization was created to make small character loans to men and women who could not borrow from financial institutions. An agriculture committee was set up whose business it was to investigate what, if anything, the Church could widely undertake to do in setting up cooperatives, both for production and marketing. In each case, the objective has been to help people help themselves.

It is hoped that this illustration will help implant in our minds and hearts the fact that the welfare program has been with us from the beginning. Programs must be modified to fit circumstances prevailing at the time, but the principles and objectives are unchanging.

We have to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances. Sometimes it is possible to get so wrapped up in a program that we forget the objective. We must be more alert and creative in accomplishing the objective of making our people independent and self-sustaining.

Work and employment

Today we are an international church, and problems vary in our homelands. This means that different programs may be necessary in different countries, but the primary purpose as stated by President Grant in the beginning of the welfare program is universal.

The theme of this welfare session has been work and employment. The priesthood-based employment system of the Church is one program which can benefit most, if not all countries. We invite you members of quorums who are blessed with employment to

participate in the sanctifying effort of helping others who are in need of employment find work.

In those cases when it is necessary to provide temporary assistance to those who are able-bodied, we challenge bishops and other priesthood leaders anew to find appropriate services for them to perform in order that pride and self-respect may remain intact.

God bless us all with a keen understanding of the foundation upon which all these activities are built. We are anxious to make our people independent, industrious, and self-sufficient. We want to accomplish this in a way which will be sanctifying to the giver as well as the receiver. When we can understand this principle, our current welfare activities will take on more meaning, and any changes or additional programs required for today's society can be revealed.

President Romney

The first general session of the 152nd Annual General Conference of the Church will convene in this Tabernacle at ten o'clock this morning.

We shall sing in closing hymn no. 66, "How Firm a Foundation," following which the benediction will be offered by Elder Charles Didier, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The congregation sang "How Firm a Foundation."

Elder Charles Didier offered the benediction.
