

gee camps in Thailand and in the Philippines by our missionary sisters. Basically, these sisters are restricted to teaching the English language and Western culture, but there is a deeper teaching that takes place through their pure love and sweet attitude toward these displaced people.

The story is told of a young camp refugee from Cambodia who was relocated in California. He found his way into one of our Church meetinghouses because the name of the Church on the sign out front corresponded with the one he used to look at each day on the name tag of the wonderful missionary sister who taught him at the camp. People don't soon forget acts of simple kindness. Pure love can transcend all differences.

### **Do you love the Lord?**

Yes, the Spirit giveth light in this church. I am thinking of a wonderful new convert in England. In response to my asking, he told me about his conversion. He explained how he was kneeling at his flower bed on a Saturday morning preparing the soil for spring planting. All of a sudden an unseen voice from behind asked the simple question, "Sir, do you love the Lord?"

He said that he turned around, fully expecting to see an angel standing there; instead there were two angels, two Mormon missionaries. And his response was, "Of course I love the Lord. Please come in the house so we can talk about it." It was all so simple, so genuine. It was an approach that the Savior might have used.

## **Bishop J. Richard Clarke**

### **The practice of truth**

In the book of John, we read the famous dialogue between Pontius Pilate and Jesus of Nazareth. The Savior was an enigma to the Roman. He

### **The honest in heart**

Not long ago a young American woman living in Taiwan felt that her taxi driver was taking her the long way around in order to increase the fare. She was in the process of venting her feelings in unmistakable terms when the young Chinese driver, obviously hurt by the accusation, stopped the cab, turned off the ignition, then turned around and said simply, "I would not do that. I am a Mormon." Calmed down and totally disarmed by the sincerity of his statement, she then asked what a Mormon was. She obviously found out, as she joined the Church just three weeks later. It all happens so simply when the honest in heart are involved.

Nephi, in foretelling the ministry of the Apostle John, described his teachings as "plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men" (1 Nephi 14:23). That our understanding and interpretation of truth may always be beautifully simple and simply beautiful is my sincere prayer for each of us, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, amen.

### **President Hinckley**

We have just listened to Elder Robert L. Simpson, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Bishop J. Richard Clarke, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

asked, "Art thou a king . . . ?" Jesus answered, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth" (John 18:37).

Pilate turned away, asking the question of the ages, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). He did not wait for an answer. I doubt he expected one. Pilate was aware that "truth" had been a favorite subject for debate by Roman and Greek philosophers for centuries, and remained the quest of philosophy.

It is not my purpose today to discuss truth in the abstract. I would speak of the practice of truth. It is both principle and application.

As William George Jordan taught: "Truth . . . is loyalty to the right as we see it; it is courageous living of our lives in harmony with our ideals; it is always—power.

"Truth . . . defies full definition. Like electricity it can only be explained by noting its manifestation. It is the compass of the soul, the guardian of conscience, the final touchstone of right. Truth is the revelation of the ideal; but it is also an inspiration to realize that ideal, a constant impulse to live it" (*Power of Truth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1935], p. 3).

### Harmony between principles and practice

As Latter-day Saints, we are committed to the principles of truth. We seek the truth; we believe the truth; and we know the "truth will make us free." (See John 8:32.) To be genuine disciples, we must have harmony between the principles that we profess and the truths we practice.

We must be like the people of Ammon, who were "distinguished for their zeal towards God, and also towards men; for they were perfectly honest and upright in all things; and they were firm in the faith of Christ, even unto the end" (Alma 27:27).

### Be what God expects

Our souls must be more than "whited sepulchres," which appear praiseworthy but inside are hollow chambers bereft of goodness. (See

Matthew 23:27.) We must not only *seem* but also *be* what God would expect of His sons and daughters.

The practice of truth, the acid test of our commitment, is known by many terms—for example, *honesty*, *integrity*, *uprightness*, and *probity*. Especially like *probity*. It is taken from the Latin *probus*, meaning good, and *probare*—to prove, signifying tried and confirmed integrity. A person who has mastered probity by discipline, until it has become part of his very nature, is like a moral compass which automatically points "true north" under all circumstances. This individual strives for instinctive honesty, acting on impulse toward the right, without having to weigh the merits of advantage or disadvantage.

"[One] who makes Truth his watchword," wrote Jordan, "is careful in his words, he seeks to be accurate, neither understating nor overcoloring. . . . What he says has the ring of sincerity, the hallmark of pure gold. . . . His promise counts for something, you accept it as being as good as his bond, you know that no matter how much it may cost him to verify and fulfil his word by his deed, he will do it" (*Power of Truth*, p. 5).

### "Keep your agreement"

Perhaps you remember the story told by President N. Eldon Tanner. A young fellow came to him and said, "I made an agreement with a man that requires me to make certain payments each year. I am in arrears, and I can't make those payments, for if I do, it is going to cause me to lose my home. What shall I do?"

President Tanner looked at him and said, "Keep your agreement."

"Even if it costs me my home?" the man asked.

President Tanner replied, "I am not talking about your home. I am talking about your agreement; and I think your wife would rather have a husband who would keep his word, meet his

obligations, keep his pledges or his covenants, and have to rent a home, than to have a home with a husband who will not keep his covenants and his pledges" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1966, p. 99).

### **Mormon standard of integrity**

I had an interesting experience a few years ago while attending general conference. I went to purchase some merchandise at ZCMI and to cash a check. Being from out of state, I was sent to the cashier. She asked for some identification. I reached into my wallet and took out some credit cards. Inadvertently, my temple recommend came out. The cashier said, "I'll accept that." I said, "You'll accept what?" She said, "Your temple recommend. It's current, isn't it?" I said, "Yes, it's current." She said, "That will do."

Well, I pondered that all the way home. I thought, Wouldn't it be a great idea if we had a Mormon credit card? A card-carrying Mormon could be depended on to keep his word, to be honest with his employers, and to pay his bills as agreed. Then our professionals, tradesmen, and business people would perform without compromising their ethics for profit, each putting his signature on his work with pride; all of us striving for excellence in every way. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be a "peculiar" people known for our honesty and the quality of our services? The Mormon standard of integrity should be the highest standard in all the world, for we are the covenant people of God. The Lord makes no special concessions for culture, race, or nationality; He expects all His Saints to live according to gospel standards.

### **The individual of probity**

I believe for every law of truth we keep, there is a compounding effect. Our character is a complex of coordinated support systems, just like a

well-engineered bridge. Each truss, column, or girder contributes to the strength or weakness of the whole structure.

The individual of probity has integrated his virtues into a pattern of consonance, whereas one who practices selective honesty, to fit time and circumstance, is never quite balanced.

General David Shoup, former commandant of the United States Marine Corps, felt very strongly about consistency in practicing moral values. Commenting upon marines who were untrue to their wives, he said:

"It is not the actual act of adultery that is of so great a concern to me; that's merely the by-product, so to speak. The vital thing is this: A man who can somehow rationalize breaking the oath he gave before God and man when he repeated the marriage vows, is also a man who could, if he so desired, or when subjected to sufficient pressure, rationalize breaking the oath he took when he became a commissioned officer in the United States Marine Corps. A man who can betray his wife and children for lustful purposes is a man who could betray his country for his own ends."

### **Integrity and honor not without price**

Brothers and sisters, we often perform below our ideals, but our aim must exceed our grasp if we would rise to a higher standard of integrity. We all have old habits to break and new ones to form. Surely it takes a long time to perfect character, and we probably won't achieve it totally in this life. But success must be measured by effort and small improvements until we eventually reach our goals. Norman Cousins described integrity as "no luxury for the pious: it is the bread of life for the truly human . . . for the man who seeks not length of days, but quality of spirit."

The love for truth and the practice of truth are best learned in the home. The Lord has laid the responsibility with parents to "teach their children

to . . . walk uprightly before the Lord" (D&C 68:28). And again, "I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth" (D&C 93:40), for "light and truth forsake that evil one" (D&C 93:37.)

Children gain a love for truth by watching parents practice truth; they learn to emulate noble character. They need models of consistency, not just sermons alone. I believe one of the most important lessons a parent can teach a child is that integrity and honor are not practiced without price. They usually require sacrifice, almost always inconvenience, and often embarrassment.

### Example of truth in action

With the permission of President Jeffrey Holland and his lovely daughter, Mary, I'd like to share their story of several years ago. It is an example of what I have tried to say today—not truth in theory, but truth in action.

Brother Holland begins:

"One night I came home quite late from work. My nine-year-old daughter Mary seemed visibly distressed. . . . I asked if she felt all right; she nodded that she did; but I guessed otherwise. I waited as she got ready for bed. Sure enough, she walked softly into the living room and said, 'Daddy, I have to talk to you.' I held her hand and, as we walked into her bedroom, she started to cry.

"I was at Grand Central this morning and saw a ladies' compact I knew Mother would love. I was sure it was quite expensive, but I picked it up just to admire it.' More tears and struggle to get it all said: 'It fell out of my hands onto the floor. I quickly picked it up, but Daddy, the mirror was cracked. I didn't know what to do! I didn't have enough money to pay for it, and I was all alone. . . . I put the compact back on the shelf and left the store. Oh, Daddy, I think I've been dishonest.' And then she wept and wept.

"I held her in my arms as that little nine-year-old body shook with the pain

of sin being expelled. She said, 'I can't sleep and I can't eat and I can't say my prayers. What will I do? I won't ever get it out of my mind.'

"Well, Mother joined us and we talked quite a while that night. We told her that we were very, very proud of her honesty . . . and we would have been disappointed if she had been able to eat or sleep very well. I told her . . . the compact probably wouldn't cost *too* much, and that we would go back to the store manager, tell him of the problem, and, between the two of us, cover the cost. If the compact was still there, [perhaps we could] buy it for Mom. That little cracked mirror could be a reminder for as long as she owned it that her little girl was unfailingly honest and spiritually sensitive. . . .

"The tears gradually stopped, her little body began to relax, and Mary said, 'I think now I can say my prayers' " ("The Excellence of the Actors," unpublished manuscript, BYU faculty assembly, 1978).

### Walk uprightly and work righteousness

We have tried to teach our children that the practice of truth is the premier virtue. If they master that great principle, all else will fall into place.

As Jesus of Nazareth was the embodiment of truth, so should we bear witness. We may talk about our religion, we may discuss marvelous manifestations and revealed gifts and powers, we may profess high ideals and noble values; but the proof of our commitment lies in our performance in the daily transaction of our life.

Let us covenant as did Job, even in his extremity: "Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.

"My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live" (Job 27:5-6).

The Psalmist posed the question: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1).

The answer: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart" (Psalm 15:2).

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The Choir sang "Come, Ye Disconsolate" without announcement.

### President Hinckley

Bishop J. Richard Clarke, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, spoke to us, followed by the Choir singing "Come, Ye Disconsolate."

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will now address us, and he will be our concluding speaker of this session.

## Elder Howard W. Hunter

I would like to refer to one of the parables of the Savior found in the book of Luke, the parable commencing with this verse: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican" (Luke 18:10).

### Simple yet profound parables of Christ

These words begin one of the many stories told by the Master Teacher during the three years of his earthly ministry. There is nothing in all literature equal to the parables of Christ. His teachings were as impressive to his listeners then as they are today to those who read his words. They are so simple a child can understand, yet profound enough for the sage and philosopher. The similitudes he used were taken from pictures of human life and commonplace incidents that could be understood by every listener—the sower, the lost sheep, a woman baking bread, the fig tree, a good Samaritan, the prodigal son.

Each of the parables spoken by the Savior seems to teach a principle or give an admonition regarding the attributes necessary to qualify for exaltation. Some of these are faith, repentance, baptism, development of talents, forgiveness, perseverance in doing good, being a profitable steward, charity, mercy, and obedience. These parables were usually given by him to add to the knowledge of persons already spiritually enlightened, particu-

larly the disciples, although they were sometimes directed to other persons and audiences.

### To self-righteous who lack humility

The parable from which I read the first verse was directed to more than just his disciples. Even though the subject matter was a Pharisee and a publican, it was not intended for Pharisees or publicans expressly, but for the benefit of the self-righteous who lack the virtues of humility and who use self-righteousness as a claim to exaltation. In this parable the Savior spoke few words, yet the lesson taught is clear. This is the whole story he told, as recorded by Luke:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every man that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that