

speak Spanish as well as he speaks English.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "The Spirit of God," following which we shall hear from Elder LeGrand R. Curtis, who was also

sustained in April conference as a member of the Seventy.

The chorus and congregation sang "The Spirit of God."

Elder LeGrand R. Curtis

The ideal home

A month ago we experienced an important event in our lives. Our oldest grandchild was married for time and eternity in the Salt Lake Temple. As that beautiful young lady knelt in the temple with a fine young man, many hopes and blessings were realized—for that young couple, the realization of the tremendous blessings of the temple ordinances; and for their parents, the fulfillment of years of teaching and loving. My wife, Patricia, and I felt many blessings as that group assembled, which included our eight children and their spouses.

Since that day, we have reminisced and reviewed many teachings about what we see as the ideal home and family—which home and family, as to location, size, and makeup, are as diversified as our members. But these factors do not lessen the desire each of us has to achieve that ideal. President David O. McKay said, "It is possible to make home a bit of heaven; indeed, I picture heaven to be a continuation of the ideal home" (*Improvement Era*, Oct. 1948, p. 618). We hope that our children experience some of the following things in our home.

Perhaps the best gift parents can give their children is to love each other, to enjoy each other, and even to hold hands and demonstrate their love by the manner in which they talk to each other.

Home should be a happy place because all work to keep it that way. It is said that happiness is homemade, and we should endeavor to make our homes happy and pleasant places for us and our children. A happy home is one

centered around the teachings of the gospel. This takes constant, careful effort by all concerned.

In the ideal home, each child would be given every possible opportunity to develop his own personality without too much domination. Discipline is organized love, and children develop properly in an atmosphere of love, with adequate guidelines to shape their lives and their habits. More children are punished for mimicking their parents than ever for disobeying them. We should *be* what we want to *see*.

A house of God

We find in Doctrine and Covenants 88:119 the verse that describes the kind of homes we should strive to create: "Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God."

We know that the world is flooded with books and magazines of negative value for us and for our children. The books in our homes are to be read, and there should be no shelves under lock and key because they hold books of questionable content.

Absolute truth should abide in our homes, and we should sincerely try to answer any question in honesty. Honesty is the companion of truth, and dishonesty of falsehood. We should expect complete honesty from our children as well as from us as parents.

In our homes, we should exhibit hospitality, and friends should feel

welcome. In our home, we preferred that our children search our refrigerator and use our kitchen rather than search the many dark places in the world. Ice cream is better bought early than wished for later.

In the ideal home, Sunday would be the happiest day of the week. We should look forward to its coming because it is the day we go to church together and then come home and discuss together what we learned in our various church meetings. Around the kitchen table at dinnertime would be an excellent opportunity to have parents and children tell about what they learned in their Sunday School classes and other meetings. How we observe the Sabbath indicates our feelings toward our Father in Heaven.

Although Father and Mother work hard, they should find time to keep informed on current events and to read good books, to discuss the *Ensign*, the *New Era*, and the *Friend* with each other and with their children. These magazines can add a wonderful dimension to our lives if we make them part of our homes and discuss them with our families. This is an ongoing challenge for all of us, but it is worth the effort.

The family should kneel together daily in family prayer. Alma 58:10 tells us, "Therefore we did pour out our souls in prayer to God, that he would strengthen us and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, yea, and also give us strength that we might retain our cities, and our lands, and our possessions, for the support of our people." Our family has always needed to be strengthened—and still does—and kneeling in prayer daily certainly helps. Children need to be constantly taught how they should act when they mature and have their own families.

Mothers and daughters should be ladies and be modest in all ways. Mothers and daughters should be active in Relief Society, Young Women, or Primary. Sister Curtis and I often reminisce about attending Relief Society at

the side of our mothers when we were children.

Fathers and sons should act gentlemanly and kind. They should honor their priesthood, fill missions, and serve the Lord.

Families need to observe the Word of Wisdom in all ways, never compromising the dos and don'ts of this sacred commandment.

Mothers and fathers and children need the experience of bearing their testimonies and expressing their love for our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ. Testimony bearing is not restricted to the chapel. The family room can be the ideal setting for some very sensitive spiritual experiences. Happy memories are made by appointment, and parents need to plan special spiritual events to create spiritual memories in their homes.

Parents need to care enough to wait up for the children as they return from their dates, or go and find them if they are out too late. I remember reading many pages of scriptures as I sat at the kitchen table waiting for the teenagers to return.

The kitchen table can provide a place for many valuable lessons and warm communications. We should partake not only of good food, but of love and friendship. Scriptures could be read around the kitchen table, and mothers and fathers could explain the teachings of the prophets. Nephi said, "For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children" (2 Nephi 4:15). As we reflect on our years of rearing children, we can see how we and our loved ones have always needed the scriptures. What better could we discuss with our children than the scriptures and our love for them?

Children need to know that their parents love them enough to teach them the gospel. Monday evenings can be made special by family home evening—by the love present and by music, games, and valuable learning moments. We have found that the child who is

rolling on the floor during family home evening listens and learns more than we think possible.

As parents, Sister Curtis and I now watch as our eight children have their own homes. We ponder deeply as we watch them teach their children, who are our grandchildren, about the principles of the gospel. We know it's not easy, but we also know that we all must try.

The things I have talked about today are some of the ideals, some of the things that all of us may work toward. Very few of us have reached that point, but President McKay said it is possible, and knowing that certainly makes the trying worthwhile.

I testify that I know the gospel of Jesus Christ and all that it gives us is meant for our happiness and for the happiness of those we love. Jesus Christ is the center of our lives. I know that he is close to his servants on this

earth this day. He loves each of us, and we can honestly sing and proclaim, "I am a child of God" and mean it (*Hymns*, no. 301).

I testify that Jesus is the Christ. I love him; my wife loves him; and we deeply desire that our children and grandchildren will love and obey our Lord and Savior. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The chorus sang "All Things Bright and Beautiful" without announcement.

President Hinckley

Elder LeGrand R. Curtis of the Seventy has spoken to us, following which the chorus sang "All Things Bright and Beautiful."

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will be our next speaker.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell

The dangers of selfishness

So many times prophets warn about the dangers of selfishness—the inordinate and excessive concern with self. The distance between constant self-pleasing and self-worship is shorter than we think. Stubborn selfishness is actually rebellion against God, because, warned Samuel, "stubbornness is as . . . idolatry" (1 Samuel 15:23).

Selfishness is much more than an ordinary problem because it activates all the cardinal sins! It is the detonator in the breaking of the Ten Commandments.

By focusing on oneself, it is naturally easier to bear false witness if it serves one's purpose. It is easier to ignore one's parents instead of honoring them. It is easier to steal, because what one wants prevails. It is easier to covet, since the selfish conclude that nothing should be denied them.

It is easier to commit sexual sins, because to please oneself is the name of

that deadly game in which others are often cruelly used. The Sabbath day is easily neglected, since one day soon becomes just like another. If selfish, it is easier to lie, because the truth is conveniently subordinated.

The selfish individual thus seeks to please not God, but himself. He will even break a covenant in order to fix an appetite.

Selfishness has little time to regard the sufferings of others seriously; hence the love of many waxes cold (see Matthew 24:12; D&C 45:27; Moses 6:27).

The last days will be rampant with the cardinal sins, just "as in the days of Noah." Society in the days of Noah, scriptures advise, "was corrupt before God" and "filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11; Moses 8:28). Corruption and violence—sound familiar? Both of these awful conditions crest because of surging individual selfishness. When