

Richard Elliott at the organ, will provide the music for this session. The choir opened these services by singing "For the Strength of the Hills." They will now sing "On This Day of Joy and Gladness," following which Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy will offer the invocation.

The choir sang "On This Day of Joy and Gladness."

President Thomas S. Monson

On this Sabbath day our thoughts turn to Him who atoned for our sins, who showed us the way to live and how to pray, and who demonstrated by His own actions the blessings of service. Born in a stable, cradled in a manger, this Son of God, even Jesus Christ the Lord, yet beckons to each of us to follow Him.

A leper gives thanks

In the book of Luke, chapter 17, we read:

"And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

"And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

"And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

"And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

"And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

Elder Marlin K. Jensen offered the invocation.

President Hinckley

President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will be our first speaker this morning.

"There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

"And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (Luke 17:11-19).

Through divine intervention, those who were lepers were spared from a cruel, lingering death and given a new lease on life. The expressed gratitude by one merited the Master's blessing, the ingratitude shown by the nine, His disappointment.

"Accentuate the positive"

Like the leprosy of yesteryear are the plagues of today. They linger; they debilitate; they destroy. They are to be found everywhere. Their pervasiveness knows no boundaries. We know them as selfishness, greed, indulgence, cruelty, and crime, to identify but a few. Surfeited with their poison, we tend to criticize, to complain, to blame, and, slowly but surely, to abandon the positives and adopt the negatives of life.

A popular refrain from the 1940s captured the thought:

Accentuate the positive;
Eliminate the negative.
Latch on to the affirmative;
Don't mess with Mr. In-between.¹

Good advice then. Good advice now.

This is a wonderful time to be living here on earth. Our opportunities are limitless. While there are some things wrong in the world today, there are many things right, such as teachers who teach, ministers who minister, marriages that make it, parents who sacrifice, and friends who help.

We can lift ourselves, and others as well, when we refuse to remain in the realm of negative thought and cultivate within our hearts an attitude of gratitude. If ingratitude be numbered among the serious sins, then gratitude takes its place among the noblest of virtues.

A favorite hymn always lifts our spirits, kindles our faith, and inspires our thoughts:

When upon life's billows you are
tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking
all is lost,
Count your many blessings; name
them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the
Lord has done. . . .
So amid the conflict, whether great
or small,
Do not be discouraged; God is over
all.
Count your many blessings; angels
will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your
journey's end.
[Hymns, no. 241]

Well could we reflect upon our lives as individuals. We will soon discover much to prompt our personal gratitude.

Gratitude for our mothers

First, there is gratitude for our mothers.

Mother, who willingly made that personal journey into the valley of the shadow of death to take us by the hand and introduce us to birth—even to mortal life—deserves our undying

gratitude. One writer summed up our love for mother when he declared, "God could not be everywhere, and so He gave us mothers."

While on the cruel cross of Calvary, suffering intense pain and anguish, Jesus "saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!" (John 19:26-27). What a divine example of gratitude and love!

My own mother may not have read to me from the scriptures; rather, she taught me by her life and actions what the "Good Book" contains. Care for the poor, the sick, the needy were everyday dramas never to be forgotten.

Gratitude for our fathers

Second, let us reflect gratitude for our fathers.

Father, like Mother, is ever willing to sacrifice his own comfort for that of his children. Daily he toils to provide the necessities of life, never complaining, ever concerned for the well-being of his family. This love for children, this desire to see them well and happy, is a constant in a time of change.

On occasion I have observed parents shopping to clothe a son about to enter missionary service. The new suits are fitted, the new shoes are laced, and shirts, socks, and ties are bought in quantity. I met one father who said to me, "Brother Monson, I want you to meet my son." Pride popped his buttons; the cost of the clothing emptied his wallet; love filled his heart. Tears filled my eyes when I noticed that *his* suit was old, *his* shoes well worn; but he felt no deprivation. The glow on his face was a memory to cherish.

As I reflect on my own father, I remember he yielded his minuscule discretionary time to caring for a crippled uncle, aged aunts, and his family. He served in the ward Sunday

School presidency, always preferring to work with the children. He, like the Master, loved children. I never heard from his lips one word of criticism of another. He personified in his life the work ethic. I join you in an expression of gratitude for our fathers.

Gratitude for our teachers

Third, all of us remember with gratitude our *teachers*.

The teacher not only shapes the expectations and ambitions of pupils; the teacher also influences their attitudes toward their future and themselves. If the teacher loves the students and has high expectations of them, their self-confidence will grow, their capabilities will develop, and their future will be assured. A citation to such a teacher could well read: "She created in her room an atmosphere where warmth and acceptance weave their magic spell; where growth and learning, the soaring of the imagination, and the spirit of the young are assured."

May I express public gratitude for three of my own teachers. I thank G. Homer Durham, my history professor. He taught the truth, "The past is behind; learn from it." He loved his subject; he loved his students. The love in his classroom opened the windows of my mind, that learning might enter.

O. Preston Robinson, my professor of marketing, instilled in his students that the future is ahead and we are to prepare for it. When he entered the classroom, his presence was like a welcome breath of fresh air. He instilled a spirit of "You can do it." His life reflected his teaching—that of friendly persuasion. He taught truth. He inspired effort. He prompted love.

Then there was a Sunday School teacher—never to be forgotten, ever to be remembered. We met for the first time on a Sunday morning. She accompanied the Sunday School president into the classroom and was presented to us as a teacher who actually re-

quested the opportunity to teach us. We learned that she had been a missionary and loved young people. Her name was Lucy Gertsch. She was beautiful, soft-spoken, and interested in us. She asked each class member to introduce himself or herself, and then she asked questions that gave her an understanding and an insight into the background of each boy, each girl. She told us of her childhood in Midway, Utah; and as she described that beautiful valley, she made its beauty live, and we desired to visit the green fields she loved so much. She never raised her voice. Somehow rudeness and boisterousness were incompatible with the beauty of her lessons. She taught us that the present is here and that we must live in it. She made the scriptures actually come to life. We became personally acquainted with Samuel, David, Jacob, Nephi, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Our gospel scholarship grew. Our deportment improved. Our love for Lucy Gertsch knew no bounds.

We undertook a project to save nickels and dimes for what was to be a gigantic party. Sister Gertsch kept a careful record of our progress. As boys and girls with typical appetites, we converted in our minds the monetary totals to cakes, cookies, pies, and ice cream. This was to be a glorious occasion—the biggest party ever. Never before had any of our teachers even suggested a social event like this one was going to be.

The summer months faded into autumn; autumn turned to winter. Our party goal had been achieved. The class had grown. A good spirit prevailed.

None of us will forget that gray morning in January when our beloved teacher announced to us that the mother of one of our classmates had passed away. We thought of our own mothers and how much they meant to us. We felt sorrow for Billy Devenport in his great loss.

The lesson that Sunday was from the book of Acts, chapter twenty, verse thirty-five: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." At the conclusion of the presentation of a well-prepared lesson, Lucy Gertsch commented on the economic situation of Billy's family. These were depression times; money was scarce. With a twinkle in her eyes, she asked, "How would you like to follow this teaching of the Lord? How would you feel about taking your party fund and, as a class, giving it to the Devenports as an expression of our love?" The decision was unanimous. We counted very carefully each penny and placed the total sum in a large envelope.

Ever shall I remember the tiny band walking those three city blocks, entering Billy's home, greeting him, his brother, sisters, and father. Noticeably absent was his mother. Always I shall treasure the tears which glistened in the eyes of each one present as the white envelope containing our precious party fund passed from the delicate hand of our teacher to the needy hand of a grief-stricken father. We fairly skipped our way back to the chapel. Our hearts were lighter than they had ever been, our joy more full, our understanding more profound. This simple act of kindness welded us together as one. We learned through our own experience that indeed it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The years have flown. The old chapel is gone, a victim of industrialization. The boys and girls who learned, who laughed, who grew under the direction of that inspired teacher of truth have never forgotten her love or her lessons.

Even today when we sing that old favorite—

Thanks for the Sabbath School. Hail
to the day
When evil and error are fleeing away.

Thanks for our teachers who labor
with care

That we in the light of the gospel
may share.

[*Hymns*, no. 278]

—we think of Lucy Gertsch, our Sunday School teacher, for we loved Lucy, and Lucy loved us.

Let us ever have an attitude of gratitude for our teachers.

Gratitude for our friends

Fourth, let us have gratitude for our *friends*. Our most cherished friend is our partner in marriage. This old world would be so much better off today if kindness and deference were daily a reflection of our gratitude for wife, for husband.

The Lord spoke the word *friend* almost with a reverence. He said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

True friends put up with our idiosyncrasies. They have a profound influence in our lives.

Oscar Benson, a Scouter of renown, had a hobby of interviewing men on death row in various prisons throughout the country. He once reported that 125 of these men had said they had never known a decent man.

In the depths of World War II, I experienced an expression of true friendship. Jack Hepworth and I were teenagers. We had grown up in the same neighborhood. One afternoon I saw Jack running down the sidewalk toward me. When we met, I saw that there were tears in his eyes. In a voice choked with emotion, he blurted out the words, "Tom, my brother Joe, who is in the Navy Air Corps, has been killed in a fiery plane crash!" We embraced. We wept. We sorrowed. I felt highly complimented that instinctively Jack, my friend, felt the urgency to share with me his grief. We can all be grateful for such friends.

Gratitude for our country

Fifth, may we acknowledge gratitude for our *country*—the land of our birth.

When we ponder that vast throng who have died honorably defending home and hearth, we contemplate those immortal words, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The feelings of heartfelt gratitude for the supreme sacrifice made by so many cannot be confined to a Memorial Day, a military parade, or a decorated grave.

At the famed Theatre Royal, situated on Drury Lane in London, England, is a beautifully framed plaque containing words which touch my very soul and prompt feelings of deep gratitude:

1914–1918

Actors, musicians, writers and workers for the stage who have given their lives for their country. Honour to the immortal dead, that great . . . company of shining souls who gave their youth that the world might grow old in peace. Their name liveth forever more. These nobly played their parts, these heard the call for God and King and home. They gave their all.

Since ye who pass in quest of happy hours

Behold the price at which those hours were bought,

Strew here the fragrance of memorial flowers,

The silent tribute of a grateful thought.²

Gratitude for our Savior

Sixth and finally—even supremely—let us reflect gratitude for our *Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ*. His glorious gospel provides answers to life’s greatest questions: Where did we

come from? Why are we here? Where does my spirit go when I die? His called missionaries bring to those who live in darkness the light of divine truth:

Go, ye messengers of glory;
Run, ye legates of the skies.
Go and tell the pleasing story
That a glorious angel flies,
Great and mighty, great and mighty,
With a message from the skies.
[*Hymns*, no. 262]

He taught us how to pray. He taught us how to live. He taught us how to die. His life is a legacy of love. The sick He healed; the downtrodden He lifted; the sinner He saved.

Only He stood alone. Some Apostles doubted; one betrayed Him. The Roman soldiers pierced His side. The angry mob took His life. There yet rings from Golgotha’s hill His compassionate words, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

Earlier, perhaps perceiving the culmination of His earthly mission, He spoke the lament, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). “No room in the inn” was not a singular expression of rejection—just the first. Yet He invites you and me to host Him. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

Who was this Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief? Who is this King of glory, this Lord of hosts? He is our Master. He is our Savior. He is the Son of God. He is the author of our salvation. He beckons, “Follow me” (Matthew 4:19). He instructs, “Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:37). He pleads, “Keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

Let us follow Him. Let us emulate His example. Let us obey His word. By so doing, we give to Him the divine gift of gratitude.

My sincere prayer is that we may, in our individual lives, reflect that marvelous virtue: an attitude of gratitude. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. "Ac-cen-tu-ate the Positive," lyrics by Johnny Mercer (ASCAP, 1945).
2. Louise N. Parter.

President Howard W. Hunter

Love others as God loves us

In an important message to the Latter-day Saints in Nauvoo just one year before his tragic and untimely martyrdom, the Prophet Joseph Smith said:

"If we would secure and cultivate the love of others, we must love others, even our enemies as well as friends. . . . Christians should cease wrangling and contending with each other, and cultivate the principles of union and friendship in their midst" (*History of the Church*, 5:498-99).

That is magnificent counsel today, even as it was 150 years ago. The world in which we live, whether close to home or far away, needs the gospel of Jesus Christ. It provides the only way the world will ever know peace. We need to be kinder with one another, more gentle and forgiving. We need to be slower to anger and more prompt to help. We need to extend the hand of friendship and resist the hand of retribution. In short, we need to love one another with the pure love of Christ, with genuine charity and compassion and, if necessary, shared suffering, for that is the way God loves us.

The choir sang "Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise" without announcement.

President Hinckley

President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, has addressed us, followed by the choir singing that stirring anthem "Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise."

President Howard W. Hunter, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker.

"Lord, I would follow thee"

In our worship services, we often sing a lovely hymn with text written by Susan Evans McCloud. May I recall a few lines of that hymn for you?

Savior, may I learn to love thee,
Walk the path that thou hast shown,
Pause to help and lift another,
Finding strength beyond my
own. . . .

Who am I to judge another
When I walk imperfectly?
In the quiet heart is hidden
Sorrow that the eye can't see. . . .

I would be my brother's keeper;
I would learn the healer's art.
To the wounded and the weary
I would show a gentle heart.
I would be my brother's keeper—
Lord, I would follow thee.
[*Hymns*, no. 220]

We need to walk more resolutely and more charitably the path that Jesus has shown. We need to "pause to help and lift another," and surely we will find "strength beyond [our] own." If we would do more to learn "the healer's