

part of their assignments. Many have gathered from all over the world and, in a few days, will again disperse to most of the nations of the earth. In most cases they will leave their children and grandchildren behind as they pursue the demands placed upon them by their single heart. I assure you that these mighty have come to an understanding of these modern times and of what the Church and the membership of the Church ought to do. This understanding and knowledge are not achieved through their substantial intellect alone but through the development of their "perfect hearts."

I suggest that all who listen to my voice would benefit by an examination of the lives of those we sustain as general officers of the Church. You will find some important examples among them and come to know those who have a "perfect heart." What mighty men and women!

### He who is mightiest of all

Please know that I stand as a witness of Him who is mightiest of all and

whom we most want to emulate. Review again the Book of Mormon record of His mighty declaration of devotion and obedience to His Father:

"I am Jesus Christ. . . I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning" (3 Nephi 11:10-11).

Brothers and sisters, during this conference please listen to the voices of the modern mighty. They speak with a single, perfect heart which, I promise you, gives them an understanding of our times and of what the Church ought to do.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Monson

A mighty man, Elder Monte J. Brough, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

We'll now have the privilege to hear from another mighty man. Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

## Elder L. Tom Perry

The chorus of Joseph L. Townsend's stirring hymn text provides timeless advice about what to do when we come to a fork in the road of life. We should always

Choose the right! Choose the right!  
Let wisdom mark the way before.  
In its light, choose the right!  
And God will bless you evermore.  
["Choose the Right," *Hymns*, no. 239]

### An inspiring CTR tie tack

On a recent trip to New Zealand, I met with a mission president who wore a beautiful tie tack with the inspiring

CTR, or "Choose the Right," emblem. I had the impression that there must be a story behind this unique CTR pin. When I returned home, I wrote him a thank-you letter and asked him about his tie tack. I received this answer:

"You are very perceptive. Yes, there is a story behind the tie tack I'm wearing. I have a number of tie tacks I really prize. They have been gifts from my children, my wife, and friends. However, I choose to wear this beautiful silver shield inlaid with lovely blue turquoise, with the inspiring CTR emblem of our Primary.

"Why? I suppose it started back when I was a bishop and had an inter-

view with a good-looking young man who was to receive the Aaronic Priesthood. He told me a special story. He related to me how one day after school, he and some of his friends found a package of cigarettes. They decided to go down on the cliff alongside some large boulders and smoke. They lit up, and the young man said that as he was looking down at the smoldering cigarette that he held between his fingers, he saw his CTR ring. He quickly put the cigarette out and made a very wise choice, never ever to do such a thing again. He chose to choose the right, as he remembered what the emblem stood for. From this story I gained a special love for the CTR emblem.

"Now for the story of how I came to be a recipient of the CTR tie tack. A few weeks ago before coming to New Zealand as a mission president, I was in the Kayenta Ward in Kayenta, Arizona. As I was saying some tender farewells to many of my Navajo friends, a remarkable young Navajo bishop gave me a big hug, then removed his tie tack and pinned it on my tie. As he did so, he asked me not to forget him.

"Now here in New Zealand, the last thing I do every morning as I dress for this great calling is to pin my tie tack with this beautiful silver and turquoise CTR emblem on my tie. I love it! It helps this old boilermaker make the right choices throughout the day. I know that it also helps fulfill the prophetic promise made to my wife and me from President Gordon B. Hinckley as he laid his hands on our heads and set us apart.

"He said words to this effect: 'You will have an instant bonding of love for every missionary in your mission.' I can't tell you how many times that a missionary, during a visit, has said something like this: 'President Gardner, I love your tie tack.' And then he or she will show me his or her CTR ring.

"I believe that Navajo bishop was inspired to give me the tie tack and that I make the right decision every day

when I choose to wear it. And the beautiful blue and silver CTR pin is helping bond me to a royal army of missionaries in the New Zealand Wellington Mission.

"I appreciate the opportunity of relating to you my special experience associated with this great Primary children's motto, 'Choose the Right.'"

That special letter from this mission president in New Zealand has prompted me to speak to you great young people of the Church, who have had, or are currently having, the opportunity of being taught by loving Primary teachers who teach the gospel principles that will help you choose the right.

### The wrong choices of Nehor

The Book of Mormon is filled with accounts of what happens to people who make both the right and wrong choices.

Let me refer to two examples. During Alma's first year in the judgment seat, a large and strong man by the name of Nehor was brought before him to be judged. According to the scriptures, Nehor was going about among the people causing much dissension:

"And he had gone about among the people, preaching to them that which he termed to be the word of God, bearing down against the church; declaring unto the people that every priest and teacher ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people.

"And he also testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice; for the Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life" (Alma 1:3-4).

Nehor's words appealed to the people, but his doctrine, while popular to many, was incorrect. As we face the many decisions in life, the easy and popular messages of the world will not

usually be the right ones to choose, and it will take much courage to choose the right.

### Alma teaches Zeezrom

Now for the second example. In the land of Ammonihah, Amulek and Alma also found a people following false teachings. Amulek attempted to convert them to the true and living gospel. Zeezrom, a man who was expert in the devices of the devil, challenged the teachings of Amulek. Zeezrom asked Amulek, "Shall he [Christ] save his people in their sins?" Amulek answered and said, "I say unto you he shall not, for it is impossible for him to deny his word" (Alma 11:34).

Then Zeezrom taunted Amulek, but Amulek's response was marvelous as he explained the plan of redemption:

"And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. . . .

"And he shall come into the world to redeem his people; and he shall take upon him the transgressions of those who believe on his name; and these are they that shall have eternal life, and salvation cometh to none else.

"Therefore the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made, except it be the loosing of the bands of death; for behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead and stand before God, and be judged according to their works" (Alma 11:37, 40-41).

Later, after considerable tribulation and a blessing of healing, Zeezrom joined the Church.

### Decide now to choose righteousness

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught us, "Happiness is the object and design

of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God" (*History of the Church*, 5:134-35).

We live today in a world so full of choices. Television offers both the good and the bad. Bookstores are full of publications offering the right and the wrong. Very few movies are worthy of seeing because of the profanity, violence, and immorality that fill them. Advertising is full of enticements to lead us to violate the Word of Wisdom. Some music, with its monotonous rhythms, beats illicit thoughts into our heads.

Consider the counsel given by President Spencer W. Kimball:

"Now may I make a recommendation? Develop discipline of self so that, more and more, you do not have to decide and redecide what you will do when you are confronted with the same temptation time and time again. You need only to decide some things once. How great a blessing it is to be free of agonizing over and over again regarding a temptation. To do such is time-consuming and very risky.

"Likewise, my dear young friends, the positive things you will want to accomplish need be decided upon only once—like going on a mission and living worthily in order to get married in the temple—and then all other decisions related to these goals can fall into line. Otherwise, each consideration is risky, and each equivocation may result in error. There are some things Latter-day Saints do and other things we just don't do. The sooner you take a stand, the taller you will be!" (*President Kimball Speaks Out* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981], p. 94).

### Three white dresses

To offset the worldly messages that entice us to choose the wrong, the Lord has blessed us with symbols of purity to keep us on the right course to

choose the right. I was reminded of one of these at a baptism of one of my granddaughters a few months ago. In the little program that preceded the ordinance of baptism, my granddaughter read a poem, which had been written by her mother for this special occasion.

**"My Three White Dresses"**

My mom bought me a white dress,  
Not red or pink or blue.

She said it was a special dress  
Like very other few.

There has been just one before,  
A dress now put away,  
That I wore some time ago  
Upon my blessing day.

As a little baby clothed  
In my first white dress,  
My dad held me in his arms,  
There to name and bless.

So pure and clean was I just then,  
With time to grow and learn  
About the Father's plan for me.  
My glory I must earn.

Now I've reached the age to judge  
The wrong road from the right,  
And I am here to be baptized  
In this dress of white.

So once again I'm free from sin.  
The path is clear to me.  
I'll grasp the rod and hold on tight,  
I vow with certainty.

Just as mud would stain my dress,  
Sin would stain my soul.  
The key is to repent or bleach,  
For whiteness is my goal.

And if I try my very best,  
Then richly blessed I'll be,  
Wearing inside God's holy house  
White dress number three.

So today I make this pledge:  
I'll strive to choose the right,  
Through this sacred baptism  
ordinance

In my second dress of white.

[Linda Gay Perry Nelson (1993)]

**Choose the right**

We are at a time in the world's history when Satan is marshaling all his forces to lead the people off the strait and narrow path. Fortunately, most members of the Church are clear about who it is that they will serve. Like Joshua of old, they proclaim, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

I hope and pray that you great young people of the Church will have the courage to consistently choose the right! Moreover, I suggest that each of you find or create reminders to help you and your loved ones choose the right when a choice is placed before you. There is power in a tie tack, a CTR ring, or a white dress hanging in the closet if we associate them with our desires for purity and righteousness. Even more important than physical reminders is to have the conviction deep down in our hearts to live the kind of life that will cause us to make the right choices, not only for peace and happiness in the world right now, but also for peace and happiness eternally.

I promise you that you will receive everlasting happiness if you consistently choose to do what is right.

God lives! Jesus is the Christ! Obedience to His laws will lead us to life eternal is my solemn witness to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir sang "I Know My Father Lives."

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**President Monson**

Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us, and the Tabernacle Choir has sung "I Know My Father Lives."

Following my remarks, the Tabernacle Choir will conclude this session