



# A Vision Splendid

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The Discourses of  
David O. McKay

Anne-Marie Wright  
Lampropoulos

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Anne-Marie Wright Lampropoulos

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In memory of  
Clare Middlemiss  
and  
William Robert Wright

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## Preface

For as long as I can remember, hundreds of thick, legal-sized, black leather binders lined the shelves of the walk-in closet next to my bedroom. At times, my family of ten could have used more storage space, but despite the inconvenience of a leak in the closet's ceiling, offers to buy the books, and busy lives that prevented us from really exploring them, the black binders stayed, four shelves down and dozens across. My parents knew what treasures they contained: my great-aunt Clare Middlemiss's meticulously preserved records and memories of David O. McKay.

Aunt Clare worked as McKay's personal secretary for 35 years during his service as Apostle and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the only woman to have ever been the private secretary to an LDS Church president. Aunt Clare never married nor had children, so her nephews (my father and his three brothers) were her surrogate children of sorts. As such, my father enjoyed many special experiences with McKay.

In addition to frequently visiting McKay's office and sitting next to him in the Tabernacle before general conference began, my father would greet Aunt Clare at the airport and drive her home when she returned from Church trips with the McKays and other Church leaders. During one airport greeting, my father, Wm. Robert Wright (Bob), and his twin brother, Richard, told Aunt Clare that they had submitted their mission papers. This news was especially exciting since the Church had just lifted its limit of one missionary per ward, instituted because of the need for young men to be drafted for the Korean War. Aunt Clare eagerly shared the news with McKay, who, with a twinkle in his eye, immediately put an arm around each of them and gave them their mission calls on the spot. My father was to serve in Switzerland and his brother in England. My father often talked about how this unique and spontaneous calling helped him through difficult days during his mission.

I have fond memories of Aunt Clare. She wore her honey brown hair stylishly set and immaculately groomed, and she dressed impeccably with coordinating hats, handbags, gloves, and jewelry. I felt especially lucky to score an occasional addition from her for my dress-up collection. One year, I mailed her a picture I had drawn, thanking her for a gift she had given me for my seventh birthday. A few days later I got a letter on fancy stationery from the Church Office Building, thanking me for thanking

her. Visiting her home on Lake Street just east of Liberty Park in Salt Lake City was memorable too. Aunt Clare always had piles of papers stacked on her dining room table. In her spare time, she would compile another scrapbook about McKay to add to her collection.

Workdays at the Church Office Building often began for McKay and Aunt Clare at 4:30 a.m., but never later than 7 a.m. Most days, after checking in, McKay would get the key to the temple doors out of his desk drawer and walk to the temple in his white double-breasted suit. He would return to the office by 6:30 a.m. and dictate letters and speeches until his regular Church meetings with the brethren began at 8 a.m. With hundreds of letters needing to be answered (thousands at Christmas time), meeting minutes to be kept, phone calls to be taken, and speeches to be typed, Aunt Clare always had plenty of work to do. And although she was paid only \$700 per month, even after 35 years of service, she worked until 6 p.m. weekdays and even on Saturdays.

“Clare was swamped,” said Lola Gygi Timmins, a secretary brought in to help in Aunt Clare’s office. “I don’t know how she got along.” Timmins, who was hired in 1961 at the age of 26, marveled at how incredibly organized Aunt Clare was. “Her organization skills were the best I have ever seen in my life.”

McKay’s fondness for quoting poetry often made Aunt Clare’s job of preparing his speeches more difficult. He had memorized so many literary passages that he often recited just the first line to Aunt Clare, and she was to fill in the rest. In preparing one funeral sermon, for example, McKay recited a line from a Robert Burns poem: “the best-laid schemes of mice an’ men gang aft a-gley,” a line not easily deciphered on her Dictaphone. She “desperately listened over and over again to those words . . . but could not distinguish them” and frantically started searching for the poem. She eventually found it and decided to start “compiling and indexing all the poems and quotations used by McKay” to avoid that kind of frustration again. Over the years she compiled several binders of quotations from which she could locate his favorites “at a moment’s notice.”

Sometimes McKay would decide generally what he wanted to say, and then Aunt Clare would prepare an outline for him, gathering thoughts and poems from her indexed files. Other times McKay gave his speeches freely from the pulpit, quoting the vast majority of poems by memory. A few of the typescripts Aunt Clare preserved were in unusually large font, presumably to make it easier for McKay to read at the pulpit. But that was an exception. He usually spoke from his heart, with Aunt Clare attending

his speeches and furiously recording them in her legendary shorthand to get the actual words recorded properly. She would later type them up and then file and index them, which formed the foundation for this book. If she could not attend, she sent someone else, usually the secretary to the First Presidency Joseph Anderson. Sometimes two shorthanders would go and then compare their notes afterwards. Aunt Clare then transcribed the speeches and had McKay review and edit them. He would make occasional, minor corrections, some of which can be seen jotted down on certain pages in the scrapbooks, before she filed them.

Aunt Clare not only typed and organized all the speeches McKay gave, but she also inserted parenthetical details or comments about visual aids or gestures he used, and she sometimes recorded numbers of people in attendance or information about how many venues were reached via closed circuit broadcasts as well. She clipped newspaper articles, preserved photographs, and collected other memorabilia, creating an incredibly thorough documentation of McKay's years in Church leadership.

After McKay died in 1970, Aunt Clare finished compiling and indexing 40,000 pages of McKay's diaries, 10,000 pages of his discourses, and 80,000 pages of scrapbooks that made up 215 legal-sized binders, each 8 1/2 inches wide, 14 inches tall, and about 4 inches thick (without a computer or even a self-correcting typewriter). As she got older and time was running out on her plan to write a book, she became concerned about finding a safe place for these scrapbooks, knowing that they contained the most comprehensive record of McKay's years as prophet: never-published speeches he gave at chapel and temple dedications, addresses to civic and community groups, general conference and other Church-related discourses, and numerous funeral sermons. The day she decided to entrust these precious pages to my father, with the understanding that they would be used to share McKay's remarkable legacy, is imprinted in my memory. She implored him to write the book that time had robbed her of writing.

When she died in 1984 at the age of 83, my family received what I thought was the best gift ever: the shiny black 1962 Buick Electra that McKay had sold to her when he moved into the Hotel Utah and no longer needed it. McKay was a notoriously speedy driver, but under Aunt Clare's ownership the car was carefully driven only to and from work, to church on Sundays, and to the grocery store once a week. The odometer registered just over 20,000 miles even though it was more than 20 years old. My father figured that this long, heavy, steel machine was about the safest car around, and that since it had been the prophet's car, my brothers and



I might be less inclined to use it inappropriately. The premium gasoline it required could be found only at a couple of gas stations in Salt Lake City, but we happily sought it out. Our new ride was quickly dubbed “Black Beauty” or “The Bat Mobile,” and my friends and I were especially pleased that it matched the black, Highland High pep club uniforms we wore every Friday. Twice we were flagged down on the road by anxious car collectors offering, and in one case begging, to buy it. But Black Beauty wasn’t for sale.

As more of my seven brothers reached driving age and I set off for college, Black Beauty aged more quickly than it had with Aunt Clare. The car’s luster faded, and as I grew older, I realized that Aunt Clare’s other gift to us—the vast collection of big, black scrapbooks—was far more valuable and long-lasting. On my visits home from Columbia University in New York City, my fascination with the volumes that had been waiting in the closet all those years intensified.

Several years ago, as his time allowed, my father started exploring the scrapbooks and interviewing relatives, friends, and colleagues of McKay, hoping to further augment and organize the information in a way he could share with others. During his tenure as the LDS Mission President of the Washington DC North Mission, my father found a colleague, Greg Prince, who was as passionate about sharing McKay’s legacy as he was. After countless hours spent over many years, they wrote a comprehensive biography examining issues and offering insights into McKay’s administration: *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, which was published by the University of Utah Press in 2005. The book, the first to use the original sources compiled by Aunt Clare, offers fascinating insights into many issues McKay faced. But as thorough as the book is, the hundreds of thousands of pages that Aunt Clare accumulated still have so much more to offer.

McKay’s words shed invaluable insight into his psyche and soul. The hundreds of discourses delivered during his years in Church leadership are not typical, even for an LDS prophet. They are brimming with beautiful poetry, both classic and contemporary, with fervent patriotism, with science, and with spirituality. Many of the words McKay used were not his own—he gathered them from poets and authors, scientists and saints, and patriots and politicians whose words not only add interest and dimension to his discourses but also demonstrate his astoundingly broad interests, his keen intellect, and his desire and ability to glean wisdom from many sources.

Aunt Clare dedicated a generous portion of her life to documenting his life. Why? Perhaps it became a passion, or her favorite hobby, or even a labor of love. More importantly, she understood the historical import of Mckay's tenure and his enormous impact on the Church and the world's perception of it. She loved the gospel he proclaimed, she enjoyed the work they were both engaged in, and she revered the man and the ideals he personified.

In the Book of Mormon, Nephi and other prophets were commanded to keep records of their leaders and people. 1 Nephi 3:19–20 states:

And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we may preserve unto our children the language of our fathers. And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets, which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, since the world began, even down unto this present time.

Aunt Clare embraced this instruction and emphasis on the preservation of records, which has always been part of modern Mormon culture.

“In gathering together and preserving in scrapbooks and diaries a vast store of clippings, speeches, editorials, special letters, and notes, concerning the activities of Mckay, I have been profoundly impressed with the magnitude of the work accomplished and the service rendered by him,” Aunt Clare wrote in a tribute to Mckay. “His records show that since 1936, he has personally interviewed more than fifteen hundred distinguished men and women from all over the world. This is in addition to the thousands of church officers and laymen whom he has met.”

Several other books have been written about Mckay that offer insights into different facets of his life, but it is access to Aunt Clare's comprehensive records that make this one unique. It delves into all Mckay's public utterances—previously unpublished speeches he gave to various audiences for a wide range of occasions, and the poetry and prose that structured each one. Although Aunt Clare began documenting Mckay's speeches when she became his personal secretary in 1935, she was able to gather speeches dating back to 1906, the year Mckay was called to become an Apostle. Except for the relatively few speeches that were printed in conference reports or local newspapers, these speeches have been read by very few and heard only by those who were in attendance. Aunt Clare could see the import of Mckay's words, and because of her, we have the opportunity to read them too.

In the process of preparing this book, I have read thousands of pages of McKay's speeches to explore his speaking style and content, and to select the most interesting and insightful passages, his most profound words

and messages. I delved into the numerous notebooks Aunt Clare kept that my parents donated to the Manuscripts Division at the University of Utah's Marriott Library. They comprise 87 of the 107 boxes of The David Oman McKay Papers housed in the library's Special Collections. I have focused primarily on speeches given from 1906 to 1968; temple dedications delivered from 1951 to 1964; funeral sermons, which were organized alphabetically by last name; and scrapbooks with material dating from 1869 to 1969. I concentrate not on the historical events and issues of his time, but on the more personal side of the prophet and the principles and ideals he held dear.

Aunt Clare's legacy to the twenty-first century and beyond is immense, far-reaching, and invaluable. It is my hope that the treasures I have mined from the mother lode of records she kept will present a balanced yet intriguing portrait of the previously undiscovered oratory and literary world of David O. McKay.

# Introduction

Tall and strong-voiced, McKay was an affable new image of Mormonism to a world that had previously seen the Mormon leaders as dour, dark-suited figures. He was perhaps the first Mormon president to treat non-Mormons as generously as members of his own faith. . . . In his own generous, enthusiastic way, McKay had expanded his Church's horizons and involvement far beyond the abilities of any successor to contract them. If he had not completely destroyed Mormon exclusivism, he has certainly tempered it with his own remarkable vision of a much wider, friendlier world.<sup>1</sup>

This description of David O. McKay in *Time Magazine* shortly after his death captures the essence of how he was perceived and the lasting influence he imparted. During his remarkable lifetime, he was able to forge a new outlook on Mormonism and triple Church membership to approximately three million during his tenure.

McKay's life as prophet of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been thoroughly documented and extensively written about, but a few important highlights emphasizing his education and the importance his family placed upon it provide the background and the context for the genesis of his unique outlook, inclusive rhetoric, and enduring impact.

McKay was born in 1873, the son of Scottish converts to the LDS Church who immigrated to Utah in 1856. He grew up as the third of ten children and the oldest boy in his family in Huntsville, Utah, where he gave many speeches and selected readings to church and neighborhood groups. He also read and memorized literary passages while herding, doing chores, and delivering mail and the *Ogden Standard Examiner* over the mountain to the mining town of La Plata once a week, which entailed leaving Huntsville at 7 a.m. and returning at 5 p.m. He attended elocution classes given by his lifelong teacher and mentor Mosiah Hall and assisted Hall in his schoolroom after finishing eighth grade. Pieces McKay committed to memory flavored and distinguished his sermons and addresses throughout his sixty-five-year tenure in Church leadership.

During his youth, McKay's father, David McKay, helped construct the first church and the first school building in the Huntsville valley. When the school opened, many families could not afford tuition, so McKay's

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1. *Time Magazine*, February 2, 1970, 50.

father and others created a system of taxation, which was adopted by all resident families, giving Ogden Valley the first free public school in the West. McKay's father also served as trustee of the Huntsville school district, county commissioner, justice of the peace, and member of the state House of Representatives where he worked for women's suffrage until it passed. The elder McKay also became a state senator, one of the presidents of the seventy-fifth Quorum of the Seventies, a member of the high priest quorum, a leader of the board of education of Weber Stake Academy (now Weber State University), and a patriarch within the Church. McKay's mother, Jennette Evans McKay, taught school until her marriage, and she insisted that her children attend college despite the financial sacrifice.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, education and community involvement were priorities, and McKay followed this family creed.

After graduating as class president and valedictorian from the University of Utah in 1897, David O. McKay served as principal of Weber Stake Academy, in the superintendency of the Weber Stake Sunday School Board, and later as president of the Board of Trustees when it became Weber State College. He married Emma Ray Riggs on January 2, 1901, and they were the first couple to be married in the Salt Lake Temple in the twentieth century. They raised six children, a seventh dying at the age of three.

McKay was a professional educator who was teaching English Literature at Weber College in Ogden when he was called to be an Apostle in 1906, at the age of 32. In those days, Apostles had to continue working to support their families, so he continued teaching for several years. During his apostleship, he also served as president of the Church Board of Education from 1906 to 1919 and as Church Commissioner of Education from 1919 to 1922, where he rejuvenated teaching in Church schools and seminaries by setting character building as the main goal and wrote the first lesson manual the Church ever produced. When McKay was called to become the ninth President of the Church in 1951 at the age of 77, he was the first President to have graduated from college.

McKay extolled his education and proclaimed his ideas at home and abroad. In 1921–22, he became the first General Authority to embark on an around-the-world tour. During the two years he was gone, his diary indicates that he read poems from *A Heap o' Livin'* and half of *As You Like It* to the missionaries. One of the boys said he never liked Shakespeare, so after reading a few scenes, McKay asked, "Are you getting tired?"

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2. Llewelyn McKay, *Home Memories of President David O. McKay*, 22–23, 26.

“No, please finish it. . . . That’s the first time I ever liked it,” the missionary replied.

McKay wrote, “Just another example proving that interest can always be awakened by producing mental pictures of personality and action. The following afternoon I read *Hamlet* to the elders.”<sup>3</sup> It is hard to imagine a prophet reading much besides scriptures to missionaries now. This is not necessarily an indication of McKay’s indifference toward scriptures as much as it is a testament of the value and substance he always believed could be gleaned and shared from other sources.

His diary shows that he took the time to read about the countries he visited, their histories, people, religion, and philosophy, and he even spoke the language, if possible. On his way to Tahiti he wrote, “Am reading *History of New Zealand*; have just finished *Tahitian Days*.” “Finished reading *Shibusawa: Or the Passing of Old Japan*, concerning the feudal system written by Adams.” On his way to Australia he recorded, “Completed Tollis’ *Agriculture and Rural High Schools for Australia*.” He mentioned other books, including Marcus Clarke’s *For the Term of his Natural Life*, Florence Marryat’s *There is no Death*, and Lew Wallace’s *The Fair God*. He visited Robert Louis Stevenson’s grave while in Samoa,<sup>4</sup> and he delighted in observing local customs and taking part in local cultures. He described attending a Sumo wrestling match in Japan and celebrating the New Year with the people. At all stops, he visited colleges and universities, museums, and art galleries. He mingled with people on the street and talked to leaders about state problems. “Before you can understand a people,” he said, “you must know how they think!”<sup>5</sup>

On his world tours he visited several countries and became the first LDS President to visit missions in South Africa, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, the Fiji Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, New Zealand, and Australia, traveling more miles (about one million) than all his predecessors combined.<sup>6</sup>

When asked if missionaries should persist in encouraging members to leave their homes and move to Zion, McKay deviated from the traditional thinking of the time that Church members would be better off coming to Utah. He said, “No, it is important that the branches be built up, and members should remain and work toward that end. Someday we shall have temples built for them which will be accessible to all, so that

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3. McKay, 75.

4. David Oman McKay Diaries, July 7, 1921.

5. McKay, *Home Memories*, 144.

6. *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 1970, 1.

the desired temple work can be done without uprooting families from their homelands.”<sup>7</sup> And that was what happened. “Everywhere he went, membership increased and new chapels, seminary and institute buildings rose in his wake.”<sup>8</sup> Under his leadership, the number of stakes increased from 184 to 500, the missionary force rose from 2,000 to 13,000, and the Church completed more than 3,700 buildings, including five temples: Los Angeles and Oakland, California, Switzerland, New Zealand, and London. McKay also approved the plan to build a huge central language and training facility next to the BYU campus, which is now the largest such facility in the world.<sup>9</sup> This growth underscores his fundamental commitment to Church growth, especially outside the United States. McKay described his greatest accomplishment as “making the Church a world-wide organization.”<sup>10</sup>

Admiration for McKay and the Church spread among common people and world leaders alike. McKay visited with Presidents Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Lyndon B. Johnson—all the US Presidents that served during his Church leadership. He also met with Vice President Richard M. Nixon, Cecil B. de Mille, Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, and other icons of his time, enhancing the prestige of the Church and dispelling misunderstandings.

In a 1962 *Time Magazine* article exploring the changing attitude towards Mormons, McKay stated, “There is a genuine affection between members of the Church and non-members. How did it come about? By getting to know and understand each other better. When you get to know a fellow, chances are you’ll get to like him too.”<sup>11</sup> This was not only a motto he lived by as he educated himself about different people and cultures, but one he frequently advocated in speeches as well.

During his forty-five years as an LDS Apostle and nineteen years as the prophet, McKay gave thousands of speeches, including hundreds of temple and chapel dedications, civic addresses, funeral sermons, and general conference and other Church-related talks. Many of these speeches contain some of the same prose and poetry, but no two speeches are the same, which is remarkable given the vast number of speeches he gave and their

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7. McKay, *Home Memories*, 33.

8. *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 1970, 1.

9. Richard N. Armstrong, *The Rhetoric of David O. McKay*, 69.

10. As quoted in Terry W. Call, “David O. McKay.”

11. *Time*, December 21, 1962, 37.

extremely limited dissemination. Without a twenty-four-hour news cycle, the Internet, and instant coverage, McKay could easily have used the same material or tweaked a standard dedication address, for example, but each speech is unique. All these discourses were composed by McKay himself (most extemporaneously), and virtually all of them were later typed, organized, and kept in large, legal-sized leather binders by Clare Middlemiss, his longtime personal secretary. The impressions, lessons, and experiences from all phases of McKay's life—his childhood in Huntsville, his college days in Salt Lake City, his mission in Scotland, and his Church leadership throughout the world—are touched upon in these rich, beautiful speeches, most of which have never been published. His insight, ideas, values, aspirations, and concerns are laid out in his own words, providing a glimpse into the world he saw and loved.

Throughout his life, McKay continually spent time reading great literature, memorizing important passages, internalizing ideas, and then reciting from the pulpit the messages he loved. They became part of him, engraved upon his mind. Even in old age, he recited passages he had used for fifty years as well as those he was constantly adding to his repertoire. In fact, blank spaces in the indexes Middlemiss kept of his speeches indicate the likelihood of adding new authors and sources. His choice of prose reveals his favorite authors and literature, a glimpse into his personal library. It also conveys his ideals and his fervent belief in their truth. He carried the language of poetry and prose within himself and used its wisdom and beauty as if it were “a record undamaged by the centuries and continents it may have crossed since poet or scribe put pen to paper.”<sup>12</sup>

McKay knew that as the prophet, anything he said publicly would be interpreted by many as Church doctrine, and he chose his words from many varied voices. His heavy use of literature reveals his desire to find beautiful thoughts that illustrated and articulated his beliefs. As he recited poems and quotations, he often changed their use of gender or other small words to better relate to his audience or location.

He clearly considered it one of his missions to bring poetry to the people. McKay's son Llewelyn wrote:

A good book is father's friend. He constantly rereads Shakespeare, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, and other favorites. He reads for relaxation, for enjoyment, for knowledge. He reads rapidly, widely, and in many fields, and he reads constantly when I have thought he should be sleep-

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12. Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, and Jon Stallworthy, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, v.



ing. He gleans the nectar from each book and files it in his astounding retentive memory to be used in his humor, poetry, and pathos in teaching.

As a companion he is ever interesting and delightful and draws on his storehouse of knowledge to discuss in a most stimulating manner any subject at hand.

A trip through Scotland is illustrative, for we sat enthralled as reminiscences of his youth were told or when a landmark reminded him of Scotland's history or when a landscape recalled a poem of Burns. As we passed Sterling Castle, he remembered stories in history of King James, Mary Queen of Scots, and the story of the beheading of Wallace. He related to us in such a way that history became alive how Wallace stood defiantly before the judges who accused him of treason and answered: 'I cannot be a traitor, for I have never pledged allegiance to the English King!' Then he was beheaded and quartered and parts of his body distributed as a warning to others who opposed the king. Father related these stories and recited poetry as if he had just completed reading them, though I'm sure it has been years since he read them.<sup>13</sup>

Stayner Richards, an assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve, described similar experiences while traveling with McKay. In a talk he said:

Between the time of the two dedications in Scotland . . . the President with the members of his party . . . took a bus tour up through the highlands of Scotland, around the Trossachs, around Loch Lomond, Ben Lomond, the Brig o' Kirk, and those places made famous by the immortal words of Sir Walter Scott and other great poets. During the tour the President delighted all of us by reciting from memory stanza after stanza from "The Lady of the Lake" and other great poems. He made us all feel that as visitors in foreign lands, we should study the history of those countries; we should learn of their poets and their artists and secure all of the cultural value that we could from such visits.<sup>14</sup>

The hundreds of different poems and quotations sprinkled throughout McKay's speeches consistently show his immense love of literature. Great, classic literature and poetry were like scripture to McKay. Because he used so many quotes as major vehicles in every speech he gave, some speeches came across more as poetry readings than traditional prophet's sermons. This profound literary bent reveals much about him, including his philosophy of life, his source of academic sustenance, and his intellectual biography.

Poetry was McKay's language of choice on most occasions, both public and private. Occasionally he recited his own poem about a baby dressed in

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13. McKay, *Home Memories*, 165–66.

14. McKay, 145.

white, a “Sweet, innocent, heavenly treasure, / Spirit offspring from God above, Gift of an All-Wise Creator, / Expression of Heavenly love!”<sup>15</sup> Most of his other poems were composed for his wife and children on holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries.<sup>16</sup>

Just as he spoke in poetry to various audiences and family members, they sometimes spoke in poetry to him. Emma Ray used literature in a tribute to McKay. First, she quoted Goethe: “Anecdotes and maxims are high treasures to a man, for he knows how to introduce the former at fit places in conversation and to recollect the latter at proper occasions.” She continued, “The President’s ability to quote at any time the *Bible*, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Burns, Pope, and other authors, helps exceedingly to make him an interesting companion and public speaker.” She went on to quote Shakespeare, saying, “As I know him, I feel that Shakespeare must have had someone like him in mind when he said, ‘What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable!’”<sup>17</sup>

Because McKay was a trained educator, we must assume that the sources he studied and shared convey the ideals and wisdom he believed were essential to his own personal development as well as the collective development of Church members. For McKay, life and the living of it were not necessarily simple, but he espoused basic universal principles that he believed made life simpler. His broad education and open-minded attitude formed a foundation conducive to building a worldwide church.

Even though he was a highly educated man, McKay was a humanist with a special knack for relating to everyone, no matter their level of education. The way he addressed different audiences in various venues and for assorted purposes with themes of personal character, service, and love demonstrates his skilled craftsmanship. Whether through the native poems of his beloved Scottish poets or the singsongy verses of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, he tailored his remarks to suit various occasions, giving gratitude

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15. David O. McKay, “Baby Dressed in White,” recited at the Dedicatory Services held in the home of George C. and Adelaide Ridges Wood, Woods Cross, Utah, May 22, 1961, at 7:00 p.m., at which time McKay dedicated the home as a museum to house Pioneer and Church History relics. Unless noted, all sermons and discourses referenced in this volume are from the David Oman McKay Scrapbooks.

16. David O. McKay, “Baby Dressed in White” and “To my Sweetheart on our Golden Anniversary.”

17. McKay, *Home Memories*, 269–70.

at dedications, inspiration in conference and civic addresses, and comfort at funerals. He identified people's needs and desires and then incorporated relevant themes, poetry, and prose.

In a tribute to McKay, Middlemiss said:

Often people ask me what impresses me most about President McKay. It is almost impossible to find words to portray the depth and breadth of his lofty character. There is a spirituality radiating from him that is oftentimes felt by even the stranger who visits him. He keeps himself spiritually tuned to heavenly things. His benevolent kindness and warm sympathy towards those who are suffering or who are bereaved, his sincerity and friendliness, his keen interest in people, and love for children are dominant characteristics. . . .

I have been a witness to the despair that has been on the countenances of many men and women who have entered his office and have seen the transformation as they left—a look of hope, of renewed determination to surmount their difficulties, and to live better and nobler lives. . . .

President McKay has a delightful sense of humor and enjoys to hear or tell stories of Scottish origin. Often, when he is conversing with groups of prominent business or professional men who have called to pay their respects, one may hear a burst of hearty laughter coming from the room. President McKay no doubt has told them one of his enjoyable jokes, probably in Scottish dialect. . . .

His liking for people, his instinctive ability to understand the other person's viewpoint, his belief in the sacredness and importance of each individual make him a little short of a genius at personal relationships. His charm is legendary. When he enters a room or takes his place at the pulpit, wherever it may be, a ripple of emotion seizes those present; they catch his glow, his love of life and humanity.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps partly because of his love for and interest in all people, McKay's simple messages, delivered in an inclusive and distinctive way, resonated wherever he went. He advanced a spirit of world citizenship by inspiring individuals, no matter where they lived, with his keen sense of moral values, his enthusiasm for higher human conduct, and his fervent belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. McKay's vision of a worldwide Church became a reality as the Church and Latter-day Saints were better understood. "Truly father has been able to feel, to grasp, and to understand the heartbeat of the world!" his son Llewelyn stated.<sup>19</sup>

Never before, and not since, has The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had a prophet so well versed in secular as well as scriptural

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18. Clare Middlemiss, "Tribute to President David O. McKay."

19. McKay, *Home Memories*, 35.

prose. McKay's intellectual and spiritual worlds meshed as he recited with ease the poetry of Edgar A. Guest, John Oxenham, and Joaquin Miller, as well as the patriotic pronouncements of George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Benjamin Franklin. In one speech he seemed to have studied Scottish lore, and in another he effortlessly extolled current US statistics on crime or divorce. He was at times romantic and wistful, and at other times firm and warning.

McKay held a special place in his heart for Scotland and especially loved the Scottish dialect and the poet Robert Burns. Because of his heritage, his mission, and his father's mission to Scotland, he found himself drawn to everything Scottish and therefore to Burns. His comments about Burns's possession of "the art of singing the soul into song and setting the heart to music"<sup>20</sup> reveal his strong kinship to Burns and his poetry.

At a general priesthood Meeting, McKay said:

We should never know anything about that [Stoke Poges] if it had not been for Thomas Gray. We should never know anything much about Stratford-on-Avon had it not been for Shakespeare; nothing about Ayr had it not been for Bobby Burns. These great men have immortalized those humble places. Let us not look with disrespect upon these great leaders in the literary world. They make life worth living and give us the best in the world.<sup>21</sup>

In a conference address, McKay shared another insight into his view of poets and their words. He said:

Wordsworth's heart leaped up when he beheld a rainbow in the sky. Burns' heart wept when his plowshare overturned a daisy. Tennyson could pluck the flower from the "crannied wall," and see, if he could read in it the mystery, "all that God and man is." All these, and other great men, have shown to us, in the works of nature, the handiwork of God.<sup>22</sup>

McKay's penchant to quote literature and poetry was much greater than his inclination to quote scripture, even at Church gatherings. And of the scriptures he quoted, most were from the more lyrical Gospels of the Bible's New Testament.

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20. Robert Burns, *The Poems & Songs of Robert Burns*, vii.

21. David O. McKay, Speech at General Priesthood Meeting, October 1, 1955. Stoke Poges is where Gray wrote "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

22. From Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Flower in the Crannied Wall," found in Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Complete Poetical Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson*, 248. It is also used by McKay in *Report of the Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, October 1908, 108.

Poetry served not just as a flowery way of embellishing McKay's speeches or ideas. His poetic choices supplemented and beautified already meaty messages and called attention to constant, broad learning. In October 1952, a writer for the *National Tourist News* stated:

The writer has never met a more interesting person than David O. McKay. In English literature there are none better read than David O. McKay. In all high-class literature there is no greater master. Mention Robert Burns, and Mr. McKay can quote poem after poem by memory. The spirit and philosophy of Shakespeare still live in the mind of David O. McKay and can be quoted by memory. The rhythmic lines of Longfellow can pour in an unbroken stream from his storehouse of memory. Five years of study of literature in two different universities did not bring the writer in contact with a teacher as well versed in literature as Mr. McKay.<sup>23</sup>

McKay projected an aura of dignity, even majesty. His slow, subdued oratorical style, coupled with his dramatic appearance, contributed to his impressive aura. In 1960 McKay quoted a passage to the youth of the Church describing John Keats. He could easily have been describing himself:

So long had his inner eye been fixed upon beauty; so long had he loved that "vision splendid," so long had he lived with it, that not only did his soul take on the loveliness of what he contemplated, but the very lines of the poet's face were chiseled into beauty by those sculptors called "thoughts" and "ideals."<sup>24</sup>

McKay's speeches were beautiful, while his words were weighty and firm. The poetry that flowed from him was romantic, while his convictions remained resolute. With his good looks and charm, he could have been an icon. With his education and love of learning and literature, he could have been an academic. With his deliberate diction and command of language, he could have been a renowned orator. With his love of mankind and enormous desire to serve, he could have been a humanitarian saint. Instead, he was all of these and more, a fascinating prophet with his own personal flair.

With pure and simple words enhanced by the poetry, literature, and history he loved, McKay revealed his learned mind, allowed the depth of his personality to emerge, and provided a more intimate view of his soul and the man he was. Through his words we can sense his emotion and in-

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23. McKay, *Home Memories*, 166–67.

24. David O. McKay, "Determining Your Own Future," address to the youth of the Church in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, and, through closed-wire circuit, to the youth gathered in 208 meeting places from Coast to Coast, Sunday, October 2, 1960, 7 p.m.

nate elegance, be inspired by the ideals he lived by, and learn more about the remarkable vision he had for the world and the Church he led.

Amidst the thousands of speeches McKay gave, several dominant themes prevailed which personify the man he was as well as the mission of his ministry: character, Christianity, education, immortality and eternal life, happiness, patriotism, family, love and friendship, service, and prayer. Although familiar, these themes were invigorated by McKay's enthusiastic conviction, lyrical style, and expressive eloquence as he incorporated poetry and prose that conveyed his values and what he believed to be of utmost importance to Church members and all of humanity. "A poem is a composition written for performance by the human voice,"<sup>25</sup> and McKay interspersed many poems' messages masterfully. He truly practiced what he preached, as the themes he shared were what he centered his life and the focus of his ministry around.

The contents of this book have been culled from the vast records Middlemiss kept and have been organized by grouping certain categories of speeches together: dedications, civic addresses, Church discourses, and funeral sermons. Each chapter broadly analyzes a category and then includes samples of illustrative full speeches. Although the contents of each speech are presented in the way Middlemiss recorded them, spelling, punctuation, and formatting have been updated and made consistent.

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25. Ferguson, Salter, and Stallworthy, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, xi.

## Dedications

David O. McKay promoted and presided over enormous expansion of the Church. He toured the missions of the world 1920–21, served as president of the European mission 1922–24, and traveled more miles than all previous prophets combined, all of which contributed to his broad, international outlook. Stakes were organized in several countries, including England, Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, and Switzerland, as well as many American states; chapels were built in England, South Wales, Australia, Uruguay, and throughout the United States; and temples were constructed in England, Switzerland, New Zealand, and America. He dedicated many chapels and temples throughout the world, giving dedicatory speeches and prayers that revealed his view on many issues, including the Church's growth, purpose, and role in helping people gain eternal life.

At the dedication of the San Mateo Ward in California, McKay expressed his joy over the Church's expansion:

The Church is worldwide, and oh, how we are thrilled to contemplate it, and to see how intelligent men are beginning to grasp that there is something vital in the Church contributing to the happiness in the home morning, noon and night; happiness in business affairs; happiness in social affairs. We are a happy people, because we are seeking to build the Kingdom of God on earth, and the Gospel, we know, is the power of God unto salvation.<sup>1</sup>

The worldwide, unprecedented growth of the Church was evident in the many locales McKay visited for dedications and also the number of buildings planned. At the November 24, 1955, dedication of the Monument Park 3rd and 4th Wards in Salt Lake City, he stated, "You will be pleased to know that this morning there are applications now and plans being drawn for fourteen churches down in Australia alone. . . . In Tonga, ten or twelve churches are in process."<sup>2</sup> Eight years later, construction remained intense. At the August 25, 1963, dedication of the Merthyr-Tydfil Church Edifice in Glamorganshire, South Wales, McKay reported, "In the British Missions, there are 46 chapels under construction now and 39

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1. David O. McKay, Dedication of San Mateo Ward, San Mateo Stake, California, February 22, 1953.

2. David O. McKay, "The True Spirit of Thanksgiving," Dedication of Monument Park 3rd and 4th Wards, Salt Lake City, November 24, 1955.

chapels going under construction before the end of the year, a total of 85 buildings either completed or under way for 1963.”<sup>3</sup>

The great number of buildings being constructed not only indicated the Church’s significant growth and expansion during the 1950s and 60s but also pointed to the Church’s shift, promulgated by McKay, to encourage members to stay and build up the Church where they resided instead of migrating to Utah. At the dedication of the Ipswich Branch in Ipswich, Australia, McKay expressed this new view:

Keep your own land, build up the country, be loyal to the government. Don’t go off to another land where there are strangers, where there are strange customs, where you have strange speech (my speech is strange to you this morning I’m sure), but let the Temple as well as your chapels be built nearer and more accessible to you. Let me put it this way, for fear of arousing expectation (blessed are they who expect nothing, for they will not be disappointed), but I hope that in the near future a Temple will be placed here in the South Seas somewhere, easily accessible to you, so that you may tend to every ordinance and blessing which the Restored Gospel offers, and remain in your own branches, in your own districts. We said the same to those in South Africa. We said the same to those in Europe; and in August of this year, a Temple will be dedicated at Bern, Switzerland, the first on European soil; in September the largest Temple ever built will be dedicated in Los Angeles, California.<sup>4</sup>

McKay promoted establishing roots in all lands and tailored his remarks to suit various locales, demonstrating his broad knowledge of many countries and the basis on which the Church’s enormous growth originated. As in other addresses, McKay conveyed many of his dedication messages through relevant literature and poetry. At the dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel in London, for example, he personalized his remarks by relating a story by Charles Dickens pertaining to Mormons in England, which is printed later in this book.<sup>5</sup>

Interestingly, although McKay gave dozens of dedicatory speeches, sometimes two or three in the same month, they all imparted different

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3. David O. McKay, “A House of Worship Should Promote Brotherhood,” Dedication of the Merthyr-Tydfil Church Edifice, Glamorganshire, South Wales (Central British Mission), August 25, 1963, 10:30 a.m.

4. David O. McKay, Dedication of the Ipswich Branch in Ipswich, Australia, Australian Mission, February 1, 1955.

5. David O. McKay, “Progress Apparent,” Dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel, London, England, Sunday morning, February 26, 1961. See pages 51–59 for the entire speech.



ideas. His dedications were generally more message-driven than his funeral remarks, contained more scriptural references and recitations, and featured their own titles as well. Some of the thoughts or poems were the same, but each speech was unique. The details Middlemiss added to the dedicatory speeches reveal her conscientious work, as many denote “(synopsis—uncorrected by President McKay)”<sup>6</sup> or “(Not published and not corrected by Pres. McKay),”<sup>7</sup> indicating that typically speeches were typed verbatim and then edited by McKay. Middlemiss’s notations such as “(Laughter)”<sup>8</sup> after jokes within speeches demonstrate her thorough documentation and perhaps her attendance or transcription from recordings.

McKay also invoked a more serious and doctrinal tone in his dedications than in his funeral sermons, in part because he conveyed the expectations these buildings implied and in part because he warned against the perceived evils of the day, especially Communism. Poetry and literature remained a significant part of these speeches, but scriptures, particularly from the New Testament, formed more doctrinal structure and conveyed more religious dogma. At the dedication of the Lake View Ward Meeting House, for example, McKay outlined four principles of the Church and gave a relatively infrequent testimony of the Book of Mormon. He stated:

Not infrequently, people ask (particularly reporters and strangers we meet), “In what way does your Church differ from churches of Christendom?” In reply, we can always name these four: First, we believe in divine authority by direct revelation. That is a distinguishing feature. Second, the organization of the Church. There is nothing like it anywhere in the world because it is divinely organized. Third, the eternal nature of covenants and ceremonies; for example, we believe in marriage for eternity, and we also believe that the Priesthood given once will remain with that individual forever unless he proves himself unworthy of it. And fourth, The Book of Mormon.

I invite your attention, young people, today, to this book, because it is what it purports to be, you may rest assured that Joseph Smith was inspired.<sup>9</sup>

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6. David O. McKay, “Two Great Testimonies,” Dedication of the Hyrum Stake Tabernacle, Hyrum Third Ward, August 31, 1952.

7. David O. McKay, “Purpose of the Church to Instill High Ideals in the Hearts of Youth,” Dedication of Las Vegas 5th and 6th Wards Church Edifice, Las Vegas, November 14, 1954, 2 p.m.

8. David O. McKay, “Five Marks to Prove a Claim Authentic,” Dedicatory address and prayer at Pontiac Ward, Detroit Stake Center, Detroit, Michigan, April 26, 1959, 2 p.m.

9. David O. McKay, Dedication of Lake View Ward Meeting House, Lakeview Stake, October 19, 1952.

McKay cited these distinguishing characteristics of the Church and proclaimed its main purpose was found in Moses 1:39, which he quoted frequently in his dedicatory remarks: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”<sup>10</sup> To McKay, the many churches and temples he dedicated helped to achieve this purpose because there are “four fundamental institutions upon which our success and happiness depend: first, the home; second, the Church; third, the school; fourth, the government.” He continued,

In the home we give to our children their physical life and should give them their spiritual enlightenment. In the Church should be supplemented that training; and independently, too, the Church should instill faith—the true religion—in the hearts of the children who come from these homes. That is the duty of the Church.

That is why you built this edifice—the only reason; in blessing those children, you give glory to God. That is the only way you can honor Him. Oh, I know you can kneel down and, in words, praise and honor Him, but His work and His glory are to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. This Church is built to help Him.<sup>11</sup>

The Church, and the meetings and activities held in its buildings, not only helped people grow closer to God and eternal life, but it allowed them to provide such blessings for those who did not have a chance before they died. At the dedication of a new chapel in Surrey, England, McKay said:

We demonstrate by our presence, and I hope in our hearts, the belief—better than belief—the knowledge that those of our loved ones who have died without having heard the name of Jesus Christ may have opportunity to hear and obey His principles and receive the blessings of the gospel. . . . Such is the claim of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it is in harmony

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10. David O. McKay, “Six Sources of Happiness,” Dedication of Idaho Falls Eighth Ward Meeting House, South Idaho Falls Stake, December 7, 1952; Dedication of Laguna Beach Branch Meeting House, January 4, 1953; “The Development of Character,” Dedication of San Joaquin Stake Center, November 6, 1955; “The True Spirit of Appreciation,” Morning session of Dedication of Detroit Stake Center, Pontiac Ward, Detroit, Michigan, Sunday, April 26, 1959, 10 a.m.; “Important Principles of the Gospel—The Spirit of Unity and Service,” Dedication of the 6th–7th Wards Church Edifice (Grant Stake), held Sunday, June 5, 1960, 5 p.m. (synopsis); “The Reality of the Resurrection,” Dedication of the Bountiful South Stake Center and Bountiful Eighth Ward Church edifice, Bountiful, Utah, Sunday, March 26, 1961.

11. David O. McKay, Dedication of Laurelhurst-Beacon Ward Meeting House, Salt Lake City, Utah, March 22, 1953.

with the words of our Savior. . . . The principal purpose of our assembling here today is to dedicate this selected acreage for the erection of a temple in which our ancestors who died without having heard the Gospel may have opportunity to receive those principles and enjoy the blessings thereof.

How just! How in keeping with the love of a divine Father! Its reasonableness appeals to your judgment and gives satisfaction to your soul.

Baptism is an earthly ordinance, and the only way that they who died without having heard the Gospel may enter into the kingdom by water and by the spirit will be by proxy; and you children of today, descendants of parents, and great-grandparents and great, great-grandparents have the responsibility, the glorious privilege of securing the names of your ancestors and of being baptized for them. Such is one of the sacred ordinances performed in a temple of the Most High.<sup>12</sup>

McKay stressed worship, education, recreation, and service as the main elements that contribute to the development of the religious soul, and that the Church and its buildings offered opportunities in all categories. In his dedicatory prayer for the San Fernando Stake Center and Van Nuys 2nd and 3rd Ward Church Edifice in Van Nuys, California, McKay proclaimed the significance of this and other buildings:

The greatness of the nation is not in its wealth, nor in its dense forests, nor in great lands, nor in useful machinery, nor in metals, wealth, nor mines. The greatness in a nation is measured only by the greatness of its men and women, and this edifice contributes to that, Holy Father. Bless those who have considered this investment and have seemingly deprived themselves of comforts and possibly of necessities to make this center of learning, this center of worship contribute to the greatness of human souls.<sup>13</sup>

Character, or greatness of human souls, remained a prominent theme in McKay's dedications as well as his other speeches, and he often quoted Ralph Waldo Emerson: "As there is nothing truly great in the world but man, so there is nothing truly great in man but character. Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be fit to live as well as to think."<sup>14</sup> He also recited

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12. David O. McKay, Dedication of New Chapel, Surrey, August 10, 1953.

13. David O. McKay, "The Importance of Keeping Old-Fashioned Principles," Dedication of San Fernando Stake Center and Van Nuys 2nd and 3rd Ward Church Edifice, Van Nuys, California, October 30, 1955.

14. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The American Scholar: An Address*, 31. This quote was used in the Dedication of Laurelcrest-Beacon Ward Meeting House, Salt Lake City, March 22, 1953. Also used in "The Development of Character," Dedication of San Joaquin Stake Center, November 6, 1955, and in speeches given March 30, 1961, and April 4, 1965.

the last stanza of Oliver Wendell Holmes's "The Chambered Nautilus," which integrates the building theme, soul development, and immortality:

Build thee more stately mansions, oh, my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each temple nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!<sup>15</sup>

The themes of immortality, personal character, and the importance of families appeared in all McKay's speeches, but he extolled the importance of the Church and a cooperating government most in dedication remarks. In virtually every dedicatory prayer, McKay stressed that salvation depends upon the ordinances and activities that take place within the Church's buildings, and that the freedom to worship—the Church's very existence—depended upon the government. For example, at the Idaho Falls Eighth Ward Meeting House dedication he stated:

We are grateful for this great country, this great American Republic, in the ideals to which Thy Church could be established because of the freedom to worship according to the dictates of one's conscience. Preserve this country, O Father, from the evils of those who desire to rob the individual of this freedom. To that end frustrate the plans of the Communists, who are misguided in this land by false ideals. May the weapons that are formed against this country and its fundamental foundation, the Constitution of the United States, be turned aside, and their accomplishing their purposes thwarted.<sup>16</sup>

For McKay, the Constitution not only allows the Church to flourish, but it also serves as a deterrent and force against Communism, a pressing political issue he often mentioned. Three dedications in August 1952 conveyed different messages, but each declared the grave threat of Communism. Most other dedications warned against it as well. At the

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15. Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Poems of Oliver Wendell Holmes*, 358. Used in Dedication of McKay Ward, December 14, 1952; Dedication of the Ipswich Branch in Ipswich Australia, Australian Mission, February 1, 1955; Dedication of St. George 5th and 6th Ward Chapel, St. George, April 17, 1955; "The Responsibility of Consistency in the LDS Home," 2nd session of dedicatory services of the Merthyr-Tydfil Church Edifice, August 25, 1963, 2:20 p.m.; funeral sermon given November 14, 1954; and other speeches.

16. David O. McKay, Dedication of Idaho Falls Eighth Ward Meeting House, South Idaho Falls Stake, December 7, 1952.

dedication of the Brigham 7th Ward in Utah's North Box Elder Stake, McKay invoked a statement General Douglas MacArthur made on the deck of the Battleship Missouri in Yokohama Bay when Japan surrendered:

If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be upon us. The problem is basically theological and involves a spiritual renaissance and improvement of human character. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh.<sup>17</sup>

In December of 1952, McKay again warned of Communism:

Well, one purpose of this edifice is to instill into the hearts of the youth and all that God lives, that He is our Father, and that we are His children—a truth needed in this world now, because there is sweeping Europe particularly, from Russia, on through all those countries, from the North Sea and the Baltic Sea right down to Czechoslovakia, a spirit of irreverence, a spirit of atheism! Take my word for it, it is real!—so diabolically real that our souls shudder from it! Recently we read in the London Times a report from a teacher who had escaped from Russia, from behind those lines. I hesitate even to repeat it to you on this sacred occasion, but you young students should know how real the teaching is. They are not teaching them, but indoctrinating them, indoctrinating them with such false ideals as this. Little boys and girls in a school room were left to go without several meals; they were hungry, and one of these atheistic teachers entered. . . . The teacher said, “Now, children, pray to God that you might get something to eat.” They prayed; the door was opened, and only empty trays were seen. “Now, children, pray to Stalin for something to eat.” They prayed, and when the doors were opened, trays filled with food were brought in. “There, you see, when you prayed to God you got nothing, but when you prayed to Stalin you got food. Long live Stalin!”

Is it real, indoctrinating false ideas into the minds of those darling children? Here we instill into minds of little children faith in the Eternal God and bring them here to worship God, and to let them know that He is our Father, as well. He will answer our prayers always, sometimes negatively, as you answer your own children, but always will He answer, especially when our hearts are in tune with Him.<sup>18</sup>

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17. David O. McKay, “Seeking Spiritual Development,” Dedication of Brigham Seventh Ward, North Box Elder Stake, August 24, 1952. Also, “The Dual Purpose of Mortal Existence,” Dedicatory Services of the Cokeville Ward Church Edifice, Cokeville, Wyoming (Montpelier Stake), Sunday, October 8, 1961.

18. David O. McKay, Dedication of Idaho Falls Eighth Ward Meeting House, South Idaho Falls Stake, December 7, 1952, p. 4.

Because McKay's references to Communism were almost always surrounded by praise and gratitude for the United States Constitution, he seemed to view the Constitution as a gift from God as well as a righteous force to combat the evils of Communism. As Communism threatened the freedom to worship, it therefore endangered the Church and God's work. McKay's patriotism and pride in the Constitution went beyond their relation to Communism, however, as he repeatedly referenced statesmen and Founding Fathers. McKay quoted British statesman William E. Gladstone, who having read the Constitution a hundred years after it had been in force, said,

The American Constitution is, so far as I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man. It had had a century of trial, under the pressure of exigencies caused by an expansion unexampled in point of rapidity and range, and its exemption from formal change, though not entire, has certainly proved the sagacity of the constructors and the stubborn strength of the fabric.<sup>19</sup>

For McKay, freedom of religion was precisely what motivated the foundation of America, and along with the constitutional freedoms to worship, to write, to work, and to speak comes the responsibility of choice about how to live.

McKay weaved this theme of choosing a good life into the general theme of building as well. He quoted "A Builder Or A Wrecker" by Charles Franklin Benvegar:

I watched them tear a building down  
 A gang of men in a busy town.  
 With a ho—heave—ho and a lusty yell,  
 They swung a beam and the sidewalks fell.  
 I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled  
 And the kind you would hire were you to build?"  
 He laughed and said, "Why, no, indeed,  
 Just common laborers is all I need.  
 They can easily wreck in a day or two  
 What has taken the builders years to do."  
 So I said to myself, as I went on my way,  
 "What part in the game of life do I play?"

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19. David O. McKay, Dedication of Laurelcrest-Beacon Ward Meeting House, Salt Lake City, March 22, 1953.

Am I shaping my deeds to a well made plan,  
 Carefully measuring with a rule and square,  
 Patiently doing the very best I can,  
 Or am I a wrecker who walks the town,  
 Content with the labor of tearing down?"<sup>20</sup>

He continued the analogy:

My thought is this: Are we builders, or are we wreckers? Are we going to carve something great out of the life given to us, or are we going to let it sink into insignificance, probably sin? That is the question. You have built this house with effort, by self-denial, by the exercise of faith and confidence and unity. Those are the traits which you must exercise if you are going to build your character.

It takes no effort to become a prodigal son, young man, or a prodigal daughter, young woman. You can slip into sin without effort. There is no pride which you should arrogate to yourself because of indulgence in passion or appetites. That takes no effort, I repeat. Any animal can gratify passion or appetite. But to master the appetite, to control the passion of anger, to refrain from taking the name of God in vain, requires effort, and that effort develops character.<sup>21</sup>

McKay stressed both the important role these new buildings should have in people's lives and the joy that comes from building them. He stated:

I am reminded of the fact that the source of the truest joy in life comes from creation. To give to the world something which has never been in it before is to experience supreme joy.<sup>22</sup>

As he discussed the physical buildings he dedicated, McKay often invoked John Ruskin's thoughts from *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* about building lasting structures.<sup>23</sup> He was quick to point out that although

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20. *Songs of the Free State Bards*, 29. David O. McKay, Dedication of the East Midvale Second Ward church edifice, East Jordan Stake, Midvale, Utah, December 6, 1953, "Honesty and Virtue—Basic Ideals of the Church of Jesus Christ."

21. David O. McKay, Dedication of the East Midvale Second Ward church edifice, East Jordan Stake, Midvale, Utah, December 6, 1953, "Honesty and Virtue—Basic Ideals of the Church of Jesus Christ."

22. David O. McKay, Dedication of San Mateo Ward, California, February 22, 1953.

23. E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, eds., *The Works of John Ruskin*, 234. Used by McKay in "The Purpose of the Church Buildings," Dedicatory Services for Cleveland Branch Chapel, Great Lakes Mission, Cleveland, Ohio, May 2, 1954; Dedication of St. George 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Ward Chapel, St. George, April 17, 1955; "The Temple and Character Development," Address delivered at a special service celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the dedication of the Logan Temple, held in the

buildings are important, the physical structures form only a start. They are built for the development of human beings and must house activities to help mankind make a difference. At the service to lay the cornerstone of the Montevideo Branch Building in Uruguay, McKay said:

This is a very important and historical occasion. We have met here today to lay the corner stone of the first complete Church edifice of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints built in South America.

But the purpose of these buildings is not accomplished when the walls are built, the roof securely placed, the tower completed and the dedicatory prayer offered. They are built for the edification of the soul. Unless these edifices are used to make bad men good, weak men strong, good men better, women more beautiful in nature, men more noble, then all this effort shall have been in vain. The purpose is to make men and women, men and women who worship God and His Beloved Son and who remain true to the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>24</sup>

Beyond chapels and temples, McKay spoke at the dedication of other buildings, including a museum for pioneer and Church history relics,<sup>25</sup> an airport terminal,<sup>26</sup> and schools.<sup>27</sup> For these he used the same style and some of the same prose but instead quoted relevant passages without strong religious bents. At the dedication of the Nurses' Residence of the Latter-day Saints Hospital School of Nursing, for example, McKay recited Florence Nightingale's pledge and compared nurses to the ministering angels in a passage from Sir Walter Scott's "Marmion":

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Logan Temple Assembly Room, Logan, Utah, Sunday, May 17, 1959, 4:30 p.m.; "Progress Apparent," Dedication of the Hyde Park Chapel, London, England, Sunday morning, February 26, 1961 (see pages 51–59 for the entire speech.).

24. "The Purpose of Building Church Edifices." Address given at the laying of the cornerstone of the Montevideo Branch Building, Uruguayan Mission, Montevideo, Uruguay, January 30, 1954.

25. David O. McKay, Dedicatory Services held in the home of George C. and Adelaide Ridges Wood, Woods Cross, Utah, May 22, 1961, at 7:00 p.m., at which time McKay dedicated the home as a museum which now houses Pioneer and Church History relics.

26. David O. McKay, Dedication of the new air terminal, Salt Lake City Municipal Airport, June 17, 1961.

27. David O. McKay, Dedication of Ben Lomond High School.



Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,  
 Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
 And variable as the shade  
 By the light quivering aspen made;  
 When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
 A ministering angel thou!<sup>28</sup>

In this same dedicatory speech he also quoted poetry, an excerpt about service from Robert Browning's "Paracelsus," and a passage from Shakespeare.

McKay's references to MacArthur, Stalin, *London Times*, Scott, Shakespeare, Browning, and more demonstrate his breadth of knowledge and love of reading. He actively sought spiritual messages from a variety of atypical sources and eagerly shared them in all his remarks. Personal stories, scriptural references, quotes from world leaders, and timely issues of the day formed and flavored every address he gave.

Although he expounded upon many themes and ideas, one of McKay's overarching messages in dedications was service to others—as a source of happiness, a significant purpose of the Church, and a means to salvation. For "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).<sup>29</sup> He also explained the purpose of these edifices and the importance of building them worldwide because of the important work that takes place within them.

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28. Sir Walter Scott, *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field*, 294. Used by McKay in "Service to Others," Dedication of the Nurses' Residence of the Latter-day Saints Hospital School of Nursing, May 8, 1953.

29. David O. McKay, "The True Aim of Life," Dedication of the Studio Ward Meeting House, San Fernando Stake, Los Angeles, August 10, 1952; Dedication of Idaho Falls Eighth Ward Meeting House, South Idaho Falls Stake, December 7, 1952; "Six Sources of Happiness," Dedication of Laguna Beach Branch Meeting House, January 4, 1953; "The Perilous Present," Dedication of the Park-University Wards Church Edifice at Provo, Utah, July 31, 1955.

## Samples of Dedications

*McKay drove from Salt Lake City on Friday, August 1, 1952, to dedicate the new ward chapel in Studio City, California.<sup>30</sup> This is the address he delivered at the dedication of the Studio City Ward Meeting House, San Fernando Stake, Los Angeles, California, on Sunday, August 10, 1952, at 2:00 p.m.*

### **The True Aim of Life**

My brethren and sisters, I esteem it a privilege to participate with you in the dedicatory service of your excellent Church edifice. It is a credit not only to the Studio City Ward but to the San Fernando Stake and to the Church.

I am happy to partake of the spirit of appreciation as expressed by previous speakers, and who have been most gracious in their desire to give credit where credit is due. I am pleased that they named the architect, our wives, and mothers, besides those men who participated specifically in the manual duties and labors that have resulted in this house of worship.

It has been my privilege to dedicate a good many chapels, a number of which have been the product of the skill and ability of Brother Harold W. Burton.<sup>31</sup> I have come to the conclusion that whenever we dedicate a building drawn by this able architect, we have an excellent edifice, and this is no exception. It is commodious; it is beautiful; it is artistic; and it will serve the purpose for which it has been erected: the worship of God.

I am glad to add my commendation to the sisters. While listening to the words mentioned by the previous speakers, I turned to the following, which is a tribute to all our mothers, I think. On one occasion President Lincoln greeted Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” with the question, “Is this the little woman that made this great war?” Mr. Appleton, who comments on this remark, continues:

Often, too, she shapes the career of husband or brother or son. A man succeeds and reaps the honors of public applause, when in truth a quiet little woman has made it all possible—has by her tact and encouragement held

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30. *The Salt Lake Tribune*, August 2, 1952, 14.

31. Harold William Burton became the chief supervising architect for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1955.

him to his best, has had faith in him when his own faith has languished, has cheered him with the unfailing assurance: “You can, you must, you will.”

Helping, and loving, and guiding  
 Urging when that were best,  
 Holding her fears in hiding,  
 Deep in her quiet breast;  
 This is the woman who kept him  
 True to his standards high,  
 When, tossed in the storm and stress of strife,  
 He thought himself through with the game of life  
 And ready to pay the cost.  
 Watching, and guarding, whispering still,  
 “Win you can—and you will, you will.”<sup>32</sup>

Mothers, wives, and sisters, I add my commendation to that already given to you for your self-sacrificing efforts in making possible this edifice. There is joy in creating; there is pain in destruction. That is why war is so terrible—it is so destructive. But always in making something or giving something to the world that has never been in it before gives joy, and that is what you have done. Of course we have many meeting houses, but this edifice is distinct, as every other edifice is. You have given to the world something which was not here before. That is one reason why you are happy. You have forgotten the pain, deprivations, displeasures, and self-sacrifices—and you have had to make them—all forgotten in giving to this world, stake, and Church something new. When it approaches perfection for the purpose for which it is built, the joy is correspondingly greater.

There are two people who I wish were here today to participate in the satisfaction that Bishop and Sister Watts, his counselors and their wives, the builders, Relief Society, and all you members are now enjoying, and they are the father and mother of your bishop. I have known this good father for many years—half a century now, nearly. I saw him only a day or so before I came down. I know that his heart is here. He was unable physically to make the journey, but I have been thinking of him and the pride he has in the achievement of his son. Every father likes to see his son succeed. Every parent likes to have his daughter a success in life. Indeed, that is the greatest success that man can achieve. I am going to illustrate it with these lines:

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32. From Everard Jack Appleton’s “The Woman Who Understands,” in Appleton, *The Quiet Courage: And Other Songs of the Unafraid*, 15.

We've never seen the Father here, but we have known the Son,  
 The finest type of manhood since the world was first begun,  
 And summing up the works of God, I write with reverent pen,  
 The greatest is the Son He sent to cheer the lives of men.

Through Him we learned the ways of God, and found the Father's love;  
 The Son it was who won us back to Him who reigns above.  
 The Lord did not come down Himself to prove to men His worth,  
 He sought our worship through the child He placed upon the earth.  
 How can I best express my life? Wherein does greatness lie?  
 How can I long remembrance win, since I am born to die?  
 Both fame and gold are selfish things; their charms may quickly flee,  
 But I'm the father of a boy who came to speak for me.

In him lies all I hope to be; his splendor shall be mine;  
 I shall have done man's greatest work if only he is fine.  
 If someday he shall help the world long after I am dead,  
 In all that men shall say of him my praises shall be said.  
 It matters not what I may win of fleeting gold or fame,  
 My hope of joy depends alone on what my boy shall claim.  
 My story must be told thru him; for him I work and plan,  
 Man's greatest duty is to be the father of a man.<sup>33</sup>

You may not agree with all the sentiment, but you will, as a father or mother, with the spirit of it. Your pride in success of your boy—that pride is what there was in Bishop and Sister Watts for their son who, with his counselors and your assistance, has guided the construction of this commendable edifice.

Now I feel impressed to say just a few words as to the purpose of it. The house itself is but a frame. If you were to let it stand, it would be admired as an edifice by those who pass, but its purpose would not be achieved. The erection, the completion, even the dedication of it today will be but a beginning of its purpose. I would like to name just four ideals or purposes for which you have erected this edifice.

First, to make noble sons and beautiful daughters. When I refer to beautiful daughters, I refer to beauty of soul as well as of features.

Second, to make happy homes.

Third, to bring to the human heart peace in true worship.

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33. Edgar A. Guest, "Thoughts of a Father," in Guest, *The Path to Home*, 153. Used by McKay in a funeral sermon on April 6, 1964, and other speeches.

Fourth, to help to bring about the universal brotherhood of man; that hope expressed by the heavenly choir when they sang, “Peace on earth and good will toward men.”

I think those aims should be willingly subscribed to by any clear-thinking human being, no matter what his creed, or even no creed.

First, we like our young men to realize that success in life depends upon character, that happiness depends upon it. We like them to feel that the indulgence in what we call the pleasures of the world will never give lasting satisfaction; and oh, how many millions are vainly seeking satisfaction along those lines! Physical pleasures, physical indulgences never succeed in leaving peace and happiness. I do not deny the pleasure that comes from such indulgence. Any animal enjoys that, and man especially. But the poet Burns was right when he wrote:

But pleasures are like poppies spread,  
You seize the flower—its bloom is shed;  
Or like the snow falls in the river,  
A moment white—then melts forever;  
Or like the borealis race  
That flit ere you can point their place,  
Or like the rainbow’s lovely form  
Vanishing amid the storm.<sup>34</sup>

He knew, that poet, how superficial were those sensual, physical pleasures. After one night’s escapade in which he indulged too freely in that which inebriates, and he could not remember how disgracefully he had acted, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Dunlap and addressed it “From the regions of hell amid the horrors of the damned.”<sup>35</sup> You cannot call that happiness. He had the pleasure, but no happiness.

And so this house is erected in order to teach our boys and our girls that an upright character is the principal purpose of life, and that only by developing such character can youth enjoy happiness and joy, which include all pleasures which the human heart requires. We should like them to learn that the first principle essential in the development of character is the principle of free agency. It is not that they want to do what they please in defiance of Father and Mother—no. They will consult them and obey them, sometimes contrary to their own feelings.

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34. Robert Burns and Allan Cunningham, “Tam O’Shanter,” in Burns and Cunningham, *The Works of Robert Burns: With Life*, 302.

35. Mrs. Dunlap was a friend of Robert Burns. This quote is found Burns and Cunningham, *The Works of Robert Burns*, 736.

But after all, character depends on the action that comes from within. And when a son says, “I am going to obey my father even though it is contrary to my own feelings,” he is taking a step toward character. He is not subordinating his free agency; he is merely surrendering his judgment to the judgment of a higher mind.

That is sometimes done in the Church. I saw it with the Twelve soon after I became a member of the Twelve, when I was pretty sure all the Twelve members had something in mind which was not what the President of the Church had in mind; but when the President of the Church stood up and said, “This is what we should like, Brethren,” though it was contrary to what we had thought—not in principle but on an issue—President Francis M. Lyman<sup>36</sup> was the first to arise, and said:

“Brethren, I move that this be the sentiment of the Council.”

“Second the motion,” said President Grant (Elder Grant, then),<sup>37</sup> and it was carried unanimously.

The Twelve surrendered their best judgment and inspiration on that occasion to the voice of the prophet; and three months did not pass before that leader, prophet, and seer was vindicated, and the Church blessed.

So it is with youth. You do not always surrender your free agency when you subscribe to the superior judgment of your parents. But free agency is the first fundamental principle upon which your character is built. I have read on every occasion, and I am going to read it until every young person in the Church hears it, the following lines:

You are the person who has to decide  
 Whether you’ll do it or toss it aside.  
 You are the person who makes up your mind  
 Whether you’ll lead or will linger behind.  
 Whether you’ll try for the goal that’s afar  
 Or just be contented to stay where you are.  
 Take it or leave it. Here’s something to do!  
 Just think it over—it’s all up to you.

What do you wish? To be known as a shirk,  
 Known as a good man who’s willing to work,  
 Scorned as a loafer, or praised by your chief,

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36. Francis Marion Lyman was the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from 1903 to 1916.

37. Heber Jeddy Grant was called to be an Apostle in 1882 and served as President of the Church from 1918 to 1945.

Rich man or poor man or beggar or thief?  
 Eager or earnest or dull through the day?  
 Honest or crooked? It's you who must say!  
 You must decide in the face of the test  
 Whether you'll shirk or give it your best.

Nobody here will compel you to rise;  
 No one will force you to open your eyes;  
 No one will answer for you, yes or no,  
 Whether to stay there or whether to go;  
 Life is a game, but it's you who must say  
 Whether as cheat or as sportsman you'll play.  
 Fate may betray you, but you settle first  
 Whether to live to your best or your worst.

So, whatever it is you are wanting to be,  
 Remember, to fashion the choice you are free.  
 Kindly or selfish, or gentle or strong,  
 Keeping the right way or taking the wrong,  
 Careless of honor or guarding your pride,  
 All these are questions which you must decide.  
 Yours the selection, whichever you do;  
 The thing men call character's all up to you.<sup>38</sup>

The second element in building your character is self-control. Young men and women fail to realize this, and too many today, even in our own groups, take the easy way and justify the yielding to that which is not right because of what they have heard regarding inhibitions. I know of nothing which our young people should be more earnest in developing than the ability to say no in the face of temptation. Too many cigarettes are indulged in because young people are afraid to say, "No, thank you." Too many cocktails are accepted simply to please some hostess. Too many New Year parties are ruined by indulgence in intoxicants simply because it is fashionable to drink the old year out and the new year in. We desire, and fathers and mothers particularly long for, the time when the youth of the Church will have strength of character sufficient to maintain the ideals of the Church. And that is what this Church must do: maintain ideals no matter how loose the actions of those not of us.

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38. Edgar A. Guest, "You," in Larry Chang, ed., *Wisdom for the Soul: Five Millennia of Prescriptions for Spiritual Healing*, 123. Used by McKay in Speech to Youth gathered in 208 meeting places from coast to coast, Sunday, October 2, 1960, 7 p.m. (see pages 121–26 for the entire speech).



It is easy enough to be virtuous  
 When nothing tempts you to stray,  
 When without or within, no voice of sin  
 Is luring your soul away;  
 But it's only a negative virtue  
 Until it is tried by fire,  
 And the life that is worth the honor on earth  
 Is the one that resists desire.<sup>39</sup>

The third element in that character building, young man or young woman, is reverence. A strong man is always reverent. A noble soul is reverent. You never hear him take the name of Deity in vain. You never see him make light, or see him write in a scoffing way, of that which is sacred. Your best humorists are those who respect that which is sacred.

George Washington condemned by letter the fact that some of his soldiers took the name of Deity in vain. He called it a vice so low, so mean, that the American soldiers should not indulge in it. America, from that standpoint, is rather irreverent.

In our Church, in our homes, God and all things pertaining to Him should be treated with reverence; and that applies to this house. I re-echo what the bishop said, that the walls should be kept unmarked, the desks clean, every room in order, because it is the house of God.

I said that another purpose of this house is to make happy homes. After all, our happiness depends upon those two things largely, what we are—character—and how we live in our homes. It is possible that we can have a touch of heaven right here at home, right on this earth,

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39. From Ella Wheeler Wilcox, "Worth While," found in Wilcox, *Poems of Cheer*, 1. Used by McKay in "The True Aim of Life," Dedication of the Studio Ward Meeting House, San Fernando Stake, Los Angeles, August 10, 1952; "Seeking Spiritual Development," Dedication of Brigham Seventh Ward, North Box Elder Stake, August 24, 1952; "Six Sources of Happiness," Dedication of Laguna Beach Branch Meeting House, January 4, 1953; Dedication of Dallas Branch Meeting House, Texas-Louisiana Mission, April 26, 1953; "Honesty and Virtue—Basic Ideals of the Church of Jesus Christ," Dedication of the East Midvale Second Ward church edifice, East Jordan Stake, Midvale, Utah, Sunday, December 6, 1953; Dedication of the Ipswich Branch in Ipswich Australia, Australian Mission, February 1, 1955; "The Development of Character," Dedication of San Joaquin Stake Center, November 6, 1955; Dedication of Park Stake Center, December 4, 1955; "The Dual Purpose of Mortal Existence," Dedicatory Services of the Cokeville Ward Church Edifice, Cokeville, Wyoming (Montpelier Stake), Sunday, October 8, 1961.

and I think from what I have heard, some divorces that I have signed recently, that we can have a touch of hell here, also. I cannot imagine that there are conditions in some homes which are disclosed by those who are applying for separation. The purpose of the Church is to make happy homes. It is true, as I have already indicated, that our success in life depends on our children. I cannot imagine a home without children; and those women who are not blessed with the power to bear children should adopt children, that the children's voices and lives might contribute to that happiness that makes home. A classmate of mine, who was deprived of having children, adopted seven. She is now a happy grandmother. She has more grandchildren than Sister McKay and I, and we have seventeen. Happy is the home blessed with children, and the classrooms in this edifice should teach how to bring about this happiness.

I am going to name three ways in which that happiness can come, three elements which will bring about love between husband and wife, and then if you have that, you have everything. If you have not that, you have lost it. It is when love begins to wane that the rift between husband and wife begins to widen. Let us all teach the young boys and girls, in the first place, in choosing the right mates; in the second place, in perpetuating certain ethical standards, certain relationships, that will keep love awake, for love can be starved to death just as literally as the body can be starved from lack of food. It needs daily sustenance.

There are three virtues which we should always keep in mind, and the first is that little and simple attribute of kindness. The first sentence of what is now known throughout the Christian world as "the song of love" is this: "Love suffereth long and is kind." I tell you, wives appreciate kindness—and so do we husbands. (Laughter.)

The second thing I name is courtesy, the simple little virtue of courtesy. Too often after marriage, the husband, and sometimes the wife—most frequently the husband—forgets the "thank you," the "if you please," and the "pardon me." Your wife perhaps will not say much to you, but if you forget the little courtesy you had in courting, she will feel it.

But most of all, show courtesy in the home. In the home blessed with children, who see that the father is courteous to the mother, and mother considerate of father, they will themselves become courteous to one another and will thus become refined, cultured children; for the essence of true culture is respect for others.

The third and last I name is trust. You husbands and wives who have stood together in the House of God have covenanted that you will

be true and loyal to each other; and they who have that abiding trust in each other will never have to go to the divorce courts. Each is trusting the other—one may be on the other side of the world, but each knows that the other is faithful, loyal, and true.

Yes, our Church stands for the home, the happiness in the home—not the broken homes, not in divorces; and a good place to learn those ideals is in the classrooms, where our boys and girls come to learn the ideals of life. I am not speaking about the hereafter, do you notice; I am speaking about salvation here and now, and the happiness that we enjoy here and now.

The third purpose of building this house, I said, is for reverence, peace that comes from faith in God; faith that God lives, that He is a personal being in our home life, in secret, and as students in school. As teachers, as men who are working in business, we should not be above it. Faith is a daily acquisition, something which should be introduced into every phase of life. Remember that story about the manager who came rushing into the superintendent's office and said to the secretary, "I want to see the superintendent."

"He is in conference," said the secretary.

"He isn't in conference this early. I want to see him."

"I tell you he is in conference and does not wish to be disturbed!"

But the blustering man opened the door, then stopped, and quietly backed out and said, "I did not think he was that kind of man."

"I told you," said the secretary, "he is in conference."

"Yes," said the manager, "he is in conference with One greater than I."<sup>40</sup>

I think it is a good lesson, because I believe that if religion is practiced every day, and if God lives, and we can so live that we can be partakers of His divine eminence, His divine spirit, of which we spoke this morning, then we surely can receive guidance from Him; and I know that is a reality.

As we develop that, we spread the spirit of true brotherhood; and oh, brothers and sisters, the world needs it! They are calling for it. Generally, the people are not bad. In nearly all cases where you meet men and women, anywhere, you find that in their hearts they desire to do what is right, and they want to accept the truth. You and I have the responsibility of giving them the truth!—letting them know that we

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40. This story is repeated in the next dedication.

believe in universal brotherhood, not in hatred; and, in that respect, it means that if we are going to develop character, if we are going to spread this brotherhood, then we must decide specifically whether we will choose selfishness or whether we will deny ourselves for the good of others: “For inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:40).

We must decide whether we will cherish indulgence of appetite and passion, or whether we will develop restraint and self-control; whether we choose licentiousness or chastity; whether we will encourage hate or develop love; whether we will practice cruelty or kindness; whether we will be cynical or hopeful; whether we will be traitorous—disloyal to those who love us, to our country, to the Church, and to God—or whether we will be loyal; whether we will be deceitful or honest; whether we make our word our bond or just be untruthful; whether to have a slanderous or a controlled language.

God help us that we may spread those truths, to choose that which will develop the character contributing to the happiness of the home and to the spirituality which we need of a testimony of the living God.

Finally, we have built this church to prepare to disseminate to mankind that spirit of universal brotherhood and love, through service. You have exemplified this in building this house. You have not done it for yourself alone—you have done it for the world, inviting them to come here and worship and partake of these ideals.

Never before in my life have I been prouder of the membership of this Church than I am at this moment. Never have I been prouder of our young people than I was in our recent trip through Europe, seeing your sons in action; never more confident in the members of the Church than when we saw the men and women from behind the Iron Curtain. Do you think you are not happy; do you think you are not blessed with freedom and individual liberty? Get one glimpse, just one breath from the tyrannical country! You will kneel down on your knees and thank God for what He has done for you!

In conclusion, I congratulate you upon this achievement. It is a credit to the Studio City Ward, to the stake, to the Church, to you. God bless you that the purpose for which you have erected it might be realized, and in that realization, you have the joy of fatherhood in seeing your son achieve happiness and success, the joys of fatherhood and motherhood in seeing your girl keeping her virtue, her integrity and beauty. You will realize the joys in your home, because it will be a

Latter-day Saint home, free from bickering, guided by love and confidence, and children who contribute to make that home happy; joy in the testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ which will be taught here; joy in the sense that you have something to give to the world, something which the world needs today. It is the best thing in all the world, I know! God bless you, one and all, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.