

Freedom and Personal Liberty

ROBERT D. HALES

It is always a difficult occasion for me to ask our Heavenly Father that I might have the Spirit to say those things that are proper at a time like this. I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. To communicate that to others is very easy. The difficult part, for you young men and women who are about to embark on your two-year missions, is how do you get somebody else to feel that Spirit. Because this Spirit respects free agency, you cannot force somebody to believe; he has to have free agency. What does that mean in a free land?

I thought today (and I will come back to this subject of free agency as it applies to each of us individually) that because it is July 6 we should spend a minute or two reviewing our history and the reasons why we can assemble here today in such a free way. We are a free people because of what we have just celebrated, an event that happened 199 years ago—the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Our Heritage of Freedom

Possibly Patrick Henry summed up the tensions of that time as he spoke to the Virginia Convention of Delegates on March 23, 1775. I will read excerpts from his speech. It is familiar to many of you who are history students. He said:

I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes [that there will be reconciliation]. . . . Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with these war-like preparations which cover our waters and darken our lands. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? . . .

They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? . . . Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and

Robert D. Hales was an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this fireside address was given at Brigham Young University on 6 July 1975.

who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. . . . There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

. . . Gentlemen may cry peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!

That is why we are able to gather here this day—because men have been willing to give their lives—as stated in this impassioned speech of Patrick Henry—for liberty, for life, and for the pursuit of happiness.

There are three questions that Patrick Henry's speech brings up: (1) Was this really a holy cause of liberty, as he said? (2) Is there a just God, who presides over the destinies of nations? (3) Is free agency important? Should we have liberty, or should we have bondage? To all three questions, for those of us who are here this day, the answer is an emphatic yes. Free agency is important. We know that there is a God who presides over this world and who looks after the destinies of nations.

Six hundred years before Christ an ancient American prophet foresaw the establishment of the colonies and the War of Independence. This is what he said:

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.

And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them.

And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all

those who were gathered together against them to battle.

And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations. [1 Nephi 13:16–19]

Another ancient prophet outlined the principles upon which the freedom of this land depends:

For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. . . .

Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. [Ether 2:10, 12]

It is clear, therefore, that to preserve our liberty, our national freedom, and ultimately our personal free agency, we have a responsibility to serve God.

Are there any among us who would disagree with the founders of our nation or who would say that they were not inspired and dedicated men? The Lord, in a revelation to Joseph Smith, stated this truth simply: "I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose" (D&C 101:80).

Do you realize the heritage that we have? On July 4, I had the opportunity of giving a talk in St. George. There the words of President Wilford Woodruff came to my mind, his great tribute to our founding fathers:

Those men who laid the foundation of this American government and signed the Declaration of Independence were the best spirits the God of heaven could find on the face of the earth. They were choice spirits, . . . inspired of the Lord.

. . . Every one of those men that signed the Declaration of Independence, with General Washington, called upon me, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Temple at St. George, two consecutive nights, and demanded at my hands that I should go forth and attend to the ordinances of the House of God for them. . . . Would those spirits have called upon me, as an Elder of Israel, to perform that work if they had not been noble spirits before God? They would not. [Conference Report, April 1898, pp. 89–90]

Said they, “. . . We laid the foundation of the government you now enjoy, and we never apostatized from it, but we remained true to it, and were faithful to God.” [*Journal of Discourses*, 19:229]

Knowing that this is a choice land, a nation with a divine mission, founded under the guiding hand of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, we ask, “What is our obligation to preserve the tenets of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights?” I thought I would make a comment or two about what the basic tenets of these documents are. I would hope that every one of us here this evening would take the time some evening on a date to read the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and maybe a few other things. (I noticed in reading from the history of the Church that Brigham Young at the July Fourth celebration had the whole Constitution read before the people started their festivities. I noticed at St. George we did not do that.)

The Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence states:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their

just powers from the consent of the governed,—That, whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government.

Does that sound familiar? Haven’t we seen it working in our day, in the past few years? And then the signers said this: “With a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge . . . our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.” The signers of this document knew that they were putting their lives foremost with their beliefs.

This document was the prelude to the American Revolution, which started on the field of Lexington, a small skirmish on April 19, 1775, and which ended six years later, in 1781. The colonial troops started as few as 3,000. They built up to as many as 17,000 at one time, and over 400,000 men enlisted for short periods during that time, with 5,000 dying for their liberty.

I would like to make one comment about the British. I think it is very unfair that we think we Americans were the ones who generated freedom of religion in the colonial culture. Actually, our British heritage is the reason we do not have a state religion today. During the seventeenth century, for instance, the Puritans in Massachusetts persecuted anyone who did not accept their church. They assumed that they had the only correct religion and that everyone else must accept it or be persecuted. The need to entice settlers, however, and the economic conditions were also important. The colonies needed to have more settlers; so they became more tolerant in their religious beliefs. But more importantly, the English Toleration Act of 1689 granted the right of public worship to all Protestants. Since all English liberties applied to the colonies, such toleration had to be established here. The Puritans chose to ignore this particular act for some time and continued to persecute the Baptists and the

Quakers, but from 1731 through 1734 the Puritans were forced to come into line with English practices. And so religious tolerance entered the colonies.

Our Inspired Constitution

After the war came the Constitution. I would like to mention only one thing in connection with the Constitution. The Constitution set apart, as you know, the legislative, the judicial, and the executive branches of government. They formulate and administer the law which all of us live under. William E. Gladstone, the nineteenth-century British statesman, once said that the Constitution was “the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man.”

I think Mr. Gladstone would be interested to know that it was not written only by just men, for it also had the help of God. When the Constitution was being written and the revolutionary war was being fought, there were fourteen to fifteen hundred miles of colonies from New Hampshire to Georgia—all embodying different beliefs and started under different charters. To unite them in this document took four months of very hard work, and there was discouragement.

One of the most striking features of this particular document is the fact that it allows for representation in two ways. We would have representation according to what has been called the magnificent concession. In the early days of the convention, Roger Sherman of Connecticut proposed this solution to the knotty problem of representation—that the members of the House of Representative would be elected on the basis of population and the Senate on the basis of equality of states, with two senators per state. His proposal was considered and voted down. But as you know, it was later approved.

The Bill of Rights and Free Agency

Now, let's ask what happened after the Constitution had been established. Let's go on to free agency and the Bill of Rights. There were a hundred proposals for amendments to the Constitution. Forty to fifty were eliminated as duplications. Seventeen were approved by the House in the First Congress; twelve were approved by the Senate; and finally, ten were approved by all the state legislatures and became the Bill of Rights.

The first amendment provides for freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right peaceably to assemble, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. We are able to gather here this evening because of this amendment. I have lived in countries where we could not gather more than twelve people without a permit. Had we wanted to change our permit for any reason, it would have been turned down.

The second amendment concerns the right to bear arms. The third amendment ensures that during times of peace no soldiers will be quartered in our houses without consent of the owner—and in times of war, only according to the law.

The fourth amendment stipulates that there should be no unreasonable searches and seizures and no warrants except for cause; no person can be held to answer for a capital crime except by an indictment by a grand jury (except military personnel during war or public danger). The fifth amendment guarantees that there should be no double jeopardy and that persons cannot be held as witnesses against themselves nor deprived of life, liberty, or pursuit of happiness without due process of law. Private property cannot be taken for public use without just compensation. The sixth amendment guarantees the right of the accused to have a speedy trial by an impartial jury, to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to confront the witnesses against him, and to have defense counsel. The seventh

amendment concerns the rights to jury trial if the value of the controversy exceeds twenty dollars. The eighth amendment protects us from excessive bail or cruel and unusual punishment.

The ninth amendment provides that we are not denied of any rights not specified in the Constitution, for these rights are retained by the people, not by the government. The tenth amendment states that the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution are reserved to the states or to the people.

Bondage Versus Freedom

We, then, are responsible for what this nation is and what our communities are. Let me ask a question in that regard: “What do we do when we find that our freedoms are imposed upon?”

I would like to describe to you, if I may, a place where I took my son—the Berlin Wall. We drove out and walked onto a metal platform and then onto a wooden platform, and then we were up in the air possibly forty or fifty feet. As we looked out across the Berlin Wall, we saw barbed wire. We saw fields that were mined. We saw tank embankments that stopped trucks and tanks from leaving, not from coming into, the walled area. We saw guards with dogs and with searchlights, towers were there were guards looking at us through binoculars as we looked back at them. They had machine guns and guarded the wall.

Let me make this recommendation to any young man or young woman—and I say that to you only after having been in international work for fifteen years. If you ever get disillusioned about your country, please take a trip abroad. Live there, and then after five years, return home, as I did. Then I would like to ask you, as you enter into the sight of the Statue of Liberty, to be emotional. The reason I say that is this: The man who made the Statue of Liberty, Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, had, as a young man, seen a young lady with a torch in her hand jump onto a barricade during a

French rebellion. There she was shot, and she died setting the barricade on fire. Thirty years later, as he sailed into the harbor of New York, he conceived the idea of a tribute to America from France, a statue symbolizing *Liberty Enlightening the World*. He thought of the young girl with the torch in her hand, and that is how the statue of liberty was conceived.

The Statue of Liberty has in her left arm a tablet, with the inscription July 4, 1776; in her right hand she holds the torch of freedom; and in the base is inscribed a poem by Emma Lazarus: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” What has happened recently with the refugees from South Vietnam could not have been a better fulfillment of the vision of that fine lady who stands in the harbor of New York City.

Emma Lazarus’s poem also declares, “I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” How do we hold the lamp of freedom? Do you place yourselves in such a position that you cannot exercise your free agency?

All we have talked about to this point is only a preamble as we begin to discuss ourselves and our own free agency, which these documents proclaim and protect. Joseph Smith could not have restored the gospel without freedom of religion. Do you think it an accident that Joseph Smith was born just a few years after our land had become free and after we had gained these documents ensuring our unalienable rights? No, it was not an accident.

The Right to Reject

With your freedom of speech, do you do this?

1. Do you place yourself and your families in a position where you have no alternative but to listen to television programs, or view movies, or read magazines or books that are degrading? Our free agency can be used for accepting or rejecting; we may avoid evil.

2. But there is also something positive we can do about this problem. We are in a position

to express our personal beliefs in public forums and in elections. Our founding fathers in New England used town meetings. Today every citizen still has the right to discuss an issue as a citizen of the community in a town meeting. Do the communities that you come from have such public forums for freedom of speech? Does your legislature (and do you by your vote) put in the kind of men who will protect that right?

3. Moreover, we are in a position to withdraw personal time and financial support from those books, movies, television programs, magazines, and political and public establishments that do not uphold the standards of a free people.

I would also like to pose the problem that the total freedom of one person may be an oppression of another's freedom. And I ask this question: Should we tolerate an individual's saying, printing, and doing whatever he wants (and say that he deserves freedom) without bounds or restraints of any moral sensibilities? Let's think about that for a moment. That does not seem to be an easy question, but the answer is easy. A justice of the Supreme Court summed the problem up this way, in essence, after the court had worked for weeks trying to come up with a definition of pornography: We cannot agree on what the legal definition of pornography is, but show it to us and we know what it is.

Do you realize that pornography today takes up \$550 million of the public's money? One basic truth that I have learned over my twenty years in business is that the devil himself will not participate in any venture, such as pornography, that does not make a profit.

The other day I went down to a grocery store on an errand. I bought about a pound of plums, which was my little venture on the side (it was not on the list), a loaf of bread, and one other item. The total came to \$2.55. (I can remember when my mother with \$5.00 could fill two grocery bags that I could not even

hold.) There I was with this little bag that cost \$2.55. And as I was checking out, I looked across the stand; and there were magazines that absolutely appalled me. I could not understand how a proprietor of a store could tell his own young son or daughter that that display represented freedom.

I ask you today, young men and women, what are our freedoms? We have the freedom to accept or reject. We should talk directly to the offenders about what our rights are as well as what theirs are. Isn't that fair? If they are offended, aren't they the ones who become the bigots?

Let me give you a few examples that I have noticed in my life. First of all, most of us are part of that famous silent majority. We are pushed around, for example, by the vociferous minority's profanity. Have you ever sat with your family in a restaurant and heard profanity to the point that you could not take it any longer? Have you ever thought of turning to somebody and saying, "Sir, do you mind? I have my wife and children with me." I will tell you that the majority of people, when it is called to their attention, admit that they use profanity completely unknowingly. It is a part of their way of life, but they will be shocked if someone reminds them.

When a workman steps into your car or your home, he may have conditioned a reflex to pull out a cigarette and smoke it. I have found that not one of them is offended when I remind him that his smoke will permeate our clothing. I can tell you, the odor of one cigarette smoked in our home by a workman remains in our home (or our car) for days. Once he realizes that, he is understanding. Why aren't we willing to express our freedom (and be kind about it) to others?

When a person sitting next to you on an airplane asks, "Do you mind if I smoke?" it is easy to say, "I really would." The shock on his face comes from the fact that he usually has the cigarette out and a match lit. But when you

exercise your rights, he pauses, and then you can start telling him why you do not smoke and explaining a few of your own beliefs. He will enjoy it. Nobody wants to offend knowingly, but smoking is a conditioned reflex.

Reflexes and Freedom

I want to talk about conditioned reflexes in our own personal lives. As young pilots, we sat for hundreds of hours in Link trainer airplanes. When the fire-warning light came on, we had to turn all of the switches off and save our lives within eight seconds. That developed a conditioned reflex. When the light came on, we literally went through the motions of turning off all the switches. For about three years I thought that was a large waste of time on my part—until the fire-warning light came on as I was on takeoff row. I can remember my crew chief saying to me, “I have never seen a man get all the switches off and be out with his parachute and raft in less than ten seconds.” And I said, “have you ever been in a burning airplane?” That is the motivation you need.

Now, I want to talk to you about your conditioned responses and your fire-warning light. As you leave here this evening, as the young man turns up the canyon instead of toward the dorm, does a fire-warning light come on? I once heard a young lady say, “Well, what can I do when that happens?” I say, “Wear a very comfortable pair of shoes.” I mean that. All of you young men, I would ask that you would not be the cause for the fire-warning light to come on in a young lady’s life.

What is your preconditioned response when someone hands you a cigarette or a beer? I was talking with a young man recently and asked, “Why have you used such bad language?”

He looked down, a bit chagrined. “Well, I was just going along with the crowd.”

My only answer can be, “That’s the wrong crowd.” If those are the kinds of things you need to do in order to be friendly with your

peer group, you are in the wrong peer group. You had better be alone rather than with them. That is difficult to say because loneliness and depression are probably two of the most difficult things we have to face in life. But it is better to face problems alone than with that type of crowd as you go down life’s road.

Many of you young ladies are looking for a partner, and young men the same. There is only one thing worse than not being married in the temple of God, not being sealed for time and all eternity; that is being married to the wrong person. If you do not believe me, talk to someone who has made that mistake. I can only repeat: There is only one thing worse than not being married, and that is being married to the wrong person. Think carefully who you are going to give yourself to, because it should last for time and all eternity.

Free Agency and Obedience

Too often we think of free agency as something that lets us do what we want. We know that this idea is not true; we have found that out in life. I would like to give you a little story. As one of the younger General Authorities, I look up to the other General Authorities. I am number forty-seven out of forty-nine. We look to the Twelve, the Twelve look to the First Presidency, the counselors in the First Presidency look to the President, and he looks to Jesus Christ and God the Father. That’s the way it must be in our lives. We must establish where we are going to look for direction and where we are going to get the direction for free agency. Are we going to get it from our peer group? Are we going to set up rationalizations to make life more comfortable? Oh, my brothers and sisters, the commandments of our Heavenly Father are there for one reason; they are there for one purpose—to save us from those things that will ultimately destroy us.

Look at the commandments as positive things, not as things that say, “No, you can’t do this,” or, “no, you can’t do that.” Let’s look at

commandments in a way you have perhaps never looked at them before. Do you realize why we have tithing? Tithing is here so that each one of us, even as students, has as much right to go to this institution as anyone else in the Church or in the world. We can go to any temple and share just as much.

I was in a chapel in the East that we bought a few years ago. When I was there I noticed that in front of the podium was the name of the family who had given the podium. On the glass behind me in that chapel was the name of the family who had donated the beautiful stained-glass windows. Even the cedar of Lebanon walls had the names of those who had donated.

Do you realize that tithing is there so that each of us owns equally in anything the Church possesses? When you go up to the twenty-sixth floor of the Church Office Building, you own as much of that building as Mr. Marriott. He is a great man, but I want you to know that he does not possess any more of any building than any of us. He is the kind of man who understands that, and that is what makes him great.

Do you realize that if you pay your tithing you will never have money as your number-one-goal? Maybe you are going to have to live a few years to think about that, but let me say that to you. If you will pay your 10 percent tithing and use the rest of the 90 percent, you will never have to worry about money because you will learn how to budget and live within your means. Money and wealth are insatiable. I have known men who, after they had the half-million-dollar home and the yacht and the airplane, would then want other possessions. They were never satisfied, and they went into debt millions of dollars satisfying that need. Why? Because they had not learned the law of sacrifice and the law of consecration at the lowest levels. That is what tithing is. What the Lord tells us is that if we cannot live the law, we are not ready for greater laws.

Brothers and sisters, let us ask ourselves about moral laws. Why are they there? They are there for one reason: to protect us. Do you realize what happens in your life when you get diverted on moral issues? Your whole eternal progress changes. You have to wait until you can repent and come back, and valuable time is lost in your progression. There is nothing as dangerous as a fallen lighthouse. When you give your life and yourself to someone, do it totally. Even if you have made a mistake at this time, the miracle of forgiveness is there and it is real. You can come back; that is what President Kimball writes in his book *The Miracle of Forgiveness*. There is a beautiful story about a bird who, when a man came along selling worms, took a few inconspicuous feathers under her wing and gave them to the man because it was so easy to buy the worms. But as time went on, she ran out of the little inconspicuous feathers. Pretty soon she had to take one of the key pinfeathers on her wings. She could no longer fly to the top of the tree and sing. Then the man who sold the worms was not to be found because she had lost her beauty. She could not sing from the high tree-tops and fly. Do you want to give away your morality a little feather at a time until you lose the beauty that is yours, the beauty you should keep for that one person for time and for all eternity? It is not worth it. It will absolutely consume you if you are not willing to repent.

What is it that makes us listen to the commandments of our Heavenly Father? You know, I love Alma because, although he was rebelling with the sons of Mosiah, he still repented. He was striking out against his father. His father not only prayed, but he had his congregation pray, and you know the story: An angel appeared to him. Later that same Alma, who had worked against his father, who had repented and then gone on a mission, was talking to his sons. This is what Alma said as he talked to his three sons: "If you keep the commandments, you will have happiness in

your life. If you do not, you will be cast out" (see Alma 36:30; 37:13; 38:1; 41:10–11). That is the simplest advice a father can say to his son or daughter.

As we exercise our free agency, it is free agency to keep the commandments of our Heavenly Father. It is for our growth and our protection. If we do not keep the laws, as we know, with every law there is a counterpart punishment that we suffer.

Knowing that, we can look at the commandments of our Heavenly Father and ask, in all love and care and in our prayers, as Alma instructed his sons: "Oh, my sons, pray every night and every morning" (see Alma 37:37). He told us how to pray. That is the key. We must pray and stay close to our Heavenly Father. Too often when I was a bishop (and I was a bishop three times over the years), I went to conference and looked up at the General Authorities and said to myself, "Wouldn't it be nice to be a General Authority" They have it made. They have no problems as I do."

I was at a conference and a young person asked me, "What is your greatest problem?" My greatest problem, like yours, is having the Spirit with me always. May I remind you that you took the sacrament today. What did you say then? You said, and you were promised, that if you keep the commandments you will always have the Spirit with you. That is how simple that particular obligation is.

Endure Grief and Suffering Patiently

As for General Authorities, let me digress for one moment.

You know, I have been to four funerals since April. I have seen the wives of General Authorities go, and I have seen a great General Authority leave us and leave his wife alone. It would be very easy for someone to say, "Why me?" It is the same thing that Job could have said. But I want to let you know that within two or three days after Elder Cullimore lost his wife, when I climbed on an airplane with Elder

Ashton to go up to Ricks, there sitting in the first row, first seat, was Elder Cullimore going to his assignment. There is a message there for a young man or a young woman. It may be ten years, it may be twenty, it may be thirty, but the time will come when that lesson must be learned either by you or by your wife. None of us wants to face it, but we have leaders who show us how.

Have you had any problems recently in terms of physical disabilities? We recently set apart a mission president, and there was a sweet daughter in a wheelchair, who while on her mission had had an automobile accident. She was paralyzed from the neck down. Mom and Dad are now being called on a mission and she is going back on a mission. President Rex Reeve and his daughter showed Elder Hunter and me a great testimony. Beautiful, happy, smiling, she could have been just lying down the rest of her life. But she said, "I prayed only to sit in a wheelchair, and my prayers have been answered." That showed us a great deal.

How many of us would have the same attitude she did? Or do we feel sorry for ourselves and then see that as an excuse for why we do not keep commandments? If we do not get the young lady we want or the young man we want, do we get down on our knees and pray about it, or do we go and do something foolish?

May I ask in closing that we exercise our free agency in a free land, that we know what our beliefs are, that we know God lives and Jesus is the Christ. Oh, how we know that!

President Kimball

We have a leader as a prophet who has told us to lengthen our stride. He is a man who is a prophet, Spencer W. Kimball. How do I know that? By having been around him a very short period, but also by having observed him and heard stories about him for many years.

On my first stake assignment, the stake president told me this: "You know, when

President Kimball was first assigned as a prophet and an apostle, he came to our house. My father was the stake president at the time. It was 5:30 in the morning, and we heard hammering. Out on our little shed at the back of our house where we needed some repairs was Elder Spencer W. Kimball—hammer in hand, nails, and shingles, repairing the roof.” On my next call, when I went to a particular stake where the lawn needed mowing, I almost felt as if I should have brought a lawnmower along because that is what the prophet had shown us. President Kimball has been dedicated—throughout his open-heart surgery, his cancer. And all of the afflictions that he has had could have caused him to give up. But he has dedicated every hour of every day so that this Church might move forward.

It is my prayer and my blessing that each one of us might get the vision of President Spencer W. Kimball, that we might know that he has dedicated every hour and every day of his life. He is impossible to slow down. For his next trip for area conferences Elder Fyans and those that are were making the schedule tried

to put in two free days. Do you know what the President did? He put two mission tours in those days. It is impossible to slow him down. He is also an example to all of us. The time is late, and he is telling us that we must quicken our step and lengthen our stride.

I ask the Lord’s blessings to be with you, and I leave a simple testimony with you once more. I know God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was brought forth in a free land at a time when it was opportune for him to restore the gospel. We have the responsibility of living the commandments. May we be able to do this without any fire-warning lights in our lives and without being fallen lighthouses for those who love us. There is nothing so dangerous as that fallen lighthouse. May the Lord bless us that we might always be an example to our younger brothers and sisters and to our parents. For you elders and sisters as you embark on your missions, may I say that there are many mission you will embark upon but none greater. May the Lord’s blessings be with you, I say in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.