

# “I Need Thee Every Hour”

L. TOM PERRY

I received a call from the BYU Music Department just a few days before Christmas requesting the subject of my talk this evening. They wanted to coordinate the music with the topic I had selected. Then in a very nice way, they explained that this was the holiday season and it would be necessary to prepare the music early. If it would be convenient, they wondered if I could fit their theme rather than allow me that privilege. This I agreed to do, and you will notice the music they render at the closing of this service will be, “I Need Thee Every Hour.” This is our theme this evening.

I want to express my appreciation to them for choosing such an appropriate theme to begin a new year. It is a good time to direct our thought to our dependence on our Lord and Savior. Tonight our objective will be to start your new year with thoughts in that direction.

How great is that need! How total is our dependence on him! To recognize that need every hour is to realize in every aspect the manifold nature of man; we need to be sensitive to the direction of our Lord and Savior.

Let me begin with a scripture story which, I believe, tells us of our need to have balance

in our lives. There is a story in Acts which has always intrigued me. The scripture starts out:

*And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest.*

*And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. [Acts 9:1-2]*

Now, a most remarkable event occurred to Saul as he was making this journey to find Christians in Damascus. As he was proceeding on his journey,

*there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

*And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord*

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*L. Tom Perry was a member of 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 2 January 1977.*

said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? [You see, not knowing the ways of the Lord, he had to inquire as to what the Lord would have him do.] And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. [Notice, he did not say, "What will you have me do?" but, "Here am I, ready to serve."]

And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. [Acts 9:3–12]

Ananias was shocked at this. He knew Saul. He knew how much evil he had been doing. He knew that he was there with authority to bind and take back to Jerusalem those who professed Christianity. But the Lord just said to him:

Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. [Acts 9:15–17]

And immediately, just as if scales had fallen from the eyes of Saul, he received his sight and arose and forthwith was baptized.

Then he asked to receive meat, and he was strengthened. He spent some days with the disciples that were at Damascus. After being trained by them, he went straightway and "Preached [of the Savior] in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." And "all that heard him were amazed" and wanted to know if this was not the same man who came from Jerusalem with the intent of binding those who would call upon the name of the Savior. "But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ" (Acts 9:20–22).

Saul went through a special process of preparing himself for the work that the Lord had called him to do. He had to be prepared *physically* to receive his sight and strength. He found a need to be *emotionally* prepared to associate with the disciples. He found a need to be *mentally* prepared to be taught by Ananias and the other disciples in the way of the Lord. Saul also found a need to be *spiritually* prepared by having hands laid on his head so he might receive the Holy Ghost. It was when Saul found the need for all aspects of his life to be brought into focus and to be a builder rather than a destroyer that he found purpose to life.

It is not difficult for me to give my witness concerning the need for all parts of our life to be in harmony and dependent on the Lord. However, in case there should be any who would not trust my witness tonight, I have brought with me three special witnesses. I know the scripture, "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matthew 18:16). I have brought with me my special panel of experts tonight to help give witness and testimony to these various aspects of life, and to

teach us of our need for our Lord and Savior in all that we do.

First, our physical needs. The Lord has given us special insight into our physical needs; we have been directed to keep our physical bodies properly functioning to make it possible for the full expression of our spirit. One cannot function properly without the other. We are instructed:

*Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. [1 Corinthians 6:19–20]*

Let me call my first witness to give you testimony of physical needs. She has distinguished herself in the medical profession as a nurse. She has BYU ties as a former student and as a member of the faculty. My first witness tonight is Barbara Perry.

### **Barbara Perry**

There are three areas I would like to address myself to regarding the direction the Lord has given us for our physical well-being. First, we have been instructed in the Doctrine and Covenants concerning the partaking of the proper foods to give our bodies nourishment. “All wholesome herbs God hath ordained for the . . . use of man—every herb in the season thereof, and every fruit in the season thereof, and every fruit in the season thereof; all these to be used with prudence and thanksgiving” (D&C 89:10–11). Also he designated that the “flesh . . . of beasts and of the fowls of the air” are for the use of man, but “to be used sparingly” (D&C 89:12). All grain is good for the food of man, particularly wheat (see D&C 89:14, 16–17). Nutritionists concur with the recommendations given by the Lord: in fact, the basic four food plan includes: first, cereals and breads; second, fruits and vegetables; third,

meat, fish, and poultry; and fourth, milk and dairy products. How many of you follow this food plan and include food from these groups in prescribed amounts in your daily diet? Or does your diet consist of high-caloric, empty foods, such as soft drinks, French fries, and pastries, which contribute more to your waistline than to your health?

It is particularly important for you girls, as prospective mothers, to eat properly. Being a nurse and involved in the maternity area, I have a special concern here. And nutritionists agree that even more important than adequate nutrients during pregnancy is good nutrition during the mother’s own period of growth and development. Such will increase the likelihood that she will enter pregnancy in a state of good health and enhance the probability of a healthy child. Let me encourage you to improve your diet.

Second, the first instruction given to Adam after eating the fruit of that certain tree was, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Genesis 3:19). Physical exercise becomes an important part of maintaining man’s physical body. Our prophets have set the pattern. President Heber J. Grant has made the statement, “I do not know of anything that destroys a person’s health more quickly than not working. It seems to me that lazy people die young while those who are ready and willing to labor and who ask the Lord . . . to help them . . ., live to a good old age” (G. Homer Durham, comp., *Gospel Standards*, p. 183).

Our present-day prophet has to be a living example. President Kimball arises early each morning and daily completes a schedule that men half his age would find impossible.

My husband is one who carries out a program of physical fitness. It consists of an early-morning swim, walks to and from work—this includes coming home for lunch—and the practice of never driving when we can walk.

We have a nephew presently in the Language Training Mission—in fact, he is here tonight. In high school he was All-State in

football and wrestling. The most difficult part of his experience in the LTM is the confinement and the long hours of study without physical activity. He states, "The exercise periods are a welcome relief." Communications to his younger brothers at home are full of instructions and counsel relative to maintaining a fitness program as they prepare for participation in high school athletics. He even expresses concern of his parents. For Christmas he sent them one of those special exercise jump ropes. His message to them was, "So you two won't get fat on me while I am gone." Let me admonish you to take advantage of your opportunities for physical activity on this campus.

And third, setting an example after six periods of labor in the creation of the earth, as the scriptures record, "On the seventh day I, God, ended my work, and all things which I had made; and I rested on the seventh day from all my work" (Moses 3:2). There was a built-in system from the very beginning to provide a day of rest, a time of renewal, and a recess from everyday activities. Do you take advantage of this special day as a time to rest from your labors? I was always grateful for the Sabbath, particularly when there were some needed tasks that I did not want to do. I could not do them and not feel guilty.

Then there is that important consideration: What about rest or sleep on a daily basis? I know the typical pattern for many college students. There is little time to sleep; other things take priority. The Doctrine and Covenants, section 88, verse 124, states, "Cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated." I have a confession. Prior to my marriage I was consistently a night person. Typically my day ended at twelve or one o'clock, despite the fact that I had to be at work by seven. That has all changed. We still observe the early schedule but I go to bed earlier. Now I wonder how I managed on the other routine.

We were recently in a home on Saturday night where everything was in preparation for the Sabbath. The children were bathed and shampooed, the house was in order, and dinner preparations were underway. My friend made the comment, "If I don't have order in my home, I am unable to do for others." The same is true of our bodies. To effectively serve our Heavenly Father, we need to be at our peak physically. Let me challenge you, as we begin this new year, to maximize your physical well-being by eating properly, by maintaining an exercise program, and by getting adequate rest.

#### **Elder Perry**

The second aspect of determining our needs is to achieve social-emotional stability. Let me call my second witness. This is one who distinguished herself as a young child as possessing a happy heart. She was even given a name to match her exciting spirit. The second witness I call is Linda Gay Perry, one of your fellow undergraduate students. Gay.

#### **Gay Perry**

Those of you who are like me and can hardly wait till this meeting is over can be thankful that there are only four of us here and that our name is Perry and not Packer.

Have you ever seen the stars up there shining lately? You know, they have been up there gleaming all my life, just patiently listening to my many dreams and urgent wishes. I guess that it is true that some nights I cannot see them, but I know that they are still there, glowing away behind those clouds as brightly as ever. You would think that at some future moment they would run out of sparkle, but they never do.

I met a great friend a few weeks ago. She was a little aged lady who twinkled herself. She stopped me on the street corner to tell me that it was a beautiful day. I had not noticed. I gazed up at the endless sky and it looked like it would soon rain, but it was a beautiful day.

I wished that I could have thanked this lady, but she had disappeared. Instead I said a silent prayer and thanked my Heavenly Father for people like her.

I guess that everyone appreciates a happy, friendly, and interesting acquaintance. Every person in his own special way must develop within himself at least one trait or talent which he can find the thrill of achieving.

In junior high school we were all required to take a music class. In this class we all had to audition for the school choir. The teacher would call your name, and you would have to go stand in front of the sneering class, by yourself, and sing what you were asked to. The teacher called out the names Larson, and then Murphy, and then I knew that my time of reckoning was nigh. I started to panic and asked to be excused to get a drink of water. While I was out in the hall, I dreamed up the most elaborate plans for my instant escape. I wanted to run away, but my feet carried me back into class just in time to hear my name read. I walked slowly to the front of the room and was asked to sing one scale. That was all. My voice did not go nearly as high or quite as low as some of the others had, but at least it did not crack. I had wanted to sing more, to prove that I could miraculously do better, but I was told that I could now *please* take my seat. I was sure that I had not done well enough, but to my surprise, when the list of the choir members was posted, my name was on it. Now, singing is certainly not one of my stronger talents, yet my greatest victory was still to come.

One afternoon we were in the auditorium practicing for an upcoming concert. We were being arranged on the bleachers according to our height. I was near the top. Our director stood back to evaluate the scene, but she was not satisfied with our appearance. She told the girl who was next to me that she was not quite tall enough to stand on our row. The girl spoke up politely and said, "It helps me to stand here next to Gay because it's easier to get the notes

right." At that moment I felt as if I had conquered all doubts.

Our talents need to be shared and it is through this that we find real happiness. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

We need to be aware of others' needs and desires. We need to be sensitive and pray for others as well as for ourselves. My mother used to tell me that when I was little I would pray for everyone I knew and would often fall asleep doing so. She said that I would even pray for the devil that he would know better.

In everyone's life there are disappointments and temporary setbacks. You may drop your white gloves in a mud puddle, or your teacher might think that your literary masterpiece needs to be rewritten again, or your very most favorite baseball team might lose with two outs in the ninth inning in the seventh game of the World Series. But these tragedies can be overcome with hard work, a positive attitude, and the help and support of others. In the handmade program of the sixth grade's version of Alice in Wonderland, my name was not listed as playing Alice; instead it was listed as portraying the third girl dressed in red. But it did not matter so much to me because my mom was in the audience clapping more loudly than any of the other mothers. The rainbow comes only after the rain. A cheerful heart and a smiling face pour sunshine in the darkest place. When things go wrong, treat yourself to an ice cream cone and start smiling again. With Baskin and Robbins' thirty-one flavors, you can certainly become a well-rounded person.

I can remember one day at recess we had the whole second grade playing a lively game of Red Rover. The boy I liked more than any other boy in the whole class was it. He stood surveying the situation for a moment, and then he called, "Red Rover, Red Rover, send Gay on over." I took off running as fast as I could. I had to try to make it over to the other side without

his catching me. I ran faster than I have ever run before; I guess I learned at an early age to play hard-to-get. This boy came really close, but I ran from one side of the field to the other without being tagged. Success! Unfortunately, I was running too quickly to stop, and I ran right into a barbed-wire fence. It is important that in our lives we do our best and work our hardest to achieve our goals, but we must be certain that the outcome leads us to where we want to be. Our goals must be directed to the future, to happiness, and to perfection. "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 144:15).

And one day when I am eighty or so, I will walk down the street telling those I pass that it is a beautiful day. Or maybe I will not wait till I am eighty. Maybe I will start at eighteen and see how long my sparkle lasts. I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Elder Perry**

The next is the mental. The Lord, from the very beginning, commanded us to multiply, replenish, have dominion over, and subdue. He expected us to grow and develop. Essential in this is our mental growth and development. For my third witness, I call a graduate student who has distinguished himself here at this University for many, many, many, many years. My next witness is Lee Perry.

#### **Lee Perry**

Thank you. If I faint, why don't you catch me, okay? Looking around here tonight, I realize why some people have come to call this place the lions' den. Anyway, welcome back from vacation, lions—or is that cougars?

My assignment tonight is to talk about mental growth needs, or, more simply, our needs for learning. I think my philosophy can be summarized in a purposeful manipulation of those famous words at the west entrance of this University. My revision would read, "Enter learning, learn, go forth and continue learning." In other words, I consider learning to be

a never-ending process. I have not always been a zealous advocate of learning. I was a typical dumb high-school athlete, the typical class-sloughing freshman, the typical marriage-minded RM (though it did not do me much good), even though I deny it and refuse to admit it to almost everybody. I did emerge for a breath of learning every semester in time to cram for finals, but, with the exception of a few days twice a year, I was in a mental coma. Nevertheless, my grades maintained the appearance of excellence; and I was satisfied, even proud, of my nonthinking state.

My emergence from the rut of a mental stupor is something of a miracle to me. It just so happened that the summer before I entered graduate school I had a great deal of free time I had not expected. To combat the discomforts of prolonged boredom, I finally did something I had not done for a long time: I picked up a book and read it. Fortunately the book was one of those only-put-down-to-sleep kind. I read it in two days. I was very excited, so excited about my accomplishment that I borrowed another book from a friend and read *it* in two days. From that very humble beginning, I committed myself to be involved in continuously reading unrequired books throughout my graduate school years. And they have been many, many years. I will not say that it has been easy to maintain that commitment, but I have maintained it. I consider reading to be the most important element in effective learning. If your goal is learning, you must commit yourself to reading. If everything else I say tonight is forgotten but you remember the importance of reading, then I will consider this talk to have been a great success.

Because most of us are students, let us talk about mental growth in the university setting. I want to take the liberty to be prescriptive. I want to prescribe a goal for all of us, namely, that we should be excited about the educative process. At a university this goal has two parts: first, teachers should be excited about teaching;

and second, students should be excited about learning. What kind of teacher is excited about teaching? Or what are the attributes of an exciting teacher? Let us make an abbreviated list.

1. A teacher should be an interested and informed advocate of his chosen field of study. This is a given; it almost goes without saying.

2. A teacher should ask questions and not simply transmit *his* answers. This attribute subsumes a teacher's commitment to truth and an openness to new answers that he may not have previously considered. Also included is a touch of the socratic method. I had a professor last year who embodied this particular attribute. He came in the first day asking questions, destroying the endeared notions of me and my fellow classmates. He demanded that we build new premises we subsequently questioned, destroyed, and rebuilt. The cycle continued throughout the entire semester. I thought I was the dumbest kid at BYU until the final day of class, when this teacher told me that my intellectual toil and tribulation had been fruitful, saying, "I've appreciated your work."

3. A teacher should adapt his teaching to the situation. I enrolled in a statistics class. Even now I am not a statistician; I was afraid the class would be beyond my grasp, but at the same time I had a teacher who anticipated my apprehension. He realized that what I wanted from his class was a tool, not a profession. He designed his class, writing a special text, to satisfy my needs; and I learned.

4. A teacher should care that his students learn. My last final this past semester was in an MBA economics class. For some very complicated reasons I had to take the exam a day late, with one other student. The first problem was worth thirty points. I read it once; I read it twice; I read it over and over until I realized that I had no idea how to do it. I panicked, but decided I had better finish the rest of the exam, which I did. After two hours, this economics professor returned and asked me how I was doing. I was reluctant to say, obviously, but

finally explained my dilemma. He was very understanding; he asked me some questions to see what I really knew; he gave me a hint. I went as far as I could, struggled, and panicked again. He looked at my work and suggested I do one more thing. I did and, to my surprise, the problem was solved. I felt like I owed him my life. I thanked him, and then he said, "There is no need to thank me. That exam taught you something, and, after all, that is what we're here for—to learn."

My final words about teaching come from a statement entitled "True Education Must Be Put to Use for Human Benefit," by John Taylor. He said,

*I will tell you my idea of true intelligence and true eloquence. It is not as some people do to take a very small idea and use a great many [rhetorical] words without meaning something to befog and mystify it with something to tickle the ear and please the imagination only. That is not true intelligence. But it is true intelligence for a man to take a subject that is mysterious and great in itself, and to unfold and simplify it so that a child can understand it. [G. Homer Durham, comp., *The Gospel Kingdom*, p. 270]*

Now, briefly, let us talk about some attributes of students who are excited about learning.

1. The excited student realizes that the responsibility for learning is his own. As recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 58, verse 28: "For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves."

2. An excited learner is humble. I can tell fifty stories about how pride has impeded my intellectual growth and modesty has stimulated it. We need to be keenly aware of how much we don't know before we can do anything about it.

3. An excited student learns offensively, and not defensively. (When I originally wrote this, I wrote, "An excited student is offensive about

learning,” but that did not sound right.) In other words, he senses his mission to be one of expanding the parameters of knowledge instead of protecting his already-formulated ideas about the world. Employing an appropriate seasonal analogy, a bit of truth is much like a very small present wrapped in many layers of newspaper in a very large box. When we look at the box, our perceptions of the gift are distorted. After we open the box and peel away layer after layer of wrapping, our perceptions gradually improve. Nevertheless, we do not completely understand what the present is until the final layer of wrapping is removed. Peeling off the layers of fallacy is usually far more tedious. Dogmas have remained because persons have defended them, or at least the traces of truth which underlie them, without removing the many layers of fallacy. Never defend an idea simply because it exists. Discover whether it is right or wrong.

4. An excited learner is disciplined. We live in a time of rapidly expanding knowledge—the age of future shock. If the intent of the learner is to stay current with new ideas, learning requires a day-after-day, disciplined effort. Block out hours of time every day in which studying is the overriding priority. Before you can become excited about learning, you need to learn something to get excited about.

In conclusion, I would like to tie everything together by reading from the 130<sup>th</sup> section of the Doctrine and Covenants, eighteenth and nineteenth verses:

*Whatsoever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.*

*And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come.*

I say these things humbly, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Elder Perry**

Thank you, family, for participating with me. It was not easy to convince them to appear tonight. Thank goodness we have had the holidays for me to work on them. My children kept saying, “It’s difficult enough being a child of a General Authority without having to be put on display.” But, obedient to their father, they have accepted their assignment.

Now, the final aspect of life I have reserved for myself—the spiritual. There was a Sunday School lesson taught back in the early 1950s which I have never forgotten. The lesson stated this: “For a wise and glorious purpose, we lose at birth all remembrances of our previous life and experiences. But for our guidance upon earth, God has graciously revealed certain truths about our former existence. Your lineage is divine. Your pedigree begins with God, the Eternal Father. There is within you an immortal spirit that existed as an intelligent being before your earthly body was formed and that will continue to exist after your mortal body has gone to the grave. Your spirit body was born to heavenly parents as one of their begotten children in a previous, heavenly abode. Thus God is actually and literally the father of your spirit body.”

Brigham Young has added his witness by saying,

*Things were first created spiritually; the Father actually begat the spirits, and they were brought forth and lived with him. . . .*

*There is not a person here today but what is a son or a daughter of that Being. . . .*

*We are the sons and daughters of celestial Beings, and the germ of the Deity dwells within us.* [John A. Widtsoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 50]

Once we understand and accept this doctrine our lives can never be the same again, for we must think and act as eternal beings. God’s law then governs our actions. The beautiful plan of



salvation becomes our road map and guide to lead us through our mortal existence. I give you my witness: there is exceeding joy to be found in having a spiritual base to your life. There is no way to find real happiness without it.

In conclusion, let me tell you about a personal planning cycle I developed about the time that I was ending my formal education, with the hope that it will cause you to seriously reflect and plan the future. I was a little older than most when I graduated from college; a mission and World War II had slowed the process. I graduated from college just a few months before my twenty-seventh birthday. I was married, and the first child was on its way. Family responsibility has a special way of bringing a maturing process. I decided if I was to accomplish my life's objective I needed to form a plan and review my performance regularly against the determined plan. My decision was that I would hold an annual review on each of my birthdays to evaluate my progress. On my twenty-seventh birthday my first plan was prepared. On my twenty-eighth birthday I made my first annual performance evaluation and plan revision. This I have carried out each year until the present. The plan includes the same ingredients we have discussed here tonight. First, a physical plan: it is near my birthday each year that I go to the doctor and have an annual physical examination. My plan includes some established goals for an active and restive pulse rate, a blood pressure reading, and a weight range. Annually I check my performance in my physical plan.

My physical plan also includes a financial plan. I wanted to have thirty years of accumulation where I could become financially independent. My plan at the end of those thirty years was to be in a position where I could call the shots, be flexible, do what I wanted to accomplish. I would be able to fill a second mission, or to devote my time to community service or education. Each year I would

prepare a personal balance sheet to evaluate my progress toward achieving this objective.

Second, I would evaluate my relationships with my wife, my children, my friends, and my business associates. I was continually asking the question, "What kind of an influence in the world am I for teaching righteous principles?" I wanted to be balanced socially and emotionally.

Third, I established a study program to improve my mind. I would mark a calendar each year with my study objectives of how many chapters I would read each day in a 365-day year. I am afraid that in my early years I was moving too much toward the objectives of my professional life. Now my program has changed, because I have discovered the great value of the scriptures. My program now is to read two chapters in the scriptures first thing every morning. By so doing I can cover the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the New Testament each year.

Fourth, each year I gave myself a very careful temple worthiness interview. I would ask myself the questions, "Am I morally clean?" "Do I live the Word of Wisdom?" "Am I honest in paying my tithes and offerings?" "Am I regular in my attendance at my priesthood and sacrament meetings?" "Am I keeping my life in harmony with the principles of the gospel?" "Do I sustain my stake president?" "Do I sustain the prophet of the Lord?" "Is my testimony of the Lord and Savior vital, alive, and an active force in my life?" This process has had me focusing in a special way each year on what I wanted to accomplish within the time allotted to me in my mortal experience. Each year I would feel the thrill of accomplishment, but more strongly the determination to do better.

I remember many years ago, when we lived in New York, coming back to Utah on vacation and stopping to visit a ninety-one-year-old aunt of my wife's. She lived alone in a small but comfortable home. At her age, she was

completely self-reliant. Her home was clean and orderly; her house was filled with beautiful plants, so well cared for. Around one chair we found the well-used scriptures and other church publications. In our conversations with her we were amazed at her knowledge of current events. At the end of our visit she taught us a great lesson. She said, as we prepared to leave, "You know, I have found in life that it is not enough just to *do*. You also have to *be*." I encourage you tonight to *be*. Be physically strong, living the Lord's code of health, making even more dramatic the difference between the children of the Lord and the children of the world. Be socially and emotionally acceptable to those you are privileged to associate with, and be comfortable in their presence. Show some life, some spirit, and some enthusiasm as you go about your activities each day.

Grow mentally each day. Prepare yourself for the eternities to come. Be close to the Lord.

Understand the potential within you as one of his spirit children. I encourage you to start this new year with a plan, with new goals, with new objectives, to lift yourself physically, socially-emotionally, mentally, and spiritually to newer heights on your eternal course toward eternal life.

Again we would encourage you to recognize: "I Need Thee Every Hour," in every aspect of a life based on his plan, his law, and his way.

I give you my witness, his way is the right way, the only way that will lead us to life eternal. May the Lord's choicest blessings attend you in this special and new year which is before us. God lives; Jesus is the Christ; and we have a prophet of the Lord on earth today. May God bless us to realize our potential in this bright new year, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.