

Sister Camilla Kimball said, "I would hope that every girl and woman here has the desire and ambition to quality in two vocations—that of homemaking, and that of preparing to earn a living outside the home, if and when the occasion requires. An unmarried woman is always happier if she has a vocation in which she can be socially of service and financially independent. . . Any married woman may become a widow without warning. . . Thus, any woman may be under the necessity of earning her own living and helping to support dependent children. If she has been trained for the duties and the emergencies of life which may come to her, she will be much happier and have a greater sense of security."

Brigham Young encouraged his daughter, Susa Young Gates, in her educational pursuits. But he cautioned her, "If you were to become the greatest writer, the most eloquent woman speaker, the most gifted and learned woman of your time, and had neglected your home and children in order to become so. . . you will find your whole life had been a failure. . . If, in addition to your wifely and motherly duties, you can pursue one or more fields of public labor; in fact, all the good that you can accomplish publicly or privately, in addition to your home duties, will be so much added glory to your eternal crown."

Satan's philosophy says homemaking doesn't have to be a mother's first priority. President Kimball said, "Some women, because of circumstances beyond their control, must work. We understand that. We understand further that as families are raised, the talents God has given you and blessed you with can often be put to use in additional service to mankind. Do not, however, make the mistake of being drawn off into secondary tasks that will cause the neglect of such eternal assignments as giving birth to and rearing the spirit children of our Father in heaven. Pray carefully over all the decisions you make." Another time he said, "To be a mother is a woman's greatest vocation in life. She is a partner with God. No being has a position of such power and influence. She holds in her hands the destiny of nations, for to her comes the responsibility and opportunity of molding the nation's citizens."

The world would have us feel that we are unfulfilled if we can't do something in the world—or that a woman is insignificant if she says almost and apologetically, "I'm only a mother." Sister Kimball said such women are selling themselves short. "For true motherhood is the greatest calling a woman can have." President McKay said, "A woman, who rears successfully a family of healthy, worthy sons and daughters, whose influence will be felt through generations to come, is living for eternity. She deserves the highest honor that man can give and the choicest blessings of God." Rather than call her "only a mother" we should call her Blessed, for indeed she is.

An ancient Chinese proverb reads, "The man is the head of the house, but the woman is the heart of the home." A young boy, whose father was an army officer, heard some of his parent's friends lamenting the fact that these people had never been able to settle down and have a home. The boy quickly spoke up, "Oh, we always have a home. It's just that sometimes we don't have a house to put it in. This mother had the ability of putting the heart into a home. It is the responsibility of the mothers to set the spiritual temperature and atmosphere of the home. It is important for mothers to be in the home, in order to set the right atmosphere. I recall a story from a dear sweet sister who was one of 10 children in a family. One time one of the children came in the house, walked through all the rooms and finally exclaimed, "Where is everybody?" They got to checking and found that all 10 of the children were at home—the only one missing was mother. In our home there are several times when the children have been out playing, and they come in and want to know where I am. Content to know I'm there, they go outside to play again. How lost they would feel if Mother wasn't close by, just so they could feel her presence and go to her in time of need.

Satan's philosophy would say that children learn best from their own experiences, that parents should not hinder their growth by teaching them out-of-date values and behaviors. President

Benson said, "The Lord's ways says 'Since the beginning, (a mother's) role has been to teach her children eternal gospel principles. . . Home is the place where a child learns faith, feels love, and thereby learns from mother's loving example to choose righteousness.'" On the same subject, President N. Eldon Tanner said, "Children do not learn by themselves how to distinguish right from wrong. . . While we are teaching them we have the responsibility to discipline them and to see that they do what is right. If a child is be-smudged with dirt, we do not let him wait until he grows up to decide whether or not he will bathe. We do not let him wait to decide whether or not he will take his medicine when sick, or go to school or to church." President Tanner also said, "A mother has far greater influence on her children than anyone else, and she must realize that every word she speaks, every act, every response, her attitude, even her appearance and manner of dress affect the lives of her children and the whole family. It is while the child is in the home that he gains from his mother the attitudes, hopes, and beliefs that will determine the kind of life he will live, and the contributions he will make to society."

President David O. McKay said, "If I were asked to name the world's need, I should say unhesitatingly; wise mothers and . . . exemplary fathers." We're told in the scriptures, "Train up a child in the way he must go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." The best way to train children is by example. Abraham Lincoln, whose mother died when he was a young boy said, "I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life."

The best example I have had in my life of the joys of being a wife and mother was my own mother. She taught me more through her example than I could ever have learned in 1000 books. She gladly gave up a successful teaching career to become the mother to a ready-made family of 3 boys, whose own mother had died. She cared for them and loved them, as she did her own 5 children to which she gave birth. She loved my father and cared for him and us children without complaining. I remember how often she would sing and create a spirit of peace in the home. She faithfully supported my father as he spent many house as a very busy stake president. She always had time to work in the Church, serving for many years as a counselor in the stake primary presidency, as well as teaching a Sunday School class. The last testimony meeting I attended with her, just 2 months before her death, she bore her testimony and told her children that she wanted them to know that she knew that God lives and that this Church is His only true Church on the earth today. I have felt my mother's influence throughout my life as I have become a mother and have a family of my own.

Perhaps you have heard the phrase, "Motherhood—a partnership with God." This is really true and we as mothers can't be successful without His help. Through prayer we can have the spiritual power we need to make a house a home. Through prayer we can receive insight and inspiration on the care and discipline of our children.

As we were married, my husband and I knelt in prayer and asked the Lord to send us some of his choicest spirits, and we promised that we would do our very best to teach them so they could go back and live with him some day. the Lord has certainly honored that request and we have been blessed with 10 of his choicest spirits. I truly love each and every one of them and it is, indeed, an honor and a joy to be their mother.

My children are my jewels ,my riches. Sure, they take a lot of time and effort, and it costs a lot of money to raise a large family, but I feel more wealthy than the richest man. I guess it depends on where you place your values, and my value is on our family. A person might want a big Mercedes or a nice big house or a boat, and in order to get it he has to work hard to get the money. There may be some sacrifice and struggle, and yet these are only temporary things that can't be eternal. Having a large family also takes sacrifice and struggle, and lots of hard work, but a family is eternal and these relationships can last forever.

How sad it is that so much of the world has accepted another of the adversary's plan, and they are downplaying the importance of motherhood. This is just another one of his strategies to try to stop the Plan of Salvation. Woman's liberation movement, abortion, limiting family size, and minimizing the importance of family life are all trying to make women feel that motherhood isn't important—but as I said at the beginning, "I am glad that I am a woman, a wife, and a mother." The world can't convince me that I am not being fulfilled when I prefer to be a mother instead of a career woman, for I know that there are mothers in the exalted eternities where I want to eventually be with our family.

No paycheck could ever compensate for the rewards and feelings I get when my children express their love and gratitude to me.