

May Hallmanack
May 4, 1985

Dear Family:

One really does get more reflective and philosophical as one gets older. Perhaps that is due to the fact that by the third generation you see patterns which repeat themselves, and when the third generation is your own grandchildren, you realize that they are growing up to the time in their lives when they will be making choices that have far reaching effect on their own lives and the lives of their future children, our Great-Grandchildren.

I think that our Grandchildren have led very sheltered lives, and that is good. They have had (for the most part) happy childhoods. This will help when they face life's inevitable problems and stresses in their future lives.

On the 6th of May Huntington Tracy will be 16. How did he get to be a young man. (like the song in Fiddler on the Roof). Incredible. In three years he will be 19 and through high school and have a year of college behind him and be missionary age. Tracy, your Grandfather and I really hope that you will want to serve a mission. Those 18 months to two years that a young man or woman spends serving the Lord blesses the people he teaches, himself, and the Lord by furthering his kingdom here on earth. But I would rather my grandchildren did not go on missions unless they intend to serve with all their heart, mind, and soul, even knowing that its a hard job--but one that is more rewarding than hardly anything they will ever again do. A mission (if the missionary serves as above) is a settling-in process. It stabilizes the character, increases our knowledge of the Lord and his Kingdom, brings us closer to our Savior and our Father-in-Heaven, and instills in us a love for our brothers and sisters everywhere in the world. A good missionary comes home loving people. It takes a young person out of himself, and gives him a perspective of the problems, sorrows and joys of his fellow man. It also gives him a knowledge of the power and reality of satan and the basic struggle of human existence--the constant choosing between good and evil.

I hope that the girls will want to go on missions too. If I were a young man I would want my eternal companion to be a return missionary.

It is thrilling to see you parents preparing your young people for these experiences by giving them every opportunity to get a knowledge and a testimony of the truthfulness of the church and the reality of our Savior and his Father.

Besides deciding whether to go on a mission or not, in a very short time, the grandchildren, boys and girls, should be deciding on learning some useful training that will prepare them to provide for their families. Girls often think they don't need that--that some young man will take care of them, so why should they worry about having a useful occupation. When President Kimball was alive he was very vocal on that very thing. Every young woman and man should plan to train themselves in such a way that they could support themselves and their children if it was necessary. No young girl can say that she will not at sometime have to do just that--support her family. Husbands sometimes die. Marriages sometimes do not work out.

Sometimes when you think about how you want to earn a living you have to be very cold blooded and practical.

If you want to be a teacher--where do you want to teach? In college, in high school, in secondary school, in gradeschool? What do you want to teach? I read in the paper the other day that teachers who are prepared to teach only one subject, such as English and Math, are losing their jobs to teachers who can teach both or more than one subject. Virginia found when she graduated with her teaching certificate, that a background in music made her a much more desirable candidate for getting a teaching ^{post} ~~point~~. She could play the piano, and she could teach singing groups. Are you grandchildren developing talents that will supplement your skills which you learn in school? A background in debate in High School will be a good thing to put on a resume, because schools need debate coaches.

How are you going to support yourselves through college? Do you want to work on the janitorial force (not all that bad) or work in the Photo Studio or be a secretary for a professor. Skills in computers are almost as essential today as skills in typing were in my day. If you want to work for a professor nowadays, you need to be able to do word processing. You can pick that up at home or by taking summer courses.

David worked in the photo lab and as a janitor when he went to college. Tracy had a full scholarship, so until he got married, he did not have to have a part time job. Be aware of scholarships that are available for the school of your choice, and make sure you have the background and the grades to be eligible for them. The schools counselors can tell you all about them. Having a fulltime scholarship is the easiest way to get through school. Ask your parents about them, and how to prepare for them.

Maybe you don't want to go to college. then if you aren't interested in the professions, which require a college education--how do you want to earn your living? Trades are still good ways to earn a living, but if that is the way you want to go you need to decide now. If you want to be a carpenter, see if you can channel your high school education towards that end. And seek summer employment in the field of your choice. It is not too soon for any of you to give serious thought to this NOW. Your grandfather knew he wanted to be a scientist when he was in grade school. He chose a field he has always been happy in.

Most men (and sometimes women) spend at least eight hours a day supporting their families. It is good to get something to do you will enjoy--or you will end up doing something you don't like.

Sometimes children don't realize that there will not always be a mom and Dad they can "live on". Parents let your children know that they have a responsibility to be prepared to be parents, and that they will before too long be old enough to be self-sufficient. My mother (Charlotte Langford) used to say: "My mother raised her children--and a lot of her grandchildren. You kids need to know, that I am willing to raise you--but I am not willing to raise your children--that is YOUR responsibility."

I have recently had two experiences which made me realize how responsible children can often be.

I was in a grocery store (rearms) one day, and in front of me was a lady with three small children. Two boys and one girl. The oldest boy was about eight years old. The family was obviously a welfare family. The mother was either a handicapped mother or she had suffered a mild stroke. She had problems with speech and motion. That little eight year, oldest boy, was incredible. He kept his younger brothers and sisters in line. He handled