

T.JR. Mondav March 11. 1985

Dear Family.

Isn't it wonderful to receive your inheritance while your parents are still alive to thank! Thank you Father and Mother!

It is such a relief to pay off our debts and have, for the first time, some long-term savings. (we'll still need the interest from the savings to balance our monthly budget, but we were able to keep out some "mad money", and boy has it been fun to use. We let the kids have 5% of their inheritance to use before they're 18, and it's been interesting to see how they use it. The house is full of "Star Wars" stuff and porcelain dolls. Swing sets (parental "guidance" for Anthony and Soencer) are coming up, and bikes and radios, of course. Tracy & Zina are sitting on theirs: big plans brewing, I suppose. Mary hasn't spent much of hers because everything she wants costs too much. (A waterbed in the loft seems out of the question.) Betsy and I have a new waterbed (the old one gave just before the sale of Mega), a video camera, a new freezer and fridge, and Betsy got a great deal on a White sewing machine that can sew through armor plate, such as the kind needed to patch Robert's jeans. We're also planning to get a small used economy car. We really don't need a second car since Bruce Campbell, Monte Russel, and I each chipped in \$300 to buy a little Datsun to commute to work in, but we figured a second, small car will save us a lot in gas.

HT just completed his debut as a member of the chorus ("moving prop") in the Orem High School production of "Once upon a Mattress." We got most of his "scenes" on video camera --what a nifty invention! Zina supervised props for the play and had it down to a science. It's their last play this year, however-- too hard on parents. They're having a wonderful time going part-time to school and made the honor roll, despite my warnings they wouldn't be approaching their education properly if they didn't get an "F" or two. Helps with our credibility with the neighbors as miscreant home schoolers, however. Betsy recently picked up a copy of the "Harbrace College Workbook" at D.I. and Tracy has been devouring it. We are now afflicted with a child capable of correcting our grammar. I don't think there's a subject that doesn't interest him. Right now he's trying to get me to take him ice fishing for perch at Deer Creek reservoir. Zina is having great trials because she can't seem to get a big enough testimony of "mutual", though her testimony of --and living of-- the Gospel is coming along wonderfully. She's just not immature enough for her age. The bishopric is very understanding of her, however. We're hoping maybe she can get a job in the nursery during that difficult hour. (She'd really rather go to Relief Society with Betsy, but we're not quite obnoxious enough to try for that "indulgence.")

Mary loves mutual and appears to be embarrassingly normal in her peer relationships. Still manages to stay sweet, however. She is grateful she doesn't ride the bus home from Jr. High (Betsy picks her^{up} each day after her half-day) as on the two occasions she has, she has been kicked and spit upon by "admiring" boys.

Today Betsy received an official brass P.T.A. key chain for helping to judge children's compositions in the annual "Reflections" contest. There were some really imaginative entries this year, and a few real duds. I especially liked one about eggs and how fascinating they were to contemplate as the child stalled to avoid eating them. If our kids were in the public schools Betsy wouldn't qualify as a judge, of course. As it is, she plans to dangle her key chain whenever she feels her aforementioned credibility threatened.

I'm waiting with baited breath to be released as elders' quorum president, as I recently told my new high council advisor that I wouldn't give him a report before the last Sunday of each month listing which of my brethren hadn't done their home teaching yet. Told him I didn't really want to know, myself, if it would be discouraging to them, and that I certainly didn't want their name circulating on a list of "bad guys." I've had such wonderful results backing off from being a "mother hen" to my wife and children! It's been overwhelming to me how wonderfully they respond to the tiny amounts of faith, love, trust, interest, encouragement, understanding, freedom, etc., that I'm squeezing like blood from this "type A" turnip of a personality of mine, that I thought I'd try applying it in my church calling. I think I made a mistake, though, to tell him I wouldn't do it. I should have just said "sure, you bet" and then never turned the reports in. Then he would have just worried about my incompetence instead of my obstinance.

Thank goodness I have an understanding Bishop. When I told him I just wasn't comfortable anymore with the concept of "management" or "supervision" in the Priesthood, he told me I wouldn't have to ask them for reports. He just wanted me to visit and call my brethren regularly, show a real interest in them, encourage them, and I'd know well enough how things are going. And it works!

(over)

I'm sick home today with the flu. Last week my "do list" at work was becoming so unmanageable that I put it on a data base on the computer and gave each of my 50 or so present tasks a priority and a date. Friday I looked at the week's list and changed a lot of "3/8's" to "3/11". But how do you schedule "get sick"?

Recently I've called two new quorum instructors, but I still take turns with them, as I can't give up my one fun Church job completely. Yesterday I taught the lesson on how a husband and wife can become one, and had a really good time teaching it, as it's been a subject I've been working on with some degree of success. Referred to a column by Brent Barlow in the Feb 7-8 Deseret News which I passed out a few weeks ago entitled "Can 72,300 wives all be wrong?" in which he referred to a survey by Ann Landers: "Would you be content to be held close and treated tenderly and forget about 'the act'?" nearly 100,000 women responded, and 72% said "YES." He then referred to an earlier survey he had conducted himself, in which 100 women had helped him compile a "profile of a loving husband." He took their suggestions, combined them into 10 items, and asked 200 other women to rank them in order; the results were: 1: He communicates effectively with me by both talking and listening. 2: He expresses his love both by word and action. 3: He expresses affection by touch without sexual overtones. 4: He takes an active part in rearing and disciplining our children. 5: He helps me attain my spiritual needs. 6: He is concerned about my changing intellectual, emotional, social, and physical needs. 7: He encourages rather than discourages my individual endeavors. 8: He often spends time alone with me without interruptions or distractions. 9: He gives genuine help around the house without being asked and without complaining. 10: He helps me attain sexual satisfaction in our relationship. "So wives," he concluded: "the next time you want to cuddle a bit, clip out this article and put it under your husband's pillow."

I thought that was pretty interesting, so I checked these priorities with my own private survey. The entire group of one said: "that's right."

So in our lesson we discussed President Kimball's favorite scripture on marriage: Ephesians 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." We read President McKay's statement: "Woman's mission and throne is the family, and if anything is withheld that would make her more efficient, useful, or happy in that sphere, she is wronged and has not her rights." I asked: "what does that mean?" and someone responded: "buy your wife a microwave," which I thought was a pretty good answer, as we've been through 9 children and X thousand baby bottles that could have been efficiently warmed and still don't have one. I guess the point is to get your wife what she feels she wants and needs, not just what you think might be "good" for her in your immensurate wisdom.

I added, "How about something 'completely impractical', such as roses?" They're so expensive, and they don't even last long. After all, couldn't that money be used for the poor, or for investment, or some other "more worthy" use? But the answer came right from the scriptures: (John 12:8: "For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always".) Note that it was Judas who decried "waste" of the flagrantly expensive ointment the woman used on the Savior.

It's really marvelous what such a "waste" can do for the "waster". The day of the stockholder's meeting, I gave Betsy ~~some~~ 25 roses. "For sixteen wonderful years, for nine wonderful children, but mostly . . . for me." And it really did a lot for me, besides making her feel pretty nice.

This inheritance has given me a few anxious moments, as I fretted with the 'burden' of this responsibility, the 'guilt' of such wealth, and other such nonsense, but after I stopped sitting on it and fretting about it and started putting it to good use, it became a lot of fun. Hope you all have fun with yours, too!

Love,

Tracy Jr.

ed. Betsy

Tracy Jr.

ps pardon the missing
descenders. (Blown transistor somewhere).