

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

1873-1970

We have asked a number of people, of various age and experience and place, who have known David O. McKay as their Prophet and the President of their Church, to express their feelings at his death.

MY MEMORIES OF PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

My first recollection of David O. McKay is a sermon he gave in a Sacrament Meeting which led me as a teenager to engage in critical self-examination and to leave the meeting with high resolve.

Despite the nervousness and excitement I felt in getting married, I still remember three principles he gave my wife and me forty years ago, in his introductory remarks preceding his celebration of our marriage: live within your means, practice the courtesy and chivalry of courtship throughout your marriage, and trust one another and be worthy of that trust, "for to be trusted is greater than to be loved."

Over a period of about thirty years while engaged in teaching religion to L.D.S. college youth, I was privileged either at his invitation or my request to have a half-dozen conversations with him about questions critical to me at the time. Looking back I marvel at the trust he placed in me, at his tolerance for those who disagreed with him—a prophet of God—and at his love of life in its intellectual, aesthetic, social, as well as spiritual dimensions.

President McKay invited me in to see him as I began in the innocence and inexperience of youth to teach religion in a college environment. After drawing me out on a number of issues, his only advice was, "Be true to yourself and loyal to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and whatever else you do will be all right." Not long thereafter, I returned with questions about evolution and family planning. "What shall I teach in these areas?" I asked. Very wisely, he replied, "What is your belief?" And then in gracious response he supported and amplified my fumbling beginnings of a position statement.