

EARL C. CROCKETT

I have been thinking how we honor great men who die by naming buildings after them or by presenting their family with a plaque; or we mark some spot with a shaft of granite, or erect a statue. All of these ways of honoring seem appropriate.

But I think upon Jesus, the greatest man who ever lived. He didn't construct any great buildings in Jerusalem, nor were there any buildings named in his honor. The Temple in Jerusalem, which was supposed to be His, He sadly labeled--"a den of thieves." (Matt. 21:13) In our day we have 17 Temples which we call the House of the Lord in His honor. The Saints were commanded to build these in order that he might give the Saints power. The buildings, as such, cannot bring honor to the One after whom they are named. His very presence is, or can be, there. The purpose of a Temple, according to the prophet Joseph Smith (DHC V, p.1), is to provide the means whereby we can one day return to His presence and live with Him. It is ever the presence of God--an association with a holy personality that is greater than the Temple as a building.

John the Revelator was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain. There he was shown that great city, Jerusalem, which, at the conclusion of God's plan for all of us, will descend out of heaven from God. John says the City will have the glory of God which will be a light like unto a precious stone, clear as crystal. Then he records these words:

"And I saw no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple in it. And the City had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the Glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. 21:10,11,22-23)

It is ever the life of character that counts. The deeds of this person is the real light that shines forth more than any other memorial. Moses shown with this light. Moroni's presence in Joseph Smith's bedroom lighted up the room like noonday.

I do not know that any building or part of a building has, or will be named for Pres. Earl C. Crockett. I do know that kindness and love of fellow men and God, and willingness to bear anothers burden, fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2) and a glory like the glory of Christ shines forth--making that person, himself, a Temple

of God. (II Corinthian 6:14-18)

Naming a building after Earl in the long run cannot be compared to the light of kindness which shone from him. Some say this is the real memorial. Earl was a kindly man who never seemed indifferent to those who came under his administration at BYU. Some may have thought him to be too kind to be an effective administrator in a great University. When I hear this viewpoint, I contrast it with the viewpoint of the poet who wrote:

"I have wept in the night  
For my shortness of sight  
That to somebody's needs made me blind  
But I never have yet  
Felt a tinge of regret  
For being a little too kind."

No faculty member or dean ever sat in the shadows of Earl C. Crockett's administration. All knew that they had access to his office and that there, they could find not necessarily agreement, or even a quick solution to a problem--but always a listening ear and an understanding of viewpoints.

In the last two or three years of his life Earl and I worked together in a different setting--the setting of the Provo Temple. Like all men in their Seventies, we often talked of the certain limitation of the years left to us. What a person could or should do first and foremost with these remaining precious hours and days? Some would say that we were in that time of life when men and women naturally "cram for their finals." But I would like to record for his family, snatches of things we talked about and, some conclusions reached as we met now and again, during our Temple assignments.

First, we reviewed the many days when he taught the theories of economics or when both of us were concerned with the administration of public and church educational programs. These were profitable, enjoyable and important days. The knowledge we taught is to be sought after and respected.

Next, we compared this professional experience with our work days in the Temple --work days filled with directing Holy Ordinances of God. Our textbooks were not from Harpers or Scribners or Deseret Book Company. Our textbook was from Joseph Smith who

said God had revealed it and that it was the same one given to Adam, Moses, and Peter, James and John. The textbook said these ordinances had to be authoritatively sealed upon the individuals. We had the sealing and ordinance administration power from the prophet to make these teachings and contracts truly binding on both God and the person to whom he gave them.

Now, no one gave us the sealing power to bind up what we taught or administered in the BYU educational programs. These educational programs were needed and helpful and good, but many of them were only for this life. The Temple programs are for eternity. The things we taught at the "Y"--even the Doctrine & Covenants and the Bible were beautiful, open revelations for the whole world. But the things we administered in the Temple of God were closed revelations--personal and intimate doctrines and agreements entered into between our Father in Heaven and the individual receiving them. They were both sacred and secret, and would lead that individual, someday, into the very presence of God. And there was no other way, and no other University of God except His Temple--or no other place--or other authority that could do this.

We could both see that what we were doing in the Temple had weightier results than anything else we could do. We understood more what the prophet, dedicating the Provo Temple, meant when he said that "The knowledge found in the Temple surpassed any knowledge that could be obtained elsewhere." (Provo Temple Dedicatory Prayer) We were both humbled by the Spirit of God which told us that what we were doing had to do with things of eternal consequences. Earl said that he could see now, that only in the Temple could we experience the fulness of the priesthood of God. We talked about a power we had and felt which we did not have any other place--a power which breaks down the barriers of the grave (Pres. Rudger Clawson, Gen. Conf. Report October 5, 1900) By this power all those, both living and dead, would stand before the Lord as if there were no such thing as mortal time. The great world of the dead was made equal with the world of the living. We saw more clearly how God is no respecter of persons, and how His mercy, His love, and His justice reaches out to bless all mankind, black, yellow or white--and those with education and degrees, as well as

those with no formal education.

We talked of death and how, as President Brigham Young said, the two words "eternal life" entirely exclude death. "We really have no death to preach," Earl said, "and we should never practice the principles of death but continually talk about and pursue the way that leads to 'the continuation of lives'". (JD 9:309)

I will appreciate always the moments when we two educators talked as if God speaks to a person in the Temple as if he were standing in eternity. His commandments and laws seemed given as if there was no such thing as death or a veil dividing us from His presence. Time and eternity were one and the heavens and the earth seem oh so close in their proximity!

Now President Crockett was not given to vagaries of the mind, or illogical reasoning, but there in the House of the Lord where the mind can be and is lighted up by the spirit of revelation, we saw more clearly the spiritual nature of the next existence--that existence where Earl is today.

Where we are now, our spirit body is clothed upon with flesh with which we struggle and work to sanctify, redeem and save, so that in the resurrection the spirit and the body may be eternally one. I think Earl would want me to voice his testimony and mine, to you today. Earl knew that this struggle with the flesh can only be won through the power of the atonement and resurrection of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God. I know he believed this.

We talked, sometimes late in the evening, of the next state of existence--a spiritual one, where we work and wait as our body passes through the purification and refinement of death and the grave.

Earl said, "I don't know how much our economic theories can be used in this spirit world, but I feel that what I am doing in the Temple can be used forever." I bear witness to you that President Crockett knew that he was engaged in an order of things in the Temple that he and all who honor the Temple could use, when our work is finished here.

I bear witness to you that he is using the order which he learned in the Temple. I know that he gained this knowledge because he was a kind man, purified by loving God and his fellow men, and by serving them, and because he knew and lived the teachings and commitments of the Temple of God. I bear witness that we can all see and understand these things while we are here in the flesh, if we have the spirit which Earl had.

I am grateful, Della, that I had these moments of reflection in the Temple with my friend, brother and colleague--your beloved husband and sweetheart.

The 76th Section of the Doctrine & Covenants tells the Temple story of the Gospel somewhat as the Temple does. The Lord, after explaining in this section the degrees of glory in the world to come, concludes with these words:

"Neither is man capable to make them known for they are only to be seen and understood by the power of the Holy Spirit, which God bestows on those who love him--to whom he grants this privilege of seeing and knowing for themselves, that through the power and manifestation of the Spirit while in the flesh they may be able to bear His presence in the world of glory." (DC 76:116)

I know that Earl was a man purified by the life he lived here. I know that he knew, through the power and manifestation of the spirit, that this next world is very real. I know that he was prepared to bear the presence of the Lord in a world of glory. I know for a surety that he learned the order of God here and is working busily in that order of God in the spiritual world, organizing and preaching the gospel to his many professional friends who may never have heard a true gospel sermon in their mortal life. How busy he must be! Be comforted, as a family, by this knowledge. I promise you that when you come to the Temple in the spirit of that Holy House, you will strengthen your testimony that Earl is happily busy, and you will be comforted as a family, and he will seem very near to you, and will be near to you, always. His manner of life will be like a lantern in your hand and a song in your heart, guiding you, as a family, to where he is, Della--your eternal companion in the presence of God.

In the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.