



Do Your Duty

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Fifty-one years ago I heard William J. Critchlow Jr., then president of the South Ogden Stake, retell a story concerning trust, honor, and duty.

“[Young] Rupert stood by the side of the road watching an unusual number of people hurry past. At length he recognized a friend. ‘Where are all of you going in such a hurry?’ he asked.

“The friend paused. . . . ‘The King has lost his royal emerald! . . . Everyone is searching, for the King has offered a reward . . . to the one who finds it. Come, we must hurry.’

“‘But I cannot go without asking Grandmother,’ faltered Rupert.

“‘Then I cannot wait. I want to find the emerald,’ replied his friend.

“Rupert hurried back to the cabin at the edge of the woods to seek his grandmother’s permission. . . .

“But his grandmother shook her head. ‘What would the sheep do?’ she asked. ‘Already they are restless in the pen, waiting to be taken to the pasture, and please do not forget to take them to water when the sun shines high in the heavens.’

“Sorrowfully, Rupert took the sheep to the pasture, and at noon he led them to the brook in the woods. There he sat on a large stone by the stream. ‘If I could only have had a chance to look for the King’s emerald!’ he thought. Turning his head to gaze down at the sandy bottom of the brook, suddenly he stared into the water. What was it? It could not be! He leaped into the water. . . . ‘The King’s emerald!’ he shouted.



President Monson reminds us to follow the Lord by doing our duty.

“With shining eyes Rupert ran to his grandmother’s hut to tell her of his great find. ‘Bless you, my boy,’ she said, ‘but you never would have found it if you had not been doing your duty, herding the sheep.’ And Rupert knew that this was the truth.”¹

The lesson to be learned from this story is found in the familiar couplet: “Do [your] duty; that is best; Leave unto [the] Lord the rest!”²

Let us learn our duties. Let us ever be worthy to perform those duties and, in so doing, follow in the footsteps of the Master. When to Him came the call of duty, He answered, “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). May we do likewise. ●

From an October 2006 general conference address.

NOTES

1. In Conference Report, Oct. 1955, 86; paragraphing, capitalization, and punctuation standardized.
2. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Legend Beautiful,” in *The Complete Poetical Works of Longfellow* (1893), 258.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why do you think Rupert’s grandmother asked him to stay home and take care of the sheep? What would have happened if he hadn’t obeyed?

2. What if Rupert had not found the emerald? Why do we do our duty even if we don’t expect a reward?

3. What are some of our duties as members of the Church? What kinds of rewards will we receive for doing those duties?

