

Seek

LEARNING

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



Life has become so complex and competitive. You must get all of the education that you possibly can.

Many years ago I worked for a railroad. I was in charge of what is called head-end traffic. One morning I received a call from my counterpart in Newark, New Jersey. He said, “Train number such-and-such has arrived, but it has no baggage car. Somewhere, 300 passengers have lost their baggage, and they are mad.”

I went immediately to work to find out where it may have gone. I found it had been properly loaded and properly trained in Oakland, California. It had been moved to St. Louis. But some thoughtless switchman in the St. Louis yards moved a small piece of steel just three inches, a switch point, then pulled the lever to uncouple the car. We discovered that a baggage car that belonged in Newark, New Jersey, was in fact in New Orleans, Louisiana—1,500 miles from its destination. Just the three-inch movement of the switch in the St. Louis yard by a careless employee had started it on the wrong track, and the distance from its true destination increased dramatically.

That is the way it is with our lives. Instead of following a steady course, we are pulled by some mistaken idea in another direction. The movement away from our original destination may be ever so small, but, if continued, that very small movement becomes a great gap and we find ourselves far from where we intended to go.

It is the little things upon which life turns that make the big difference in our lives, my dear young friends.

There can be no doubt, none whatever, that education pays. Do not short-circuit your lives. If you do so, you will pay for it over and over and over again.¹

Fulfill Your Potential

You have the potential to become anything to which you set your mind. You have a mind and a body and a spirit. With these three working together, you can walk the high road that leads to achievement and happiness. But this will require effort and sacrifice and faith.

You must get all of the education that you possibly can. Life has become so complex and competitive. You cannot assume that you have entitlements due you. You will be expected to put forth great effort and to use your best talents to make your



YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR HANDS

EDUCATION OF THE CONSCIENCE, OF

way to the most wonderful future of which you are capable.² Sacrifice a car; sacrifice anything that is needed to be sacrificed to qualify yourselves to do the work of the world. That world will in large measure pay you what it thinks you are worth, and your worth will increase as you gain education and proficiency in your chosen field.³

The Lord Wants You to Be Educated

You have a mandate from the Lord to educate your minds and your hearts and your hands. The Lord has said, “Teach ye diligently . . . of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—that ye may be prepared in all things” (D&C 88:78–80).

The Lord wants you to train your minds and hands to become an influence for good as you go forward with your lives. And as you do so and as you perform honorably and with excellence, you will bring honor to the Church, for you will be regarded as a man or woman of integrity and ability and conscientious workmanship.⁴ In addition, your education will strengthen your service in the Church. A study was made some years ago that indicated the higher the education, the greater the faith and participation in religious activity.⁵

The Lord wants you to educate your minds and hands, whatever your chosen field. Whether it be repairing refrigerators, or the work of a skilled surgeon, you must train yourselves. Seek for the best schooling available. Become a workman of integrity in the world that lies ahead of you.⁶

Special Counsel for Girls

In this day and time, a girl needs an education. She needs the means and skills by which to earn a living should she find herself in a situation where it becomes necessary to do so.

The whole gamut of human endeavor is now open to

women. There is not anything that you cannot do if you will set your mind to it.⁷ I am grateful that women today are afforded the same opportunity to study for science, for the professions, and for every other facet of human knowledge. You are as entitled as are men to the Spirit of Christ, which enlightens every man and woman who comes into the world (see D&C 84:46).⁸

You can include in the dream of the woman you would like to be a picture of one qualified to serve society and make a significant contribution to the world of which she will be a part.⁹ Set your priorities in terms of marriage and family, but also pursue educational programs which will lead to satisfying work and productive employment in case you do not marry, or to a sense of security and fulfillment in the event you do marry. Education will increase your appreciation and refine your talent.¹⁰

Special Counsel for Boys

No boy anxious to please his Heavenly Father would fail to take advantage of educational opportunities.¹¹ But there is a troubling trend taking place. Young men are more likely to drop out of school than young women. Women have earned more bachelor's degrees than men.

It is plainly evident that young women are exceeding young men in pursuing educational programs. And so I say to you young men, rise up and discipline yourself to take advantage of educational opportunities. Do you wish to marry a girl whose education has been far superior to your own? We speak of being “equally yoked.” That applies, I think, to the matter of education.¹²

More Than Secular Learning

Never before have so many been educated in the learning of the world. What a powerful thing it is—the intensive schooling of a large percentage of the youth of the world, who meet daily at the feet of instructors to garner knowledge from all the ages of man.

The extent of that knowledge is staggering. It encompasses the stars of the universe, the geology of the earth, the history of nations, the culture and language of peoples, the operation of governments, the laws of

THE CHARACTER, AND OF THE SPIRIT



EXTRA! EXTRA!

Are you uncertain about your future education? Do you need help planning and preparing for college? For help with these issues, as well as information about Church schools and institutes of religion, visit www.besmart.com.

commerce, the behavior of the atom, the functions of the body, and the wonders of the mind.

With so much knowledge available, one would think that the world might well be near a state of perfection. Yet we are constantly made aware of the other side of the coin—of the sickness of society, of the contentions and troubles that bring misery into the lives of millions.

Each day we are made increasingly aware of the fact that life is more than science and mathematics, more than history and literature. There is need for another education, without which the substance of secular learning may lead only to destruction. I refer to the education of the heart, of the conscience, of the character, of the spirit—these indefinable aspects of our personalities which determine so certainly what we are and what we do in our relationships one with another.

Over fifty years ago while serving in England as a missionary, I went to the London Central YMCA. I suppose that old building has long since gone, but I can never forget the words that faced visitors in the foyer each time they entered. They were the words of Solomon: “With all thy getting get understanding” (Proverbs 4:7).

Understanding of what? Understanding of ourselves, of the purposes of life, of our relationship to God who is our Father, of the great divinely given principles that for centuries have provided the sinew of man’s real progress!

As we pursue our secular studies, let us also add to our lives the cultivation of the Spirit. If we do so, God will bless us with that peace and those blessings which come from Him alone.¹³ **NE**

NOTES

1. From “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 5–7.
2. From “Stay on the High Road,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 113.
3. From “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” 4.
4. From “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” 4–5.
5. From “Rise Up, O Men of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 61.
6. From “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” 7.
7. From “How Can I Become the Woman of Whom I Dream?” *Ensign*, May 2001, 95.
8. From “Ten Gifts from the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 89.
9. From “How Can I Become the Woman of Whom I Dream?” 95.
10. From “Ten Gifts from the Lord,” 89.
11. From “To Please Our Heavenly Father,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 49.
12. From “Rise Up, O Men of God,” 60–61.
13. From “With All Thy Getting Get Understanding,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1988, 2, 5.