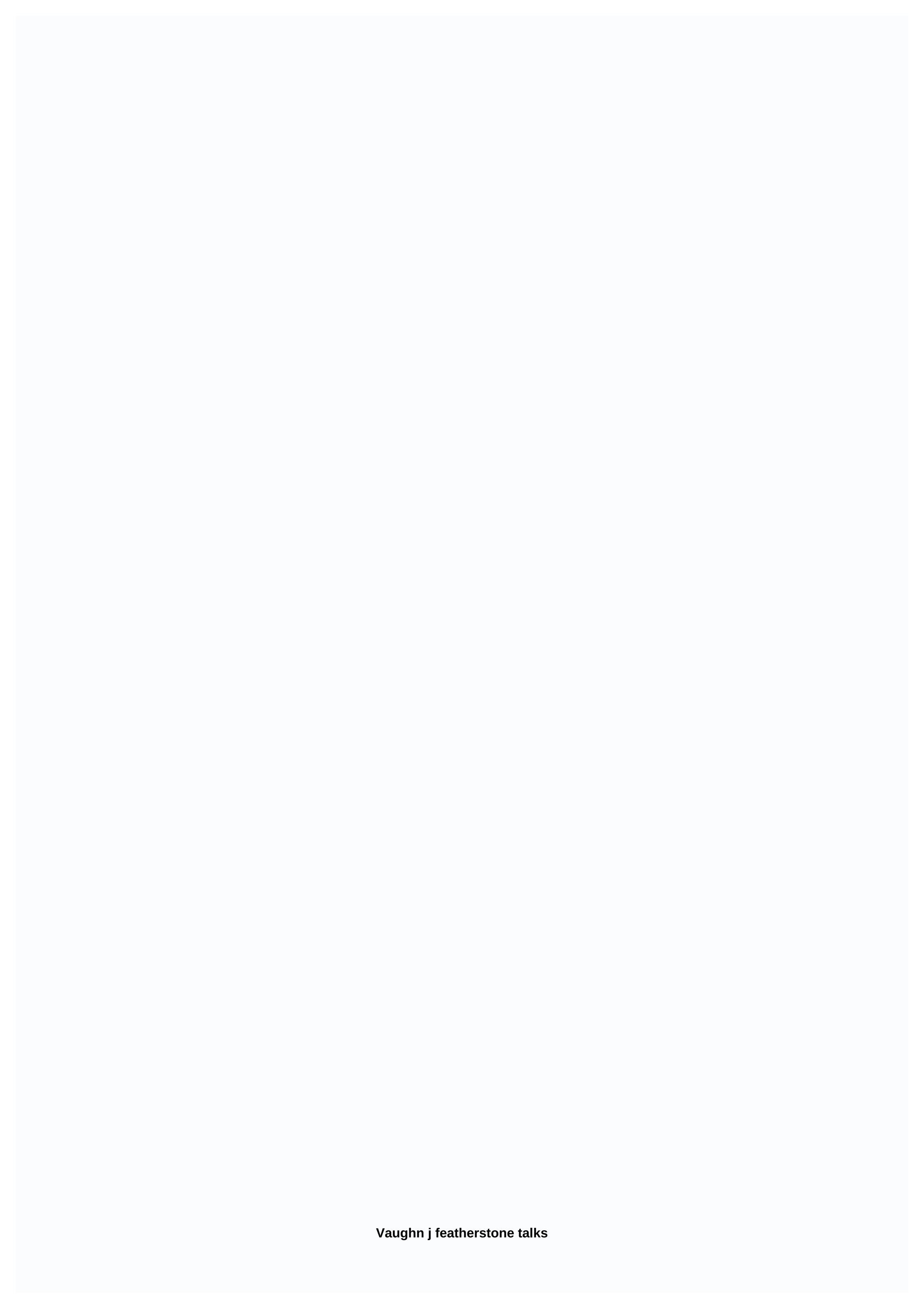
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I am very happy to be with you tonight. When I was invited to accept this assignment, I looked at it as a great honor and one that hopefully I can contribute something. I feel very eager about young people, and I guess these are the thoughts that went through my heart as I thought about this mission for
the last few weeks. Not so long ago, news came from Scotland. Apparently, at the funeral of Donald Graham, one of the pallbearers, Blackey McGregor, when he rounded the open grave, fell in and broke his arm. A newspaper reporter covering the incident wanted to put it in the paper in a certain way, so
he simply had a little article there that said: Yesterday at Donald Graham's funeral, Blackey McGregor, one of the pallbearers, slipped into the open grave, cracking a limb, causing a gloom all over the occasion. I hope we don't do it tonight. I also remember an incident related to the subject I want to lead
into a minute. The story is about the guy who was in a nice big car. He pulled up to a red light and waited. Then a Volkswagen pulled in behind him. The light turned green, but the fellow was busy and didn't notice. So the man behind him shouted out the window, move the trash can, pilgrim! This guy was
just a little upset about this, and so he got out of his car, went back to Volkswagen and said, I'm not taking that kind of guff out, and he kept getting out and kept coming out, and when he was all the way out he was six feet five inches and
240 pounds. Then the little guy said to him, Isn't there some kind of guff you give that I can take? Then I also remember scotchman who bought his wife an X-ray of the chest for their anniversary. He couldn't afford a gift, but he wanted her to know that his heart was in the right place. In our time we have
many things that come into our lives that seem to be major obstacles and major handicaps. Someone who had such an obstacle was a young man named Timmy. Timmy was an idiot —at least that's what his teacher told him... ...so she had him transferred out of his class to a class where they taught
idiots. When he entered the new class, he said to his teacher, Well, what's an idiot? His teacher said: Timmy, I guess an idiot is someone who doesn't know as much about something as anyone else. He said, Oh, I'm in the right place then. I certainly don't know as much as all these people in the second
class. All year, that teacher told me things I didn't know a thing about. But he also said, There are a lot of things I know about. You know, I love my dad because we're sitting around the dinner table, and when we have dinner, Dad will say to me, 'Timmy, what do I do? think?' Then I can tell my dad what I
think, And his teacher said, Timmy, what do you think? Oh, I think about birds all the time, he replied, I know every bird in the woods, I can name every one of them, and there are hundreds of them in the woods around our house. I can see any bird flying, and I can tell you what it is, and I can tell you
what color it is. All I have to do is hear a tone of a song of any bird, and I can tell you what bird it is and finish the song of the bird for you. I can tell you when the eggs are laid, and when they hatch, what color they are, and the different varieties—. He continued and continued. His teacher said, Oh my
God, Timmy, you're a genius! And he said, What's a genius? A genius is someone who knows a lot about one thing. Timmy said: You know, I've only been in your class just a little while, and you already know more about me than the other teacher did all year. She doesn't know much; She must be an
idiot! I think it's a good story, and I think it will lead to what I'm going to tell you tonight. Finding treasures at home several years ago, a man named Russell Conwell wrote a great book, Acres of Diamonds, taken from his lectures. He talks about being in Baghdad and hiring an old Arab guide. By a camel
train, they went down the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. As they walked along the banks of these rivers, they saw beautiful white sands and the old Arabic guide told history, much like a modern barber. Finally, instead of acting as if I wasn't listening, Conwell said, I'd act as if I was listening and
then just turn him off. I guess he noticed this, because all of a sudden he took his turban off and waved around to get my attention, but I just ignored him. He continued to wave, and pretty soon I succumbed to temptation and looked over at him. As soon as I did, he started with a story. He said: This story I
save for my friends. Then he told me this story: In ancient Persia, there was a man named Ali Hafid who owned orchards, gardens and corn fields. Ali Hafid was rich, and he was rich, and he was rich because he was satisfied. One day, a Buddhist priest came by ali hafid's home, and
together they sat by the fire. This Buddhist priest told how the Almighty put his finger in the bank of a fog and began to swirl it faster and faster until it burst into a solid mass of flames. And then it rolled through the universe. As it did, it went through other fog banks, and the dew settled on earth, and the
crust began to form. When it was formed, after it had gone through the fog bank after fog bank, part of the internal eruption emerged. This is where we got our mountains and hills and our valleys and our deep This is the thing that embellished the earth. As the earth's crust cooled, that
which cooled most quickly granite; less fast, copper; then silver, gold and last of all diamonds. And the priest said to Ali Hafid: If you had a diamond mine, you could place your children on thrones all over the world. After the
Buddhist priest left, Ali Hafid went to bed. He was a poor man. He was poor because he felt and feared he was dissatisfied because he felt and feared he was poor because he felt and feared he was poor because he was dissatisfied because he felt and feared he was poor because he was dissatisfied because he felt and feared he was poor because he felt and feared he felt and feared he felt and feared he felt 
him: I have to find a diamond mine. Where should I look for one? The Buddhist priest, after waking up early in the morning and not feeling too pleasant, said: You are looking for a river between high mountains, and the river will flow on white sand, and there you will find diamonds. There is no such place.
There is, replied the priest, and there are many of them, and you will find them. You'll always find diamonds. Ali Hafid replied: Then I'll go. And he went home and sold his farm and collected the money. Then he left his family with a nearby neighbor and went on this search for diamonds. He began in the
Mountains of the Moon, and then he went down to Palestine, and finally over to Europe. Many years later—in miserable poverty, having been driven all the way through Europe, not a penny left, in rags, heart-sick, tired, tired— he stood on the bay of Barcelona. When a giant stream of water came in
between the pillars of Hercules, unable to resist the terrible temptation, he threw himself into the incoming tide and sank under the crest—never to rise in this life again. And then the old Arab stopped telling the story and went back to straighten the flock on the camel's back. Then he came up and went
right on with the next chapter. The man who bought the farm from Ali Hafid went out to water his camel one day in the sand. As he did, he saw something glittering in the sand. He reached into the water and pulled out a large rock. When he pulled it out, he
noticed that it caught all the different shades of the rainbow, so he took it in the house and put it on his robe. Three or four weeks later, the old Buddhist priest came by, walked into the house and soon saw this rock on the mantelpiece. He walked up and said, That's a diamond! Has Ali Hafid returned? No,
Ali Hafid hasn't returned, and it's not a diamond. It's just a rock I found out in my stream here. That's a diamond! I know diamonds! the priest replied. So they went out and dug in the sand nearby, and with almost every shovel of sand, they showed up Diamonds. The Arab concluded its story by saying that
Ali Hafid's farm was the Golconda mine, the richest diamond mine in the history of the world. If Ali Hafid had stayed at home and dug in his own fields, he would have had acres of diamonds. It's a good story about what I'd like to talk to you about tonight: acres of diamonds each of you have as an
individual. I had lunch on Tuesday with a man I admire very much. I've come to love him just because of his story. I had heard of him and admired him for a long time. Having the privilege of having lunch with him was something very exciting for me, and we arranged dinner a week from this Friday, so my
wife and I will have the privilege of spending more time with him and finding out more about him. His name is Douglas Snarr. Have you heard of Snarr Advertising Agency? Possibly you've seen a lot of his signs. This is Douglas Snarr's business. He told this story, and I asked him if I could lift some of it
because I think it might help you understand the message I have for you. Overcoming disability As a young man, Douglas Snarr developed a serious problem with stuttering and stuttering. He said that when he entered high school (I think his junior and senior year), stuttering became more intense, until
finally he retired in a shell and would hardly speak in any of his classes. He particularly remembered one summer night when he went up to his girlfriend's house. She lived on a hill in a beautiful colonial home. He went to the door and knocked. Her father came to the door and said, What do you want,
young man? Douglas explained how he felt then: I tried to say what I wanted, but I couldn't. The words wouldn't come. The sweat started pouring off my face, and I wanted to say something, but I still couldn't, so I just stood there. Suddenly Carol came down the spiral staircase in a beautiful dress and
said, Yes, Dad, it's Douglas Snarr. He's here to take me out tonight. And with those words, she took away all the pressure and alleviated the problem, Douglas decided he had a great talent—a great artistic talent, as some of you here might know—and so he developed a business.
After his senior year, he had earned enough money in that business to come to BYU. He came to a class, a very large class, and sat in the middle of the back row, where surely no one would call him to answer questions or do anything. The professor went down the whole list and said, We want Douglas
Snarr to come up and give initial prayer. Doug said: I got out and went down, and I stood in front with my head bowed. I wanted to pray, but the words wouldn't come anyway. As the pressure got more The sweat was running down my face. I could feel it under my
arms. The pressure was intense. To the professor stood up, came over and stood by my side, put his arm around me and said, I will give the prayer. When I made my way back to my place, no one wanted to look at me because they didn't want to embarrass me. But it was
irresistible; they had to look. I felt like a freak. After class this type professor came to me and said: Doug, if you're going to keep coming to class, I'll make it worth the effort. We believe we have something worthwhile in this class, and I promise you I will never call you again. The teacher's comment was
worse because it made me feel like a spectacle. Doug wanted to do something about his stuttering, but it just accentuated the problem. He decided to try to find a school for speech correction. He finally found one, and after he had taken a battery of tests, the speech therapist told him, You have a serious
case of stuttering and stuttering. I guess the teacher didn't have to be a genius to tell him. The man who performed the tests told him: 'We really don't know much about stuttering and stuttering when the case is as serious as yours. We don't know what we can really do for you, Doug, but I'll tell you this:
we can teach you how to live with the problem. Doug described his reaction: Something overturned inside me that made me so angry that I could barely bear it. I didn't want to live with the problem! I turned to the man and said, You're not good! Then I turned around and left. I was heartsick. I went through
school that year, and then one day when I was sitting in a hairdresser's chair, I saw a little ad in the paper about a man back in Chicago that would guarantee speech correction in a course that cost a thousand dollars. I went home that summer and although there was a girl I was interested in [apparently
the same little girl], I didn't go for a day. I worked all summer and served enough. I'd tell my dad I'd like to go to this speech school in Chicago. He had had BYU and Utah State University and the University of Utah check it out. They had all told him that the teacher was a quack, and that he really couldn't
do anything, and that the course was just a waste of money. So I had decided that I would pay for the course myself. As I walked in, and was met by a seventy-four-year-old, white-haired man. He said, Your name is Douglas Snarr. When I was your age, I had a problem
very similar to yours. You can overcome the problem and one day you will speak as I speak. I started crying because someone had told me I didn't have to live with the problem I had. In the first ten days of that course, we could not say a word. We didn't, anything for 10 days. (I should mention that we
met in a small shabby room—gray, dull, shabby—and one of the women who taught us was about the same age as the man and was blind.) At the end of the ten days they taught me to slowly move my arm back and forth while saying, My name is Doug Snarr. I want to tell you what it was to be able to
speak! I didn't mind moving my arm because I was finally communicating. I said something, and it came out! We started talking slowly, but then we took off. I used to go out and sit in the park with a magazine. It would be drunks and others lying on benches out in the park, but I would go out and put the
newspaper over my arm while reading or talking to myself, with my arm moving back and forth under the paper with each syllable-practicing! Then, on a Sunday about nine weeks later, I got a regression. I didn't know what to do, so I knelt down. I've prayed most of my life, but on this day I really prayed,
'Dear God, help me know what to do.' Then came the message, so I got up, called a taxi and went down to the LDS chapel. It was too late; the church was out; the building was completely locked up. In a small note on the front door, the branch president had left his name and speech. I went back to the
cab and told the driver to take me to that address. When I arrived, I rang the doorbell, and a man came to the door with his little girl right behind him. Then I said, 'My name-is-Doug-Snarr. I've-been-bett-and-God-have-sent-me-to-you. The little girl ran to her mother and said, 'Mother, come fast. There's a
crazy man at the door talking to our father. (I was eighteen at the time.) You can imagine how I felt. Anyway, the branch the president invited me, we talked for a while, and he said, Go out and send the taxi away. We'll take you home tonight. Tomorrow you pack your things and come and stay with us the
whole time you're in Chicago. A short time later, this family took me on a trip down to southern Illinois. I talked to one of the church members downstairs, waved my arm, but had a regular conversation. The woman I was talking to said, Doug, you have a great story to tell. I think you should tell me in
church. Even though I said I didn't think I could do it, she continued, Do it, Douglas. You come and talk to our people. They have to hear it.' Charity is the pure love of Christ, when you don't mind being embarrassed, when all you can think about is the people's best interests. And then this sweet man said,
Okay, I'm speaking at your sacrament meeting. All night before his talk, Doug barely slept at all. Then at the meeting he was as nervous as he could be until they finally invited him to speak. He stood up, put his arm out, and then he put it down. He gave it talk without touching your arm. His problem was
solved. If you could hear Douglas Snarr talking today, you'd find that he speaks about as fast as I do, and I speak very quickly. He has an exciting way of speaking, with no trace of a problem. Showing concern to others Let me tell you just another thing about Douglas Snarr, because I know his ability to
  beak is a miracle. He's very successful, and he's been a tougher-one driver. He just can't believe that someone can't succeed if he wants to succeed. All he has to do is make his own rules and then live by them, and he will succeed. Doug was in Washington, D.C, not long ago, riding in a taxi. The drive
who was black, pulled in next to a bus. The bus driver looked down, saw a black driver and began trying to force him off the road. Doug asked: What's going on here? The driver replied: I guess this guy doesn't like black. The taxi driver slowed down, and the bus went on down the street. When the taxi
tried to pass the bus again, the bus driver swung right over in front of the taxi. Doug said, I can't believe this. Finally both vehicles pulled up to a red light. Doug jumped out of the back seat of the taxi and ran around to the bus window. He reached in, grabbed the bus driver and started dragging him down.
The bus driver slammed the window on Doug's arm, and when he pulled it out, his white shirt and his suit bled. Doug ran around to the door and saw it was locked. Then he stood about six inches in front of the bus. When the light turned green, the driver started inching up until the bus window was right
towards Doug's nose. Doug wouldn't move, so the bus driver stopped. Horns horned in the back, and pretty soon a cop came over and said, What's going on here? Doug replied: This man tried to force the black driver off the road. He was trying to cause an accident. He didn't care; He's just prejudiced. I
want to talk to him. To the bus driver opened the door, and the policeman went in to talk to the driver and the people on the bus. Passengers agreed that the driver off the road. Then the officer said to the driver, we will report this to your company and take appropriate
action. The bus driver started crying. He said, I have a family. This is all I've done in my life. If I get fired from this, I don't know what to do. And then big, old, soft-hearted Doug said, If you're going to go over and apologize to the black driver, everything will be forgotten. So the bus driver went over and
apologized to the black driver and got back in his bus, and everything was forgotten. Then Doug climbed into the back of the taxi, and the black driver turned about-tears streaming down his cheeks—and said. It's the first time in life that someone has ever stuck up for me. I wanted to tell you the little
incident just to give you some background on what kind of man Douglas Snarr is. Someone said: When someone you hold twixt hand and hook a violin to me, he will be glad that Stradivari was alive, made violins, and made them of the best. The masters only know whose work is good, and they will
choose mine. For while God gives them skill, I give them instruments to play on, God chooses me to help Him. For God could not make Antonio. Isn't that great? I really like it. Developing Personal Attractiveness What I'm trying to do is help you realize that you have your
own acres of diamonds. I don't care what the problem is. I told some seminary students the other day about an experience I had after getting glasses. I hadn't worn them all my life, so they changed my appearance a little bit. I was in a store, and one of our neighbors came in—a good LDS gal about our
age (young). (As you can see, we are still on our way to have our family. My wife's waiting. That's great! We're proud. We're really excited about it.) Anyway, this little girl came in, looked at me and said, Is that you? Is that really you? Vaughn Featherstone, is that you? I said, yes, why? Well, I thought you
had horn-lined glasses and a plastic nose! I said, no, it's my nose. And then I said, I have an advantage over you: I take a breath and it lasts me all day. After hearing that story, a lot of the seminary leaders came up to shake hands. We talked for just a few minutes with each one—Thank you for coming.
We appreciated your conversation—and so on. And then a little girl came up, stood back and looked at me, and said, You're a sweetheart. There are the types of people who help others feel as if their peculiarities really aren't that much of a problem. I
can't do anything about my nose, and I think if we were to look around here we would find people who think their legs are bigger than they should be. Maybe their shoulders are slumped instead of square-I don't know. Maybe their noses are bigger, or maybe their ears are a
little bigger. I think if we went through this audience every single person would think of something he would change if he could. Many things cannot be changed, and we have to live with them. It does not matter what the problems are; we can overcome any of them if we only understand that we are
creations of God, and each of us is someone. We're going somewhere, and we can make real contributions to the kingdom as soon as we start looking outside ourselves instead of just thinking about ourselves and all the problems we have. I heard a while ago of a To find the ugliest girl in America. I think
it is mentioned in Dr. Carlton Maltz's book The Power of Self-Image Psychology. I guess a lot of people sent in snapshots of what they thought were the ugliest girls in America, and there was a big promotion. Finally the judges chose the girl that everyone agreed was the ugliest girl in America. Then they
took this girl, after they had the picture of her before, and got the finest clothes that money could buy for her. They found others who were artists and could see the shape of her face and its contours. Her hair was done properly, and they did everything else necessary to make her more attractive. If she
needed braces, I guess they did this. Finally they even operated a bit, did some plastic surgery, and may have taken a hump out of a place or two. Anyway, when they finally finished, they had a picture. She was definitely a beautiful person. A few months after the competition, this girl was married, and a
short time later she had five children. I think what I am trying to say is that even if we have problems, we can be attractive. Others can help us be attractive. I think we need to keep our teeth sparkling white, and I think we need to groom ourselves
so that at least someone will take a second look at us. But the most important thing is the inner beauty that begins to shine forth. It really comes out when you start serving people. It's something bubbling inside and starting to move out. Someone said that when a person is really enthusiastic he divides
measurable wavelengths that leave his body for four or five feet. When I find someone who is not enthusiastic, I try to get within four or five feet of him so some of those wavelengths will continue right through. I think that's what happens when someone starts to have an inner beauty. It shines through and
makes him beautiful from the inside and out. I came across a letter that I thought would interest you. It was found in a baking soda can be attached to the handle of an old pump that offered the only hope of drinking water in a very long, rarely used track over the Armagosa Desert. This is the letter: This
pump was okay from June 1932. I put a new sucker tray in it, and it should last for five years. But the washer dries out, and the pump has to be primed. Under the white rock, I buried a bottle of water—out of the sun and the cork ends up. There is enough water in it to prime the pump, but not if you drink a
little first. Pour out about a guarter and let 'er wet to wet the leather. Then pour in the rest medium fast and pump like crazy! You will git water; the well has never dried round. Have faith! Once you git watered up, fill the bottle and put it back as you found it for the next feller. Signed, Desert Pete. P.S. Do
not go drinking water first. Prime the pump with it, and you git everything you can keep. I guess if you had finally crawled like last few turns and found this pump with the letter, your faith would really be tested. Do you drink the bottle of water you have in your hand, or do you pour it over the sucker tray to
see if maybe this when the well went dry? I think you'll get the message. You must have a lot of faith because each of you is someone special. You're a person of value. To achieve success I have a formula for success that I quote guite often, and some of you may have heard it, but let me, for the few
who haven't heard it, go back through it again. It goes like this: When you want one thing bad enough to go out and fight for it, To give up your peace and your sleep and your time for it; If only the desire for it makes your goal strong enough never to tire of it; If life seems all
empty and useless without it, And all that you dream and you system is about it; If gladly you will sweat for it, fret for it, plan for
neither poverty nor cold nor famish nor gaunt Nor disease of pain to the body or brain can turn you away from the purpose that you want; If stubborn and grim, you besiege and consider it, you get it! [Author unknown] Isn't that easy? That's all you have to do if you want to be a success! I've picked up
several quotes by successful men about what they believe the secrets of accomplishment are. Thomas Edison said: Geniuses themselves do not talk about hard work and long hours. He also said, Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent sweat. Michelangelo said,
If people knew how hard I work to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all. And Paderewski said, Genius? Maybe, but before I was a drudgery. Alexander Hamilton said: All the genius I can have is just the fruit of work and thought. Dorothea Brand wrote an entire book, Wake
Up and Live, to come across a simple formula for success: Act as if it were impossible to fail. Shouldn't we in the kingdom of God act as if it were impossible to fail? There is no reason why we need to fail. I picked up another interesting quote from a fellow who was also a stutterer. His idea kind of wraps
up what Doug said about his experience: You see, I'm a stutterer, and I've spent twenty-five years of my life doing a pretty good job with it. During that time, I learned many tricks to avoid speaking. I even avoided trying to talk or take a chance. I was afraid of failure, which could worsen itself eventually to
total retreat from reality. Failure can be overcome, but failure can suck the lifeblood from a person's ego and leave him useless to himself, his family, and his company. The forest is filled with losers, and they have a hundred different excuses why they lose, but I'm not interested in talking to you at all
about it today. I think if you're going to be a coach of people, or a teacher, or a philosopher, you need to plant that sweet scent of success in the nostrils of those you would inspire. I think it is a good concept: others need to be able to see some visions forward. I could tell you about some great men who
have had that kind of influence and influence on my life. We must remember a great phrase by President Hugh B. Brown: No matter how dark the night, the dawn is irresistible. I would like to tell you that there are times when it gives me great hope, because the dawn must come. Someone else said,
Nighttime demands from the overloaded soul the things that daylight denies. Isn't there something brilliant about light, we can then judge good and evil. But when we begin to do the things that cause the Spirit to withdraw from us, then we lose our ability to judge.
I've heard very intelligent people —people who hold temples recommend, but who have been involved in serious mistakes—say: Is it really wrong, and I can't imagine they couldn't see it for themselves. But I can understand that the light has withdrawn from
them, and it is difficult to discern when you do not have that light. I think you'd be interested in a quote I often use to tell me how I feel about my wife, but I want to use it to make another point tonight. Can you look at this lovely wife of mine and think about two points? This quote is taken from Camelot.
You remember the scene where King Arthur finally, after many months, received reports and innuendo and what lancelot and King Arthur's wife, Guinevere, had had an affair at the time. King Arthur didn't want to believe it, so he kept it under water and didn't want to believe it. But finally
the facts were out, and he knew they were true. He retired to a lonely room where he made some great mental struggles within himself. Finally, he said this (and that's how I feel for my wife, the second point, about the suffering even kings go through, I will do later): Proposition: If I could choose, from
every woman who breathes on this earth, the face I would love most, the smile, the touch, the voice, the heart, the laughter, the soul itself, every detail and function to the smallest hair—they would all be Jenny's. Proposition [and I feel like this about my sons]: If I could choose from every man who
breathes on this earth a man for my brother and town they answer me with pain and torment. Be it sin or not sin, they betray me in their hearts, and it is far too sin enough. I see it in their eyes and feel it when they speak,
and they have to pay for it and be punished. I'm not going to get hurt and not return it in kind. I'm done with weak hope. I demand a man's revenge! Proposition: I am a king, not a man. And a civilized king. Could it possibly be civilized to destroy what I love? Could it possibly be civilized to love myself
above all? What about their pain and their torment? Did they ask for this disaster? Can passion be selected? Is there any doubt about their devotion . . . to me, or to our Table? By God, Excalibur, I will be a King! This is King Arthur's time, and we're reaching for the stars! This is the time of King Arthur, and
violence is not strength and compassion is not weakness. We're civilized! Solved: We shall live through this together. Excalibur: They, you and i! And God has mercy on all of us. [Alan Jay Lerner, Camelot, 1,11,11–37] Facing challenges Each of us often thinks: I have problems, I'm nobody. The
competition is so keen here at BYU. You know, there are the few people who just seem to lift right up to the top, above everyone else, and you think, If Only I had their skill. We wouldn't assume that a king would have a problem, but do you assume that any physical condition
might be close to the evil of having the one you love most fervently on this earth to cheat on you? I'd rather be stripped of all my limbs than it would happen to me. I think, you see, what King Arthur went through was a terrible thing. Every man has to be tested. Every man has to be tried. President Lee
said, The greatest test we have in this life is the loss of a loved one, and the greatest burden we bear [and I repeat emphatically], the greatest burden we bear, is sin. You might have a problem like that. You may feel like what we talked about before, or you may have a physical illness of some kind that
makes you not be everything that you think you should be. If you only know some of the great people of the earth and what they have done? If you could look back and see the obstacles they had, I want to tell you that you would be so grateful to have everything that you have. No matter what the
problems are—physically, mentally, or in any way—you would say: I am grateful, dear God, that I am what I am and that I have all these things. We should start looking for the positives in our lives instead of negatives. I remember the story of a famous artist who painted a beautiful portrait. He stood in
front of it, looked at it for a long time, and then began to cry. A person nearby saw him and asked: What is it? Why are you crying? Is it Aren't you happy with that? The artist replied: That's the problem. I'm happy with that. What the artist had just discovered was that if he was happy with the image, he
didn't know how to improve. He did not have enough concept, skill or ability to increase and improve that painting. I think it was Michelangelo, blind and reaching his ninety years, who said when he felt a sculpture that someone else had made, even at ninety I continue to learn. I heard President Brown
make a statement a long time ago: If I could choose from all times in earth's history to live, it would be about fifty years later than I was born. You know what that means? This means that those of us who are here were born at the very time when President Brown, if he could have chosen, would have
chosen to be born. We are here on earth, and we will benefit from all the great things that President Brown—as a prophet, seer, and revelator of the First Presidency—could probably see where forward for us. This is a great life, and it's a great time to live. I don't care if there are truck strikes or food
shortages, or whatever it may be. The Lord has said, If you are prepared, do not fear (D& Amp; C 38:30), I'm just so excited to live in this day and to be part of the wrapping-up process. I cannot tell you what it means to me to be on the Savior's team on this very critical day. I guess, if I had my
druthers, I would hope my family could be spared from all the dirt and pornography and all the garbage on newsstands and the things we see in the movies. They can if they are trained properly and if they have self-discipline. We will all be exposed to these things, but we can live the kind of life that would
draw us close to the Savior and help us be the kind of people we should be — when we make the decision to do so. I imagine there are a lot of young women here today who are worried that I am twenty-two and I am not married yet or I am twenty-five and not married. It's not that serious. Just keep
serving, and in due course things will happen. I wouldn't dare tell vou, I'll teach you to live with it, because you'd say, like Doug Snarr did, you're not good! I don't like that answer, and I don't think it's the right answer to give. I think the answer is just to bide your time as you
should, and the Lord will do for you what is best for you. I have every confidence in this statement. So I think we should remember that no one else in the whole world is like any of us. Developing Patience I guess I could share with you a
personal story. I would like to change it just enough so that it possibly recognized, but the facts are true. A bishop from a parish in a remote town came to see me one day and said. We have a woman in our ward who would like to be excommunicated. I said, okay, What's the problem? Have you talked to
her? Yes, we've tried to talk her out of it many times. Has the stake president spoken to her? Yes. What do you recommend? He said: I hate to say this, but we told her that if she came to see you and talk to you, and if she still wanted to be banned after she had the interview with you, we would let her be
banned. I replied: Thank you. Then I was humbled inside and said, Of course I get to meet her. We made an appointment, and I want to tell you that I came to that interview with a great prayer and a very humble heart. The woman came in, and I asked, You're so and so? And she said, yes. I said, I've
been expecting you. She replied: 'The only reason I'm here is because my bishop said that if I came and talk to you, I could be banned after the interview. That's the only reason I'm here. I said, Can you just take a few minutes and explain the story to me? Then she told me some of her experiences. When
I was eighteen, my mother died, and I had four younger brothers and sisters. I knew I couldn't start dating and get serious about a man, so I didn't even look. Everything that started to evolve I just cut off. I took care of the family at home, and when the older of my young brothers was ready to go on a
mission, I supported him. Then my second brother came and I supported him on his mission. They came back and eventually found companions and got married, and then the whole family grew up. I was about thirty and I thought, Now I can get married. A short time later, I
found the guy, and we fell in love and got married. You know, she continued, I thought prayer was a one-way street. You just reported in, but you didn't dare ask for anything. All the years that I took care of and supported my brothers and sisters, I had a health problem. I had a good job, but I had a serious
health problem. After I got married, my husband was called to seventy. We went to one of the seven presidents of the First Council of seventy, and he gave my husband a blessing when he ordained him. Then he said, 'I'd like to give you a blessing too.' I did not ask for the blessing; he just
volunteered it. Then he put his hands on my head, and he told me something I didn't know until that day. He opened up a whole new dimension of life because he said, 'Do you know that when you pray, you can ask God for things, and he will answer those prayers?' I hadn't known that before. When he
was done, I believe it. I went home, and for the first time in my life I got down on my knees and started asking God for something. Then I decided that before I did that I had better be worthy. I worked in a place to make more money than my husband, and I started looking at myself and thought that my
skirts were a little shorter than they should be. So I voluntarily extended my skirts. Then I thought maybe I shouldn't work, and we really don't need both income, so I stopped working. We lived off my husband's income, and I ran his business for him at
home. We paid our tithing all these years. At one point, the bishop felt impressed to give me a blessing, and he promised me that I would be a priesthood holder, and that he would do a great service to the Church. I did not ask for the blessing; he volunteered it and gave
it to me. So I expected his promises to take place. We've been married five years, but we don't have kids. Later, a member of the stake presidency gave me a blessing and promised me that my health would be increased, but my health is no better. Do you know what it's like to let someone throw you a
lifebuoy if you drown in the middle of the ocean? You swim and finally get there, but when you reach out to grab it he pulls it away, I don't believe in a God like that. I believe in my bishop, and he is a great
man, and I believe in the stake presidency and the president of the First Council of the Seventy, I know they are honest and lawful men, but I do not believe in a God who would not keep his promises. I want to be excommunicated from the church. When I heard this sweet soul tell that story, I want to tell
you that I sat there and cried with her. I've never been through that. I've never had the Lord throw out a lifebuoy to me, let me swim towards it, and just as I got there pull it away from me. I haven't gone through a test like that. When I heard this story, I thought in my heart: Dear God, please, everything is
riding on this interview. Help me say the right thing today. When she finished, I said, You know, I really don't think you want to be excommunicated. You just want to let him know that you just can't take anything more, that you've had your limit on the
pressure. She replied: Yes, that's part of it. Then I said, But you know, you have to develop a Job-like attitude. Job was a great soul, and he said, 'Though he [God] slays me, yet I shall trust him' (Job 13:15). If we have that kind of attitude it doesn't matter what we go through, our reward is safe in the next
life, set a time limit on the Lord. You've been married five years, What if in five years and six months you get pregnant, and then you have this baby? What if a short time later your health comes? These things haven't happened, so you expect them now. What if it's not for five years and nine months? It
could be seven years, or fifteen years, or fifteen years, or maybe not in this life. But I promise you, as surely as God is in heaven, that the promises made by the righteous priesthood holders will take place in your life. Now you don't want to be excommunicated, do you? I was teary-eved. She replied: No. I really don't.
The tears came a little faster then, and I wanted to say, do you want me to give you a blessing? But I didn't dare do it. She asked: Bishop Featherstone, before I go, would you like to give me a blessing? So I gave her a blessing, and she left. I closed the door, walked over and sat at the desk, crying.
Everything had been hanging on to that interview, and God had been there. Why, at that moment, God had answered her prayer, but she didn't even know it. He would continue to do it all her life. You see, the God I worship has a thousand times more compassion than I have. If I could see in my limited
way all that she had gone through and feel all that she had suffered enough. God would know much more than I ever could what suffering she would go through, the depth of it, and then at the right time he would not withhold these blessings from her. I hope you feel like the story as I try to pass it on to
you. I think sometimes i feel like God had thrown out the lifebuoy and then pulled it away from you. It's not like that. You simply have to trust him like Job did. But he's slaying me, yet I'm going to trust him. Trust in the Lord Despite difficulties I will tell you something I would rather not tell you—something I
have said only a few people, a select group. I've told the general authorities once in the temple and some other places. The reason I'm telling you in the temple is that General Authorities can see right into me. Lord Byron Buckingham said: Make my heart like translucent crystals so that others can look
into my heart and see the most disgusting act my heart holds. When I'm in the presence of the brothers I feel like they can see inside me anyway, and so there's nothing to hide. If I really had my druthers, I'd rather not tell you this, but I will tell you. I know this speech is on TV and will be on tape, and I was
thinking about this at the time I prepared what I was going to say. I'm telling you because I hope you will somehow get the message that I will leave with you in this story. I didn't have a college education, and I've been embarrassed about it. I've been trying to make up for it. Here are all you wonderful at
BYU—all get what I've longed for and hungered for. I tried to compensate by buying books, and I have thousands-I don't know how many books. I've got them on all my walls, and I've tried to read each of them to educate me, because when I was younger I couldn't go through school—at least I thought I
couldn't. Many of you are finding it much harder and have gone to college. But I haven't, so I've been embarrassed. When I was 19 1/2, I went to the bishop and asked, Bishop, can I go on a mission? He replied: We only take one per year per ward. I guess we had fifteen or eighteen boys of mission age,
and I couldn't afford to go. He said, I'm just suggesting you get married. So I did, and we have a wonderful family. When I was about seven or eight years old, a friend of mine, Spike Herzog, told me when I got home from school one day, why don't you come with me to Primary? So I said, Very good,
Spike, I'd like that. So I went over to Primary with him, and after I'd been there for a short time, a year or so, I remember noticing a small box the Primary leaders ticked off to show if you were baptized or not. I hadn't been baptized, and I was nine years old at this time. I didn't know what the baptism was,
but I wanted the little box to be ticked off. So I asked if I could be baptized. They said yes, and I was baptized. During that time (and this is the part I would rather not tell), my dad was an alcoholic, and my mother was not a member of the Church. She has since gone through the temple, but then she was
not even a member of the Church. I remember that on payday my mom would walk over and stand against the robe and look out the window up the street. She looked and waited for the bus to come by that would drop off father. I've seen her standing there from 4-30 to 63, 93 30 and ten-30 at night. She
never moved: She just stared out the window waiting for Dad to come. No food in the house, nothing, The family gathered and said, Let's go to bed, We cannot add a featherweight of burden to our mother's heart. And then we'd go to bed hungry. The next morning I was going to get up, and I couldn't tell
you but she'd been up all night. Mother would come to me, give me a list, and say, Vaughn, would you bring this up to the store? Ask Mr. Parsons, the neighborhood responder, if we could charge these groceries, and tell them we don't have any food. Could you do that, please? I looked up at her, and I
said, Mom, why do I always have to go? Why don't you ask one of the other kids? Does it always have to be me? But when I looked into her face and saw the heavy heart she had, I'd say, I'm going to go. So I would take the list, and I would go out and have our old red wagon with the tires torn off wheels
worn flat. I'd drag that wagon as slowly as a man could walk up the street. I would come to the store and go in and walk around the aisles trying to avoid Mr. Parsons, who by the way (I didn't know at the time) was a high priest in our congregation. I went up to him and gave him this note, and he read it:
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Dear Mr. Parsons, we have no food in the house. Would you mind taking out fifty pounds of flour, a bucket of lard, some side pork, and a few things? We promise to pay back every penny when we get some money. Thanks. [Signed] Mrs. Featherstone. I would see that great high priest and shopkeeper look at the letter, then look down at me, and tears would come to his eyes. He would go get a big grocery cart, and then he would shoot it around the store and fill it with all these things. He'd see a charging note and put it in the wagon, and then I'd drag it home. I've done it more times than I can tell you—

embarrassed, bitterly embarrassed, every single time. I give credit to my mother and older brothers in the family that we ever borrowed from Mr. Parsons and from another grocery store that gave us a fee account. At about the same time we couldn't afford much clothing either. I had a pair of shoes that I would wear in church. They weren't the best shoes. They had holes in the bottom sole, so I'd cut out pieces of cardboard and slide them in like an insole. When I went to church, I would sit with both feet flat on the floor; I didn't want to raise a leg and have someone see Quaker Oats over the bottom of my shoe. I would go off to church that way, and everything was fine until those shoes were out. Then I didn't know what to do. I remember it was Saturday, and I thought, I have to go to church. In church, I'm someone. They really care about me. I remember thinking that by, and I went to a small box of shoes some neighbors had given us. I went through them, but I could only find a pair of shoes that would suit me. (This is the part I'm embarrassed even to tell you.) They were a couple of women's nurses. I thought, how can I wear those? They'll laugh me off at the church. So I decided not to wear them, and I wouldn't go to church. I went through that night, and the next morning—you know how your mind works—I knew I had to go. I decided what to do. I would run there very early and sit down near the front before anyone got there. I thought, I'll put my feet back under the bench so no one can see them, and then I'll wait until everyone leaves. When they're gone, I'll be running home half an hour later or something. That was my plan. I rushed to the church half an hour early, and it worked. No one was I put my feet back under the bench. Pretty soon everyone came in, and then all of a sudden someone announced: We will now be separated for classes. I want to say I was terrified. The ushers started coming down the aisle, they came to our line, and everyone got up and went. But I was just sitting there. I couldn't move. I knew I couldn't for fear that someone would see my shoes. But the social pressure was intense. The whole meeting just seemed to stay and wait until I moved, so I had to move. I got up and just followed the class down there. I think I learned the greatest lesson I've ever learned in my life that day. I went downstairs, and the teacher made us sit in a big semicircle. Each of my shoes felt two feet in diameter. I can't tell you how embarrassed I was. I watched, but, you know, not one of those eight- and nine-year-old kids in that class laughed at me. None of them looked at me. No one pointed to my shoes. My teacher didn't look. I was looking all the time. I looked at everyone to see if anyone was looking at me. I didn't hear a word of the lesson. When it was finally over I rushed home, went into the house and thought to myself, thank god no one saw them. How ridiculous! Of course, they saw the nurses' shoes that I had to wear to church. But they had the nice instinct not to laugh. I guess the Lord knew That I could not take a particle more of the pressure. I believe that we will all find in our lives that some of our obstacles are turned into benefits and great blessings. My father was a great man when he was sober. Later, mother and father divorced. A short time after that, I went one day to see my sweet mother. It was the day Merlene and I were married. My older brother was the only one at the wedding on our side of the family. After the marriage, we went out to see my mother. I threw my arms around her and said: I would give anything in the world for having had you there with us this morning. She just couldn't make it. But I want to tell you that she was there next time, when the next brother got married. But bless the heart of the great master. She stood by us and was our great defender during the bitter years. She did not give up on us; She agreed with us. Can you begin to understand how I feel about her? What I'm saying is that if the Lord is going to take a scroungy little kid like that, who had to wear nurseries shoes to church and had to go and beg for food, and if he will make him a high council or a staff president or the other counselor in the presiding bishopric, can you believe what he would do for you? Many of you are covenant children. Your parents were married in the temple, and you were born in the covenant. The rest of you are going to this institution, BYU, BYU, the largest learning process in the world can take place. God bless each of you that you will understand who you really are. You're a royal generation. You have a lot to offer. I do not care what the handicaps are that you think are so serious; you can overcome them. God bless each of you, I pray from the bottom of my soul as I pray a blessing upon you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. Reserved.

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