

The True Spirit of the BYU

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There has grown out of the history of the institution [Brigham Young University] a particular mandate that must be respected—a certain fire that must be kept burning. This has been peculiar to the institution ever since President Brigham Young sent Doctor Karl G. Maeser here to open its doors. It is difficult to define just what that something is, but it has to do with the lives of students apart from their regular schoolwork. It establishes in their minds wholesome ideals and gives them a respect for proper living. It helps them to form good habits and to throw off bad ones. It teaches them to enjoy uplifting amusements rather than to seek corrupt diversions. It teaches them the

sacredness of the family as a unit in society, and it imparts to them a particular responsibility as a citizen. It has nothing to do with long-faced sanctimoniousness but is rather that quality of high spirituality that teaches wisdom and moderation in all of the activities of life.

The first task of the future is to preserve at the institution this spirit that comes to us from the past—the true spirit of the Brigham Young University. This spirit places character above learning and indelibly burns into the consciousness of the student the fact that the most enduring joy is dependent on spiritual growth which looks toward eternal progression.

This is an excerpt of the inaugural address delivered by Franklin S. Harris, president of Brigham Young University, on October 17, 1921.