

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The First Quorum of the Seventy
47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

July 16, 1988

Dear Varsity Team and Coach:

Today you have met the challenge of climbing to a "mountaintop". The Young Men Presidency of the Church commend you for this accomplishment. There are many others who have taken a lower road and have denied themselves forever the feelings you are now able to enjoy.

On one occasion a noted mountain climber who had just conquered Mount Everest was asked who decided which ones from the expedition would stand on the top of Mount Everest. Doctor David Dingman, of the American Expedition, seemed to ignore the request and went on with his discussion. The request was repeated with added emphasis, "Dr. Dingman, I think that is an important question."

Dr. Dingman turned to his inquiring friend: "Allen, I not only think it is an unimportant question, but I think it is a stupid question. I wouldn't expect it to come from you, knowing that you are well aware of the rigors of climbing. But since you insist, let me tell you what it is like climbing at an altitude in excess of 25,000 feet."

"One, you are always cold. You cannot get warm. When most people are cold they want to stop climbing. There are a few people in the world that have enough control when they are that cold to keep climbing."

"Two, you are sick. Your body just does not function at that altitude. You can't get enough oxygen and you develop chemical imbalances. Most people, when they are sick, want to stop climbing. A few people in the world have enough control when they are sick to keep going."

"Third, you are always tired. You do not think in terms of distances, you think in terms of one step at a time. When most people are that excruciatingly tired they want to stop. There are a few people in the world that have enough control when they are that tired to keep going. Only a few continue. Allen, nobody else chose who got to the top, they chose!"

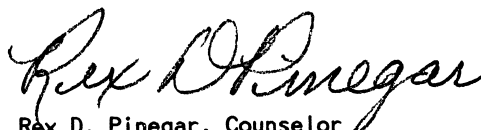
The struggles in life are like climbing the mountain, only YOU can choose whether or not you will climb over these trials. Only you will decide whether you will have the determination and courage to remain in control. You will decide if you are among the few who will face inconvenience (cold), sickness, fatigue and other personal obstacles with faith (control) to keep going toward those goals the Lord has set for you. You, like the climbers of Everest, are individually facing decisions which will determine the direction your life will take.

We encourage you, even plead with you to keep ON TARGET. Keep your mind and heart focused upon the eternal consequences of your decisions. The Lord will bless faithfulness in obeying His commandments with happiness and success.

When you are "cold," not as excited about service as you would like to be, remember, only a few have the control to "keep climbing." When you are "sick," your body is craving for that which it should not have or is resisting the demands of "extra-mile" effort in doing right, remember, only a few have the control to "keep going." And, when you are "tired," when the routine of life lacks excitement, when the call to service brings a sudden fatigue, remember, only a few "continue."

We believe you are among the "few." You who bear the Priesthood of God are the few among His sons to carry forth His power and authority to the blessing of His children. When you continue to faithfully fulfill His assignments and seek to worthily obtain the Melchizedek Priesthood, to go on a mission, marry in the temple and dedicate your life to serving in His kingdom on earth, you are ON TARGET. You are climbing the "mountains of life" with the assurance of success. May the blessings of faithfulness always be with you, our beloved Young Men.

Faithfully yours,



Rex D. Pinegar, Counselor
Young Men General Presidency