

## PRESIDENT RUDGER CLAWSON

*My brethren and sisters*, you will pardon me if I look straight ahead and do not turn to the right or to the left; it is the only way.

I was profoundly impressed by the stirring exhortation and testimony of President Grant this morning, which was strongly emphasized and reinforced by remarks of the brethren who followed. Surely it was a keynote address. We have received the word and we would do well to give heed to it.

## NATURE OF FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is one of the most attractive and beautiful principles of the gospel of Christ. You know Moses said: "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." He is a God of mercy and of forgiveness and is long-suffering. We should be like him. Do you know that what some people call forgiveness is not always forgiveness. "Yes," says one who has been wronged, "I'll forgive but not forget." I am reminded of the story of the two darkies, Rastus and Sambo. These darkies were at enmity all their lives. There was a great feud between them until Sambo came to his death-bed, and a friend said to him: "Sambo, in this solemn moment, surely you will forgive Rastus." Sambo said, "Yes," and turning to Rastus remarked, "Rastus, if I dies you are forgiven, but if I lives, look out for me." Another illustration. One friend said to another: "Do you love your enemies?" He answered: "No sir, but I sympathize with them." "Well, I did not know they needed sympathy." "They don't," he said, "but they will when I get through with them." Remember, the admonition is, seek diligently faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity.

## THREE EVILS EXTANT IN THE WORLD

I would like to speak for a few moments today upon the subject of three evils that are extant in the world at large and which have also crept into our community, in some places in a greater degree, in other places in a lesser degree; but they are here nevertheless, and oh, what a triumvirate of evils! I allude to profanity, the tobacco evil, and the bondage of debt.

## SACREDNESS OF THE NAME OF GOD

You will remember that the Lord spoke to Moses upon one occasion and said to him that he was about to come down and manifest himself to his people. Moses was instructed to sanctify the people that they might meet the Lord, to take two days for this important duty and on the third day the Lord would come down. This is what the record says of that manifestation of majesty and power:

And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

And so the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai and revealed himself in power to the children of Israel and spoke to them, but I would like to say to you, that this great demonstration of the power of God, which must have been exceedingly impressive, was nothing, in my judgment, compared with the words which the Lord spoke upon that occasion. Remember, the thunders passed away, the lightnings ceased to flash, the earth trembled no more, but the words that were spoken have come thundering down through the ages and are known to us as the Decalogue, and these words, mark you, are binding today upon the children of Israel, and upon the whole world.

Now, the first of these commandments was exceedingly impressive. The Lord said: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Thou shalt not bow thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous god."

In the commandments that followed, the Lord made reference to the sacredness of the Sabbath day. He spoke in regard to the attitude of parents to children, that children should honor their parents. He spoke against the evil of killing, of stealing, of adultery and of bearing false witness. He also said:

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

I remind you, brethren and sisters, that there are two great Priesthoods in the Church of Christ. One is the Aaronic Priesthood, the other is the Holy Priesthood after the order of the Son of God, but out of respect and reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too frequent repetition of his name, they, the Church, in ancient days, called this Priesthood after Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a great high priest. He is spoken of as having been the king of Salem and the prince of peace. He must have been a great and good man, and surely he was highly honored in having the Priesthood named after him. But it was primarily for the purpose, mark you, of avoiding the too frequent use of the name of Deity. Jesus, during his ministry, emphasized this matter of profanity. It had his attention, he took notice of it, and thus he spake to his disciples and to his people:

And again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself but shalt perform unto the Lord thine

oaths: but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communications be yea, yea, and nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Now brethren and sisters, we learn from these scriptures that the name of God is very sacred, and that it ought not to be used lightly. We have been told many times that even in our sermons it should not often be spoken, neither ought it to be used very much in our prayers. If that be the case, what shall we say of the man, and particularly if he be a man holding the Priesthood, if he takes the name of the Lord in vain? The Lord has said he shall not be held guiltless, he must answer for it. You do not hear profanity everywhere, you do not hear it in all places, but now and then, in various sections of the Church, you will hear the name of the Lord profaned. It is a great sin. It is a serious evil and the man, (and I might say also the woman) who is guilty of this fault hath need of repentance.

#### TOBACCO IS NOT GOOD FOR MAN

I would like to say a word or two upon the subject of the tobacco evil. This matter is before us. You know the slogan of the Young Men's organization, in fact, of all the auxiliary organizations of the Church, is that we stand for the non-use of tobacco, because we regard it as detrimental to the health and welfare of the people of God, and also to the people of the world if they would but recognize the fact. It is an evil wherever you find it. Especially so among the Latter-day Saints, because, we have the word of the Lord upon the subject.

How very kind and merciful the Lord is that at almost the beginning of the Church, he should give us to know as a people, what is good for us and good for our bodies, good to eat and good to drink. He mentions various articles. You are familiar with them. We verily know, that the things which the Lord has said are good for us are good. We have proved it in times past. Every man knows it, every woman knows it, and the children are going to know it as they get knowledge. Bread is the staff of life. Water is a pure beverage from heaven, you might say. It comes from the earth but it might just as well come down from heaven. It is so harmless and so fine for the human system. We should eat the things that are good for us in reason, sparingly, especially in the use of meat. We must not go to excess in the use of that article and if we eat it largely, to any extent, it should be in times of cold weather. Now the Lord has declared in positive language that no one needs to err, no one needs to go astray in this matter. He has said it in plainness and simplicity. He does not say bread and water are not good for the body, but he does say tobacco is not good for the body. It is not good even for sick cattle except to be used outwardly for bruises and so on, and I feel sure that if

tobacco, or tobacco juice was administered regularly, to an animal, say, a cow or a horse, if it had been healthy before it would be terribly sick thereafter. We are admonished to refrain from the use of this article and other things that are hurtful to the body. We should put them aside and pass them by. In this connection, it would be well to remember that a great and glorious blessing goes with the observance of the Word of Wisdom. The Lord has told us clearly and strongly what would follow. "All saints," he says, "who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones, and shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures. They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Yea, the Lord giveth a promise that the destroying angels shall pass them by as the children of Israel and not slay them.

But aside from this promise, it ought to be the good pleasure of the Latter-day Saints to honor this commandment because it is from the Lord. He has spoken and we ought to listen and give heed to his word. Tobacco is particularly hurtful to young people, to the boys, many of whom fall into the habit of smoking cigarettes. They know not what they are doing. It may result in irreparable damage to them all through their lives. Listen to what Thomas A. Edison, the great inventor, says upon this subject. He says: "The injurious agent in cigarettes comes principally from the burning paper wrapper. The substance thereby formed is called 'Acrobin.' It has a violent action on the nerve centers, producing degeneration of the cells of the brain which is quite rapid among boys. Unlike most narcotics, this degeneration is permanent and uncontrolable. I employ no person who smokes cigarettes."

If any of your boys are using cigarettes, you ought to take instant notice of it, and exert every power and every influence within your means to get them to overcome the habit.

Another word upon the subject. In the *Unpopular Review*, of January, 1914, Henry W. Farnham, Professor of Economics in Yale University, had an intensely and illuminating article on our tobacco bill, and which we have kindly been permitted to quote. Says Professor Farnham:

The importance of tobacco in our National budget is shown by the latest census figure, according to which it ranks eleventh among the industries of the country with respect to the value of the product. Our manufactured tobacco was worth at the factory in 1909, four hundred and sixty million, six hundred ninety-five thousand dollars. It thus outranked bread and other bakery products, women's clothing, copper, malt liquors, automobiles, petroleum and distilled liquors. It was but about one-third less important than the manufactures of cotton. A careful statistician, Professor William B. Bailey of Yale, published nearly two years ago some figures showing that the people of the United States spent at that time in a single year about one billion, one hundred million dollars on tobacco. As the receipts from the Internal Revenue Tax on tobacco have increased by about fourteen per cent in the last two years, it seems fair,

to assume that the general consumption has increased by this amount. It seems, therefore, conservative to state that at the present time the people are spending at least one billion two hundred million dollars for the pleasure of smoking and chewing. The significance of these figures can best be appreciated if we compare them with other items in our national budget. To put the matter concretely "tobacco takers" spend in a single year twice the amount spent by the entire country on railroad travel, and about three times the amount which it spends on its common school system. They pay out annually about three times the entire cost of the Panama Canal, they destroy directly about three times as much property as was destroyed in the San Francisco earthquake. Their smokes and chews cost them just about twice what it costs to maintain the government of the United States, including the interest on the public debt. Our smokers could, in a year and a half, pay off the entire bonded debts of our states, cities and counties, as it was in 1902, and in an additional nine months the entire interest-bearing debt of the United States, if they were willing to exercise the self-denial which was exercised a few years ago by the Persian people.

These figures are impressive. I think I am safe in saying that vast sums are expended in our own state every year for tobacco and that thousands and tens of thousands of cigarettes are smoked by the young people in the State of Utah. It ought not to be. We must get together, we must be absolutely united, we must set our faces as flint against this evil, because it is breaking down the health and weakening the constitution of our young people. It will never do.

#### THE BONDAGE OF DEBT

Just a closing word upon the subject of indebtedness. Any man who has been in debt, any man or woman who is in debt now, surely knows the evil of indebtedness. It is bondage. It is worse than imprisonment. It is time that our people, at least, should give this important matter consideration. We do not know what is ahead. There may be evil times, we do not know. Money seems to be plentiful just now. How it comes and where it comes from I don't know, but I see a great deal of it wrapped up in the thousands and tens of thousands of automobiles that are plying throughout the country, in every city and in every country place. Surely, it is all right for a man to have an automobile for the use of himself and his family, and especially to take his family out occasionally and particularly if his family lives upon a farm. I think it is a grand thought that a farmer may take his hard-working wife and his family out for a little fresh air and drive them over the country, in the country places, and in the city too. It is all right if he can afford it. If he has the money to invest in this luxury it is all right. But I would not think it is all right to put a large sum of money into an automobile, if he does not have it, and if he must needs mortgage the automobile or possibly mortgage his home in order to get it. To me that looks like a great evil, but

the thought that is in my mind is that we ought to retrench in our expenditures. I am safe in saying that this is an extravagant age in which we are living and much money is spent recklessly and wildly.

Keep this in mind. Let us fight these three gigantic evils.  
The Lord bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lola Leonard sang a sacred solo: "Sweet story of old."

### ELDER REED SMOOT

I am very grateful for the privilege I had of attending the conference session this morning, and I desire to express my approval of all that was said. Every admonition I approved of, and it met a responsive answer in my heart. I enjoyed greatly that wonderful hymn that was sung so beautifully by Brother J. R. Boshard, and a member of the Provo choir, entitled "I know that my Redeemer Lives." I think that is my favorite song, and every time I hear it sung it builds me up in my faith and gives me confidence that there is a living God and that he has a watch-care, not only over his people, but over the whole world.

#### NEED OF REFORMATION IN THE HOME LIFE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

I am going to read an extract of a letter from a governor of one of the great states of our country. I believe that never in the history of the world has it been so necessary that there be a reformation in the home life of the American people, and to a certain extent, in our own homes in Zion, as exists today. This excerpt is as follows, in answer to a letter written the governor upon a question that I thought was very vital to the American people:

The destiny, the greatness of America lies around the hearthstone. If thrift and industry are taught there and the example of self-sacrifice oft appears; if honor abide there, and high ideals; if there the building of fortune be subordinate to the building of character America will live in security, rejoicing in an abundant prosperity and good government at home, and in peace, respect and confidence abroad. If these virtues be absent there is no power that can supply these blessings. Look well, then, to the hearthstone. Therein all hope for America lies."

I am delighted to know that from the very beginning of the Church, immediately after its organization, the "Mormon" people became home-builders and home-owners, and in the early days of this Church, at least as far back as I can remember, the admonitions to the people were to secure a home and keep it unencumbered. That admonition is good today.