

conviction of its worth and honor may help you to live so that you may obtain the glorious blessings that have been predicted and pronounced upon you through your faithfulness. I bless you all, my brethren and sisters, that the enjoyment of the truth may be your portion; and that, through your faithfulness, you may overcome every barrier that may come in your pathway to serve the Lord and to keep his commandments; and that you may triumph in your efforts to bring about the holy purposes of God. I pray that these blessings may be upon all the officers and members of the Church, whether they be gathered or scattered. I pray that the time will soon arrive when the Lord will come and accept the work that is being done by this faithful people, and that they may grow and increase in faith and in principle, until they shall accomplish his work, and we shall enjoy the blessings which the Lord has prepared for us as his faithful children. I pray for these blessings in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A sacred solo, "Come unto me," was sung by Mrs. June Marley.

### ELDER DAVID O. MCKAY

"Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and purple robe, and Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!"

#### THE WORLD NEEDS MEN

My brethren and sisters, when Pontius Pilate used these words, he directed attention to a perfect man. The world needs men, men of character, God-fearing men. "The world needs men, true men who cannot be bought or sold, men who will scorn to violate truth, genuine gold."

What is the end and purpose of religion, "swaying the lives of men the centuries through?" The Latter-day Saints answer in the words of the Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph, that the end and purpose of true religion, which is the work of God, is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

#### WHAT IS THE CROWNING GLORY OF MAN?

And what is the crowning glory of man in this earth so far as his individual achievement is concerned? It is character—character developed through obedience to the laws of life as revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ, who came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Man's chief concern in life should not be the acquiring of gold, or of fame, or of material possessions. It should not be the development of physical prowess, nor of intellectual strength, but his aim, the highest in life, should be the development of a Christ-like character. "In the destiny of every mortal being," says Phelps, "there is an object more worthy of God than happiness. It is character, and the grand aim of man's

creation is the development of a grand character. A grand character is by its very nature the product of a probationary discipline."

#### FOUR PICTURES OF IMPORTANCE AND BEAUTY

There are four pictures upon which I always love to look. Three are imaginary, one is real. The first of these is the picture of Christ before Pilate when that Roman official said to the angry mob, "Behold the man!" As he said it he pointed to Jesus, crowned with thorns, bearing upon his shoulders the purple robe. He pointed to one at whom the angry mob sneered, condemned as a felon and blasphemer, and yet when he said, "Behold the man!" he described one who was perfect in character, who was conqueror over weaknesses and temptations, and who could say, as he did to his fellow workers, "Peace be unto you! I have overcome the world." He is our pattern.

The other picture is Christ in his youth. Have you not admired the paintings of the best artists who have tried to picture purity and strength in that young boy of twelve years? I have, and I never look upon one of the choicest of these without feeling that I am looking upon one who is the embodiment of youthful strength, vigor and purity.

The third is the picture of the boy who, as Hawthorne describes him, looked upon the great stone face, and, while thinking of the ideals and virtues characterized in that great work of nature, developed those same virtues in his own life.

The fourth is a picture in real life, a youth whose clear eyes picture the strength of young manhood and the purity of the life he has led. What more beautiful thing can one see in nature than that? We love beauty in womanhood, we also love beauty and strength in young manhood, and that strength and beauty come as a result of true living.

#### THE GREATEST ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD FOR CHARACTER-BUILDING

I am grateful this afternoon to be associated with you in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the greatest organization in the world for the building of character; an organization which is striving to bring to pass the end and purpose of true religion, which is the immortality and eternal life of man. This earth life is the probationary state through which every soul must pass. By overcoming difficulties and temptation, and by rendering service to others, each may develop toward the Christ character as he revealed it among men. It is a glorious ideal; it is inspiring.

#### TWO WAYS IN WHICH CHARACTER IS BUILT

There are two ways in which this character is built in our Church. One is positive. In that positive development we ask young men and young women to participate in the various organ-

izations and the quorums of priesthood. Fathers and mothers, do we realize what this means in the development of the character of our boys and girls? I have just time to suggest that we go from this conference this October with a determination to unite with the officers and teachers in these associations in helping them to win the interest of our children who participate in these organizations—the Primary, the Religion Class, the Sunday School, the Mutual Improvement Associations and the Relief Society. I wonder why more of our young girls do not join the last named organization, and not leave it entirely to our mothers. But, it may be, that the younger women's time is occupied with these other associations up to their taking the responsibility of the home. These organizations, however, with the seminaries and the Church schools, are but auxiliaries in this great organization of character-building. They are but helps to the priesthood. No youth in the Church who reaches the age of twelve should be excluded because of unworthiness from membership in the Deacons' quorum, and that membership should signify a clean life, a prayerful life, faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Every bishop should ask the boys of his ward what their attitude is in regard to these things before he ordains them to the priesthood. So throughout the Teachers' quorum, and the Priests' quorum. That is but a glimpse of the positive means of character-building, bringing our children to Christ.

Now there is alongside these positive means a negative means. All through life the Latter-day Saint child is asked to refrain from indulgence in things that will tend to weaken character. He is asked to keep the Word of Wisdom, he is asked to keep himself pure and unspotted from the sin of immorality. That is a wonderful thing, and especially when the community sentiment in the Church upholds that teaching.

#### TOBACCO A GROWING EVIL

There is a growing evil, I fear it is growing in the Church, to which I wish to call attention, and ask all these forces to cooperate in overcoming, in assisting the youth to resist. I refer to the evil of cigarette-smoking. Smoking is an indulgence which tends to weaken manhood and womanhood and to undermine character. I have always felt that, and I have wondered recently if thinking so much about it I have not become extreme in my condemnation of the habit. With the view of checking myself I took occasion recently to read another book setting forth the supposed benefits of cigarette-smoking. It was written expressly to prove that cigarette-smoking is not injurious. I tried to be fair as I read the two hundred and some odd pages, and I stand today more firmly convinced than ever that the cigarette has no defense, particularly among youth. The habit is wasteful, but worse than this, it does undermine the character of youth and leads to greater evils. The

very man who writes so carefully and, as he thinks, so logically in the defense of that habit has this to say about its indulgence by youth: "It is agreed that the only possible harm that might result from over-indulgence in tobacco must come from the nicotine that is a natural compound of all tobacco, and man very quickly immunizes himself to the effects of nicotine." This is an acknowledgement that there is something against which the body must become immune. The writer continues: "Yellow fever, as every one knows, is a horrible and deadly disease, and yet a man who has once had it may regard it ever after with the calm indifference which an ordinary man regards nicotine."

I like the comparison. The use of nicotine should be looked upon just as we look upon yellow fever. No one will expose himself to that disease merely for the sake of becoming immune. It is too great a risk, so sane persons prefer to keep from it entirely. That is the proper attitude also toward the use of tobacco; and that is just what the author quoted desires regarding his own boy. Says he:

"I do not believe that growing boys or girls either should use tobacco in any form." Bear in mind, fellow workers, this is written by a man who tries to prove the beneficial effects of the cigarette. "My own boy," he continues, "has now reached the time in life when habits are easily formed. That is the age when there naturally arises in him the desire to imitate his elders by smoking. Realizing this I persistently urge him, as well as all other lads over whom I believe I may have some influence, to refrain from the use of tobacco during their tender years, and quite as persistently do I advise them to refrain for the same period from too much meat and from the use of strong spices, cocoa, tea and coffee. But the best of all arguments against the smoking of cigarettes by minors seems finally to be the fact that such smoking is unlawful in most states of the Union. For my part I wish it were unlawful in every state."

It is unlawful in the State of Utah. And besides these evils mentioned by this advocate of smoking for older ones, there is this moral danger that youths who participate in smoking frequently do it surreptitiously without the knowledge of their parents, thus adding to it an element of dishonesty, and dishonesty is one of the most disintegrating elements in character-building.

#### WHAT OUR HOMES SHOULD ESTABLISH

Our homes should establish the fact that the boy who indulges in cigarettes is not contributing to his advancement and growth in the Church and Kingdom of God, neither preparing himself for his responsible place in society. Today leading business men and leading firms throughout the country discriminate in their choice between the boy who smokes and the boy who does not smoke, favoring the latter always, and in many cases refusing absolutely to employ the young man who has contracted the habit of the cigarette. That is only from an economic standpoint.

We as Latter-day Saints have a stronger reason and one that

points directly to the strength and growth of the character of our boys and girls. We heard the opening address of this conference, from the President of the Church who read the word of God to the Prophet Joseph Smith, that tobacco is not good for man. The statement is not qualified in any way. Scientists have demonstrated it; men who have tried to disprove it have failed, and we as a people stand committed to that command of God. Keep the habit of smoking and the use of tobacco in any form out of the lives of our boys. Resistance of the appetite will react upon the character and strengthen it. Just because a man has developed the habit is no justification for his continuing it. Just because some men may become immune (granting this man's argument), from the ill effects, that is no justification for its use in the priesthood of God.

#### FATHERS AND ELDERS SHOULD BE WORTHY OF IMITATION

Fathers and elders have the obligation of setting an example worthy of imitation to the youth. Boys want to look upon you as men. Their ideals incorporate in your life all the Christ-like attributes, as near as you can develop them, which Christ had when the Roman governor pointed to him, saying, "Behold the man." Remember, even though you have the habit, overcoming it will make you stronger.

"It is easy enough to be virtuous  
When nothing tempts you to stray,  
When without or within no voice of sin  
Is luring your soul away.  
But it is only a negative virtue  
Until it is tried by fire,  
And the soul that is worth the honor of earth  
Is the soul that resists desire."

God bless our boys and our girls! May they stand out in clear, distinct manhood and womanhood to the admiration of all who see them, bearing witness that the power of the gospel, as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in this dispensation and as being preached throughout the world by two thousand of these young men and women, is indeed the power of God unto salvation, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*My beloved brethren and sisters:* I do not expect to present anything that is new, in fact we have not heard anything that is new during this conference, but we have heard the simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which have been from the beginning and which never grow old. I trust that what I may add may find a response in your hearts, that I may leave some impression that will abide with you when you return to your homes.