

The congregation and male chorus sang the hymn, "Do What Is Right."

President William A. Pettit of the Pasadena Stake offered the invocation.

Singing by the congregation and Tabernacle Choir male chorus, "How Firm a Foundation" (Song Folder No. 2, L.D.S. Hymn Book No. 185).

**ELDER OSCAR A. KIRKHAM**  
*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

I never appear in a capacity of this kind but what I am almost overawed with the challenging responsibility that is mine. As I hesitate for a moment, to try to feel the inspiration that may be mine, with your faith and prayers, I am at this moment constrained to do something different from what I have prepared if I had spoken over the air, and I shall follow that inspiration.

**ADVICE AS TO CARE OF THE PHYSICAL BODY**

As I have traveled up and down the Church, I have been impressed as I have met you brethren, many of you, in wards and stakes, under the stress and strain of a year that has perhaps had no comparison in our history, and also that has drawn upon us, and our energy, like no other year in our life. I feel in my heart tonight, here in our intimate relationship in a priesthood meeting to give you for your own consideration and thinking one or two things that have been helpful to me in my life.

I feel sure they have a spiritual relationship; they have a priesthood relationship; and are vital to our success.

I want to suggest to you one or two daily tasks. They have helped me. The first one: Every day, if we are going to fulfill our responsibility in leadership in the Church, we should do something which will protect and build our bodies. They are the tabernacles of the spirit, and we should do everything we can to keep them clean and efficient.

No matter on what age level we are living, we should have annually, a physical examination; and then, under the advice and counsel of medical help, take up some simple form of exercise, or experience in the open where we can keep ourselves fit.

Too many of the brethren that I see as I visit about the Church have neglected that opportunity, and as a result, not only in their physical life and enjoyment, but in their spiritual obligations they are not doing their best.

I happened to have the opportunity once to meet one of the Mayo brothers, and I asked him a question about the relationship of the spirit of man and his physical body.

He said to me, "I don't know just exactly what you refer to,

but," and he put his hand up before me and said, "I have often thought about where life begins and ends, and if I draw a knife it is hard to tell where the spirit begins and where the flesh ends or begins. It is all wrapped up together."

I can testify to you brethren, myself, that because of a bad stomach I have said unkind words. When I am not feeling physically fit, I have not been at my best, in kindness and in efficiency. So I appeal to you tonight, and from my life I bear testimony that I know if I keep at it, as I strive to do every day, something to keep myself physically fit, I am helping myself so that I can give better service, and I am also more susceptible to the spirit of inspiration and help from on high.

I know you can cite, and maybe you have in mind now, some of the great intellectual geniuses, some of the great spiritual characters who have not enjoyed the best of health. But with the responsibility that is ours, I am sure that we can be more efficient if we sincerely care for ourselves, every day in some way.

#### SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE SCRIPTURES

Another suggestion I make to you, and I am sure it will help us, is that every day we take one of our standard works of the Church, or the work of some good commentator or gospel principles, and read at least fifteen to thirty minutes. It is this every day that counts, forming the habit; it is worth more than two hours' reading at some one time. If you have the responsibility of leading a quorum or some other definite religious instruction work, try this method of preparation. Read the text through, then a period of meditation, then reading again, and so the third and the fourth and the fifth reading brings fuller understanding.

We must go beyond the first impressions, deep into the heart of the text; there we will find the real challenging truth.

I am reading now the New Testament, and I am practicing as best I can the very thing that I am trying to give you, and I am sure it will be helpful to you. And so I suggest that you read every day fifteen to thirty minutes on some gospel theme. Get the habit, it will help you wonderfully; it will color the whole day. Your meditations will be upon the glorious things of our Heavenly Father. Then when the hour comes, and you ask for the inspiration of God, the Holy Ghost will quicken your memory, and the beautiful things from your reading will come to you and help and bless you.

#### DAILY KIND ACTS PART OF THE GOSPEL

Now, out of my years of experience with boy life I make the next suggestion to you, and I know it has a bearing upon our leadership in a priesthood capacity and other Church service.

From Baden-Powell came this wonderful suggestion to the Boy Scouts, and he gave it to the world. It has resulted in more real inspiration for service to mankind than almost any text that I know of, and it is simply this: "Every day do a good turn."

Please do not feel that I am referring at this moment now to a boy; I am talking to a man. I am asking that every day as priesthood leaders this spirit of service go forward in our lives, that we might feel the gospel in action, doing some simple, kindly act.

A young man was picking up the glass of a broken milk bottle near a home in California. He was a member of one of our stake missions. A woman from the window was looking at him. The moment that he knocked at the door she said, "Come in. I do not know what you have to sell, but come in."

The young stake missionary said: "I was greatly surprised at this invitation."

In a moment, however, the woman enlightened him when she said, "I saw you gathering up the glass at the gate. You are welcome in my home." A gospel conversation was soon going forward.

It is these simply kindly acts that count. A child or someone in your own home may be in need. It is your mother who is away, and you write that letter, for you haven't seen her for years. Every day doing that good act somehow expands the heart, and we feel the things we teach. It is wrapped up in the life that is striving to practice what it preaches, a radiation that men feel. So I invite you in the future, every day, to do some kindly act; put religion into action.

#### THE STRENGTH OF PRAYER

Finally, I suggest to you every day to pray at least once—but here is the qualifying clause—and feel the prayer. I confess to you that I have prayed many, many times and when I got into bed, under the covers, I have said: "Well, they were only words."

I am very sincere about this, because through the kindness of the Lord I bear testimony to you that when out of my soul I have asked for a blessing, I have felt the glory and the strength of prayer.

My brethren, these are my suggestions to you, born of experience, and I humbly offer them to you. I know that they will prove helpful.

God help us to keep the tabernacles of our spirit, and of his Spirit, clean and fit. May he help us in studying his word daily, that we may feed our souls. May we practice our glorious religion, and feel daily the joy of service.

May God grant to us the daily exercise of prayer, the yearning of a soul crying for help, and praising God for his many

blessings. This is my humble prayer, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### ELDER MARVIN O. ASHTON

*First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

I know of no one whom I would rather follow than Oscar Kirkham. I remarked to Bishop Wirthlin, who sat next to me tonight, as soon as I felt a little relaxation go through the audience a few moments ago, "There is a different feeling here tonight. We are not under such a strain when we are not 'on the air.'"

Much has been said today about prayer, including the last few remarks of Brother Kirkham's. I have never bragged about how much praying I do, but if there is any time I do pray, and pray fervently, it is during conference time—and you know why.

I thought President McKay had some inspiration when he used to announce the speaker, and then say who was to follow. As far as I am concerned, if he wanted to say who was on deck as the third one up, I would say he had still more inspiration. I do not know if anybody has had the courage to tell it to him, but I am telling it to him right now.

#### A TIME FOR FERVENT PRAYER

As one looks out of his window into the world today, he sees things to criticize, and if you please, persons to criticize as he never did before. It does not take very much intelligence to tell what is the matter with the world, here, there, and everywhere. Brother Kirkham has given you four rules of good procedure in life. I would like to give you two which I am sure will "dovetail" into his sound advice. First, *now* is the time when we ought to say our prayers fervently; second, *now* is the time to do our own thinking. I say that with as much fervor as I know how to say it.

Tonight as I speak I would like to feel perfectly free. I am going to speak as I would like to speak, and trust that I will be understood. It will be a kindness of you who are here if you will take what I say in the spirit it is given. I trust that what I say will be tempered with good judgment so that I will not be embarrassed, nor embarrass the good brethren I love.

#### "BOWLEGGED" THINKING

Someone who has been championing very fervently the Word of Wisdom—and I mean *championing*—made this remark the other day. I shall give you his exact words, "I wonder if it wouldn't be a good thing now for us to let up a little on the Word of Wisdom and preach *honesty*."

Now don't get excited; let's stay with the Word of Wisdom. As I go about the Church from stake to stake, if there is any-