

The Tabernacle Choir Men's Chorus sang: "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief."

President Smith:

I am sure there is a large number of members of the Aaronic Priesthood present tonight, and I feel to call the Presiding Bishop to come to the stand and say to them what may be in his heart. I realize that the Presiding Bishopric had their meeting last night with the bishops and others, but I see a good many members of the Aaronic Priesthood here and I am sure they would like to hear this fine Presiding Bishop of the Church, Bishop LeGrand Richards.

BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS

Presiding Bishop of the Church

Brethren, I need not tell you that this is a great surprise. I had my turn at conference and last night I had an opportunity to talk to the Bishops and the day before to the Relief Society, but there is no one I would rather talk to than the boys of the Aaronic Priesthood, if there were not so many of the dads here and so many of the brethren sitting here on the stand. But I do appreciate the privilege of being here and being invited to say a few words in this Priesthood meeting for I cannot help but feel that if every man and every boy who is honored of the Lord to bear the Holy Priesthood could just realize the responsibility resting upon his shoulders in that respect, it would be marvelous thing.

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

I would like to preface what I say tonight by reading a few words from the 5th chapter of St. Matthew and I will commence with the 13th verse, for the Lord said:

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

I cannot think of anyone in the Church who has a greater responsibility to let his light so shine before men that they seeing his good works may glorify our Father in Heaven than the brethren who hold the priesthood, both the Melchizedek and the Aaronic.

It was Peter of old, who in addressing the Saints of his day, made this declaration:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

Now, brethren, we are just as much a royal priesthood today as the priesthood was in the days of Peter. The Lord has called us out of the world that we might show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light and there is not a day of our lives, that we do not have an opportunity to show forth his praises because the world looks upon us, they expect more of us than from those who are not members of our Church, and we can hardly stoop to do the things that others do. To illustrate what I mean along this line: When I was attending a conference in San Diego during the war we had about 35 boys in uniform present. We called some of them to speak and one lieutenant made a statement something like this. He said: "When I first entered the service I went back East to attend an officers' training school" and he said, "one day when we were sitting in the reception room, the boys started telling dirty stories, and when my turn came I told one too. That night when I went to go to bed my companion, not a member of the Church, turned to me and said 'I didn't think you would do it.'" He kept that in his heart all day long since he had heard that companion of his tell the dirty story because he knew that he was a Mormon boy and no doubt this lieutenant had already told him something about the Church, therefore, he did not think he would do it; and that lieutenant as he stood there in that stake conference said "That was the best sermon I have listened to for many a day and it just keeps ringing in my ears until the present, 'I did not think you would do it' and I'll tell you, I have not done it since that time."

EXEMPLARY SERVICEMAN

Illustrating another case. We have heard so many lovely things about our boys who have been away in the service and returned to us that have not hid their light under a bushel. The Lord has called us out of the world to be a light unto the world and in all man's sight we cannot afford to let our light go out. I received a letter, it was published in the Church Section of the Deseret News, so you may have read it, from a missionary in California. He said he and his wife were laboring in this particular town and he said the attitude of the people had literally changed toward the Mormons because there had been so many Mormon boys there in uniform and they had lived such fine lives they had attracted the attention of the people. Then he gave one specific illustration. He said one of the ladies clubs in the town was giving a luncheon at the hotel and the hostess had an extra plate placed at the table and when the guests came she said we will invite the first soldier who comes along to

occupy this extra place at the table. It happened to be a Mormon boy, and thank the Lord he was a good one; the Lord had called him out of the world to be a light unto the world and he did not hide his light under a bushel, and when the women passed the coffee around he would not touch it. I do not think he thought of the harm a cup of coffee would do his body, just one cup, the bishop wasn't there to see what he was going to do, whether he took it or not, his mother and father were not there to see whether he would turn it away; neither was his best girl, but he knew that the all-seeing eye of God was upon him, he knew he bore the priesthood of God, he knew the Lord looked to him as the salt of the earth and if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted, and he would not touch it. They offered him tea and he would not touch tea. They asked him where he was raised, and finally when they were through eating they passed the cigarettes around, imagine women doing this—shame on the women—but this boy would not touch the cigarettes, and one of these women said, "I resolved that if ever a Mormon elder called at my door I would let him in, I would like to know more about a people that could raise a boy like that young man who sat at our table." And when that letter was written that very woman was a very earnest investigator of the Church.

I told that story in the Assembly Hall sometime back and at the close of the meeting a young man walked up to me and said, "Bishop, I am that young man." I said, "No kidding?" He said, "No sir, I am that young man." I would not be surprised if he's in this audience tonight. I said, "Is the story correct?" He said, "Just exactly." I said, "What are you doing in the Church now?"

"Why, I'm bishop of such-and-such ward."

That is the kind of men the Lord wants to do his work among the people, not the kind that go with the crowd and do what the crowd does, but the kind that have the courage to let their light shine before men, because the Lord has called us out of the world to be a light unto the world.

REPUTATION FOR HONESTY

I would like to say a word that comes out of my experience at a conference last week. I met a new convert to the Church. He had served in a branch presidency in the East before coming West, and I said, "How are you enjoying living among us?" He said, "Very much, but I have been disappointed." I said, "Why?" He said, "I have found that some of the brethren are not very careful what kind of financial deals they make and how well they treat friends that come within their midst." That made me feel bad because "ye are the salt of the earth and if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall the earth be salted?" Imagine how I felt to get that report as compared with the one I received down in Miami when I was president of the Southern States Mission. I was invited

into the home of one of our brethren who stood high in financial and social circles. He said, "If you will stay over night I will invite my friends into my home and let you tell them why I am a member of the Church." Of course, I could not run away from an opportunity like that; so when the crowd was gathered, about 35 prominent business people of Miami, he stood up and said, "You all know I am a Mormon, but," he said, "you don't know why I am a Mormon. I have invited President Richards tonight to tell you why I am a Mormon and I want to tell you that my membership in the Mormon Church means more to me than anything else."

At the close of the meeting a man came up by the name of Knowlton and said, "My first experience with the Mormons was when I went out to Arizona. There," he said, "I worked in an implement house, a cash store that never gave time on anything. One day a man came in and wanted \$200 credit for about 60 days, and I said, 'No, we don't do any credit business' and the man said, 'would you mind asking the boss?' So I went to the owner of the store and the owner said, 'Who is this man?' When I gave him the name, 'Oh,' he said, 'he is a Mormon bishop, let him have anything he wants,' and he gave him the credit." He said: "After that whenever a Mormon came into the store and wanted anything I did not even bother the boss about it."

Wouldn't it be marvelous if every Latter-day Saint could be trusted like that?

You've heard President Grant's story about how the Consolidated Wagon & Machine Co. used to sell the paper of the Mormon farmers to a non-Mormon banker here in Salt Lake at 100 cents on the dollar because the farmers never defaulted, but somehow or other, there are those among us who think that if they can do a shrewd thing and outwit their neighbors and their friends with whom they do business, that it is good business, and they classify it as business. I want to tell you one more story:

THE EFFECT OF CONVERSION

When I was president of the Southern States Mission I was crossing the state of Florida one day with one of our brethren who went there from the West, a grand character. He said, "Brother Richards, there is a new convert living over here. He would be thrilled if we would visit him." I said, "Let us call on him." And we did. This was his story:

He said, "I used to be a fruit merchant in these parts. I bought up the entire product of these fruit farmers and sold it on the New York fruit market." He said, "When I heard of Mormonism and met the elders I joined the Church and began to think of all the shrewd deals I had made as a fruit merchant." He said, "One day I left my home and took my check book in my pocket, and when I returned" he said, "I had spent \$3,000 just among my neighbors and friends, to try to even up some of the shrewd deals I had made."

He said, "I felt like I could then look my neighbors in the face and tell them that I was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should show forth the praise of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light," and may your light never go out in the presence of your fellowmen no matter where you go, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

While listening to Bishop Richards I was reminded of an incident in the life of Superintendent Nelson, formerly Utah State Superintendent of Public Instruction. During the latter part of his life he was sorely afflicted, and went back East to have performed a very difficult, indeed dangerous, operation. His affliction was so serious that doctors hesitated about operating on him. While considering the matter they asked him several questions relating to his private life. They inquired whether he was addicted to the use of tobacco. He answered: "No." Whether he indulged in intoxicants. He said: "No." Then they touched more vitally upon his life and asked him whether he had had any venereal disease. Superintendent Nelson said, "Why no, doctor, I am a Mormon."

"Well," said the doctor, "what the h— does that matter?"

"Well, that means that we do not indulge in these things. It means that I never have used tobacco, that I never have indulged in whiskey, and that I have lived a virtuous life and have known only one woman and she is my wife."

The doctor was surprised. He used the word astonished and said: "If you have lived that kind of life we are going to operate on you."

They did so, and Superintendent Nelson returned home and continued his service here as State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Tonight President Raymond, in his opening prayer, expressed two very important thoughts. One was an invocation that God would enable us to appreciate our responsibilities; and the other, an appeal that we may set proper examples, "that we might be a light to others." I hope the Lord will answer that invocation, and that we as men who hold the priesthood may realize its value.

THE VALUE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

I have told you before of a little incident that happened in front of the Japanese Emperor's palace in Tokyo. Three or four of us, Mormon missionaries, were there, and with us a Japanese convert, a carver of ivory, wearing the cloak of the ordinary working man.