

PRIESTHOOD COURSE OF STUDY

Now, one more matter. There has been prepared by Elder Joseph Fielding Smith an excellent course of instruction for all Melchizedek quorums under the title, "Church History and Modern Revelation." Each year there have been prepared thirty-six lessons with the understanding that three class periods of not less than forty-five minutes each be devoted to a study of the lesson manual each month, it also being understood that one of the four class periods might be devoted to a quorum business meeting where the membership of the quorum all reside in the one ward. Otherwise, there would be occasional time for an extra lesson, and so thirty-six lessons have been provided for the study of the quorums.

It has come to our attention that in some stakes and some quorums there has been a program that does not permit the carrying out of this lesson program. In some stakes there has been a ward teachers' report meeting being held during the time of the priesthood meeting once each month which, if you will think for a moment, would deny the possibility of carrying out the lesson instructions that have been provided. Also, in some quorums we have learned that the monthly quorum meetings have been held once each month where the membership of the quorum have been taken away from the priesthood meeting on that Sunday.

We ask you brethren to pay attention to the instructions that have been given as to the course of lessons in order that these difficulties might be overcome.

The Lord bless you, my brethren, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom. Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand."

And then, in the next paragraph he tells us to comprehend all phases of instruction pertaining to the earth, the heavens, to the end,

That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you. Behold I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor. Therefore, they are left without excuse, . . ."

There are two things which the Lord here asks us to do. that we are to teach and to warn, testify of the truths of the Gospel and to warn the people of the evils in the world.

There are two great phases, departments, of our Church in

which the priesthood exercises the right of teaching, one is in the organized stakes; the other, in the mission field. I should like to say a few words about the latter phase of this great modern work. First, regarding some items which pertain to the calling of missionaries.

CALLING OF MISSIONARIES

About a year ago, or so, we suggested that young couples should not be called into the mission field, for reasons given. Just by way of reminding you, we thought it best for the young couples not to go into the mission fields because, in the first place, in the natural course of events, the responsibilities of motherhood would interfere with the work of the sisters, and if anything were done to postpone that responsibility, the Church would become a party to birth control, and the Church will have nothing to do with that evil.

But at that time it was suggested it might be permissible for a young girl to go out and join her husband during the last six months of his mission. Now that was given particularly because some of our young, many of our young men had been out in the war, been on the battlefields, been away from home two, three, four, five years, and now going out into the mission field. Naturally, they wanted to get married when they came home, and so that permission was given. Tonight, we should like to say that it has not worked out very satisfactorily, brethren, and the conditions that justified the giving of such permission have become practically non-existent. We suggest, therefore, that you discontinue encouraging these young girls or giving the thought to them that they might go out and join their husband if they marry just before he leaves, to join him the last six months.

Mission presidents feel that it is not in the best interests of the work. And only by special permission, by special request of some mission president will that be granted; and to you bishops and presidents of stakes we suggest that the thought be discouraged.

It is suggested, secondly, that more care be taken in recommending missionaries. Now you have heard that repeated time and time again. Missionary work is strenuous, the change of climate, often the worry that takes possession of some of our young men at first, sometimes homesickness, discouragement. Unless they are physically strong they break under it, and it is surprising how many during the last six months have so broken. That, too, hinders the work in the mission field. That applies also to those who are past middle age, to elderly couples that would like to go out. They seem strong, capable to do work here at home, but when they get out in the field under different circumstances, not a small number of them fail to meet the vicissitudes and the responsibilities of the mission. So now, before your elderly couple will be sent out to

*Wednesday, April 6**Third Day*

the field the mission president will be communicated with; and if he can use them, all right; if not, we will ask that they remain in the home fields, in the organized stakes.

Now we recognize, bishops, that you are going to have difficulty in satisfying some of these young men who feel that they can go out, who may be physically handicapped. Physicians may declare a weakness in the eyes, probably in the heart. The young men will say, "Well, we can work hard and we should like to go," and sympathetically you say, "All right." They feel as though they will be deprived of a privilege, and no doubt they will in a sense, but let us emphasize the importance of the work here at home. It is just as important, the home missionary work, and they can be here under their normal surroundings, and be near any help, medically, which they might need. So let us try to impress them with the fact that they can serve the Lord here at home to the extent of their physical, intellectual and spiritual ability, and probably better than going out into the world under conditions which might be too strenuous for them.

I am pleased to report to you that the Chinese mission is about to be reopened. The mission presidency, two of them at least, have already been chosen, as you have undoubtedly noticed in the papers, and within the next few months we hope papers will be in such shape that the brethren, under the direction of President Cowley will go over there and establish a headquarters and preach the gospel again to that mighty nation.

SUCCESS IN JAPANESE MISSION

You will be delighted, too, to hear of the success attending our missionaries in Japan. I thought you would be interested in this message from President Clissold:

With a nucleus of several old members who had been meeting with Nisei saints from Hawaii, here in the service, A Sunday School was fully organized at Ogikubo, Tokyo in April 1948, and now has an average attendance of over two hundred. Other Sunday Schools organized in Tokyo are at Shimokitazawa, Denenchofu, and Takanaway. Cottage meetings, Primaries, and study classes are being held in several other areas, making in all 21 weekly meetings in Tokyo, with an average attendance of over eleven hundred people.***

One of the faithful members of the former mission and a man of considerable influence in Takasaki, a city ninety miles north of Tokyo, has been of great assistance to the missionaries assigned to that district. He helps them with a large Sunday School and several weekly meetings, including an M.I.A. gathering of over four hundred young people.

All of the organizations, with one exception, are presided over by missionaries. Since January, however, there have been twelve ordinations to the priesthood, and it is expected that local people will be called to positions of responsibility in the near future.***

Including the mission president and his wife, there are seventeen missionaries in this field. Eight of them are Niseis, six from Hawaii,

one from the mainland, United States, and one from Canada. They are without exception capable and earnest young people. As the Caucasian missionaries are in the process of learning the language, the burden of the work thus far, with one notable exception, has been borne by the Nisei missionaries. They are a great credit to the wards and branches from which they come.

About fifty members of the former mission have been found. [After all these years of disorganization] These faithful saints are the nuclei around which the present organizations are being built. They are practically all people of high standing and influence in the communities in which they live, and are excellent examples of the efficacy of the Latter-day Saint way of life. These humble members, in their steadfastness through almost a quarter of a century of isolation, have demonstrated a loyalty and faith that is unexcelled in the Church. If there has ever been any thought that the first mission in Japan was not successful, the faith and the works of these stalwart members should dispel it forever. To associate with them as they labor to assist the missionaries would fill with deep satisfaction the hearts of the former missionaries who struggled against great odds to glean just a handful of converts out of over twenty years of missionary effort.

We have good word from the Saints in Germany, and encouraging word even from Czecho-slovakia, although government officials refused to let seven of our missionaries enter Czecho-slovakia a month or so ago. But those who are there are encouraged and people are hungering for the truth.

Other missions report progress. It is just inspiring to receive the letters of encouragement from the mission presidents and from elders, missionaries and the sisters, and also to hear the reports of the returned elders from the various missionary fields. Truly the harvest is great, and these mission presidents would tell you that the laborers are few. Though five thousand missionaries, a few under that now—many have come home—are in the field, each mission president is asking for many more than these he has in his missionary corps.

TEACHING AND WARNING

Teaching, warning, testifying of the restoration of the gospel, warning the people, and it "becometh every man also to warn his neighbor." Within the last twenty-four hours there have been gathered here in connection with this conference, I suppose, twenty thousand teachers, probably eight thousand here tonight, an equal number last night in this building and in the Assembly Hall. Within twenty-four hours approximately twenty thousand teachers, and I am speaking to teachers tonight, for the priesthood means teaching, the authority to represent the Lord in teaching the Gospel, the Gospel of the Kingdom.

I thought that one of the most effective means of teaching is proclaiming the glories of the gospel as we heard today, but equally effective in this old world, is that which warns of the dangers. You remember what Paul says in his epistle to the Galatians, about the works of the flesh being manifest, such as adultery, fornication,

*Wednesday, April 6**Third Day*

lying, and he listed all the evils, and he concludes after doing that by saying that "they who do these things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

And then in contrast he says: "Now the fruits of the spirit are these, love, joy, peace . . ." and so on, and the blessings that will follow. There are two things always that we should keep in mind: one, the beauty of a righteous life; the other, the warning against indulgence in the evil life, and you cannot get away from that.

INFLUENCES UPON LIFE

As I recall the influences upon my young life, I believe the greatest was the memorizing of that important saying: "My spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle."

Then there were three others, and they were all in the form of warnings. The first came to me as a boy as I sat on a spring seat by the side of my father as we drove into Ogden. Just before we crossed the bridge across the Ogden River, a man came out from a saloon, which was just on the northern bank of the river. I recognized him. I liked him because I had seen him on the local stage. But on that occasion he was under the influence of liquor, and had been for, I suppose, several days.

I did not know it, did not know he drank, but as he broke down and cried and asked father for fifty cents to go back into the saloon, I saw him stagger away. As we drove across the bridge my father said: "David, he and I used to go ward teaching together."

That was all he said, but it was a warning to me that I have never forgotten, about the effect of dissipation.

A little later, a teacher gave us to read a story about a group of young people sailing down the St. Lawrence River. If any of you can find it I wish you would give it to me. I cannot give you the author, I cannot give you the title, but I can give you the memory that has stayed with me, about those young folks who were drinking and carousing and having a good time in the boat sailing down that noted river. But a man on the shore, recognizing, realizing the dangers ahead of them, cried: "Hello, there, the rapids are below you."

But they ignored his warning, defied him. "We are all right," and continued in their jocularly and their indulgences. And again he cried out: "The rapids are below you," and again they gave no heed to his warning.

Suddenly they found themselves in the rapids. Then they immediately began to row for the shore, but it was too late. I do not remember but just the words of the last paragraph, but cursing, yelling, over the rapids, over the falls they went.

Negative? Yes. But I will tell you there are many in the stream of life who are rowing just that way. I have never forgotten the story. I hope I shall find it again.

And the third was a warning of the danger of unchastity. It was not my father who gave me that, but it was a teacher who spoke to a group of us boys about the danger of impurity, of sexual impurity, getting disease, sexual disease, getting it into the blood and transmitting that disease to innocent offspring.

Later the thought was expressed by one of our American poets in that poem in which a boy says, among other things, he is going to have his fling:

“And I said religion is rot,
And the laws of the world are nil—
The bad man is he who is caught
And cannot foot the bill.

For I saw men everywhere
Hot-footing the road to vice,
And women and preachers smiled on them
So long as they paid the price.

So I had my joy of life,
And I went the pace of the town;
And then I took me a wife,
And started to settle down.

I had gold enough and to spare
For all of the simple joys
That go with a house and a home,
And a brood of girls and boys.

I married a girl with health,
And virtue, and spotless fame;
I gave in exchange my wealth,
And a proud old family name.

And I gave her the love of a heart
Grown sick and sated with sin.
My deal with the devil was up
And the last bill handed in.”

So he thought.

“We were going to be blessed with a child,
And when in anguish she cried,
With love and fear I was wild
But now I wish he had died.

For the son she bore me was blind,
 And crippled and weak and sore,
 And the mother was left a wreck—
 Aye it was so, she had settled my score.

I said I would have my fling,
 And they knew the paths I would go,
 Yet no one told me a thing
 Of what I needed to know.

Folks talk too much of a soul
 From heavenly joys debarred,
 But not enough of the souls unborn
 By the sins of their fathers scarred."

WARN YOUTH OF DANGERS

Modern science has made youth a little more daring, but I will tell you the danger is just as great. Warn, warn youth of the dangers of the flesh, the works of the flesh.

Never have I been more thankful in my life for noble parents. It is great to be well born. Not much preaching but just a hint here and a hint there about pure living, and the saying: "When you start out with girls, you treat that young girl, now, David, as you would have any other boy treat your sister."

The training of the teachers, the teachings they receive, rough boys, seemingly not much attention paid to what they say, but those teachings and warnings remain all through life. "Testify," says the Lord through Joseph Smith "and warn." And when you are warned, warn your neighbor.

TESTIMONY

Brethren, I know as I know I am looking into your faces that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is true, and that He is my Saviour, as real as He was when Thomas said, with bowed head, "My Lord and my God!"

I know that if our young people will only accept the teachings and live the standards that they will be the happiest, most joyous persons in all the world, and I know if they do not, that they will bring sorrow upon themselves and upon their wives and children in the future.

I know that the gospel was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith, by the Father and the Son, who are as real today in connection with the other world as my loved ones and yours. And as teachers here, we are to let the people know it, and warn these men — and this is not imagination — who, after having lived with their wives and brought into this world four and five and six children,

get tired of their wives and seek a divorce, that they are on the road to hell. It is unfair to a woman to leave her that way, just because the man happens to fall in love with some younger woman and feels that the wife is not so beautiful or attractive as she used to be.

Only the other day such an incident came before us. Warn him! Nothing but unhappiness for him and injustice to those children.

Well, brethren, God bless you. God bless the work, the missionaries abroad; protect them from evil. They are in the midst of it. God bless these mission presidents, that they may have influence with the young boys who are getting discouraged, some of them, and bless you parents at home who are sacrificing to send them, and you men of the priesthood and the quorums, that you may gather around those who are seemingly indifferent and win them into quorum activity.

I bear you the testimony that this is God's work, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Men of the Tabernacle Choir and congregation sang the hymn: "Do What Is Right."

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

President Smith has requested that I speak next. I rather feel that perhaps, if we were to adjourn now, after the powerful and inspired utterances of President McKay, we would be better off than perhaps to have me try to say something, but obedient to the request of the President I shall do the best I can.

I do pray that the Lord will bless me and that you will be good enough to ask him in my behalf that he will grant the blessing, in order that you may be edified, strengthened, and built up.

Over the last year I have been doing considerable reading of a more intensive kind than I have before done, on the matters I have been reading about, and I have been impressed with certain historical facts to which I wish briefly to allude.

EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY

For some reason, which is not clear, either from history or from scriptures, it does not appear that Peter, James and John, who were left as the First Presidency of the primitive church, ever appointed any successors to themselves. The result was what might have been expected. There grew up certain great centers, Alexandria, Rome, Carthage, Caesarea, and so on. As time went on, each of these was presided over by a bishop. They had no central guiding hand, and the result was they began to dispute about doctrine, and