

are in or going into transgression and to prevent others from following their course. It is no light thing to transgress sexually; it is a tragedy.

God give us the power and the knowledge to know how to do the things that I am suggesting, namely, help others

to keep themselves pure, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Stephen L Richards will now speak to us.

PRESIDENT STEPHEN L RICHARDS

First Counselor in the First Presidency

I COULD WISH that all of the Priesthood assembled in the 96 meeting halls where they are met tonight might have been present last evening in the Tabernacle to have listened to and seen the program of the missionary work of the Church. I think had all been present there, it would have been unnecessary for me thus to bring an item or two of missionary work to your attention.

We have all been deeply impressed by the reports of missions which have come to us, and I am sure they have stirred us to a sense of great responsibility in carrying the Gospel to the world.

I wish to appeal to all of the Priesthood, and to the families of the Church through the Priesthood, for more missionaries at this time. You have heard that we have a considerable force in the field, but I must apprise you of the fact that they who are returning from the field in such large numbers require more replacements than we can furnish from those whom you are recommending to us week by week and month by month. If everyone could realize the problems of a mission president, I am sure that all would be appreciative of the need for missionaries to keep up a more or less standard quota in our missions. As the missionaries extend the work, they usually organize small branches of the Church, Sunday Schools, small groups, which have to be nurtured and cared for by the missionaries.

When a sufficient number of missionary terms expire so that the mission president is not able to keep in those branches the number who are requisite to carry them on, it not infrequently

means that a small branch that had a good start must be more or less disorganized because possibly no one of sufficient stature in the Church is there to administer it, and it therefore means something of a loss in the forward motion of our missionary work. We do need more missionaries at the present.

We need, of course, those who are able to carry forward the work, and as we mentioned to the brethren and sisters last night, they must be in good health—preferably younger people who can stand the more strenuous effort. They must be, too, impressed with the necessity and the desirability of missionary work. I am sure we were touched tonight as we heard these mission presidents express their interest in the people where they served. They knew they were blessing their lives, and every missionary should know that, if he would render the best and most effective service.

So, we appeal to you, my brethren of the Priesthood, to attempt to send from the homes of the people those who can meet the needs of the various missions. And may I make a suggestion, too, that may prevent some disappointment. So many of our young folks make up their minds where they would like to serve, and perhaps there is a certain legitimacy to their having a preference, but it can readily be seen that if all preferences were to be observed, that we would fail to meet the needs of the missions as those needs arise. Therefore, they who are called to serve in the missionary field should be impressed with the necessity of answering the calls that come to them with gladness and willingness, wherever the mission might be, in order

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to carry forward our Father's work for the reclamation of the souls of his children.

I take occasion to mention to the Priesthood, too, that all of our missionaries who come into the field now, or who contemplate coming in the near future, should have their polio inoculation. If they do that in advance of the time when they come to the mission home, considerable time will be saved, and they will be able to have the complete inoculation earlier than if they left their inoculations until they arrived here.

All missionaries who come to the Mission Home should come with temple recommends. We had thought that was clearly understood throughout the Church, and yet there is scarcely a company which comes to the Mission Home in which some temple recommends are not forthcoming, and time is required in order to get those recommends to go to the temple. All of the missionaries who come to the Home go through the temple twice while they are here.

I think I will not take occasion to mention any further items about our missionaries. I scarcely need to impress upon the Priesthood of the Church the necessity of furnishing to the Church those who shall carry forward this great work. One of the most encouraging things to me, following the long journeys that our President has made throughout the world, is the growth of our work in distant lands of the earth, of which you had example this evening. This great Gospel is intended for all men. There is no nation to be favored, if the children of our Father will but open their hearts to the reception of the truth, and there is no one to carry that message excepting you, the great Priesthood of the Church, and the sisters who assist us in missionary labors.

I have been thinking that there is something significant in the vastness of this Priesthood congregation that we have the honor of addressing tonight. You have already been told by the President that there are assembled in 96 different places groups of the Priesthood to hear the messages of this evening, stretched all the way across this

Continent from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south. With this wide coverage one might reasonably ask the question, "Why do we not have a general broadcast of these services?"

I think that this most unusual situation in what we call a closed circuit broadcast consists in the unique character of the Holy Priesthood which we have the honor to represent. This great society of men and boys living in different nations of the earth is admittedly an exclusive society, not made so, however, by any prohibitory rules and regulations set up for initiation and membership which we may prescribe, but made so by the Lord himself. He stands at the head of this great order in his Kingdom. He it is who has caused his delegated power and the rights of membership in this order to come to us, his servants. It is he who has made provision for the establishment of this vast exclusive society, with his chosen High Priest at its head. And thus it is that those only who have received and accepted their divine commissions are entitled, so to speak, to a ticket to this great meeting which is held tonight. You do not have to pay for your admission here, or in any of the assemblies where our Priesthood meet. You are invited guests of the President of the Church tonight to a very select and exclusive assembly. We have occasion to feel grateful and proud that we are eligible for this invitation.

It is sometimes thought that when things become widely distributed that they are common and cheap. That is not so with the Priesthood. It is widely distributed among the men and boys of the Church, as you heard from the reports read today, but it is not cheap. It is precious, and it is priceless, and the numbers who bear it, apportioned among the whole population of the world, make it very rare indeed. I one time figured out, some years ago, about how many that would be, and I estimated that there would be one member of the Priesthood to every ten thousand persons in the world. If it were so geographically apportioned, we should certainly feel that we had a rare calling.

The potential power residing in the membership of this great assemblage is

so vast and so far-reaching as to defy almost any attempt to measure it. Here among these men of God, old and young alike, is a fund of knowledge—"pure knowledge," the revelations call it—essential and vital to the peace and happiness of mankind. Here upon this great assembly rests the obligation by divine command to disseminate that "pure knowledge" among all the Father's children. In the men gathered in this great congregation is vested the right, the power, and the duty to establish in verity the Kingdom of God, to set up, to man, and to operate the organizations and agencies comprised within the Kingdom, with the express duty to prepare the Kingdom for transfer to the Savior himself when he shall come, as he surely will, to take delivery of it.

I ask you to pause a moment in the thought of this awesome, lofty undertaking—to prepare the Kingdom for delivery to the Master. I said you were an exclusive society. You are, because no other body of men in all this world are authorized and equipped to make that preparation and that delivery except yourselves. Fortunately, we are divinely organized for the achievement of that herculean task. A true representative of the Master stands at our head to guide us and to lead us in this great endeavor. If we follow his leadership, and that of his associates, and adhere to the counsels they give, we shall not fail. In preparing the Kingdom for delivery, however, let one thing never be forgotten: our preparation of the Kingdom proceeds no faster than the preparation of ourselves to enter into the presence of our Lord and partake of the fruits of obedience and righteousness.

I do not believe that the Kingdom can be nurtured in any degree of wickedness and unrighteous dominion. We controvert the age-old assertion that the Kingdom has been preserved over the centuries under wicked and sinful potentates and a perversion of the pure laws of the Christ, who was and is the founder of the Kingdom. It is not our practice, my brethren of the Priesthood, to cast aspersion on others, but we are constrained by the truth to make the

assertion I just made—that the Kingdom was lost and is now restored. To prepare the Kingdom for the Master is the most exalted objective that I can think of for the men and boys of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ. It comprehends and entails unity and brotherhood, spirit and endeavor, obedience to law and counsel, example—stimulating, worthy example—as a premise for missionary work among all men, wide and effective teaching of the principles and practices of the Church, loyalty—unswerving loyalty—to principle and to authority.

When the Christ comes to receive his Kingdom, whom will he call to assist him in its administration? I am just as convinced as I am that I stand before you tonight that he will first call upon you—his Priesthood. I expect him to be merciful and kind to all the good and well-intentioned of the world, but I know he will respect and honor the organization he has caused to be set up and the man whom he has entrusted with his divine power, and I confidently expect that when he shall personally take charge there will be perpetuated without great change the organizations and the procedures which have prevailed in the Kingdom of the latter days, organized under the revelations of God. If any word of mine might serve to enlarge your appreciation and your vision of the precious power you hold, my dear brethren, I would be grateful indeed. I have complete confidence, without doubt or wavering, in the account we have of the bestowal of the holy power which we bear, and in its authority as descended to us from those who received it from heavenly messengers.

I know that it is divine. Respect it. Honor it, my brethren. Use it, and employ it for the high purposes for which the Lord gave it. Then if you will magnify it, it will magnify you, and make even the humblest great and mighty in the sight of God and the esteem of men.

The Lord bless you, my associates in the great Priesthood of the Living God, I humbly ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.