

## PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

**T**HANK YOU BRETHREN who have so ably discharged your duty in ascertaining the attendance this night in 97 houses of worship, including this Tabernacle. It is complete.

*General Priesthood Conference,  
April 6, 1957*

Salt Lake Tabernacle	7,291
Assembly Hall, Barratt Hall, and Grounds	3,294
94 Groups reporting in	26,595
<b>Total tonight</b>	<b>37,180</b>

That is the largest attendance in the history of the Church!

We do not favor taking photographs in our meetings, but I do wish that we could get a picture of this assembly tonight. All who can see it as we from the rostrum will never forget it. If anybody have his flashlight camera, he may take a picture, so we may have it enlarged.

I think this is wonderful, it is glorious! What a power assembled tonight in 97 groups, men of the Priesthood—men of God! We just feel in our hearts to say, "O Father," as Christ pleaded with Him, "keep us one as thou, Father, and thy Son are one." Nothing can stay the progress of the kingdom of God as long as this mighty army of Priesthood will keep united.

We heard tonight from two released missionaries—presidents from missions. They represented all mission presidents tonight, first, in their ready response to the call that came to them—one a prominent businessman, another a professional man, and their wives with them. So have all other mission presidents. I happen to know some of the sacrifices that their sweet wives have made in the missions represented. So the other mission presidents' wives make these sacrifices. Do they complain? No. They rejoice in the opportunity. Other mission presidents could tell us of interesting items just as Brother Romney and Brother Coombs gave us tonight.

The world does not realize what this missionary work in the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints entails, and what a mighty contribution the members of the Priesthood are making to make it a success. I, too, wish that all had heard that program last evening. One thing they realized was that one of the influential factors in missionary work is personal contact, that is one of the most potent, most effective.

And so it is in the field of activity to which I wish to refer in a few words—our ward teaching.

Especially during the last year, I have been impressed with the realization that we are not reaching those whom the Lord would like us to reach. Now, the ward teachers are doing an excellent work. They visit homes regularly. They have their lessons prepared. And they make their report.

Statistics show that the ward teaching is in good shape. So what I say is not reflecting upon the effort that is made by this group of Priesthood. But tell me, fellow workers, are we doing all that is implied by the Lord's statement that it is the ward teacher's duty to watch over the Church always?

A man who knows about the ills that befall our Government because of criminals wrote recently—I refer to F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover—about the responsibility of parents. He said:

"Criminals are not born with a stamp of criminality affixed to them. They are created by the forces and influences surrounding them. Certainly parental influence is a vital element in determining the direction in which a child will go. The parent who fails his duty by neglecting to provide moral training and essential consistent discipline in the home should be accountable for the delinquencies which emanate from that neglect. I firmly believe that the tide of juvenile crime could be stemmed if neglectful parents were made to face legal and financial responsibility for the criminal acts of their children.

"I am convinced that parental incompetency, parental indifference are at the root of the vast majority of youthful behavior problems.

"Back of the majority of cases of juvenile delinquency lies, in some form

or another, the abdication of parental responsibility; broken homes; lack of parental supervision; over-protective parents, drunken parents; over-indulgent mother; overly strict father; parent works nights; poor home conditions; parental neglect; lack of religious training; no discipline; depraved home environment. Nothing is sadder, in my opinion, than those cases in which children lack nothing in material things, and yet parental irresponsibility destroys their potential development as good citizens." (Published in "The Rotarian," October, 1956.)

One cause of delinquency he names is broken homes. I appreciate the statistics sent me every month by the Salt Lake County Sheriff and his associates. I brought two here tonight regarding broken homes.

In November, 1956, 96 criminals were fingerprinted; 4 women among them; 23 repeaters. In December, 1956, there were 95 fingerprinted; 6 women; 22 repeaters. In November, among those 96, 60 were from broken homes; 24, in which the father was dead; 12, the mother was dead; 22, both dead; and 2 were divorced. Among the 95 in December, 1956, 56 broken homes. Note, it is over half of the people, half of the criminals. Father was dead in 16 of the homes; mother was dead in 10; and in 25, both were dead.

Well there are other statistics, but I do not have time to refer to them.

Now, it is the duty of the ward teacher to watch over the Church always, to be with and to strengthen.

I wish we could see tonight how many of those 60 who came from broken homes were on the list of the ward teacher; how many of those 56 offenders last December from broken homes were listed by the ward teacher. Do not go away with the idea that they are not members of the Church. The Sheriff's report gives the number of deacons, the number of teachers, the number of priests, and the number of elders among those who were fingerprinted. As it is the duty of the teacher to "watch over the Church always" every one of the children from these broken homes (members of the Church) should be on the ward teachers' list.

I have a case in mind that will illustrate:

A mother died and left a large family, none of whom were married, and a little baby boy. The father was quite indifferent. He had been born in the Church. We all felt sorry when his wife died and left him with a large family. The oldest girl took care of that family wonderfully well. They are all in the Church. But the young boy grew up and did not attend his school until winter came, and then he left it as soon as spring opened up. He liked to ride horses and he could ride the bucking horse. He learned to shoot. Early in his 'teens he went out to herd sheep, and he made money. But when he came back, he did not go to Sunday School, he did not go to M.I.A. His interest was in activity—a life of activity.

Well, I will not go through the whole story. He was skillful in herding, riding, shooting, and the outdoor life.

I have referred several times to that rhyme given by the Presiding Bishopric to the Aaronic Quorums about the boy who stood alone. . . .

The boy stood at the crossroads all alone,

The sunlight in his face.

He had no thought for the world unknown,

He was set for a manly race.

But the roads stretched east and the roads stretched west,

And the lad knew not which road was best.

So he chose the road that led him down,  
And he lost the race and the victor's crown.

He was caught at last in an angry snare,  
Because no one stood at the crossroads there

To show him the better road.

That is just what this boy did. While still in his 'teens, he entered a grocery store, bought something, paid with a bill, \$10 or \$20, and a dispute arose about the change. The merchantman attempted to throw him out. The young boy had his sixshooter and was caught "at last in an angry snare."

Personally, I made inquiry, when that boy went to the penitentiary, as to

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whether the Sunday School teacher had ever visited him. No. Nor had the Mutual worker nor the ward teacher. I do not know that they could have won him. I think they could have. Personal contact would have won that boy.

It is the teacher's duty to watch over the Church always. That boy's name should have been on some teacher's list.

So it is with these 60 people—let us say there are only 30—half of these who were fingerprinted belong to us—thirty last November, were from broken homes.

Ward teachers, when you go home tonight, make a complete list of all those in your district, every boy, every girl. You may not go to a broken home, you may not find them there. Find out where they are and reach them. God bless you, and bless us all as we watch over the Church always.

For first, Priesthood means service; it is not given just as an honor. I congratulate you and commend you that you are worthy to receive it, but it is given to you for service, and you act as an authorized representative of our

Lord Jesus Christ in whatever position you may be assigned.

God bless you that you may serve worthily, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President David O. McKay:

The Tabernacle Choir Male Chorus will now sing "The Lord Bless you and Keep You," directed by Elder Cornwall, after which Elder I. Haven Barlow, president of the Layton Stake, will offer the closing prayer.

We thank you, Brother Cornwall, and you members of the Choir, for your inspirational singing tonight. I am glad you are here to participate in the largest Priesthood meeting ever held in the Church, and your services have contributed to this most inspirational meeting.

The Tabernacle Choir Male Chorus sang "The Lord Bless You and Keep You."

President I. Haven Barlow of the Layton Stake offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m.

## THIRD DAY

### MORNING MEETING

(For a full report of the *Church of the Air and Tabernacle Choir and Organ* Broadcast see pages 133-138.)

The Sunday morning session of the Conference convened at 10 o'clock a.m., April 7, 1957, with President David O. McKay presiding and conducting the services.

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of J. Spencer Cornwall, was present and furnished the choral music for this session of the Conference.

### President David O. McKay:

The choir singing for this morning's session will be by the Tabernacle Choir, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting and Alexander Schreiner at the organ.

We shall begin these services with

the Tabernacle Choir singing "Beautiful Zion For Me," by Joseph J. Daynes, J. Spencer Cornwall conducting. The opening prayer will be offered by Elder George S. Haslam, president of the North Davis Stake.

We shall repeat some of these announcements. We thought you would like to hear them so that there will be no confusion between the conclusion of the broadcast and the opening of this session.

We have just announced the radio stations over which this session of the 127th Annual Conference of the Church is being broadcast.

The Tabernacle Choir, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting and Alexander Schreiner at the organ, will now sing, "Beautiful Zion For Me," after which