

Elder George S. Haslam, president of the North Davis Stake, will offer the invocation.

Selection by the Choir, "Beautiful Zion For Me," (Daynes).

The opening prayer was offered by President George S. Haslam of the North Davis Stake.

#### President David O. McKay:

The invocation was offered by Elder George S. Haslam, president of the

North Davis Stake. The Choir will now sing, "Blessed Jesu," following which President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency will address us.

An anthem, "Blessed Jesu," was sung by the Choir.

#### President David O. McKay:

President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency of the Church will now address us.

### PRESIDENT STEPHEN L RICHARDS

#### *First Counselor in the First Presidency*

LAY ASIDE the beautiful lei made of baby orchids, presented to us so graciously by our Hawaiian sisters, while I speak, fearing too sharp a contrast between the brilliance of its beauty, and the drabness of what may follow. (Laughter)

My brethren and sisters and friends, I believe that most families or parts of families to whom I have the honor of speaking today are deeply and anxiously concerned about reports that reach us constantly regarding the waywardness of youth. I can think of no milder term than waywardness to characterize what I have in mind. You know of many other harsher terms more frequently used, and I do not say without justification. I use *wayward* because there is an element in the term which deserves our thoughtful consideration. The word literally means taking one's own way, and the connotation, of course, is in contravention of, or at variance with, an established way or order.

Is there an established way or order? Under the law the answer must be yes—at least to the extent that the law covers the ways of life. The Ten Commandments is not a legal document, but its principles are all incorporated into the law by means of penalties prescribed for infraction of these commandments, at least so far as violations of the commandments may be manifest in social behavior.

Would it not be a great gain in winning respect for the law to make it

more clear that the laws of the land in the main have their origin in divine pronouncements, and that in the main they win approval only as they conform to such generally accepted standards of morality and righteousness? Is that not the vital distinction between democracy and communism? The test of democratic law has always been, and will continue to be, is it right in accordance with revealed principles of righteousness? The test of communistic law seems to be, is it effective in the maintenance of controls superimposed by arbitrary authority? It seems to be of no concern that there is no conformity to divine principles of human conduct, and no recognition of divinity as well.

Could we help wayward youth if we confronted each one with wayward tendencies with these forthright questions: "Are you a communist and an anarchist? Is it your purpose to overthrow the government and forfeit all the safeguards, the rights, and liberties derived from our ancestors who fought so valiantly and made so many sacrifices for the free society we now enjoy? Are you an atheist? Do you believe there is no divine source of right and wrong? Would you like to see this country of ours, and other peace-loving democratic countries, turned over to communistic domination and dictatorship? You should know that vice and crime in sufficiently extended proportions can do that without a single foreign bomb being exploded in our territory. Vice and

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crime are rebellion. They can bring on war as devastating as that between states, and they have able and clever leadership, for their general is the father of lies, the author of clever seductions and enticements, the deceiver, the adversary, the opponent of all that is good and virtuous. That leader is Satan, given power to tempt humanity in mortality that they may develop resistance and strength. They who follow his lead, though they may think themselves tough, are weaklings without resistance. They are without vision. If they had vision, they could see and understand the gravity and the futility of their offenses, and they would be able to see prison walls stronger and more impenetrable than those built of steel and concrete which will separate them from all the finer things of life—family, friends, the love of God and fellow men.”

I do not know that such an imaginary conversation and approach would have a deterrent effect upon those with wayward tendencies. I do believe, however, it would be good for those who ask the questions—fathers, mothers, teachers, and other guardians of youth. Such questions might serve to set in the minds of all some fundamental principles concerning respect for authority, loyalty, and duty. Most unfortunately there are many young folk who have no one to ask the questions. What a pity! May the Lord bring repentance to those parents whose selfishness, whose untimely separations, and whose misguided lives have inflicted such tragic conditions on their offspring and on society.

I think it is a mistake for those charged with the custody of children to lose sight of or abandon the principle of reproof. The Lord has used that principle in dealing with his children during all the time of which we have record, and he has never given us any indication that it should be abandoned. No one who advocates love as the most important and potent factor in parent and teacher and child relations can go too far to suit me, but let it never be forgotten that reproof may be, and very often is, an important element in that loving relationship.

The Lord has told us how to reprove. I should like to remind my brethren and

sisters, and tell my other friends, what he has said about it. Before I do so, however, I am going to tell you of an incident which occurred on a ship while I was returning from a visit to South America a number of years ago. On this voyage, which included two Sundays, I was asked by those representing the captain of the vessel to conduct what were called “divine services.” There was no one on board of our own faith to whom I might appeal for assistance. I had made the acquaintance of a rather elderly man who was a retired minister of another church, so I asked him if he would participate and offer prayer. He gave a very beautiful prayer at one of the services. After the prayer I engaged him in conversation, and among other things we spoke of the care of youth and family responsibility. He recited an impressive incident in his own experience. He said that while he was an active minister there was among his parishioners a very lovely family. They had a promising son who married. He established a home and began to have his own family. Most unfortunately, however, he took up the habit of drinking, and within a comparatively short time reached the stage where he might be classed as an alcoholic. His wife and his family were, of course, greatly distressed. They pleaded with him, and so did this minister, to abandon his wayward course, but seemingly to no avail.

One day my friend, the minister, met this young man coming down the street. He recognized him some little distance before they met. The young man offered his hand in greeting, but the minister rejected the offer, and he said, in substance, to the young man: “John, I rebuke you, and in the authority of my ministry I command you to cease the terrible practices which are ruining your home and bringing such sorrow to your loved ones.” With these words the minister left the young man, confused and shocked, standing on the sidewalk. My friend told me that after he had gone a short distance he was tempted to go back and apologize. He said that he had never done such a thing before, and he could not understand how he had come to speak such seemingly cruel words to one of his

friends for whom he felt such responsibility.

When he had finished telling me of the incident, I picked up a volume which I had with me, and I read to him these words:

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

"Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

"That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death." (D & C 121:41-44.)

"That's it, that's it!" the old minister said to me excitedly. "Where did you find that?" I told him that it was part of a revelation concerning the nature of the Holy Priesthood, given to the Prophet Joseph Smith more than a hundred years before this conversation took place. The minister then told me that after he had given the rebuke to the young man, a few weeks passed, and the man came to him and thanked him, and said to him, "All the pleading of my family and friends made me sorrowful but did not bring to me the courage to act. That rebuke which you gave to me that day on the street has given me a strength that I could not acquire before. I have never taken a drink since, and I have the resolution and the faith to believe that I never will again."

It is a kindness to reprove in the spirit of love. It is an unkindness to mitigate the gravity of offenses in those for whose guidance and direction we have responsibility.

Next, I would like to ask this question. Has the word *duty* come to have anything in the nature of an unpleasant reaction on the part of those undertaking to lay down principles for the guidance of youth? Sometimes I hear so much about uninhibited independence of action and free development of personality that it makes me wonder

if the concept of duty has gone out of the picture. *Conformity* also seems to be a term that has come in for a measure of odium. The only place where I hear duty and conformity spoken of with great acclaim is in the military establishments. Everybody there seems to be most exacting without toleration for any departure or insubordination, and I have never heard of reproof there being administered in any such way as I have described. I suppose it would be shocking to the proponents of the so-called individualistic development theory to assert or assume that discipline is just as necessary for the success of an orderly society as it is for the success of armies and navies.

Why should the inculcation of the principle of duty in the training of youth be regarded in any unfavorable light whatsoever? Do we obtain anything of worth except by conformity to this principle? It is true that the concept of duty may entail some self-denial, but do we not all suffer for success, in the sense, at least, that we discipline ourselves to the conditions of success? In athletics, which often seem so important to youth, no one achieves distinction except by conformity to training, which is duty, and to the governing rules. In business the same is true. There are governing rules and principles which must be observed. Sometimes men think they can gamble and get something for nothing, but in the end they cannot succeed in business by this method, for legitimate business is built upon the principle of exchange of values. There are some who think that in professional and academic life the so-called individualist without conformity may win great success and distinction. In reality, this is not true, for the great researchers and contributors to the welfare of humanity are generally not non-conformists—they are expansionists—building upon the knowledge already acquired for the extension of principles and formulae to good purpose.

I hope I do not labor this point too much, but when I hear occasionally—not often—of teachers, and some parents, too, who decry the old-fashioned concepts of conformity and duty, and place a premium on non-conformity

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without its alleged abridgment of intellectual freedom, I cannot help feeling grave concern about students and youth who are subjected to such views by those whose scholarly attainments they respect and admire. I wish all who project such teaching might find a way of discovering its relation to deviations in youth which so much plague society today. I am bold enough to say, whether it be wisdom or not, that any teacher taking advantage of the prestige which his position gives him, who advocates or permits the impression to prevail that the traditional standards of morality prevailing in the good homes of his students are not binding on the individuals who make up his class, is untrue to both his constituency and his calling, and remembering that these moral principles and standards have been incorporated into the laws of the land, it may not be going too far to view his teaching as traitorous to the law and the government under which he operates.

I make these drastic statements not so much by way of indictment, because I am sure there are very, very few who would intentionally mislead their students, but rather by way of caution against a philosophy which could greatly add to this waywardness of youth.

What chances do we take when we teach our youth that there are well-recognized standards of morality incorporated into the very structure of the law of the land? And if a teacher has the mind to give the history of our institutions and our laws, is it objectionable to tell the truth about the source of these moral concepts and principles which have come down to us? Is it an infringement on any personal liberty to reveal the fact that the Ten Commandments furnish the foundation and basis for much of our law? If it is not an infringement, why should not all of our students and our youth know this? I think it would greatly enhance their respect for the laws of our land and bring to them a more clearly defined understanding of duty and obligation in a country governed by such law. They ought to know that they cannot enjoy property, money, and all the advantages they bring without

the duty to protect property and rightful owners in the possession thereof. They ought to know that they cannot enjoy personal health and personal freedom of motion without the corresponding duty to protect from assault and molestation. And they ought to be made fully aware of the fact that there can be no happy homes, no contentment and security therein without the duty of everyone to preserve the sanctity of the home, the virtue of womanhood, and manhood, too. He who would disparage the principle of duty, the controlling factor in our living, has a very narrow and constricted view of the purpose of life in the universe, for without hesitation I say: Teach duty, require duty, if need be, in children to bless their lives with proper understanding and practices essential to their happiness.

Now, there are other concepts and principles indispensable to happy living in a good society which are not incorporated as such into the laws of the land. No penalties are provided for their infraction. The Ten Commandments were given largely by way of injunction: "Thou shalt not. . ." The Beatitudes come to us as persuasion and incentive. They are not negative, but positive, in character. All who believe in the standards of righteousness and morality set up by the Ten Commandments know and understand that the gracious persuasion of the Beatitudes and other of the Savior's teachings furnish the highest incentive to yield obedience to the commandments and attain the blessings which are held out as a reward for compliance. It is essential that this be made clear to youth, that they may understand that moral standards and principles are not just prohibitive and negative in character, but that they are the essential foundation to happiness and the attainment of joy. If they could once be persuaded that there is no enduring happiness in sin, but only in goodness, the battle would be won.

I know that a great effort is put forth by millions of good people to hold before youth the advantages and the lasting values emanating from the teachings of our Lord. I rejoice in these efforts, and I am sure that unmeasured

good comes from them to countless of our Father's children. If I may make any contribution whatever to this great undertaking of persuasion for the adoption of the Christian principles as a way of life, it is this: to make clear that the kingdom of God is a kingdom of law; that the governing laws are of divine origin; that they are eternally right and do not change—interpretations may vary, but the laws are eternal; that infraction of the law is sin and draws a penalty. We know of the penalty attached to the breaking of these laws when they are incorporated in the laws of the state. We have not been shown the exact nature of the penalties which the Lord imposes, but we do know that no law of his may be broken with impunity.

I want this taught to youth so that they may comprehend it. It is their due and their right to have these things given to them without dilution or apology. This is justice and mercy. Neither shall rob the other. How can it be a kindness to any youth to white-wash and ameliorate the crime and the sin of stealing, of assault to bodily injure, of vandalism, the wanton destruction of property, of malicious scandal, of lying and deceit, and perhaps the greatest of all, that robbery which steals virtue from either woman or man?

Perhaps at this point I should tell those not of the Church something they may not know. Within our society the law of virtue is applicable equally to men as to women, and all are taught that it is better to lose life than virtue. To some these teachings may seem extreme. We believe they are justified and have approval of the Christ whom we follow.

I will repeat a circumstance which came under my observation some years ago, with apologies for its repetition to those who have heard it. I presided over a conference session in one of our older meetinghouses in which there was a relatively small balcony in the rear of the chapel. This balcony was filled with young men and women in their teens. I called upon the president of the stake to speak at the conference. To my surprise, and I think to the surprise of the large congregation in the body of the house, he addressed himself

directly and exclusively to the young people in the gallery. Looking straight at them, he said, in substance:

"Young people, in the not too distant future, nearly every one of you will come to me to be interviewed; some for advancement in the priesthood—these will be young men; some for recommendations to go on missions—these will be both young men and young women; and many of you for recommendations to go to the temple for marriage—both men and women. When you come to me for interview separately, I will ask each one to sit down in a chair directly facing me. I will look each one squarely in the eye, and this is the first question I will ask: Are you clean? If you answer yes, you will be happy. If you answer no, you will be sorry. If you lie to me, you will regret it all the days of your life."

That is all that he said to these young people. There was profound silence. I think that no one who was present will ever forget the occasion and the impression made on these young men and women. I think that this man did not overemphasize the moral principle which he impressed on these young people. May it not be that when we come to the final judgment, as all of us will, that may be the first question propounded for each of us? Are you clean?

Washington said that morality and religion were the firmest props of government. I say morality—private morality—is indispensable to a good society founded on happy homes in nations of freedom. One of the disappointments that has come to me in the observation of our political life is that all too frequently our citizens are prone to tolerate private immorality in public office, and that by comity neither side will accuse the other. I do not make this indictment general, but I firmly believe that there are a sufficient number of cases of hypocritical living in public affairs, and a sufficient number of instances of infidelity in the homes of the land, exposed and unexposed, as to have furnished an example for youth which has not been encouraging. The need of the hour is for good example and good teaching, and teaching is very difficult without the fortification of example.

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You may have observed that I have not used the term *delinquency*. I chose *waywardness* for this discussion, because I wanted to give to youth the benefit of all doubt possible. Wayward youth has gone his own way, in large measure because he has not adequately been shown the right way.

I humbly pray that all the forces at our command, the home, the church, the school, the government, and the exemplars of the nation, shall all com-

bine to show wayward youth the right way, which is God's way, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is President Stephen L Richards of the First Presidency of the Church. Elder George Q. Morris, a member of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us.

### ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**M**Y DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS, I sincerely pray that the Lord will direct me to say that which I should say to you this morning. He has blessed us through this great conference from the inspired and powerful address of President McKay through all the sessions. I sincerely pray that his blessings may be with me, that that Spirit shall be continued.

This is fast day in the Church, the regular monthly fast day, and I should like to dwell with you for a few moments upon its importance and our relation to it.

In the early days of the Church, there were urgent needs to be met, and so the Prophet Joseph Smith, who had a plea made him from Kirtland for help for the poor and the needy, told the Saints to establish a fast day. Each month it was to be observed, and they were to fast for the day and bring to the one in charge the food that they would have consumed so that it might be dispensed to the poor.

What a beautiful, simple, direct, and inspired provision the Lord made through the Prophet Joseph Smith! People were to endure hunger and not partake of food they had but bring that food that others might not endure hunger.

The Lord revealed to Isaiah the true observance of the fast day; after rejecting the methods used by Israel at that time, he then points out the right way that the day should be observed.

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that you bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall the light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. (Isaiah 58:6-8, 10-11.)

What a beautiful description of a day that we should follow once a month for the alleviation of suffering, for our own spiritual growth and development, and to carry out the purposes of the Lord that there shall be no want, no suffering, but every attention given to those who are afflicted and in distress.

I was told the other day (I did not learn any more of the details) that a bishop invited some of the members of his ward to a banquet, and as one man had his plate presented to him there was on it a small piece of meat and a small piece of carrot. I do not know what the man's impressions were or what questions arose in his mind, but