

in a letter written with reference to the ordering of goods, or something of that sort.

Brethren, be careful, be prayerful, be wise, when you undertake to make your reproof, when you undertake to direct men who have nothing but their love of the Gospel and their respect of you to impel them to obey you.

Be careful of their feelings. Speak kindly and in such a way that there never will be any question as to your love for them and your desire merely to be helpful.

I bear my testimony to the truth of the Gospel. I bear my testimony that I do have a testimony that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that there is the Holy Ghost. I bear my testimony that the Gospel and the Priesthood were restored through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith and those associated with him. I bear my testimony that the same authority which was given to him has come down to us through all of the Presidents since the time of Joseph Smith, and that it is possessed now by President McKay, who I know strives to carry out these commandments of the

Lord regarding the Priesthood and the exercise of its powers as the Lord has commanded.

May God be with us always and help us to do all we need to do in order to make the home Church strong and vigorous, that we may be able to cover the other fields, spreading the Gospel among the living, and by vicarious work among the dead, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

With Brother Condie leading us, the congregation will now join with the Male Chorus of the Choir in singing, "Do What Is Right."

The congregation and the Men's Chorus sang the hymn, "Do What Is Right."

President David O. McKay:

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

PRESIDENT STEPHEN L RICHARDS

First Counselor in the First Presidency

My dear brethren, in some respects I regard this great meeting as of foremost importance in our Conference. When I contemplate standing in the presence of the ten thousand who occupy this building and its environs, plus the many more thousands of the Priesthood gathered in the Church edifices all across the country, I am overawed with the responsibility of taking even this small part of your time. I think, if I know my own heart and mind, that there is nothing that I prize higher than the Holy Priesthood which has come to me, and I gather, if you search your own hearts, that throughout these many meeting places where the Priesthood are assembled tonight, that that same feeling of appreciation exists with you. We all hope and pray that we may so magnify this marvelous power and influence which has come into our lives that we may be worthy of it, and that it may

perform for us the high purposes for which it was given to our Father's children.

Now, without taking too much time tonight, I wish to repeat, and I hope repetition is not too serious an offense, something about two matters that I have brought to your attention on previous occasions. I think it was two and a half years ago this Conference that I took the liberty of bringing to you something from an eminent judge which I thought might operate to some extent to save life on the highways. I remember telling you at that time that whenever I observed the report of an accident on the highway in our area, I was always careful to look up the notice—often the funeral notice—to find out whether the person who had met with the tragic accident was a member of our Church, and one holding the Priesthood. In our own area I was surprised to find such

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a large proportion of all of the accidents involving fatalities among our own people.

I always felt—whenever I found that out—that I had lost a fellow member of the Priesthood or a sister in the Church unnecessarily, and in most cases I think that thought is justified because we learn that much of the frightful accident rate is due to some kind of carelessness.

I recall giving that address two and a half years ago, and I received a letter just the other day dated October 3, 1958. I will not disclose the name of the writer now because I have not asked his permission, but I think he would readily grant it. He says to me:

"I am writing this letter to thank you for bringing me to my senses in my responsibility in obeying the laws of the highway. Two years ago last April conference I invited my bishopric [and this is from a bishop] to go to conference with me. I wanted to show them just how easily we could be in Salt Lake [he comes from a distance] for the first session in my new car. I didn't think we were moving if we slowed up to the speed limit, it was early in the morning and very few cars on the highway so I thought it smart to go 80 and 90 miles an hour.

"I attended the Saturday night priesthood meeting and heard you talk on speed demons, and I wondered how you had found out about my fast driving so soon. I felt you were talking right to me but I found out after the meeting there were a lot of ears burning. When you said it was just as bad to break the laws of the land as it was the laws of God [I looked it up and I did not say that, but have no objection to it] and when we break the speed laws we are on the devil's side of the line and the Lord is not bound to answer our prayers for safety if we deliberately break the law, encouraging every judge to throw the book at the first offender, it really struck home to me.

"I can truthfully say, since then, I have never deliberately broken a traffic law, knowingly, except our 20 mile speed limit in our town, and the last few months I have obeyed this. I have a family of six children and before last

April they were always saying, 'faster Dad, faster,' and Dad went faster. Now they watch that speedometer and if it even gets close to the speed limit they warn me. My boy's ticket to take the car is to obey all traffic laws and we have a father and son agreement that we will not break them.

"A year ago I asked my bishopric to raise their hand in support of our highway laws, this they have done. About a month ago I wrote a pledge and asked the priesthood quorums to sign. They responded wonderfully well. Six out of ten of my priests have signed a similar pledge, two of them are away and the other two have not been contacted. The teachers quorums are all willing to sign to help stop the slaughter on our highways. Two of our town's seventeen-year-old high school boys lie in the hospital now, not expected to live due to the fact that they were traveling 100 miles an hour at night and missed a curve. I am on the City Council so I asked the City Officials if they would set an example and sign, and 100 percent signed the pledge. Many of our Rotary Club members have signed and they want to have 500 copies made and send them to clubs all over the world with a challenge to them to do the same. I had photostatic copies made of each of the pledges that were being signed. I am sending you a copy of each of the pledges of the quorums and also the city officials, and I dare say there are very few city officials that would sign a pledge of this kind." (Because he put in the pledge to his City Council to abstain from all intoxicating beverages whether driving or not. But they signed it.)

"I want to thank you again for setting me straight because I feel sure it has saved me and my family from accident. It is teaching us to better obey all laws and has helped me to repent."

Now I do not read that letter because it flatters me, but because I think he has hit upon a constructive thing. I gather that he has pledges from more than 200, I should say, that they will rigorously obey every traffic law, and he got all of his own quorums to sign the pledge that they would never drink at all and of course it was the under-

standing none would drink when driving. So, this bishop has done something about the problem, and I thank him for sending me this letter because it seems to me it makes a suggestion that we might follow in many quarters, and reduce this great tragedy on the highway. I solicit your help in this regard.

The other matter which I want to refer to, and which I mentioned once before in the Priesthood meeting, relates to gambling. I notice in the issue of the Saturday Evening Post under date of August 23, 1958 an article entitled: "I Was a Compulsive Gambler." It is a long article, and I do not propose to read it, but it says in the heading: "For ten wretched years the author lived on the edge of ruin. He tells anonymously how he became a gambling addict, and how he finally licked the 'tiger on his back.'" I will just read the first paragraph.

"Drug addicts say they have monkeys on their backs. For ten years I had a tiger on mine. I was a gambling addict. During that time, out of an income that varied between \$5000 and \$10,000 a year, I lost more than \$25,000 in bets. At that, I was lucky. Time and again, driven by the gambling fever, I risked public disgrace, even jail."

Then he goes on to show how, during these sad ten years of his life, he had yielded to the gambling instinct to such a point that he just simply ruined his life for himself and his family and came nearly landing in jail because of issuing checks without funds and doing other illegitimate things. If you have the magazine handy, I think you would do well to read the article, and I think when you read it none of you would ever want to subject either himself or any of his family or friends to the possibility of becoming a gambling addict.

I have had a little opportunity to watch business for a good many years, and in my time I have seen a good many tragedies. I have seen fine young men with high promise for the future yield to the temptation to pay their gambling debts by stealing money,—some of our own boys, who may still be in Leavenworth Prison after 20 years. I have never heard whether all of these boys got out. Our Brethren know something about it.

I have known prominent men of this city with brilliant futures who have yielded to this gambling instinct and lost every prospect they had, lost the respect of all who knew them, and have died in disgrace. It is a dangerous thing. As this author points out, it gets into the very blood of people, and so I have no hesitance in advising my brethren to stay clear of it, and I go so far as to urge no one to begin even on the smallest basis. After my experience I have reached the point where I hate to see a youth, or even a man, put a nickel in a slot machine because I do not know where it will lead.

Now, there are a good many who will try to defend gambling. I have heard people say that all business is a gamble, that even life is a gamble. The latter statement is absolutely false to anyone who knows anything about life. There is no gamble about life, as everyone of you know. You know that it is all planned from the very beginning, and while we cannot foresee all the circumstances that will transpire, we know what life is. We know the course that life should take. We know its rewards and we know its penalties for infractions of the law. Life is not a gamble, and it is a mistake to say that business is a gamble. Anybody who understands the fundamentals of good business knows that it is not a gamble. Every legitimate business contemplates an exchange of values. One thing of value, services, for another thing of value, money or some other thing. All sound business is based solely on that principle—an exchange of values.

That is not true of gambling—absolutely not. That is an effort to secure either something for nothing, or much more than what is invested in the gambling, and this man whose article I quoted tells about gambling machines, and how if one were inclined to bet on chances he has no chance in winning against these devices in the long run. But it is the morality of it, my brethren, that I so much deplore because it puts men and women (and unfortunately there are many women who indulge) in a position where they are unable to appraise the sound values in life and in business, and it leads them on and on,

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like one who takes his first drink, until they may end up as alcoholics, or they may end up as gambling addicts, as this man calls them—compulsive gamblers. He could not stop, he could not get away from it. I hope you are sympathetic with that position because I know from long experience that it is the wise thing to do never to bet, but keep on the safe side and never trust your powers of resistance with the wrong thing. You would not with many other things, why trust yourself with this nefarious habit?

Now, brethren, I will not take more of your time, but at the risk of repetition, I wanted to mention those two items again to you tonight. It is a tremendous responsibility to bear the Holy Priesthood. I wish all of you—perhaps all did not—had heard what President Joseph Fielding Smith told us yesterday, something I have long believed, and I was glad to have sanction for my belief. He said in substance that there will be no Sons of Perdition who do not hold the Priesthood. I have believed that for years because I do not think that the Lord in his mercy would ever condemn a man to that indescribable penalty of being put out entirely from the Kingdom and from all grace unless that man

knew that Jesus was the Christ, unless he knew the power of the Christ, and he could only know that, I think, by holding the Priesthood. I believe that in the main that can be said to be true—that only men who hold the Priesthood of God stand in danger of that terrible penalty of being classed as outcasts.

On the other hand, only men who hold the Priesthood can aspire to the highest things of life, and that is the balance—to use this Priesthood to reach exaltation in the Eternal Presence or to abuse it and lose it and be cast out. I think that is a solemn thought for all of us, and I trust that as we ponder it we shall all decide, as I have reason to believe we will, that we will aspire to the highest ideals, to the loftiest stations attainable with this holy power that God has given to us. If we aspire to attain that exaltation, work for it consciously, serve faithfully, keeping the commandments, our rewards will exceed even our fondest expectations. Of that I am convinced.

May the Lord bless you, my brethren, and be with you always, I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

When this vast congregation responded to Brother Condie's baton on the first note of "Do What Is Right," I was thrilled. The strength of your voices expressed a spirit which is sublime, and strangely enough, I was reminded of a statement that a leading businessman in the United States made to me on the plane that carried us to South Africa a few years ago. There were three businessmen—one who was president of the Board of a mining company there on the Coast of Africa; another who was a member of the Board going down to a Board meeting; and this gentleman who was head of a national Drug Store chain.

When he found out we are Mormons, he said, "Whenever I can find a young Mormon boy to take charge of running our drug stores, I tell my men to give him a position. I have many of them

in my employ." He has found integrity in them. I thought I felt the strength and source of that integrity tonight.

I thought when the gentleman made that statement, that any young member of this Church who gets a position in that chain of stores may cast a reflection upon the entire body if he failed in upholding the standard of the Church. That is what he would do. Whenever anyone, any husband in this Church, treats his wife unfairly, or stoops so low as to strike her, as I heard only recently a man did, he disgraces his Priesthood, casts reflection upon the whole Church. That would be true if he were only a member, but if he holds a prominent position in the Church, as this man does, he disgraces his Priesthood, and proves himself untrue to his