

Saturday, April 4

First Day

principle of progress is revealed, there is always incorporated a means for effecting its purpose." (*The Welfare Plan*, p. 142.)

Aaronic Priesthood, Effective Principle of Progress

Now to you boys, we want the Aaronic Priesthood to be an effective principle of progress in your lives to prepare you for leadership in the Church. This year we included some additional goals for you to achieve in the priesthood program. One of these is the memorization of specific scriptures. We chose them because we believe they will be helpful for you better to understand some basic tenets of the gospel. There is no doubt that you can learn them if you will just apply yourselves to the task.

The other evening, Sister Vandenberg and I were walking down Main Street. We were about fifteen feet behind two young men in their early teens. The smaller of the two was reciting with vigor part of Anthony's "oration over Caesar's body." I could not help but overhear—he did it so well. As I listened I thought how wonderful is the exuberance of youth with its ability to learn and absorb—I also thought of the goals we had set for the Aaronic Priesthood and felt good in the thought that if this youngster could recite literature on the street, certainly there would be no difficulty for the boys who bear the priesthood of God to memorize and recite the scriptures as assigned.

As I close, let us ponder the promise of the Lord: "Thou shalt take the things which thou hast received, which

have been given unto thee in my scriptures for a law, to be my law to govern my church;

"And he that doeth according to these things shall be saved, and he that doeth them not shall be damned if he so continue.

"If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal." (D&C 42:59-61.)

"Young Men, God Loves You"

Let me assure you young men that God loves you. You are a thousand-fold more valuable than the works of men over which we frequently marvel. God, therefore, expects you to discipline yourselves and to build into your character virtues that will endure forever.

May God bless the Aaronic Priesthood of this Church is my humble prayer which I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Brother Richard P. Condie will now lead the congregation and chorus in singing, "Do What Is Right."

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

President David O. McKay:

President Nathan Eldon Tanner will now address us.

PRESIDENT NATHAN ELDON TANNER

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

My brethren: To me it is a great privilege and blessing to be able to meet with the priesthood, and as President McKay said this evening, the largest body of priesthood that has ever met in the history of this Church.

"Seek ye first. . . ."

What an inspiration it is to hear these young men bear their testimonies as to

what the priesthood means to them and how they are determined to strive to live worthy of the priesthood which they bear. It makes me believe that they sincerely mean and understand that if they seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things which will be for their good will be added unto them. (See Matt. 6:33.)

Bishop's, Father's, Advice and Example

As I look back over my life, I should like this evening to pay tribute to and thank my father and my bishop, who is the same man, for the direction and help and guidance and example he gave me all the time I was going through the Aaronic Priesthood quorums. He taught me all the time, ". . . seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness: and all these things, my boy, will be added unto you."

I remember when I was a deacon, we had no cars, no trucks. We had wagons and buggies—we usually had a democrat. When we went to priesthood meeting, we had to travel about eight miles, and we never missed the general stake priesthood meeting which was held once a month. My father used to try to make those meetings pay both ways; for instance, he would have a team and wagon full of wheat, and I would have a team and wagon full of wheat following him for about eight miles, which would take us just a little better than two hours to get to our priesthood meeting. And we would go early enough so that we could pick up a load of coal to bring back after priesthood meeting. But we never missed priesthood meeting.

As I think back over that experience I had with that wonderful man, I can't help giving him practically all the credit for directing me and teaching me to believe that if I would seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things would be added unto me. That was a great lesson for me to learn.

I remember another thing he taught me which was very important. As a bishop he was not able to spend the time at home that some men can who are not bishops. He left us one afternoon while he was going out to look after his flock in the ward, and my brother and I were assigned to do certain things. He came back a little sooner than he had intended, or than we had expected him to come back anyway, and we hadn't accomplished what he had asked us to do. We had some calves in the corral we thought needed riding, and so we went about to accommodate those calves.

I will never forget the whipping my father gave me when he came in and found we had not done the work which we had been assigned. He called me over to him and he said, "My boy, I thought I could depend upon you." That is all he said.

"I Could Depend Upon You"

I made up my mind at that moment that father could never say that to me again as long as I lived and as long as he lived. And I was happy that he gave me that experience. A trouncing wouldn't have done the good that "My boy, I thought I could depend upon you" did. I made up my mind then that no one would ever be able to say, "I thought I could depend upon you."

I thought as these young men were talking here tonight, they should make it a matter in their lives that no one could ever say, "I thought I could depend on you," but could always say, "There is a boy that I can depend on." And we brethren who hold the priesthood should be the kind of men on whom the Lord knows he can depend.

It is an interesting thing that neighbors expect one another to keep their covenants and to keep their agreements, and if a neighbor makes an agreement with another neighbor and he doesn't live up to that agreement, his neighbor immediately rates him way down. But this same neighbor might be and very possibly is not keeping his covenants with his Heavenly Father. And I wonder if his Heavenly Father is saying to him, "Son, I thought I could depend on you."

Again I wish to say, if you seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things will be added unto you.

I was pleased with this young man when he was telling what his goals are. Now he has set those goals with a certain class of persons with whom he wishes to associate. There will be some young people who will listen to that who will sneer. But I want to tell those young people that only as they live the way they should will they enjoy life. Never has any person at any time found joy in sin or doing that which is wrong.

Saturday, April 4

First Day

"Have a Good Time"

I have a little story that I have told all over the Church; probably most of you have heard it. My daughter and her girl friend were at our house, and they were going to a party; then two young men came and called for them. I sat and talked to them. I love young people. As I was talking to them, talking about different things, I enjoyed my visit with them, and just before they were ready to go, I said, "Now, have a good time, kids." But just as they were going out of the door, I stepped over to my daughter and said, "Now, behave yourself."

And she said, "Well, Dad, make up your mind."

And I said to those young people so they could all hear me, "Have a good time, kids, the best time you will ever have in your lives, really have a good time tonight, but have the kind of time, such a good time, that tomorrow, next week, a month from now or a year from now, ten years from now, you can look back on tonight and say, 'I had a good time,' and have nothing to regret or be sorry about."

And I think they went and had a good time.

And that was my slogan for our missionaries in the West European Mission—to have a good time. One young man, after I had been talking to a group of missionaries over in Germany, came up to me and said, "President Tanner, I don't think it's right for you to tell these missionaries to have a good time because the only way they can do it is to do their work."

I said, "Go, and have a good time." He was right.

The story is told of another missionary over there who was discussing the gospel with one of the reverends, and the reverend wasn't making the progress that he thought he should, and finally he turned to the missionary and said, "Well, at least you will agree that we are both trying to serve the Lord." The missionary looked at him for a moment and said, "Yes, I think I would—you in your way, and I in his." Now, brethren, that might sound impudent, and maybe it was, if the story is true. But right there is a real lesson to me.

"Serve the Lord in His Way"

If I can serve the Lord in his way, and I am saying this to all the boys who can hear me wherever they may be tonight, then I am going along the path where I will have the greatest success and the greatest joy, if I can serve him in his way.

Too many of us, probably some sitting here tonight, would like to change the rules, and would like to serve him in our way, not his way. Some of us wonder why we have to go to church and keep the Sabbath day holy. Some of us wonder about paying a full tithing. Some of us wonder about the Word of Wisdom. Some of us wonder about other things—moral living. In fact a young woman came to me the other day and said, "President Tanner, I have tried to live the gospel just as nearly as I could possibly live it, as I understand it. I am a little older now. I am a teacher. I am still single. But I think you should know that too many of our young men today are saying, 'Oh what's the difference? What does it matter? That is a lot of nonsense.' And I know young men who are returned missionaries, I know young men who come from some of the best families who are saying the same thing."

I would like to say to you young people tonight that such an attitude is just as far from right as it can possibly be. You cannot do those things and enjoy the Spirit of the Lord and make progress and be the kind of person who will have joy in your future life, and the Spirit of the Lord cannot be with you, as it is if you are clean-living young people.

"The Power of God"

Let us never be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation (see Romans 1:16), and let us never hesitate to call upon the Lord as these young men told us tonight that we should do. Stay close to the Lord, show your appreciation of the priesthood that you hold, Honor that priesthood and thank God that you have the priesthood. Imagine the priesthood being taken away from you tonight, any young man or any older man, because you are not prepared to live

in the Lord's way, because you won't honor and respect and magnify your priesthood.

Brethren, it is a great privilege to magnify the priesthood, and to do the things that the Lord has asked us to do, and as you do them, you will find joy as you live here, and you will be working out your salvation and eternal life.

A Boy Taught by Heavenly Beings

As I think of that young boy, fourteen years of age, I would like you to imagine yourself being that young boy, when he went into the grove and prayed to his Heavenly Father, and imagine how he felt when God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared to him and God said, "Joseph, this is my beloved Son, hear him." (See Joseph Smith 2:17.) Now that young man after he left that grove was left alone for three years. He had no bishop, and he had no teacher. He had no Sunday School; he had no one except his family, who believed in him, to help him live according to the knowledge that he had. He remained true to the faith, he tried to serve God, and because he did, he proved true and worthy to accept the other blessings that the Lord had in store for him.

This young man referred tonight to John the Baptist appearing, and I wonder how those two young men, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, felt then, as he who baptized the Savior came and placed his hands upon their heads and gave them the priesthood; and then as Peter, James, and John, Christ's senior Apostles, came to them. Brethren, it was because they lived close to the Lord. They asked the Lord for guidance and sought first the kingdom of God and determined to keep his commandments.

Then, as I see that same young man standing up there, twenty-four years of age, saying to those who were associated with him, his friends and neighbors, "The Lord has chosen me and ordained me an apostle, a prophet, a seer, a revelator, and president of His Church here upon the earth." (DHC 1:75-79.)

Brethren, he could not have said that if the Lord had not chosen him. To

that point he had received the priesthood, the Aaronic and the Melchizedek; he had been visited by the Angel Moroni; he had had the privilege of translating the Book of Mormon under direct revelation, and he gave us the priesthood that the Lord gave to him; and he, as you read in the twentieth and twenty-first sections of the Doctrine and Covenants, told the people what the responsibilities of the different quorums of the priesthood were, how transgression should be dealt with, how to administer the Sacrament, how to baptize, and he gave the prayers.

Brethren, he was inspired of the Lord. There is no question about it. And when we think of his receiving the revelation regarding the Word of Wisdom, and how many young people have ridiculed that Word of Wisdom and said, "You are old-fashioned; everybody is using tobacco." And now one hundred years later, scientists have proved beyond any doubt that tobacco is not good for man. It is harmful and is taking the lives of thousands of people.

"Be Obedient"

Brethren, let us be obedient to the Lord; let us be obedient to the priesthood. Let us magnify our calling so that it can magnify us. Let us not cheat as we go along and try to do it halfway, serve in our way; but let us serve in his.

The Folly of Cheating

As I think of the young men and the older men who do this part way, I think they are cheating. And I wonder "how can we think to earn a great reward if we now shun the fight?" How many of you would like to have a doctor diagnose your case, if it were a serious case, and then operate on you, if he were one who cheated his way through school? How many of you would like to have a pilot who got his flying license by cheating take you in one of these big jets today? How many of you would like to have a pharmacist who cheated prepare your prescription, given by a doctor, when your life depended on it?

How many of us can feel that we are

Saturday, April 4

First Day

safe if we now shun the fight and fail to honor our priesthood and magnify the calling that is given to us?

"Honest with Yourself"

Brethren, we have to live with ourselves. I have a little poem that I would like to read to you. Keep this in mind:

"I have to live with myself, and so I want to be fit for myself to know, I want to be able, as days go by, Always to look myself straight in the eye;
I don't want to stand, with the setting sun,
And hate myself for the things I've done.

I don't want to keep on a closet shelf,
A lot of secrets about myself,
And fool myself, as I come and go,
Into thinking that nobody else will know
The kind of man that I really am;
I don't want to dress up myself in sham.

"I want to go out with my head erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect;
But here in the struggle for fame and pelf,
I want to be able to like myself.
I don't want to look at myself and know
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.

"I never can hide myself from me;
I see what others can never see;

I know what others may never know;
I never can fool myself, and so,
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free."

"Myself"—Edgar A. Guest

(From *Collected Verse* by Edgar A. Guest. Copyright Reilly & Lee.)

Brethren, it is a great privilege to hold the priesthood of God. You are the only people in all the world who are given the privilege to speak in the name of the Lord, who have been given that authority. I plead with you young men to live so that you can enjoy your own self-respect, the respect of others, and so that the Lord will be able to say, "There is a young man that I can depend on. He is a man who can hold any office in the Church and be a leader."

Let us go forward this night and always, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, knowing that it will bring joy, success, and all things for our good. This is my prayer for you, as I bear my testimony to you that this is the Church of Jesus Christ, that the priesthood has been restored, and we are privileged to hold it, which is the power of God delegated to man to act in his stead. May we all be worthy of it and magnify our calling that it may magnify us, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Hugh B. Brown will now address us.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

First Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren, I feel as weak and humble as did Brother Plumb when he looked out at this vast congregation and imagined all of you out there who are listening in. I would like to say to these young men by way of encouragement that if they will continue, as they have started, to respond to every call made of them to stand before congregations for the next sixty years, as I have been doing, at the end of that time they will still be scared to death.

These young men have instructed

young men of their age in certain activities and held up to them certain ideals, but they have in fact been talking to all of us. Whatever our age, whatever priesthood we hold, whatever position in the Church we may occupy, these simple rules of conduct apply to us.

Names and Their Connotations

Did you ever wonder what men think when they think of you. Of what do you think when I say the words, "George