

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

Washington"? You think of leadership and honesty and honor. Of what do you think when I say, "Abraham Lincoln"? You think of courage, of humility, of leadership. Of what do you think when I say, "Winston Churchill"? You think of one gifted with oratory which enables him to weld a nation into a fighting machine. You think of one with an underslung jaw and a big cigar, but you get an idea, and you think of something when these men's names are mentioned.

I ask you tonight, "What do your friends think when they think of you?" If they do not think accurately, if they know something that would cause them to be ashamed of your acquaintanceship, you can change it. Whatever a man is at any time in his life is a result of all the past thoughts and words and deeds that have come into his life. I am thinking tonight in terms of one of the problems which confronts all of us, deacon, teacher, priest, elder, seventy, high priest. I am thinking of one of the problems that confronts the world and is being introduced among us at an alarming rate. I am thinking of a certain course of conduct which is malignant, dangerous, death-dealing, and contrary to the law of God. I am thinking of chastity, or its opposite.

Consecrated Manliness

Let us get a vision of consecrated manliness and then conform our lives to that manliness in such a way that we will never yield to the temptations that would lead us away from virtue and honor and honesty and manliness. "He who profanes the source of life," someone has said, "sins against that which is indispensable to the very existence of life." Let us then never forget the sanctity of life. With every gift of power that comes to us, there comes a temptation to dishonor it, abuse it. You remember when Christ was on the earth the adversary tempted him, tried to get him to yield to the temptation to use his power to get bread when he had been fasting for such a long time, and the Savior reminded him that man does not live by bread alone. Satan took Christ then to a height on the pinnacle of the temple

and tempted him to show his power and authority by casting himself down and said the angels would hold him up. Jesus resisted that temptation to abuse his power. Then Satan took him onto a high mountain and showed him all the wealth of the world and said, "All this I will give to thee if you will fall down and worship me," and Christ said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." (See Matt. 4:9-10 and Luke 4:8.)

Power—Uses and Abuses

I repeat, with every gift of power comes the temptation to abuse it. Each man has within himself the power that can destroy him, and that is a fact that each man under the sound of my voice tonight should keep in mind. Each man or boy, whatever his age or his station in life, is subject to the temptation to destroy himself by reason of a God-given power which all of us have. All of us who know good sometimes feel within ourselves the possibility of evil, and while we may condemn sincerely and without any hypocrisy the evil in us, we are conscious that at times we ourselves are tempted to do the very thing we hate, and in doing it we hate ourselves as well as the thing we do. I think this caused Paul to admit, ". . . the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7:19.)

Real character is formed in the midst of the battles for the soul. Christ offered peace, not in the sense of freedom from disturbance, but in the midst of disturbance. What we need is to develop within ourselves the kind of self-control that will enable us, in the midst of disturbance, to find the peace that comes into the soul of a man who is living as he knows he ought to live.

Charles Wagner said, "Why shrink from responsibility? Can we buy this great honour at too dear a price . . . ? Do you know what degradation means to a soldier? It is to see his rank, his decorations, his epaulets, torn from him; to see these signs of his former value thrown at his feet! What is death in comparison with this dishonour? It is true that in the future this unfortunate soldier can sleep; he will never again mount guard; he will

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no longer cry, 'to arms; here is the enemy!' he will never again make an assault nor hear the bullets whistling round him. . . . Very well; to declare that a man is irresponsible is to degrade him! Death were better." (Wagner, Charles, *Courage*, Dodd, Mead, and Co. New York, 1904, pp. 73-74.)

Power of Purity

And so I repeat, my plea to the men of the priesthood of the Church is to keep yourselves clean. Older men are yielding to temptation, to sin. Younger men are struggling with themselves. It is difficult sometimes for them to understand themselves because this God-given power of procreation carries with it a power of destruction. But it has, because of its life-giving nature, the possibilities of the greatest glory and joy that can come to a living soul. I believe that every man who is tempted to sin, to commit adultery, to become unclean in his habits, should examine himself and see whether he is harboring things that will destroy him.

I would like to leave with you tonight an appeal—especially to you stake presidents, high councilmen, bishops and counselors, heads of quorums, all in presiding positions—I would like to leave a plea that you get closer to your young people—and older people—under your jurisdiction and teach them the beauty of purity and let them know that purity is power. Sometimes some of us get the idea that certain people are not worth our attention. They have gone beneath and beyond what we thought to be worth saving. I would like to give you one little story to illustrate how sometimes we misjudge one another, and sometimes we are guilty of assuming that the one we are thinking of is not as good as we.

Find Good in Men

It was during World War I. We had a man in our regiment who was as tough as any man in the regiment; he was known as the unsentimental cuss; he was the kind of man that nobody liked. We thought he had no sense of emotion or of sympathy or of understanding. He could see his comrades shot down by his side and never bat

an eye, and we didn't think he had in him anything that would indicate that he had any sentiment at all. I was guilty of saying in my heart, though I think I didn't speak it out loud, "I thank thee, God, that I am not like that man." (See Luke 18:11.) There was another Pharisee once who said that, and this time I was the Pharisee.

We were in France. This man was called on duty to examine the mail, incoming and outgoing mail. (That is quite an interesting job; you read some very interesting letters. For instance, I remember reading a letter from a young fellow to his girl, it was undoubtedly very sincere, in which he told her of the good time he was having and how he missed her and how he loved her. Then, undoubtedly, he was called suddenly to duty, because he said, "I am feeling fine, but I am as lousy as a pet coon," and then underneath he scribbled, "Hoping this finds you the same.")

Well this unsentimental cuss was on duty reading mail, and he read a certain letter, a letter from a Mrs. Jock Anderson out in London, Ontario, Canada. She was writing to her beloved Jock, and she said to him, "We are getting on all right, my dear. The ten little bairns are coming along. I have had to wean the baby because I have to work to support the others, but we are mighty proud of you and proud of where you are. But, Jock, dear, our neighbor three months ago received word that her husband was missing. She said she had rather heard he was dead—she said she could hardly stand the uncertainty of it." And then she added, "Jock, my dear, join with me and pray God that I may never get word that you are missing."

This unsentimental officer read that letter but said nothing about it. That night there was paraded before him a sergeant and six men who were going out into no-man's land. They called the roll; the officer heard the name of Jock Anderson among those who were going out. They went out, and in the morning the sergeant and three men came back. Again they called the roll, and Jock Anderson did not answer. The officer said to the sergeant, "Do

you know where Jock Anderson fell?"

The sergeant replied, "Yes, sir, he fell on an elevation on which is trained the enemy's machine gun."

The officer asked, "Do you think a man could go out to that body and get the identification disc off his neck?"

To which the sergeant answered, "Sir, it would be absolute suicide, but if you say so I will try."

Then the officer said, "I didn't mean that. I just wanted to know."

You know in World War I you could not declare a man dead unless you could produce his body or his identification disc. That night that unsentimental officer was missing, and the next morning there came up to the front lines a large regimental envelope. When it was opened, there fell out an identification disc with the name of Jock Anderson on it and a short note said, "Dear Major: I am enclosing the identification disc of Jock Anderson. Please write to Mrs. Anderson in London, Ontario, Canada, and tell her God heard her prayer—her husband is not missing."

That was the man of whom I had said, "I thank thee, God, that I am not like him." He had the courage which I

never had to crawl out on his stomach in the face of almost certain death in order to bring to a woman he had never seen, 3000 miles away, the poor comfort that her husband was not missing.

And on the bottom of his letter he wrote, as though it didn't amount to much, "As for me, I am off for blighty in the morning. The doctor says it is an amputation case and may prove fatal. Cheerio."

Since that experience I have tried to believe that every man has something in him worth saving. Let us go out and help the boys and the men who are not active. Let us find the good in them and bring them into activity, and in the course of all that we do, let us keep ourselves pure and unspotted from the sins of the world. I leave you my testimony and my blessing and ask God to be with all who are in this building and you other thousands out there tonight. Make a resolution as these young men have pleaded for us to do, "... as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15.) God bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

We have the following telegram from Eugene K. Mangum, first counselor in the Phoenix West Stake: "At Phoenix, Arizona, 590 priesthood holders thrilled at messages over direct wire." Thousands can say the same.

I had in mind saying a word suggested by a visit to two fathers in this room—the two fathers of these two boys who have done so well tonight, and the pride in their sons which they had, the pride which every father has in his sons. My object in doing this was to make boys feel the responsibility of sonship.

Instead of referring to that, however, I am going to follow the thought mentioned by Brother Brown of keeping your manhood clean and unsullied. I do not know whether I can remember the lines or not, but I shall just refer to them and leave the reason of it to each of you.

I said I would have my fling,

And do what a young man may;

And I didn't believe a thing

That the parsons had to say.

I didn't believe in a God

That gives us blood like fire,

Then flings us into hell because

We answer the call of desire.

And I said "religion is rot,"

And the laws of the world are nil;

For the bad man is he who is caught

And cannot foot his bill.

And there is no place called hell:

And heaven is only a truth,

When a man has his way with a maid,

In the fresh keen hour of youth.

And the money can buy us grace,

If it rings on the plate of the church;

And money can neatly erase,

Each sign of a sinful mirch.

For I saw men everywhere,

Hot-footing the road of vice!