

Sunday, April 5

I bear you my testimony that I know this to be true, I know this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Eldred G. Smith, patriarch to the Church, has just spoken to us. The congregation and Choir will now join in singing, "High On the Mountain Top," conducted by Jay E. Welch. After the singing Elder Henry D. Taylor,

Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

The Choir and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top," conducted by Jay E. Welch.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, will be our next speaker, and he will be followed by Elder Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric.

ELDER HENRY D. TAYLOR

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

In the year 1842, the Prophet Joseph Smith was invited to submit a statement setting forth the beliefs of the newly organized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In response to that invitation, he directed a communication now known as the "Wentworth Letter." This inspired document contained among other things, thirteen concise, comprehensive declarations of belief, familiarly called, "The Articles of Faith."

The first of these Articles of Faith states: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost."

We Believe in God

Now, if we believe in God with all our hearts and seek to know him as he would have us know him, then he will be an anchor to our lives, giving meaning and purpose to them. The Savior once said, emphasizing this point: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.)

What do we know about God, our Heavenly Father?

First. We are actually his children. He is the Father of our spirits. In our prayers, we properly address him as our Father in heaven.

Second. We are created in his image and after his likeness.

Third. He is a glorified, immortal, resurrected being, possessing a body of

flesh, bones, and spirit.

And fourth. We once dwelt in his presence and may return to be again with him, provided we do the things required to achieve and merit this blessed privilege.

To these truths the scriptures have attested, and inspired men have testified.

"Hallowed be Thy Name"

We have been admonished to "Love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, might, mind, and strength." (See Luke 10:27.) And with this love also goes a deep respect and reverence for him. Jesus recognized this truth when he taught his disciples how to pray. As he addressed the Father in prayer, he said: ". . . Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matt. 6:9.) When Jesus regarded the name of the Lord as "hallowed," can we do less? Should we in any manner profane that hallowed name?

When the Prophet Moses received the Ten Commandments midst the thunderings and lightnings of Mt. Sinai, the Lord proclaimed: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (Deut. 5:11; Exod. 20:7.)

Moses, too, knew by revelation that the name of God is hallowed. And yet, everyday, we hear thoughtless, uncouth, irreverent persons violate this commandment as they blaspheme the name of our Heavenly Father in profane oaths.

In ancient times, the Higher Priesthood was called, "The Holy Priesthood

after the order of the Son of God." Out of respect and reverence for the name of the Supreme Being and to avoid the too frequent repetition of his name, they, the Church, called that priesthood after Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, to whom Abraham paid tithes. (See D&C 107:2-4.) Is it not a striking fact that in all periods of the world good men have held the name of God in highest reverence?

Too often today individuals in fits of rage and uncontrollable anger profane the name of Deity, and too frequently they do it in ordinary conversation. The Lord, through one of his prophets, warned that: ". . . the tongue . . . is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." (James 3:8.) However, through the exercise of self-control and by engaging in earnest prayer, it is possible to learn to govern one's speech or utterances.

Clean and Simple Speech

In addition to taking the name of God in vain, profanity, cursing, and oath taking are also displeasing to the Lord. We have been counseled to keep our speech clean and simple. The Lord loves a clean mouth as well as a pure heart. This is evidenced by one of the Master's own powerful statements in which he said: "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

"Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

"Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

"But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." (Matt. 5:34-37.)

A modern-day writer, Frank Crane, has made an interesting observation on the objectionable habit of swearing in these words, which I quote:

"The trouble with profanity is not so much that it is wicked, as that it is just plain dirty.

"It is not so much that you shock religious people, as that you disgust decent people. . . .

"Swearers are behind the times. They are holdovers from a former century.

"Nowadays anybody who swears is set down at once as being coarse and vulgar.

"The young man who wants to succeed needs to take advantage of everything that may help him on. And swearing will be a black mark against him in any job he may have. And if he wants to associate with the right sort of girl, he must keep his talk clean.

"Nobody wants a swearer in the office, nor in the workshop, nor on the train, nor in the hotel. The only place swearing fits is in the saloon.

"Swearing means you don't know how to talk. Your vocabulary is limited. It is a sign of ignorance.

"Swearing means weakness. You will notice that forceful men, whose words carry weight, use simple plain words.

"When you swear it shows your impotence. It is the petty refuge of the helpless. If you can help a thing, help it; if not, keep still; anyway, do not swear.

"Swearing has bad kin. It goes with ignorance, brutality, cruelty, drunkenness, licentiousness, viciousness, and anger. And you can tell a habit by the company it keeps. . . .

"To abstain from swearing does not mean you are a sissy, it simply means you are decent.

"To show you are manly, you don't have to have a dirty face, nor black fingernails, nor greasy clothes, nor tousled hair. You can be manly though clean, and you are not showing any manliness by filthy talk. . . .

"Altogether, swearing is a useless, unclean, and offensive habit.

"Quit it!" (Roy A. Welker, *Preparing for Marriage*, Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing, 1942, pp. 190-91.)

It is difficult to imagine such men as Abraham, Moses, Lincoln, Joseph Smith, or President McKay profaning the name of God. How would you regard them or what kind of opinion would you form concerning them, if they were guilty of such blasphemy?

Try to form in your minds a picture of the mother of the human race, or the mother of the Savior, or your own

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mother sprinkling vile oaths through her speech. You shudder to think of such a thing, but by the very laws of decency, it is no worse for them to do it than for you.

Speech Reflects Mind and Heart

The writer of Proverbs in referring to man declares: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7.) What is in our hearts and minds is reflected in our speech.

A person who is striving to pattern his or her life after that of the Savior will be pure in thought and action. His or her speech will then be clean, dignified, and worshipful. Jesus said: "... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12:34.) And "... thy speech bewrayeth thee," declared someone to Peter, one of the Savior's Apostles. (*Ibid.*, 26:73.) And a heart that is full of goodness, will utter good and kind thoughts through well-chosen words, the symbols that represent one's thoughts.

Now a word of encouragement to you, my young friends of the Church and the world: Make your speech pure and warm and dignified, devoid of vile-ness and profanity. Let it be of such a nature and character that the world will be attracted to you because of it. Make the Lord Jesus Christ your ideal and pattern after his speech and his ways. And as surely as you do this, he will magnify you and make you mighty before your fellow men, which I promise you, and I testify unto you that God lives, that the gospel is true, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

We have just listened to Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve. Elder Victor L. Brown, second counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve.

BISHOP VICTOR L. BROWN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

A. B. Wells describes an experience she had one time: "The great overland bus came to a stop. I looked out of the window to see the fringe of a small town. On the other side of the highway, pastureland stretched in many rolling acres. Cattle nibbled at the grass made green by recent rains.

"Suddenly, I turned from that peaceful scene to see the reason for our stop. One lone passenger entered. The young man, hesitating a bit, looked shyly around. Noting the vacant place beside me, he asked haltingly, 'Do you mind if I sit here?'

"'Not at all,' I answered, 'I like company when I travel. Do sit down.'

"He removed his cap and slid into the seat. After a moment he inquired, 'Going far, lady?'

"'Only as far as Fort Worth, that is my home,' I replied. 'We will be there in a little less than an hour.'

"'Think of that,' he said, with a seeming air of relief. 'I've been hoping I'd run into someone from there. Don't

know much about the place; I grew up on a ranch far out beyond where I boarded the bus. I'm on my way to Fort Worth, but I don't know how to find the school, once I am there.'

"'What school is that? Maybe I can help you,' I said.

"'It's that real big school; college, I guess you would call it.' Then he went on gravely, 'You see, I'm just out of the Army, and I'll get to start school. Servicemen can go, you know, and Uncle Sam pays for it.'

"'You will be a student at Texas Christian University?' I asked.

"Attitude Test"

"'Oh, I don't know just where they'll send me, but I'm all excited over having the chance to go at all. You see I didn't have much schoolin' as I grew up. But before I get started anywhere I have to go to the Fort Worth School, an' take what they call an 'attitude' test. After I take it, they will know where to send me.'