

PRESIDENT JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brethren and sisters: I have chosen a vital subject, that of chastity, if you will give me your attention.

According to the dictionary, chastity means, "The state or quality of being chaste, free from sexual impurity; free in thought, modest and free from vulgarity."

When our Redeemer was with the Nephites on this continent after his resurrection, he emphasized this principle by saying to them: "And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

"Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do;

"Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day." (3 Nephi 27:19-22.)

Repentance Essential

From what we see as we travel from city to city and from what we read in the public press, we are forced to the conclusion that repentance from sin is extremely essential throughout the entire world. In fact, there is seldom a time in the known history of mankind when sexual sin was not prevalent and the violation of the divine commandments was almost universal. It was not long after Adam and Eve had children who began to pair off and establish families that the influence of Satan was felt, and the sons and daughters forgot the teachings of their parents. We read that Satan came among them saying: "I am also a son of God"; and he commanded them to believe not the teachings of their parents, and the rec-

ord informs us that from that time forth men became, "... carnal, sensual, and devilish." (Moses 5:13.)

Very frequently I have this question asked of me: "When Lucifer, or the devil, was cast out of heaven, why did the Lord permit him to come to this earth to tempt and torment us, rather than to have been sent with his followers to an isolated place?" My answer to this question has been that it seems clear that the Father permitted Lucifer to come here to tempt us and test our faith. The fact is clear that Adam and his posterity were not left without divine commandments and guidance. Angels visited them and instructed them and commanded them to raise their children in light and truth. Moreover, the fall was not the terrible mistake which so many have been led to believe. It is customary in the religious world to speak of the fall as "man's shameful fall," leaving the impression that had Adam refused to partake of the fruit, he and Eve and their posterity would have lived in eternal bliss and harmony. The fact is clear, however, had Adam not partaken he and Eve would have lived alone without posterity. Therefore the fall was a necessity, and this was clearly stated by Mother Eve when she said: "Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient." (*Ibid.*, 5:11.)

Mortality Part of Eternity

This mortal life is just an essential part of our eternal existence. We came here to be tested and proved by coming in contact with evil as well as the good. It is necessary that we be tempted and tried, but the Eternal Father did not leave us helpless in the midst of evil. From the very beginning the plan of salvation was presented to our first parents. They taught these principles to their children. It is necessary, however, that we have trials and temptations, as well as the divine commandments.

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Therefore the Father has permitted Satan and his hosts to tempt us, but by the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord and the commandments given through revelation, we are prepared to make our choice. If we do evil, we have been promised that we will be punished; if we do good, we will receive the eternal reward of righteousness. Every soul has been given the gift of free agency. It is essential that we learn both good and evil and thus resist and overcome the evil. If we live righteously there will come eternal salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of God.

Cleanliness and Eternal Existence

Cleanliness of life will bring the reward of exaltation and an eternal existence in the kingdom of God. If we choose the evil, the reward will be in punishment. Eventually every sin will have to be righted. Our Savior paid the price of our transgressions if we do not sin a sin worthy of eternal death and humbly keep his commandments; otherwise he has said, we must suffer even as did he.

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, the Lord gave them many commandments. Among these commandments he taught the Israelites that their bodies were sacred and that they should not be improperly exposed. Among these instructions we find this necessary commandment:

Not a Lovely Sight

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." (Deut. 22:5.)

Today it is a common sight, even on the streets of the cities of the Latter-day Saints, to see women dressed in pants and suits similar to those worn by men. We are forced to declare that this is not a lovely sight. Moreover, it is also frequently the case at parties and places of entertainment that women are arrayed in what I think they call full or party dress, thus exposing a part of the body which should be sacred and not exposed.

The Prophet Isaiah without question saw our day, for he speaks of the daugh-

ters of Zion who, in the latter days, would be guilty of all kinds of improprieties in their dress. I will not quote what he said, but if any are curious enough and wish to read it you will find it in the third chapter of Isaiah, verses sixteen to the end.

Now, my good brethren and sisters, I am making a plea for modesty and chastity and for the members of the Church, male and female alike, to be chaste, clean in their lives, and obedient to the covenants and commandments the Lord has given us.

I would like to quote a few paragraphs taken from a discourse by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.:

"Our very civilization itself is based upon chastity, the sanctity of marriage, and the holiness of the home. Destroy these and Christian man becomes a brute.

Chastity Fundamental

"Chastity is fundamental to our life and to our civilization. If the race becomes unchaste, it will perish. Immorality has been basic to the destruction of mighty nations of the past; it will bring to dust the mighty nations of the present. Every one of us who instructs our youth in whatever place or position, and in whatever capacity, must teach the young people of today to abstain from unchastity." (CR, Oct. 1938, p. 137.)

The following counsel is given by President David O. McKay:

"In this day when modesty is thrust into the background, and chastity is considered an outmoded virtue, I appeal to you to keep your souls unmarred and unsullied from this sin, the consequence of which will smite and haunt you intimately until your conscience is seared and your character sordid.

"Remember, too, the significance of the Savior's saying that if any shall commit adultery even in his or her heart, he shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear.

"Resist evil, and the tempter will flee from you. If you keep your character above reproach, no matter what others may think, or what charges they make, you can hold your head erect, keep your heart light, and face the world undauntedly because you, your-

self, and your God know that you have kept your soul untarnished." (*Ibid.*, Oct. 1951, pp. 8-9.)

"Precious Above All Things"

Again from President McKay:

"My spirit," says the Christ 'will not dwell in unclean tabernacles.' The corruption that is in the world through lust, as mentioned in one of Peter's Epistles, has its source in thoughts and schemes harbored in the individual mind. A man who takes advantage of his neighbor in a business deal when the opportunity offers has prepared himself for the occasion by dishonest thinking. Young couples do not lose their chastity, named by the Book of Mormon as 'precious above all things' without their having previously in thought justified the act.

"The husband who coolly turns from

a loyal wife and family and seeks illicit relationship elsewhere, perhaps with a disloyal wife of a neighbor, has previously poisoned his soul with immoral ideas. Disgruntled members of society, faultfinders in wards and stakes, do not become such merely because of some offense, real or imagined. What they say and do has been preceded by selfish desires or unattained ambition." (*Ibid.*, April 1951, pp. 96-97.)

In the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker.

ELDER BERNARD P. BROCKBANK

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Brethren and sisters: I am thankful for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and I pray for the inspiration of this great comforter. Isn't it humbling and glorious to be an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? I find it a great joy and blessing to visit the Saints in many parts of the world. It is a privilege to shake their hands and to call them brother and sister. I like the warmth and the joy that come from this great family tie. Happiness truly comes from God and his righteousness.

"Seek ye first . . ."

The first great goal of this life was given by Jesus Christ our Savior, leader, and example, when he said, ". . . seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; . . ." (Matt. 6:33.) There is no other goal ahead of this first goal.

I would like to speak briefly about the scriptures and missionary work. No one ever needs to make excuses or apologize for the scriptures. The Apostle Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

"That the man of God may be per-

fect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17.)

I repeat, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Anyone changing or placing a personal interpretation that changes the true meaning of the scriptures is placing himself and his abilities above the God-inspired scriptures.

"The field is white . . ."

When the gospel and Church of Jesus Christ were restored to this earth in 1830 by a Prophet of God, the scriptures were again restored to their true light and meaning. Immediately after the restoration, the great missionary program of the Church was commenced. The Savior said in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, ". . . behold the field is white already to harvest; . . ." (D&C 4:4.) Christ said when he lived upon the earth that there were many people to be brought into the Church "but the labourers are few." (Matt. 9:37.)

Today, 1964, the field is still white and ready to harvest. There are millions waiting today for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, but the laborers are few. We must find ways to reach