

Sunday, October 4

Third Day

**President N. Eldon Tanner**

We have just listened to Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy. The Tabernacle Choir will now sing,

"Long Hast Thou Stood, O Church of God," after which Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will address us.

**ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY**  
*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My dear brethren and sisters: It is so great a privilege and so serious a responsibility to speak from this pulpit that I earnestly seek the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**University Splendor and Youth**

The other day I strolled about the campus of one of our great universities. I was impressed with the splendor of the buildings, the immaculate laboratories, the teaching theaters, the magnificent library, the dormitories, the gymnasiums. But I was more impressed with the students. There were some 17,000 of them—handsome young men and beautiful young women, serious and intent and earnest.

These are a few of the hundreds of thousands who have returned to college life this fall. I am awed by the great forces of knowledge which they represent. Never before have so many been educated in the learning of the world.

**Abundance of Knowledge**

What a marvelous thing this is—the intensive schooling of a large percentage of the youth of the land, who meet daily at the feet of able instructors to garner knowledge from all of the ages of man. The extent of that knowledge is staggering. It encompasses the stars of the universe, the geology of the earth, the history of nations, the culture of peoples, the languages they speak, the operation of governments, the laws of commerce, the behavior of the atom, the functions of the body, and the wonders of the mind.

With so much available knowledge one would think that the world might well be near a state of perfection. And yet we are constantly made aware of the other side of the coin—of the sickness of our society, of the contentions

and troubles that bring misery into the lives of millions.

**Life is More than Secular Learning**

Each day we are made increasingly aware of the fact that life is more than science and mathematics, more than history and literature. There is need for another education, without which the substance of our secular learning may lead only to our destruction. I refer to the education of the heart, of the conscience, of the character, of the spirit—these indefinable aspects of our personalities which determine so certainly what we are and what we do in our relationships one with another.

And so I would like to talk briefly with our young people, those in the Church and those out of the Church—with the youth of America and of other good lands.

**"Get Understanding"**

Thirty years ago while living in England I belonged to the London Central YMCA. I suppose that old building has long since gone, but I can never forget the words that faced us in the foyer each time we entered. They were the words of Solomon: "... with all thy getting get understanding." (Prov. 4:7.)

I commend them to you.

Understanding of what? Understanding of ourselves, of the purposes of life, of our relationship to God who is our Father, of the great divinely given principles which for centuries have provided the sinew of man's real progress!

**Cornerstones of Secular Knowledge**

I cannot discuss them all, but I would like to suggest three. I offer them not in a spirit of preaching

but in a spirit of invitation. Let these be added to your vast store of secular knowledge to become cornerstones on which to establish lives that will be fruitful, productive, and happy.

### Gratitude, a Divine Principle

The first I mention is gratitude, the second is virtue, the third is faith. Others might be named, but I believe these are fundamental to the full development of every child of God.

Gratitude is a divine principle. The Lord has declared through revelation: "Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things . . ."

"And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, . . ." (D&C 59:7, 21.)

Our society is afflicted by a spirit of thoughtless arrogance unbecoming those who have been so magnificently blessed. How grateful we ought to be for the bounties we enjoy. Absence of gratitude is the mark of the narrow, uneducated mind. It bespeaks a lack of knowledge and the ignorance of self-sufficiency. It expresses itself in ugly egotism and frequently in wanton mischief. We have recently seen our beaches, our parks, our forests littered with ugly refuse by young men—many of them college men—who evidently have no appreciation for their beauty. Only the other day I rode through thousands of acres of blackened land scourged by a fire evidently set by a careless smoker whose only concern had been the selfish pleasure gained from a cigaret.

Where there is appreciation, there is courtesy, there is concern for the rights and property of others. Without it there is arrogance and evil.

Where there is gratitude, there is humility, as opposed to pride.

How magnificently we are blessed. How thankful we ought to be. A recent bulletin of the Royal Bank of Canada dealt with underprivileged people of the world. It said among other things:

"It is difficult for North Americans to understand the plight of people in underdeveloped countries, because we have never been hungry. No one dies here of starvation. Elsewhere more

than 1,500 million people go to bed hungry every night . . . The fact is that not more than one in a hundred of the people in underdeveloped countries will ever, in all his life, have what a North American family would consider a good, square meal."

Reflect on that, my dear young friends, and then get on your knees and thank the Lord for his bounties. Cultivate a spirit of thanksgiving for the blessing of life and for the marvelous gifts and privileges you enjoy. The Lord has said, "The meek shall inherit the earth." (See Matt. 5:5.) I cannot escape the interpretation that meekness implies a spirit of gratitude as opposed to an attitude of self-sufficiency, an acknowledgment of a greater power beyond oneself, a recognition of God and an acceptance of his commandments. This is the beginning of wisdom.

"Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers." (D&C 112:10.)

Walk with gratitude before him who is the giver of life and every good gift.

### Virtue

Associated with gratitude is virtue. I think they are related because he who is disposed to shun virtue lacks appreciation of life, its purposes, and the happiness and the well-being of others.

One of our great national magazines recently stated the following: "We are witnessing the death of the old morality. The established moral guidelines have been yanked from our hands. . . . We are left floundering in a money-motivated, sex-obsessed, big-city dominated society. We must figure out for ourselves how to apply the traditional moral principles to the problems of our times. Many find this burden too heavy." (*Look Magazine*, Sept., 1963, p. 74.)

Heavy though it be, there is a way to apply traditional moral principles in our day. For some unknown reason there is constantly appearing the false rationalization that at one time in the long-ago, virtue was easy and that now it is difficult. I would like to remind you that there has never been a time

since the creation when the same forces were not at work which are at work today. The proposal made by Potiphar's wife to Joseph in Egypt is not essentially different from that faced by many a young man and woman in our day.

The influences today may be more apparent and more seductive, but they are no more compelling. You cannot be shielded entirely from these influences. They are all about us. Our culture is saturated with them. But the same kind of self-discipline exercised by Joseph will yield the same beneficial result. Notwithstanding the so-called "new morality," notwithstanding the much-discussed changes in our moral standard, there is no adequate substitute for virtue. The old standard is challenged on every campus in America as it is in Europe. But God has not abrogated his commandments.

The violation of these commandments in this, as in any other age, brings only regret, sorrow, loss of self-respect, and in many cases tragedy. Rationalization and equivocation will not erase the cankering scar that blights the self-respect of a young man who takes that virtue which he can never replace. Self-justification will never mend the heart of a young woman who has drifted into moral tragedy.

In April of 1942, the First Presidency of the Church issued a message which was read from this pulpit. It has the tone of scripture. I commend it to you:

"To the youth of the Church . . . above all we plead with you to live clean, for the unclean life leads only to suffering, misery, and woe physically,—and spiritually it is the path to destruction. How glorious and near to the angels is youth that is clean; this youth has joy unspeakable here and eternal happiness hereafter." (*The Improvement Era*, 45:273.)

I thought of this as I observed these thousands of handsome young men and beautiful young women on the university campus the other day. And I thought of a wise statement from the scripture: ". . . the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light. . . ." (Prov. 6:23.)

You of marvelous promise, you young men and women of great ability, do not mock God. Do not flout his law. Let virtue be a cornerstone on which to build your lives.

### Faith

I turn next to faith. I do not mean it in an abstract sense. I mean it as a living, vital force with recognition of God as our Father and Jesus Christ as our Savior. When we accept this basic premise, there will come an acceptance of their teachings and an obedience which will bring peace and joy in this life and exaltation in the life to come.

I do not regard this as a theological platitude. I regard it as a fact of life. It can become the very wellspring of purposeful living. Can you imagine a more compelling motivation to worthwhile endeavor than the knowledge that you are a child of God, the Creator of the universe, our all-wise Heavenly Father who expects you to do something with your life and who will give help when help is sought for?

These wonderful college years are years of learning. Jesus said: ". . . learn of me. . . ."

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:29-30.)

I should like to suggest that you follow that injunction given by the Son of God. With all of your learning, learn of him. With all of your study, seek knowledge of the Master. That knowledge will complement in a wonderful way the secular training you receive and give a fulness to your life and character that can come in no other way.

We were aboard a plane some years ago flying between Honolulu and Los Angeles. It was in the days when only propeller-driven aircraft were available. About midway in our journey one of the motors stopped. There was a decrease in speed, a lowering in altitude, and a certain amount of nervousness among those aboard. The simple fact of the matter was that much of the power was missing and the hazards were increased accordingly. Without that power we could not fly high, fast, and safely.

It is so with our lives when we dis-

count the need for faith and disregard knowledge of the Lord.

Passive acceptance is not enough. Vibrant testimony comes of anxious seeking. Strength comes of active service in the Master's cause. "... learn of me . . ." (*ibid.*, 11:29), was Jesus' injunction. He further declared that he that doeth the will of the Father "... shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:17.)

And so, while you read math and physics and chemistry, read also the Gospels of the New Testament. And read the testament of the New World, the Book of Mormon, which was brought forth by the power of God "... to the convincing of the Jew and the gentile that Jesus is the Christ."

I should like to pass on to you the words of a wise old man who had traveled far and suffered much and grown ripe in wisdom. I speak of him of whom Brother Hunter has spoken so eloquently today. These words were written by Paul to Timothy while Paul was a prisoner of Nero in Rome. To his beloved young friend he said, "... God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, . . ." (2 Tim. 1:7-8.)

To every young man and woman I commend this stirring injunction. This is the spirit that will reform the world.

I have been impressed with a statement from Charles Malik, former president of the General Assembly of the United Nations. He said this:

"In this fearful age it is not enough to be happy and prosperous and secure yourselves; it is not enough to tell others: look at us, how happy we are; just copy our system, our know-how, and you will be happy yourselves. In this fearful age you must transcend your system; you must have a message to proclaim to others; you must mean something in terms of ideas and attitudes and fundamental outlook on life; and this something must vibrate with relevance to all conditions of men." (*Successful Leadership*, p. 5.)

To every young man and woman within the sound of my voice I should

like to say, take upon yourself the name of the Lord and then with faith go forth to teach with relevance that which will affect the lives of men and bring peace and joy to the world. The need of the world is a generation of men of learning and influence who can and will stand up and in sincerity and without equivocation declare that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ.

And so, my dear young friends, I suggest to you with all earnestness that as you pursue your secular studies you add another dimension to your life, the cultivation of the spirit. God bless you with that peace which comes from him alone, and that growth which comes of sharing with others that which is most precious, your faith. I pray as I give you my witness of the divinity of this work, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve has been our concluding speaker.

As we conclude this sixth session of the 134th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we express again our thanks and appreciation to the owners and managers of the many television and radio stations who have offered their facilities as a public service to make the proceedings of this Conference available to millions throughout North America, South America, Africa, and in many other areas.

We should like to acknowledge several telegrams and cablegrams that we have received from people in different countries expressing their appreciation and sending their best wishes. We also express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Tabernacle Choir for their inspirational singing.

The Choir will now sing that inspiring number, "Sing and Rejoice to the Lord." Following the singing the benediction will be offered by Elder George B. Hill, formerly president of the Eastern Atlantic States Mission. This Conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

(Postlude singing by Choir: "Father In Heaven.")