

sembled here will know, but for the benefit of those who are listening in, it gives me great pleasure to tell them and you that we are favored tonight with the presence of President David O. McKay. He is presiding at this session, all sessions of the conference in fact, and we who conduct occasionally do so under his direction.

It may interest you to know that these services are being relayed by closed circuit wire to members of the priesthood gathered in the Assembly Hall and in approximately 400 other separate gatherings from coast to coast and in Canada. It is estimated that approximately 60,000 will participate in this meeting by direct wire. This does not include the 12,000 gathered in the building and in the Assembly Hall.

The singing during this session will be furnished by the men of the Tabernacle Choir, with Richard P. Condie as conductor and Alexander Schreiner at the organ. We shall begin these services by the chorus singing, "Prayer at Evening." After the singing Elder Stanford G. Smith, president of the Bountiful Stake, will offer the opening prayer.

The Men of the Tabernacle Choir sang "Prayer at Evening," following which the invocation was offered by President Stanford G. Smith of the Bountiful Stake.

President Hugh B. Brown

The men of the Tabernacle Choir

will now favor us with "Seek Thy God."

Selection by the Men of the Tabernacle Choir, "Seek Thy God."

President McKay

APPRECIATION TO PRIESTHOOD MEMBERS

Brethren of the Priesthood of the Church: Few, if any, of you can appreciate my feelings when I say, I am happy to meet you.

I had a message in my heart and I put it on paper, anticipating this moment, but I have been advised that I had better conserve what little strength I have. I say to you, I am happy to be in your presence. I feel honored to work with my counselors, and the Twelve, and the other General Authorities. My heart is filled to overflowing in appreciation for your companionship and your prayers; for your ability and willingness to carry on the Priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I have asked my son, Edward, (Dr. Edward R. McKay) to read a paragraph or two that I have written, and if he will do that, I shall just close with a prayer in my heart for God's blessings to be with you always, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Choir and the congregation sang the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet."

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Read by Dr. Edward R. McKay
a son of President McKay

My dear brethren in the priesthood:

What is the end and purpose of religion, "swaying the lives of men the centuries through"? The members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints answer in the words of the Lord revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith that the end and purpose of true religion, which is the work of God, is ". . . to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

And what is the crowning glory of man in this earth so far as his individual achievement is concerned? It is character—character developed through obedience to the laws of life as revealed through Jesus Christ, who came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

Man's chief concern in life should not be the acquiring of gold or of fame or of material possessions. It should not be the development of physical prowess, nor of intellectual strength, but his aim, the highest in life, should

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be the development of a Christlike character.

One of the most significant statements in the Word of Wisdom, one which carries with it evidence of the inspiration of the Prophet Joseph Smith, is found in the following statement, "In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarned you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—" (D&C 89:4.) "... evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men . . ."—the purport of that statement impressed me way back in the twenties and thirties of this century.

I ask you to recall the methods employed by certain tobacco interests to induce women to smoke cigarets. You remember how insidiously they launched their plan: first, by saying that smoking would reduce weight. Their slogan was: "Take a cigaret instead of a sweet." Later, some of us noticed in the theatre that they would have a young woman light the gentleman's cigaret. Following this a woman's hand would be shown on billboards lighting or taking a cigaret. A year or two passed, and soon they were brazen enough to show the woman on the screen or on the billboard smoking the cigaret.

I have a newspaper clipping which I set aside in 1931 which corroborates this idea. It reads: "It is well-known that the cigarette manufacturers are now after the young women and girls. They say there are twenty-five million of these in the United States, and if they can popularize smoking among them, they will be able to increase their sales from three billions, six hundred million dollars annually, to six billion dollars. This is their claim and their aim."

Now, as you all know, it is common to see beautiful young women depicted on billboards and in magazine advertisements smoking cigarets; and now most insidious of all are the cigaret advertisements which come into our homes by way of television and are viewed by our boys and girls, showing young men and young women smoking

in the most enticing scenes possible.

Do these conspiring men have evil designs upon our youth? Keep your eyes and ears open to observe if they are not taking the same steps now to get our boys interested as they did to entice women to use that vile weed.

Our youth should be taught the hazards of cigaret smoking to health. They should be taught that doctors and scientists now have established a direct tie to cancer and cigaret smoking.

Emerson Foote, chairman of the National Interagency Council on Smoking and Health, has testified that "it has been concluded by responsible scientific authorities' that cigarette smoking is responsible for at least 125,000 and possibly 300,000 deaths a year in this country.

"But death is not the only thing. . . . It is beyond doubt that there are millions of people who suffer varying degrees of disability brought on by cigarette smoking." (Washington [Associated Press], *Deseret News*, March 23, 1965, p. A7.)

Somewhere between sixty and eighty percent of boys and men and a somewhat lesser number of girls and women are already habituated to cigarets or they are confirmed addicts.

The high death rates from cigaret smoking have created a demand from many interested groups for positive action that will lessen the dangers to health. The Royal College of Physicians of Great Britain, the American Cancer Society, and the United States Public Health Service have led the way in creating public reaction against smoking. The Cancer Society has supported research generously and has kept the public and the medical profession informed on the problems connected with smoking. The Surgeon General of the Public Health Service has used his official and moral influence in emphasizing the dangers involved in smoking.

These agencies, as well as the great body of research scientists, have compiled the evidence and stated the facts so clearly that every reasonable mind is fully aware of the danger entailed from smoking.

Notwithstanding the admission of danger from smoking, the advertising

of cigarets by the tobacco companies has been stepped up to an all-time peak. Yet there is never a hint that smoking is already a major threat to life. Instead, the advertising constantly emphasizes the mildness of the cigaret and its pleasurable qualities. This cigaret advertising is promoted with such reckless abandon, in spite of what research has already proved regarding the dangers from smoking, that the most charitable conclusion to be drawn is that the promoters have no regard whatever for the value of human life. It seems that success for the tobacco industry is more important than the avoiding of suffering and of death.

One hundred thirty-two years ago a twenty-seven-year-old youth told the world that tobacco was harmful for the human body. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were given by divine revelation the Word of Wisdom, in which they were advised to refrain from the use of tobacco in any form. They were promised better health as a result. This was strange as no one knew of any danger from smoking at that time. Most of the members accepted and applied the instructions given.

The demonstration presented today by more than two million people of the Church should be impressive to any skeptic. Hundreds of thousands of teenage youths have never smoked. They know that smoking is a destructive habit that mars the human body as well as the mind.

Our homes should establish the fact that the boy who indulges in cigarets is not contributing to his advancement and growth in the Church and kingdom of God; neither is he preparing himself for his responsible place in society. The word of God to the Prophet Joseph Smith is that tobacco is not good for man. The statement is not qualified in any way. Scientists have demonstrated it; men who have tried to disprove it have failed; and we as a people stand committed to that command from God. Keep the habit of smoking and the use of tobacco in any form out of the lives of our boys. Resistance of the appetite will react upon the character and strengthen it, and just because a man has developed the

habit is no justification for his continuing it. Just because some man may think he is immune from the ill effects of tobacco is no justification for its use in the priesthood of God.

Fathers and members of the priesthood have the obligation of setting an example worthy of imitation to the youth. Boys want to look upon you as men. Their ideals incorporate in your life all the Christlike attributes, as nearly as you can develop them, which Christ had when the Roman governor pointed to him saying, "Behold the man!" (John 19:5.) Remember, even though you have the habit, overcoming it will make you stronger.

"It is easy enough to be virtuous
When nothing tempts you to stray,
When without or within no voice of sin
Is luring your soul away.
But it is only a negative virtue
Until it is tried by fire,
And the soul that is worth the honor of
earth

Is the soul that resists desire."
(Adapted from Ella Wheeler Wilcox,
"Worth While.")

To our boys I would say that if they want to live physically; if they want to be men strong in body, vigorous in mind; if they want to be good in sports, enter the basketball game, enter the football game, enter the contest in running and jumping; if they want to be good Scouts; if they want to be good citizens, in business, anywhere, avoid tobacco and live strictly the religious life.

May God help us as men of the priesthood, as fathers, to reach our boys and young men and impress upon them this great lesson, this divine truth, that to be carnally minded is to be miserable, unhappy, but to be spiritually minded, which means to obey the principles of the gospel in all that it means, is to have life, life eternal and peace, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

I am sure we all feel it very timely, this inspired message, this voice of warning from a prophet of God, and it