

the crowd in something that seems questionable or standing firm in what you know to be right, just remember that you are a priesthood bearer. Your commitment is to God; you must never defect to the enemy—you must remain above such things. By so doing, you will find new strength. You will be given new power. You will discover the deep-down joy that comes with compliance to priesthood principles.

I testify to you that there is no suc-

cess, no joy, no true fulfillment for us in this life or in the eternities unless our lives are in compliance with priesthood principles. This is the "living water" which can and should be a "well of water springing up into everlasting life."

I testify of the divinity of Him who offers the "living water" through compliance with the principles of the priesthood, and I do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Mark E. Petersen

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I would like to talk with you tonight about the relationship we have to our Father in heaven and the great responsibility we have of living in such a way as to be worthy of that responsibility and that great opportunity.

The sad plight of today's world is but a reflection of the willfulness and selfishness of mankind.

And sad to say, both willfulness and selfishness in the last analysis are born of deep, dark ignorance, which is nothing less than amazing in this enlightened age.

Mankind drifting aimlessly

As a race, mankind is drifting aimlessly, with no overall purpose, and the reason most people have no real purpose is that few of them know the basic facts of life—who we are, or even why we exist.

These are unanswered questions for many, and as a result they seek activities which in many respects are harmful to themselves as well as to their fellowmen.

With no understanding of the deeper meaning of existence, some sink into almost brute-like conditions where they almost sadistically destroy each other.

That is why we have riots.

That is why we have crime.

It is the basic reason behind immorality, and to a large extent is responsible for much of our drunkenness, with all its sorrow and distress.

It is why man's inhumanity to man continues to make countless thousands mourn.

World of contrasts

We are in a world of peculiar contrasts.

We live in what is doubtless the most affluent period of the history of man, and yet in our midst we have poverty and starvation.

Similarly, we live in what is probably the greatest period of intellectual—and certainly the greatest period of technological—advancement the world has ever known.

But in the midst of it all there still remain roots of ignorance that stimulate selfishness and breed crime, violence, war, and every other abuse.

True purpose of life

If man understood his true purpose in life as it is revealed in the gospel, and if he knew the secret of his origin, he could begin to free himself from the shackles of this ignorance.

Who are we?

What is the purpose of our existence?

Can a man who thinks that life came about by chance on a globe that was made by accident have any overlying purpose to guide him?

Can a man who thinks he evolved from the lowest forms of life have any lofty aspirations?

Does the idea that we are descendants of ape-like ancestors inspire us to any great heights of achievement?

The importance of having purpose in life cannot be overstated.

The discovery of an obvious purpose in creation is what now begins to

open the eyes of our greatest scientists to the facts of our existence. They are learning that creation could not possibly exist, nor could it have come into being initially, without a definite purpose. These scientists now say they are convinced that creation came by the act of a supreme Intelligence, that he had a purpose in creation, and since he has purpose he therefore must be a person. Furthermore, they tell us that this Creator also had a definite purpose in creating man to be like himself.

Statements of scientists

Listen to some of them.

Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Nobel Prize winner, writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, said:

"Where there is plan, there is intelligence, and an orderly unfolding universe testifies to the truth of the most majestic statement ever uttered—"In the beginning, God. . . ."

In a volume entitled *The Freedom of Man*, published by Yale University Press, Sir John Arthur Thomson says:

"We feel compelled—and it is a glad compulsion—to say with the most philosophical of the disciples, 'In the beginning was Mind, and the Mind was with God, and the Mind was God.'"

Alfred G. Fisk, in his book *The Search for Life's Meaning*, says:

"Just as the ordered structure of the universe implies a creative Intelligence, Architect or Orderer, so a belief in the objectivity or purpose in the universe leads to a belief in a Purposer or Divine Agent who is the source and spring of purpose in the Universe."

Sir Ambrose Flemming, in his *Origin of Mankind*, wrote: "The ultimate cause of things and events is a self-conscious and personal living Being. . . . Life can only proceed from already living matter. It cannot be derived spontaneously from non-living matter. We can obtain energy only from some source or body already possessing it. It cannot arise spontaneously from nothing. . . . Accordingly we can infer that the Cause which gave rise to our self-consciousness and powers of thought, must have been itself self-conscious and intelligent, or a Thinker.

Hence we may infer that the thought of the Intelligent First Cause was not identical with ours, and therefore this separateness constitutes that First Cause a Person."

Dr. Compton, writing for *This Week* magazine, said:

"Few scientific men today defend the atheistic attitude. Design in the Universe presumes an intelligence. Evidence points to a Beginner, a Creator of the Universe. A physicist's studies lead him to believe this Creator to be an Intelligent Being. The intelligent God has an interest in and relation to man, and it is reasonable to assume that He would be interested in creating a being intelligent like himself."

Albert Einstein, in his book *The World as I See It*, says on pages 267-68: "The harmony of natural law reveals an Intelligence of such superiority that compared with it, all the scientific thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection."

Origin and destiny of man

Now, what is the truth about the origin of man? Paul gave it to us: We are the children of God. We are his offspring. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. (See Rom. 8:16-17.)

And what does that mean?

It means that we have a mighty purpose in life, which purpose is that we may become like God!

Jesus commanded us to achieve this purpose, saying: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.)

Then, being children of God, we can see our true destiny. And being thus related to him, as his children, we now see ourselves in an entirely new light—not as the descendants of ape-like creatures living an aimless existence, but as the descendants of Almighty God, with the possibility of becoming like him!

Now we can understand the true place and dignity of man. Now we can see his infinite potential.

As members of the family of God, we can know that he has placed us here on earth in a type of school that will help us to become like him, if we are willing to follow the curriculum.

This is the light the world needs. This is the impetus we require to rise above the worldliness that brings heartbreak and degradation through sin, selfishness, and endless conflict.

Patterns to live by

God gave us a pattern to live by—his own Son, Jesus the Christ.

Since we can become like him, we should therefore measure all our acts in terms of whether they are Christlike or not.

That which helps us to become like him we should accept. All which tends to remove us from him we must reject.

Let us take a moment to measure some of the conditions and influences about us and see whether we become Christlike by indulging in them.

High estate of woman

To understand the true dignity of man, we must accept the high estate of woman. Every girl and woman is a daughter of God. She has within her the spark of true divinity. She has been given one of God's own creative powers—the ability to bring forth human life.

Recognizing her as a co-creator with God, will any of us attempt to seduce her, or defile her, or abuse her? Identifying her as a daughter of God, and a co-creator of life with him, do we not see why the Almighty places sex sin next to murder in his category of crime? Is there anything Christlike in any act that would degrade womanhood or cheapen the true concept of motherhood?

Or is it Christlike to be cruel or unkind to any woman, or even discourteous, whether in public or in private? Which of us has the right to belittle his wife in or out of the home, as some habitually do?

Man is no less a child of God than is woman. He too has a divine heritage to be realized through proper living. His standards must be as high as those of any woman. Before God, there is only one standard of good conduct.

Practices that demoralize

Dishonesty is another of the major afflictions of the world today. When

we recall that the Savior instructed us to do to others as we would be done by, and to love our neighbors as ourselves, can we find anything Christlike in unfair dealing?

One of the most conspicuous of our indignities comes through the use of alcoholic beverages. Is there anything more pitiable than men and women who have lost their senses in drunkenness?

Observe any intoxicated person; listen to his babbling. Does liquor improve his opportunity of becoming an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ?

Liquor can only lower the dignity and honor and respectability of man. Any effort to make it more available aids and abets the moral breakdown that always accompanies intoxication.

I ask you frankly, is there anything Christlike in it? Would your Savior encourage you to make liquor any more available than it already is?

And what of the use of tobacco? Is there anything sanctifying in it? If you use the weed in any form, look at yourself in a mirror and ask how you enhance the divinity within you as you smoke or chew it.

One of the widespread demoralizing practices of the present day is the telling of obscene stories. It is satanic to place evil thoughts in the minds of others. Truly the Lord taught that what comes out of the mouth reflects what is in the heart, and when corruption issues from the lips, it is but the effervescent bubbling of a wicked heart.

Purity of mind alone can lead us to God. Nothing but corruption is spread by evil stories.

If you gamble, if you violate the Sabbath day or put pleasure before God, if you lower your standards to meet the popular demands of the world, ask yourself if Christ is pleased. Ask yourself if such retrogression will bring you any nearer your purpose in life, that of becoming like our Savior.

Man's relationship to God

Since we are the children of God, we should deport ourselves as such.

Saturday, October 5

Second Day

We should maintain the honor and dignity that relationship with the Almighty demands of us.

We should be willing to follow the Christ into that perfection which only consistent righteous living can bring.

I testify to you that God is a reality and that it is equally true that we can become like him.

We are his sons. Let us bear the mantle of sonship and apply ourselves

to the work he has given us in all diligence. For this I humbly and earnestly pray in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Alvin R. Dyer

In conclusion, my brethren, President Nathan Eldon Tanner, second counselor in the First Presidency, will speak to us.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

I am happy, my brethren, to be with you this evening, to hear these fine messages from the boys, these Aaronic Priesthood holders, and those who are holding the Melchizedek Priesthood who have been chosen by God to lead, guide, and direct us in these latter days; and to hear the singing of this excellent men's chorus, which is an inspiration to anyone.

As I sat and listened to the things that have been said here tonight, I wondered if any of the young men had the idea that they were being given a hard task. I told the Regional Representatives this week a little experience I had that I hope they won't mind my repeating to this group and to those who are scattered throughout the Church in the different buildings and listening in tonight.

Church brings joy

A man came to me and said, "President Tanner, this Church just demands too much of us. It's really hard to live up to the standards of this Church."

And I said, "Brother, I can't agree with you on either statement. This Church doesn't demand anything of anybody. All it does is offer them a better way of life. It offers them the things that will bring joy and happiness to them while they are young, as they are growing older, and as they get ready to pass on to meet their Heavenly Father. Not one single thing that this Church offers is a deterrent, or will impede your progress, your joy, your success and happiness in any endeavor that is worthwhile."

He said again, "Well, it's surely hard to live up to it just the same."

I said, "Well now, brother, I don't see why it is. I don't agree with you." (I am going to cut short my discussion with him.) "Can you think of one thing that you would like to do that is wrong?" I named several while I was talking to him, like having a cigar or having a drink or robbing a bank, and so on.

And he said, "Now, don't be ridiculous."

I said, "All right, you tell me one thing that is wrong that you would like to do."

He had no answer.

I was telling this to a group where there were six adults and three children. I was talking to the adults and telling them of this experience. I said, "You know, I can't think of a thing that is wrong that anybody would really like to do." And a little girl who is ten years old who I didn't know was listening spoke up and said, "President Tanner, there is something wrong I would like to do." This was Sunday afternoon.

I said, "What is it, my dear?"

She said, "Well, I would like to go horseback riding today."

I said, "Well, why don't you?"

She said, "Well, I don't want to."

Position to resist temptation

Brethren, when we can get ourselves into a position where there might be things that we would like to do that would tempt us if we would let them, then can be so sure we don't want to