

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

do them that we won't do them, we will have very little to worry about. I can't see why we would want to do wrong. Everything that has been told you tonight would, if followed, bring joy and happiness, contentment, success, respect, and love into your lives. What more do you want? Besides that, it would assure you a place in the celestial kingdom.

No boy who is breaking the Word of Wisdom enjoys it. It's hard to learn to smoke. It's hard to learn to drink. They tell me nobody likes the first cigarette or the first drink. They have to work at it in order to develop an appetite for it.

I should like to tell you that I love young men. I love young people. I was impressed with the way these young men talked here tonight, and with these boys down here in the audience, sitting and paying attention to what is going on.

### **You, and the rest of the world**

I would like to tell you one or two experiences that I have had in my life. You know, when I was a young man my father pointed his finger at me and said, "Young man, I want you to realize that this world is divided into two great groups—you, and the rest of the world." He was serious about it, and he made me feel serious about it before we had finished talking. He said, "Regardless of what the rest of the world does, it cannot save you; and regardless of what the world does, it cannot destroy you. It is what you do yourself that determines what is going to happen, whether you are going to be loved and respected and happy and successful while you are living here, and whether or not you are going to meet your Heavenly Father the way you would like to meet him."

When I was president of the Edmonton [Alberta, Canada] Branch we had a young man there who was the only member of the Church on his high school basketball team. That young man and I were pretty close friends, though he was only a 16-year-old boy. He said to me, "You know, I don't know how I am going to hold up."

I said, "Listen, you have something

that these boys don't have. They don't know anything about our Word of Wisdom. They don't know several things that we have in the Church. They don't know that they are spirit children of God. If I were you, I would just tell these boys something about the Word of Wisdom, and how these things may destroy your body, and how detrimental they are to you, and how they will impede your playing, and so on."

You know, he set out to do that, and he became more or less a hero with those boys. Before that year was over, there wasn't a single boy who was using tobacco. Now, how easy it would have been for him to follow those boys and be one of them. You know, it is easy for anybody to be a follower, and he doesn't gain much by doing it, unless he is following the righteous.

It is a little difficult to be a leader, to take your stand. We have an individual responsibility. The world is divided into the two great groups, and remember, you are one of them. The individual is one of them, and his success depends upon his individual stand.

### **Influence of strong missionary**

I want to tell you of two experiences. One was while I was presiding over the West European Mission. I have told this in several places in the Church. There was a young man who came into the mission field for one purpose only, and that was to learn what he could about the world and to do what he thought would give him a good time. He said to some of the other missionaries, "Why do you want to waste your time trying to teach these people here in France? They don't want to hear the gospel. These Catholics think they know more than anyone else. Why waste your time? Why be a fool? Let's get out and see the night life and see what we can. It may be the only time we will ever be in this country."

He was able to influence three other elders to go along with him. Then another young man came into the mission field, and the four of them

got hold of him just as he landed. They said this same kind of thing to him: "Don't be a fool. Don't waste your time. Let's have a good time while we are here. We may never be back here again."

This young man stood up and said, "Fellows, I am here as a missionary for the Church, an ambassador of the Lord. My parents are sacrificing to keep me in the mission field, and I intend to do my missionary work. Now, don't be offended. You do what you want to do." In other words, choose you this day whom you will serve, but as for me, I am going to serve the Lord. (See Josh. 24:15.)

Two of those boys stood immediately by his side, and said, "We are with you." And it wasn't many months until the third one began doing missionary work; and before that other boy, the ring leader, had finished his time in the mission field, he too was trying to do missionary work.

Now I wonder what would have happened had this young man gone along with those four fellows. As it was, he saved his soul, and he helped to save the souls of others.

### Courage of young convert

A young girl and her family were being taught the gospel right here in this city by a returned missionary who was serving as a stake missionary. After the family had heard the first two discussions, the father said, "We want nothing more to do with it."

But this girl, who was about 18 years of age, believed what she heard, and she wanted to be baptized. Her father said, "You can't be baptized. If you want to be baptized, you will have to wait until you are of age."

She was telling her boyfriend about the gospel and what it meant to her. He got tired of listening to her. He said one night, "You will have to choose between me and the Church."

This hurt her badly. She loved this young man, but as they talked it over and she shed some tears, she said, "I am going to stay with the Church. I know it is true."

She went home and was very much upset. Her father saw she was upset

and asked her what was troubling her. She said, "Oh, nothing, Dad."

He said, "My dear, I know there is something wrong. What is it?"

She told him what had happened. He said, "If the Church means that much to you, you may be baptized." Three weeks from then she was baptized.

And who do you think was there to see the baptism? Her father, her mother, and her boyfriend; and three weeks later they were baptized.

I wonder what would have happened to that young girl, I wonder what would have happened to that young man, I wonder what would have happened to the father and mother, if she hadn't had the courage to stand up and be counted, knowing that the gospel was true. As it is, they are all members of the Church, appreciating what the gospel means.

### Stand for the right

May we as individuals have the determination, the courage, the ability to stand up and do those things which we know are right, realizing that we are the spirit children of God, with the potential to make it possible to be like him if we will follow his teachings and keep his commandments. And while we are doing it we will be happier, more successful, more respected and loved than if we were doing anything else, because this is the work of the Lord. You hold the priesthood, which is the power of God delegated to you to act in his name in the office you hold.

We do not like to deal with people on whom we cannot depend. I sometimes wonder how the Lord feels about us when we make our covenants with him and fail to keep them. I am happy that he has said to us, "If you will repent, I will forgive you." Let us go on together and do those things which will bring eternal life to us. May this be our happy lot, may we be an example to the world, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Alvin R. Dyer

From one of the seven hundred places to which this Priesthood session