

President Tanner

The Aaronic Priesthood Chorus will now sing, "I Need Thee Every Hour," following which Elder Boyd K. Packer, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our first speaker.

The Aaronic Priesthood Chorus sang "I Need Thee Every Hour."

President Tanner

That beautiful solo was by Steven Farr.
Brother Packer.

Elder Boyd K. Packer*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

● Brethren: Tonight I wish to speak to the boys and to the young men of the Aaronic Priesthood. Before you lies the path to manhood. It is an uphill course—uphill all the way. But as you climb, you become ever stronger and rise ever higher.

Foothills of life

There are some foothills of life that almost every young man will climb. They are the hills of missionary service, of military service, of education, and the highest of them all is the mountain of eternal marriage. It will take a lifetime and more to climb, but it will lead you literally to celestial heights.

There are steep and dangerous places along the way, but somehow the paths that go around these hills, the easy roads, lead downward. All seem to end in the stagnant swamps of failure.

Experience in air force

I've been across the hills of military service and would like to relate an experience to you young men. During the winter of 1943, World War II was raging in full intensity. I had enlisted in the air force and was assigned to Thunderbird Field, near Scottsdale, Arizona. We were training in open-cockpit steerman trainers.

One day there was a crash, and one of our classmates lost his life. Flight schedules were immediately intensified. This was war and no time to let anyone get jittery.

The cadets in our class had all soloed, and that afternoon found us practicing

landings at an auxiliary field. At the close of the day it was my assignment to take one of the planes across the valley to the main field.

Out of curiosity, I decided to fly over the crash site. It was plainly visible from the air. One could see the spot where the plane had hit, burst into flames, and skidded across the desert floor, burning the chaparral in a long, sooty smear. My curiosity satisfied, I then headed for the main base.

We had been taught the various maneuvers: stalls, loops, spins. In order to lose altitude to enter the landing pattern, I decided to put the plane into a practice spin. That is the quickest way, of course, to lose altitude.

In attempting a recovery from the spin (perhaps frightened by the thoughts of the accident), I was clumsy and over-corrected. Instead of a recovery, the plane shuddered violently, stalled, and then flipped over into a secondary spin. Never have I known such panic. I found myself clawing at the controls.

I really don't know what happened. I think probably I let go of the controls. The plane was used heavily as a trainer because it had the capacity almost to fly itself if you'd leave it alone. Finally the plane pulled out in a long, sweeping skid, just feet above the desert floor.

I quickly recovered my composure and made a normal landing, with the hope that no one had seen the circus performance!

No doubt you have had a frightening experience where shock set in after-

wards. Long into the night I experienced almost the same panic as I had in the plane.

My buddy, a member of the Church from southern Utah, was sleeping in the lower bunk and was awakened by my restlessness. I told him what had happened and asked, "What did I do wrong?"

He then told me that his instructor, early in their flight training, had warned them against just such a happening. He had pointed out to them the singular danger of a secondary spin. He had taken each of his students up and demonstrated how to recover should it happen. This training, this warning, had insured him against mortal danger.

There arose in me an intense resentment for my instructor. Why hadn't he told us? Another second or two in that spin, and—well, you would have been spared listening to me. His negligence as an instructor had come that close to costing me my life.

Responsibility of leaders

Great responsibility rests upon those of us who are leaders and teachers and instructors in the Church. Against the possibility that one of you, if unwarned, may, as you enter military service, spiritually falter, or stall, or spiritually "spin-in," a wonderful program has been prepared. It will see you safely through the adventure of military service.

We regard you as the finest generation of young men the Church has ever known. I have heard the Brethren comment on experiences of exceptional inspiration with our teen-agers and college-age youth.

Responsibility of servicemen

We have great confidence in you. Will you help us take care of you and assist us with your buddies? We'll do all we can to meet you at every cross-road with guidance and help. If you will volunteer before you leave home to be active and to help with the less active, much of the battle will have been won.

We ask that you subscribe for *The*

Improvement Era and *Church News* yourself. Pay for it yourself before you leave for military service. Take the responsibility for changing the address when you move.

We are asking you to find the Church—look for it—it isn't difficult to find. But many have failed because they have waited and waited to be found—and no one knew they were there.

There's an old Chinese proverb that says: Man who sits with open mouth waiting for roast duck to fly in has long hunger!

Pre-service orientation

Yesterday we delivered to each of the Regional Representatives of the Twelve a kit of materials with all of the necessary instructions to hold a pre-service Church orientation for every member of the Church entering military service. He was given a recorder, tapes, instructional manuals, and supplies.

We're happy to announce to you that within the next few weeks in every area of the Church where there is a need, this pre-service orientation will be held regularly, so that a young man going into military service will receive about three hours of important instruction.

Helps for home teacher

Your home teacher plays a vital role in this program. Be sure you keep him informed of your plans. He in turn can advise you when this orientation session will be held. He can even assist in arranging transportation for you.

To help the home teacher, there is a series of brochures printed on a number of subjects. Among nearly a dozen titles in print is this brochure: *Suggestions to Priesthood Home Teachers—'What Can I Do to Help a Boy Entering or Serving in the Military Service.'* On the front cover is the statement: "One of my families has a boy in the service and another boy who is about to be drafted. I'd like to help these boys."

As the home teacher opens the cover, there are important suggestions for

Saturday, April 4

First Day

him. Every home teacher in the Church should have one of these brochures, and for that matter, the other brochures also. The bishop or his executive secretary can order them from Church Distribution. Pretty expensive, though—they cost 2c apiece.

Other phases of military relations program

Did you know that the executive secretary in the ward and stake, whose major assignment is home teaching, has been appointed adviser to the bishopric and stake presidency on military relations? You can see the correlation in operation there. It's his job to see that the bishop or stake president knows of every man leaving for military service—even if it is just to summer camp.

Another major phase of the program begins as soon as you enter the service. When you are at basic training, there will be a special course of instruction, teaching you how to find the Church in the military service; the wise use of leisure time; how to conduct meetings; your missionary opportunities; and a number of other things. Perhaps you'll be fortunate enough to be stationed where we have a Latter-day Saint chaplain. Presently we have 30 on active duty.

We have young men serving in military service from many countries in the world. This program is prepared so that it may be adapted to meet the circumstances in every country.

A second mission

Some of you will have served full-time missions prior to entering military service. In that case, this service can be like a second mission.

Many of the mission fields of the Church have been opened by servicemen—in fact, all of them in Asia. These have been the result of Latter-day Saint servicemen living exemplary lives.

Before you go into military service, each of you will be invited to speak in a sacrament meeting. In fact, your bishops have been instructed to regard you much the same as they would a man departing for the mission field.

The home teachers must be alert and notify the bishop in order that every young man leaving for military service, though it be for six months' national guard training, can be invited to speak in a sacrament meeting.

Some of you who have served missions have had your temple endowments. There will be a question in your minds on the wearing of the temple garment while serving in the military service. The bishop of your ward, or the president of your branch, has a letter of instruction for you. In the interview that he has with every man leaving for military service, you will be invited to read the letter. It will answer your questions concerning this important matter.

Blessings of the Church

The First Presidency has declared our determination "in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law" and has stated, "We believe our young men should hold themselves in readiness to respond to the call of their government to serve in the armed forces."

Great effort is being put forth so that if you are called to serve in the military, you may have the blessings of advancement in the Church similar to the blessings you would have in civilian life.

Lesson from experience

In conclusion I return again to the experience mentioned in the beginning. I resented my instructor because he had failed in his duty to warn me of a mortal danger. The next few days I wasn't very good at flying. I was tense and tied up and frightened. After a particularly bad flight, my instructor said, "What's the matter with you, Packer? You're no good at this. Why can't you loosen up? You keep this up and we're going to wash you right out of the program." I was afraid to tell him what was the matter. And then he said, "I have a special assignment for you this weekend. I want you to go into Phoenix and get right good and drunk. You go get loosened up and relax, and we can maybe make a pilot of you."

You'd have to know how much I wanted those silver wings to know what a trial that became. I could see the thing that I then wanted more than any other thing on earth slipping away from me. There was a great temptation to follow his advice. To imbibe in those spirits would loosen me up, he thought, and restore the confidence I had lost. But those spirits are counterfeit spirits. They lift you, to drop you all the lower.

Spiritual restoration

We did go to Phoenix that weekend, but we sought the other kind of spirit in association with brethren in the priesthood and with members of the Church in worship service. There came an inspiration and a restoration of

confidence. There came an assurance that has sustained me ever since.

It was in the military service that I came to know for sure that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, that there stands at the head of the Church a prophet of God, and that our Father in heaven will hear and answer prayers and sustain us as we answer the call to enter military service. Of this I bear testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy will now address us, and he will be followed by Bishop John H. Vandenberg, Presiding Bishop of the Church.

Elder S. Dilworth Young

Of the First Council of the Seventy

● I shall begin by quoting a scripture that you all know very well:

"Therefore, let every man stand in his own office, and labor in his own calling; and let not the head say unto the feet it hath no need of the feet; for without the feet how shall the body be able to stand?" (D&C 84:109.)

The scriptures declaring the prime importance and necessity of the seventies' being in the missionary service are clear and to the point. I shall give you but one example:

"The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews." (D&C 107:34.)

Stake missionary system

However, the application of the missionary program of the Church changes as generations and conditions change. For example, we stressed the doctrine of gathering in a previous generation, so it did not matter much where converts were made, rural or

urban. They gathered to Zion. Today we do not gather. Converts are encouraged to build the Church in their home districts; and so we stress proselyting in ever-widening concentric circles with the meetinghouse as a center. Where once the missionaries had no help from the ward or branch, its auxiliaries or its people, now the whole stake missionary system is organized around the wards and branches, their buildings and their people, to work within the framework of priesthood correlation.

Where once members helped missionaries by giving them meals, now members are the best sources of finding people to whom the missionaries might teach the gospel. Because of the growth of the Church, we can correlate the vast missionary system with the wards and stakes and use these units to accelerate and implement our proselyting purposes.

Ward proselyting program

There have been great changes in the organization of our units. Where once the bishop had inadequate help and