

experience. I remember when I was a boy of 15 and we had been expelled from Mexico in the revolution. My folks went to Los Angeles from El Paso, Texas. I got a job there among a bunch of Mormon-haters, and I didn't tell them that I was a Mormon. Sometime after that, President Joseph F. Smith came to Los Angeles and had dinner with my parents—a very humble dinner; I can remember that it was very scant. He put his hand on my head and said, "My boy, don't ever be ashamed that you are a Mormon."

You know, I have worried all my days that I didn't have the courage to stand up to those ribald men.

I remember another occasion when I was in Australia on a mission. I went up to visit the Jenolan Caves—very wonderful, spectacular caves. And as we walked through them, the guide said, "If some of you will get out and stand on that rock over there and sing a song, it will demonstrate the capacity of this cave."

Well, the Spirit said to me, "Go over there and sing 'O, My Father.' I hesitated, and the crowd walked on. I lost the opportunity. I never felt good about that. The only thing that ever made me feel the Lord had forgiven me was when I heard President McKay say, "I was inspired one time to do a certain thing when I was in the mission field, and I didn't do it." He said, "I have al-

ways been sorry since." He said, "Never fail to respond to the whisperings of the Spirit. Live so you can receive it, and then have the courage to do as it instructs."

As priesthood bearers, let us resolve, brethren, all of us, both young and old, to develop the courage to be true to ourselves and to our Maker in all things in our lives.

God bless us to that end, I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

### **President Spencer W. Kimball**

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency has just spoken to us.

The congregation and choir will now join in singing, "I Know that My Redeemer Lives."

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The congregation and choir sang the hymn, "I Know that My Redeemer Lives."

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### **President Kimball**

I wonder if anywhere in the world at any time a male chorus of more than 200,000 voices sang together. It is impressive to me.

We shall now appreciate hearing from President N. Eldon Tanner, first counselor in the First Presidency.

## **President N. Eldon Tanner**

First Counselor in the First Presidency

My beloved brethren, it is always a real privilege, blessing, and inspiration for me to look into the faces of the priesthood holders in this great Tabernacle and think of the hundreds of thousands that are listening in by closed circuit in the many groups in different parts of the world. How glorious to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ and to hold the priesthood of God and be allowed to act in his name! When we think of the thousands of

priesthood holders throughout the world, it gives us great encouragement and we feel to praise the Lord.

### **Work in South America**

As we attended the area conferences in South America we gave thanks to the Lord as we saw in Buenos Aires over 1,300 in attendance at the Melchizedek Priesthood leadership meeting—representatives from Ar-

gentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Chile. At the general conference sessions there were assembled over 5,500 in Brazil and over 10,000 in Argentina.

It is evident that the work of the Lord is going forward and that his kingdom is being built up throughout the world. The members were thrilled and most excited and enthusiastic and appreciative when the President announced that we would have a temple in Sao Paulo. Both in Brazil and Argentina the members pledged their full support.

It is most encouraging, and actually is a testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel, to see the change in the lives of the people who accept the gospel and live according to its teachings and to hear their testimonies.

Now let me give you a little experience I had in Caracas, Venezuela. As we attended a meeting of the Saints and investigators there one evening, the President estimated about 500 people in attendance. As I got up to speak I asked those who had been baptized in 1974 and '75 to stand, and then in '73, '72, '71, '70. I then asked those who had been in the Church over five years to stand. Only three stood, and they were visitors. This gives you some idea how the work of the Lord is going forward in that area.

### **Honoring the priesthood**

Now tonight, brethren, I should like to emphasize, and if possible make everybody realize, what a great privilege it is to hold the priesthood, and also to help us all to determine to honor the priesthood and magnify our callings so that we may be a light unto the world and help build the kingdom of God, and at the same time prepare ourselves for immortality and eternal life. No greater goal could be set, no greater progress could be made, and no greater joy and satisfaction could be experienced than to determine that we will accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, and live his teachings.

There is no doubt in my mind that everyone within the sound of my voice would like more than anything else to prepare himself for eternal life and exaltation and to know that the Lord is pleased with his actions. However, there are many who do not keep this in mind, and some who are not prepared to put forth the effort to live worthy of these blessings. With this in mind I should like to say a few words about self-discipline, self-control, or self-mastery which is so important to all of us if we are to accomplish what we set out to do and enjoy the blessings which we desire so much.

### **Self-mastery**

First, I should like to quote some of the philosophers.

Plato said: "The first and best victory is to conquer self; to be conquered by self is, of all things, the most shameful and vile."

And da Vinci once said: "You will never have a greater or lesser dominion than that over yourself." Then he goes on to say that "the height of a man's success is gauged by his self-mastery; the depth of his failure by his self-abandonment. . . . And this law is the expression of eternal justice. He who cannot establish dominion over himself will have no dominion over others." In other words, he cannot be a worthy father or leader.

Solomon in all his wisdom made this meaningful statement: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.)

### **Willpower needed**

There are two important elements in self-mastery. The first is to determine your course or set the sails, so to speak, of moral standards; the other is the willpower, or the wind in the sails carrying one forward. As I said before, character is determined by the extent to which we can master ourselves toward good ends.

It is difficult to say just what builds good character, but we know it when we see it. It always commands our admiration, and the absence of it our pity. But it is largely a matter of willpower.

I think it was Garrison who showed his great determination when he said: "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!" (William Lloyd Garrison, Salutory Address of *the Liberator*, 1 Jan. 1831.)

This should apply to every one of us engaged in the cause of right and truth.

### The narrow way

Christ probably gave us more definitely and clearly the answer as to how to succeed when he said:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:13-14.)

As we think of this, it is so evident that those who keep on the straight and narrow path leading to their goal, realizing that the straight line is the shortest distance between two points and that detours are very dangerous, are those who succeed in life and enjoy self-realization and achievement. This requires self-control and self-discipline.

On the other hand, those who fail to keep their goals in mind and fail to discipline themselves find that they are following detours and paths that lead to failure and destruction.

### Reaching the heights

There are those who complain that to follow the straight and narrow path requires limitations, restrictions, overcoming, and doing without things that are very tempting. We must remember, however, that it guarantees victory and

achievement of our goal, which is gained by setting a goal and being able to concentrate and follow an undeviating course.

*Narrow* is a very meaningful word.

Often people accuse us of being narrow-minded if we are following the straight and narrow path, which certainly does require self-restraint and self-denial. We must realize and be prepared to accept the fact that it confines us, restricts us, and limits us in certain areas. But let us fully realize that it does not fetter or shackle mankind. On the contrary, it is the way to emancipation, independence, and liberty.

Remember that—

The heights by great men reached and kept

Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The

Ladder of St. Augustine"

### Payment of earned accounts

Remember also that nature never pays an unearned account and she never fails to pay one that has been earned. If you wish to achieve financial success, if you wish to be happy, if you wish to be healthy, if you would be morally clean, if you wish to find religious peace of mind, there is only one sure way, and that is the straight and narrow path—the way of honor, the way of industry, of moderation, simplicity, and virtue.

If you want to be successful or outstanding in any field of endeavor, it is important that you determine while young to be a great boy, and not wait to be a man to be a great man; and then have the courage and strength and determination to discipline yourself, apply self-control and self-mastery.

I have a grandson who is an outstanding badminton player. At 16 he is a champion. He has accomplished this by running miles every morning

and keeping himself in physical condition. Though he has not neglected his schooling, he has practiced and practiced and kept the Word of Wisdom strictly and followed health principles to the letter. I honor him for it.

You priesthood holders, wherever you may be this evening, should appreciate that you have the great privilege of holding the priesthood, and that as you accepted the priesthood you made a covenant with the Lord that you would honor the priesthood and live worthy of it.

### **Importance of cleanliness**

It is so important that you keep yourselves clean and pure and not participate in any vulgar or unclean or unholly practices. As you go to your Sunday School and sacrament meetings and are permitted to pass the sacrament in memory of the great sacrifice that the Savior made for us, be sure that you are worthy, that your hands are clean and your hearts are pure, that you have done nothing during the week that would make you unworthy.

As I attended a sacrament meeting the other day, I was so pleased to see those who administered and passed the sacrament wearing white shirts and ties, well groomed and clean; and during the whole service they were reverent. I complimented the young men and the bishop and told them I was sure the Lord was pleased with the way the sacrament was administered. Sacrament service is most sacred. I wondered if the Lord can be pleased when we fail to show our respect and reverence.

Then too he cannot be pleased when young men holding the priesthood are doing and saying things during the week which they know are wrong.

### **A hundred percenter**

Several years ago my oldest grandson who had been a deacon for a year came to me and said, "Grandpa, I

have been a hundred percenter ever since I was ordained a deacon a year ago." I said, "What do you mean by a hundred percenter?" Of course I knew, but he responded, "I haven't missed a sacrament meeting, Sunday School, or priesthood meeting since I was ordained a deacon."

I congratulated him and said, "John, if you will continue to be a hundred percenter until you are old enough to go on a mission, I will finance your mission." He smiled and said, "I'll do it."

I thought I was perfectly safe, but he set about to be a hundred percenter. I remember on two occasions how he disciplined himself in order to accomplish his undertaking. One time his uncle invited him to go for a trip with him and his boys where they would be gone over Sunday. John said, "Is there any place I can attend my meetings on Sunday?" and as he was told there was not, he said, "No, I can't go. I am going to be a hundred percenter," and therefore sacrificed a lovely trip to the ocean and an island on which they were going to celebrate.

Another time near a weekend he broke his leg. The first thing he asked his doctor was, "Will I be able to attend Church on Sunday? I have to be a hundred percenter." He came, of course, on crutches.

When he became 19 years of age, he said, "Grandpa, I have been a hundred percenter ever since we made that deal." I was very happy to finance him on his mission. This achievement has been a great influence in his life. It is not so difficult for him to discipline himself and do those things which are right for him to do and which will bring him success.

### **Keeping the commandments**

How important it is that every priesthood holder keep the Word of Wisdom strictly; that he never tamper with tobacco, tea, coffee, alcoholic beverages, or drugs; that he keep the

Sabbath day holy; that he is honest and honorable and upright in his dealings; that he discipline himself in every way to be sure that he is worthy and acceptable to the Lord.

Satan is continually at work, and in his cunning way tempts us through our appetites and passions and friends to do those things which are not right and proper for us to do. Too often, not only our youth, but some of the brethren in high places succumb to temptation. We must be on the job all the time guarding against evil. We must never relax or forget who we are and what we are trying to accomplish.

### **Transgression of missionary**

Not long ago I had the very sad experience of talking to a missionary who, before he was called into the mission field, was guilty of immorality. He did not tell his bishop or his stake president. In fact, he lied about it, and went into the mission field guilty of transgression and guilty of lying. He was not able to get the Spirit of the Lord. Finally he came to his mission president and admitted his wrong. He was very repentant and prayed to the Lord to forgive him.

As he talked to me he said, "I am prepared to be excommunicated or anything else. I just want to get back in good fellowship with the Lord and be forgiven by him."

We cannot afford to waver in any way. We should always keep in mind that we are trying to prepare for missions, temple marriages, and activity in the Church and to be examples for good so that others will be influenced by the way we live.

So many people say, "One cigarette, one cup of tea or coffee, one puff of marijuana won't hurt you, and one drink of alcohol surely cannot hurt anybody."

I want to emphasize that if you never take the first you will never take the second. You will never become an alcoholic or an addict.

The Lord is interested in every boy wherever he is and in whatever he is doing. We have all been foreordained for some office or some calling or some position and responsibility.

### **Example of President Kimball**

President Kimball, when he was a boy, had no idea that he would ever be an apostle. In fact, he said that when he was called as an apostle he wept and prayed and wept and prayed that he might be worthy.

I don't want to embarrass President Kimball, but I don't know of a better example any place in the world where a young man through discipline and self-mastery prepared himself so well for the position which the Lord had in mind for him. Now, as the prophet of God, he has asked all of our young men to prepare themselves for missions by studying, and keeping themselves clean, and pure, and worthy, and by saving money for their missions.

I want to tell all of you young men that if you will do what the president of the Church asks you to do, you will be happy and more successful, and you will accomplish much good and be ready for any call that might come to you from the Lord by those who are in authority.

### **Translation for a prophet**

While I was at the area conference in Buenos Aires I met a young man who is the head of the Gillette Razor Company for the whole of South America. He set out as a boy to live the way the Lord wanted him to live, to magnify any office he held in the priesthood. He went from Argentina to BYU, where he became studentbody president. From there he went to work for the Gillette Company in the United States and has just been called to be the head of his company in the whole of South America. He translated for President Kimball in all of his talks while in the area conference.

He said to me how honored he was to be able to translate for a prophet. He told me what the gospel meant in his life and how it had prepared him for the work he is now doing.

The Lord is always looking for men in whom he can place his full confidence, who can represent him in the mission field, and men who can be trusted in every way and who are prepared to help build his kingdom.

### **His work and glory**

He said, "This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) He is asking us as priesthood holders if we will come and help him spread the gospel and live, and help others to live, so as to enjoy immortality and eternal life.

I wish to bear my witness to you

and to the world at this Easter season that Jesus Christ lives and that he is actually the Son of the living God; that he came and gave his life for you and me; that he gave us the plan of life and salvation, which is the gospel we teach in his restored church; that we are led by a prophet of God, Spencer W. Kimball.

May we apply the principles of self-mastery and discipline, so as to prove worthy of the many blessings we receive as priesthood holders, and walk uprightly before the Lord at all times, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **President Spencer W. Kimball**

President N. Eldon Tanner has just addressed us. He is the first counselor in the First Presidency. (President Kimball then addressed the meeting.)

## **President Spencer W. Kimball**

I have been wishing as I sat here and listened to these excellent sermons of these four Brethren tonight that all the boys in this world and every man in this world could hear sermons such as these to give them some concepts, some ideas, and some standards toward which to work. How fortunate are we, the men and boys of the Church, to be able to be so instructed and inspired in our personal lives and our Church work.

### **Counsel to executive officers**

I should like to address a few words to our executive officers, particularly the bishops and stake presidents, who are the "common judges" in Israel.

I will read for you the words of the prophets and the president of the Church in an earlier century. President John Taylor is quoted as saying:

"Furthermore, I have heard of some Bishops who have been seeking to cover up the iniquities of men; I tell them, in the name of God, they will

have to bear them themselves, and meet that judgment; and I tell you that any man who tampers with iniquity, he will have to bear that iniquity, and if any of you want to partake of the sins of men, or uphold them, you will have to bear them. Do you hear it, you Bishops and you Presidents? God will require it at your hands. You not are placed in position to tamper with principles of righteousness, nor to cover up the infamies and corruptions of men." (*Conference Report*, April 1880, p. 78.)

I read further from George Q. Cannon, who was also in the First Presidency:

"The Spirit of God would undoubtedly be so grieved that it would forsake not only those who are guilty of these acts, but it would withdraw itself from those who would suffer them to be done in our midst unchecked and unrebuked; and from the President of the Church down, throughout the entire ranks of the Priesthood, there would be a loss of the Spirit of God, a withdrawal