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Be instruments in His hands.

Build up treasures in heaven.

Discover the missionary adventures of the spirit.

God lives and loves us. He is in His heaven.

Jesus lives and loves us. Resurrected, glorified, exalted, He stands physically at the head of this church which bears His name. His spokesman is a living prophet, and everything that we teach is true.

As a witness, I testify of it in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Benson

Elder Robert E. Wells, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

It will now be our pleasure to hear from Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder Russell M. Nelson

### Quest for self-mastery

If our faith be united in prayer that we may be edified together, I should like to speak about our quest for self-mastery. In so doing, I would converse as a loving father counseling one of my own children.

Before you can master yourself, my precious one, you need to know who you are. You consist of two parts—your physical body, and your spirit which lives within your body. You may have heard the expression “mind over matter.” That’s what I would like to talk about—but phrase it a little differently: “spirit over body.” That is self-mastery.

When you arrived as a newborn baby, your little body was master. You had what I call the “I-want-what-I-want-when-I-want-it” philosophy. No amount of discussion could postpone your impatient demands when you wanted to be fed—and *now!* Like all parents, we anxiously anticipated the first smile, a word, a glimpse at the potential of the spirit within your tiny body. Is there a mother who has not cradled her baby as your sweet mother did, in wistful wonder of the destiny of her dear little one? Even Mary, the mother of Jesus, might have asked such questions:

Baby, lyin' in a manger,  
slumberin' so sweetly,  
What you goin' to be?  
Baby, all the world is watchin', all  
the world awaits to see.  
What will you be?  
Baby, sleepin' in a stable,  
underneath the heaven,  
What you goin' to say? . . .  
Baby, lyin' in a manger,  
Will you save the world one day?  
(Natalie Sleeth, “Baby, What You  
Goin' to Be?” [New York: Carl  
Fisher, Inc.]

### Body, tenement for spirit

Through those early years, we parents are properly concerned with physical needs of our children, such as food, clothing, and shelter.

But as you grow older, our concerns shift more toward your spiritual growth, in order that you might achieve your full potential. “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit . . . and becometh a saint” (Mosiah 3:19).

That requires self-mastery. Remember, “The spirit and the body are the soul of man” (D&C 88:15). Both are of great importance. Your physical

body is a magnificent creation of God. It is his temple as well as yours, and must be treated with reverence. Scripture declares: "Ye are the temple of God. . . . If any man defile [it], him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

Remarkable as your body is, its prime purpose is even of greater importance—to serve as tenement for your spirit. Abraham taught that "these . . . spirits . . . existed before, they shall have no end . . . for they are . . . eternal" (Abraham 3:18).

### Learn to control thoughts

Your spirit acquired a body at birth and became a soul to live in mortality through periods of trial and testing. Part of each test is to determine *if* your body can become mastered by the spirit that dwells within it.

Although your spirit had a veil of forgetfulness placed over it at the time of your birth into mortality, it retained its power to remember all that happens—precisely recording each event of life. Indeed, scriptures warn "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36). Prophets refer to our "bright recollection" (Alma 11:43) and "perfect remembrance" (Alma 5:18) at that day of decision.

Since thoughts precede deeds, you must first learn to control your thoughts. "As [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

### Keep the Sabbath day holy

In your quest for self-mastery, full participation in the activities of the Church will help. I'll mention but a few. A first step comes as we learn together to keep the Sabbath day holy. This is one of the Ten Commandments. (See Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:15.) We honor the Sabbath "to pay [our] devotions unto the Most High" (D&C 59:10), and because the Lord

declared: "It is a sign between me and you . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13; see also Ezekiel 20:20).

### Law of the fast

Another step toward self-mastery comes when you are old enough to observe the law of the fast. As funds are contributed from meals missed, the needs of the poor may be met. But meanwhile, through your spirit, you develop personal power over your body's drives of hunger and thirst. Fasting gives you confidence to know that your spirit can master appetite.

Some time ago your mother and I visited a Third World country where sanitary conditions were much poorer than ours. We joined with a delegation of other doctors from all over the world. The president of our group, an experienced traveler, warned of risks. In order to avoid water that might be contaminated, we were even counseled to brush our teeth with an alcoholic beverage. We chose not to follow that counsel, but simply did what we had learned to do once a month. We fasted that first day, thinking we could introduce simple food and fluids gradually thereafter. Later, we were the only ones in our group without disabling illness.

Fasting fortifies discipline over appetite and helps to protect against later uncontrolled cravings and gnawing habits.

### Obedience to Word of Wisdom

Another step toward self-mastery comes from obedience to the Word of Wisdom. Remember, it contains a "promise, adapted to the capacity of . . . the weakest of all saints" (D&C 89:3). It was given "in consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days" (D&C 89:4). Indeed, as you develop courage to say no to alcohol, tobacco, and other stimulants, you gain additional strength. You

can then refuse conspiring men—those seditious solicitors of harmful substances or smut. You can reject their evil enticements to your body.

If you yield to anything that can addict, and thus defy the Word of Wisdom, your spirit surrenders to the body. The *flesh* then enslaves the *spirit*. This is contrary to the purpose of your mortal existence. And in the process of such addiction, your life span is likely to be shortened, thereby reducing the time available for repentance by which your spirit might attain self-mastery over your body.

### Creator's law of chastity

Other physical appeals come during your courtship period. In your youth, you may be challenged by restraints of parents hoping to guide you through this wonderful period of life.

Because the adversary is keenly aware of the power of physical temptation, Alma instructed his son and all of us: "See that ye bridle all your passions" (Alma 38:12).

When you marry, you and your eternal companion may then invoke the power of procreation, that you may have joy and rejoicing in your posterity. This divine endowment is guarded by your Creator's law of chastity. All through the years, remember: chastity is the powerful protector of virile manhood and the crown of beautiful womanhood.

In courtship and marriage, virtue seems to come under attack first. Mental turmoil that trails in the wake of weakness from lust has evoked many a tear from innocent loved ones. Without repentance, tumult within self does not quit either.

Shakespeare expressed such self-conflict as one of his characters contemplating conquest in lust spoke these lines:

What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?

A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.

Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week?

Or sells eternity to get a toy?

For one sweet grape who will the vine destroy?

("Lucrece," lines 211-15.)

Prophets have repeatedly cautioned about moral sin. One, for example, warned: "O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in transgressing against that Holy God, and also the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that cunning one. Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal" (2 Nephi 9:39; see also Romans 8:6; Alma 36:4; D&C 29:35, 67:10).

### Regular exercise

Now don't misunderstand me. I would not want you to neglect your body. It deserves daily care. Physical conditioning through regular exercise requires self-mastery too. I marvel at Elder Joseph Anderson, now in his ninety-sixth year. For decades, the strength of his spirit over his body has induced him to swim regularly. But his motivation has never been to attain physical longevity. That has come only incidentally. His desire has been to serve God and His anointed. Elder Anderson has followed what I label as the Lord's prescription for a long and useful life. Those faithful in "magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become . . . the elect of God" (D&C 84:33-34).

Elder Anderson's exercise program agrees with the perspective of Paul, who said: "Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8).

Handsome and fit, Elder Anderson personifies this scripture: "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

### Reputation and character through self-mastery

As you work during the productive years of life, whether at home or in the field, in the factory or at a workbench, reputation is built and character is forged as you develop self-mastery. Faithful payment of tithing is part of that process. It defends you against dishonesty or shabby temptations. Courageous accountability for your own actions becomes a cherished prize.

It really matters what you listen to, what you look at, what you think, say, and do. Select music that will strengthen your spirit. Control your speech; keep it free from profanity and vulgarity. Follow the teachings of this proverb: "My mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

"All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing . . . perverse in them" (Proverbs 8:7-8).

### Emulate the Savior

As you approach old age, you will face new challenges to self-mastery. Symptoms of the deteriorating body can be painful, even disabling. Deep aches of sadness are caused by the departing of loved ones. For some, these deepening trials come early in life. But when yours are thrust upon you, remember a concept expressed by my father some time after my mother had passed away. Your grandparents had been married for sixty-four years. When someone asked how he was doing, my father simply stated, "I'm lonely, but I'm not lonesome." Do you know what he meant? Though he was now without his sweetheart, he was so busy assisting family and friends, he had replaced sorrow with service and had displaced self-pity with selfless love. He had found joy in following the timeless example of the Master.

Jesus, our Savior, was born in the lowliest of circumstances. For his baptism he was immersed in the lowest body of fresh water upon the planet. In

service and suffering, he also "descended below" all things (D&C 122:8), that he could rise above all things. Near the end of his life, he triumphantly declared, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). "Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life" (3 Nephi 15:9). Scriptures tutor us at least twenty-six times\* to endure to the end to attain eternal life. Then we will obtain a resurrected body—one that is incorruptible, glorified, and prepared to live in the presence of God.

To reach your highest destiny, emulate the Savior. He proclaimed, "What manner of men ought ye to be? . . . Even as I am" (3 Nephi 27:27). Our loftiest hope is to grow in spirit and attain "the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children" (Ephesians 4:13-14).

### Prepare to "receive . . . final assignment for eternity"

You will then be well prepared for that pending day of judgment when, as taught by President Spencer W. Kimball, "the soul, composed of the resurrected body and the eternal spirit, . . . will come before the great judge to receive its final assignment for the eternity" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], p. 46).

Remember, my dear one, not an age in life passes without temptation, trial, or torment experienced through your physical body. But as you prayerfully develop self-mastery, desires of the flesh may be subdued. And when that has been achieved, you may have

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\*Matthew 10:22, 24:13; Mark 13:13; 1 Nephi 13:37, 22:31; 2 Nephi 9:24, 31:15-16, 20, 33:4; Omni 1:26; Alma 32:13, 15, 38:2; 3 Nephi 15:9, 27:6, 16-17; Mormon 9:29; Moroni 8:26; D&C 10:69, 14:7, 18:22, 20:25, 20:29, 53:7.

the strength to submit to your Heavenly Father, as did Jesus, who said, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

When deepening trials come your way, remember this glorious promise of the Savior: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

Christ is our great Exemplar. I declare, as a special witness, that he is the Son of God and "is the life and the light

of the world" (Alma 38:9; see also D&C 11:28). We develop self-mastery as we become like him, I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Benson

Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us.

We will now hear from Elder Thomas S. Monson, also a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder Thomas S. Monson

### True and abiding love

Driving on the modern freeways during the sunshine of summer is often a pleasant experience. Frequently, one can view the grandeur of majestic mountains and the mesmerizing surf of the sea all in a single drive. However, when the traffic is heavy, the mountains and seas are set aside, and concentration is focused on the car ahead. Such was the occasion when I read with keen interest the words of a bumper sticker readily visible on the highly polished chrome bumper of a car which was weaving in and out of the traffic stream. The words were these: "Honk if you love Jesus." No one honked. Perhaps each was disturbed by the thoughtless and rude actions of the offending driver. Then, again, would honking be an appropriate manner in which to show one's love for the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Redeemer of all mankind? Such was not the pattern provided by Jesus of Nazareth.

The importance of demonstrating daily a true and an abiding love was convincingly taught by the Master when the inquiring lawyer stepped forward and boldly asked him, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Matthew records that "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy

God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:36-39).

Mark concludes the account with the Savior's statement, "There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:31).

### Divine example

His answer could not be faulted. His very actions gave credence to His words. He demonstrated genuine love of God by living the perfect life, by honoring the sacred mission that was His. Never was He haughty. Never was He puffed up with pride. Never was He disloyal. Ever was He humble. Ever was He sincere. Ever was He true.

Though He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by that master of deceit, even the devil; though He was physically weakened from fasting forty days and forty nights and was an hungered; yet when the evil one proffered Jesus the most alluring and tempting proposals, He gave to us a divine example of true love of God by refusing to deviate from what He knew was right. (See Matthew 4:1-11.)

Jesus, throughout His ministry, blessed the sick, restored sight to the