

to holders of the priesthood gathered in the Tabernacle, the Assembly Hall, the the BYU Marriott Center, the Missionary Training Center, and in locations in many countries throughout the world.

The singing during this session will be given by male members of the Tabernacle Choir, joined by returned missionaries, under the direction of Craig Jessop and Mack Wilberg, with Richard Elliott at the organ.

We shall now begin this priesthood meeting with the choir singing "Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise." Following the singing, the invocation will be offered by Elder W. Don Ladd of the Seventy.

The choir sang "Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise."

Elder W. Don Ladd offered the invocation.

President Hinckley

The choir will now sing "Praise to the Man." Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will then speak to us.

The choir sang "Praise to the Man."

Elder Richard G. Scott

The sanctity of womanhood

There is one title that the First Presidency and the Twelve seldom use, considering it too sacred—that of Apostle. It is in that role that I come to you, my beloved priesthood brethren.

I would speak of the sanctity of womanhood. President Hinckley has eloquently captured what the Lord has repeatedly inspired His servants to say of His precious daughters:

"Woman is God's supreme creation. Only after the earth had been formed, after the day had been separated from the night, after the waters had been divided from the land, after vegetation and animal life had been created, and after man had been placed on the earth, was woman created; and only then was the work pronounced complete and good.

"Of all the creations of the Almighty, there is none more beautiful, none more inspiring than a lovely daughter of God who walks in virtue with an understanding of why she should do so, who honors and respects her body as a thing sacred and divine, who cultivates her mind and constantly enlarges the horizon of her

understanding, who nurtures her spirit with everlasting truth."¹

Then President Hinckley warns us, "God will hold us accountable if we neglect His daughters."²

Satan's campaign against womanhood

So many of our sisters are disheartened, even discouraged and disillusioned. Others are in serious trouble because of the choices they make. Satan has unleashed a seductive campaign to undermine the sanctity of womanhood, to deceive the daughters of God and divert them from their divine destiny. He well knows women are the compassionate, self-sacrificing, loving power that binds together the human family. He would focus their interests solely on their physical attributes and rob them of their exalting roles as wives and mothers. He has convinced many of the lie that they are third-class citizens in the kingdom of God. That falsehood has led some to trade their divinely given femininity for male coarseness.

The growing success of Lucifer's efforts was emblazoned on my mind

when in Salt Lake City I turned my car in front of a pickup truck loaded with attractive young women. Their vehicle then swerved in front of me, cutting dangerously close. The girls vented their displeasure with multiple vulgar comments and obscene gestures. They were dressed predominantly in male attire, yet some had immodest clothing that left little to the imagination. My heart sank. These are daughters of God. I resolved that if I ever had the chance, I would enlist the righteous priesthood of God to help such misguided young women.

Help young women overcome worldly trends

Brethren, we can and must help them. I fear that much of their plight comes from our own neglect or misdeeds. As a priesthood husband, father, son, or brother, each of us absolutely must help each daughter of God we can to realize what sacred characteristics Father in Heaven has given her. Many are being cheated of the rich, full life and the blessings God would have them receive. Will you help them understand what they are sacrificing as they are led as innocent, blind sheep by those who, for personal gain and self-justification, would rob them of their priceless womanhood? Because it is their nature to give and please others, many women do not realize their intrinsic worth. That loss makes them vulnerable to those who would convince them that their major role is to be physically appealing.

So many of our own young women sacrifice their God-given endowment of femininity, deep spirituality, and a caring interest in others on the altar of popular worldly opinion. Young men, let such young women know that you will not seek an eternal companion from those that are overcome by worldly trends. Many dress and act immodestly because they are told that is what you want. In sensitive ways, communicate how distasteful revealing

attire is to you, a worthy young man, and how it stimulates unwanted emotions from what you see against your will.

Those young women who do embrace conservative dress standards and exhibit the attributes of a devoted Latter-day Saint are often criticized for not being "with it." Encourage them by expressing gratitude for their worthy example. Thank them for doing what is pleasing to the Lord and in time will bless their own husband and children. Many young women have returned to righteousness because of the example and understanding support of a worthy priesthood bearer. Perhaps a group of you could frankly discuss your concerns in an appropriate setting, such as a Sunday School or seminary class. Will you begin a private crusade to help young women understand how precious they are to God and attractive to you as they magnify their feminine traits and divinely given attributes of womanhood? You might even help mold the character and devotion of your own future eternal companion.

Influence of brothers, fathers, bishops

As a brother, you can have a powerful, positive influence in your sister's life. Compliment her when she looks especially nice. She may listen to you more than to your parents when you suggest that she wear modest clothing. Simple courtesies like opening the door for her and building her self-esteem will encourage her to find her real worth.

Be a wise father who showers attention on each daughter. It will bring joy to you and fulfillment to her. When a daughter feels the warmth and approval of her father, she will not likely seek attention in inappropriate ways. As a father, acknowledge her good behavior. Listen to her. Praise her for her strengths. You will greatly enrich her life. She will model the behavior she observes. Let her see you treat your wife and other women with admiration and honest respect.

Bishops, encourage each young woman to ponder last Saturday's inspiring Young Women meeting. It will give her a vision of who she is and help her in her quest to fulfill her divine destiny. It will help her see how essential it is to stand valiantly against the destructive tide of the world and to bear her testimony of Jesus Christ.

Brethren, as we honor womanhood, each daughter of God will be encouraged to do likewise.

Sacred expressions of love

Now I would speak of something that is most sacred. When we were created, Father in Heaven put in our body the capacity to stir powerful emotions. Within the covenant of marriage, when properly used in ways acceptable to both spouses and to the Lord, those emotions open the doors for children to come to earth. Such sacred expressions of love are an essential part of the covenant of marriage. Within marriage, however, the stimulation of those emotions can either be used as an end unto itself or to allow a couple to draw closer in oneness through the beautiful, appropriate expression of these feelings between husband and wife. There are times, brethren, when you need to restrain those feelings. There are times when you need to allow their full expression. Let the Lord guide you in ways that will enrich your marriage.

There are men, and unfortunately some women, who experiment with stimulating those emotions by influences outside of the covenant of marriage. There is a great difference between love and lust. Pure love yields happiness and engenders trust. It is the foundation of eternal joy. Lust will destroy that which is enriching and beautiful. A husband must have no private, hidden agenda that is kept secret from his wife. Sharing everything about each other's personal life is powerful spiritual insurance. When you

travel, take along a picture of your wife. Set it before you. Remember how you are loved and trusted. You will not be tempted to contaminate your mind or violate your covenants.

Destructiveness of pornography

One of the most damning influences on earth—one that has caused uncountable grief, suffering, heartache, and destroyed marriages—is the onslaught of pornography in all of its vicious, corroding, destructive forms. Whether it be through the printed page, movies, television, obscene lyrics, the telephone, or the flickering personal computer screen, pornography is overpoweringly addictive and severely damaging. This potent tool of Lucifer degrades the mind, heart, and soul of any who use it. All who are caught in its seductive, tantalizing web and remain so will become addicted to its immoral, destructive influence. For many, that addiction cannot be overcome without help. The tragic pattern is so familiar. It begins with a curiosity that is fueled by its stimulation and is justified by the false premise that when done privately, it does no harm to anyone else. Lulled by this lie, the experimentation goes deeper, with more powerful stimulations, until the web closes and a terribly immoral, addictive habit is formed.

How can a man, particularly a priesthood bearer, not think of the damage emotionally and spiritually caused to women, especially to a wife, from such abhorrent activity? The participation in pornography in any of its lurid forms is a manifestation of unbridled selfishness.

Well did inspired Nephi declare, "And [the devil] will . . . pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, . . . and thus [he] cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell."³

Stake presidents and bishops, warn of this evil. Invite any captured by it to come to you for help.

“Be ye clean”

To each of you as an Aaronic Priesthood and Melchizedek Priesthood bearer, I solemnly declare as a servant of Jesus Christ that despite what is taught in the world, the violation of the law of chastity is a very grievous sin. For your own well-being and for the blessing of His daughters, be ye clean. If there is even the slightest tendency to participate in immorality, eliminate it from your life. Where there has been any violation, talk to a bishop or stake president and clean up your life. Make it pure and righteous. You bear the priesthood of God. I testify that the Redeemer will help you. If you seek it, He will lead you to that help so that through full repentance, the Lord can forgive you.

Express love for wives, mothers

I know what it is to love a daughter of God who with grace and devotion served with the full feminine splendor of her righteous womanhood. As a husband, consistently tell your wife how much you love her. It will bring her great happiness. As a son, tell your mother how you love her. It will give her great joy. Let us be grateful to our Father in Heaven for His precious daughters. Let us help them as

much as we can. Then let us encourage every woman who questions her value to turn to her Heavenly Father and His glorified Son for a supernal confirmation of her immense individual worth. I testify that as each woman seeks it in faith and obedience, the Savior will continually prompt her through the Holy Ghost. That guidance will lead her to fulfillment, peace, and a consuming joy through magnifying her divinely appointed, sacred womanhood. I know the Savior will do that. I testify that He lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

This printed text includes segments that were not delivered due to time constraints.

1. “Our Responsibility to Our Young Women,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1988, 11.
2. *Ensign*, Sept. 1988, 11.
3. 2 Nephi 28:21.

President Hinckley

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

We will now be pleased to hear from Bishop H. David Burton, the Presiding Bishop of the Church. He will be followed by Elder Angel Abrea of the Seventy.

Bishop H. David Burton

Good evening, brethren. For months we have worried about this building's readiness for general conference. A miracle has been accomplished—a miracle made possible because professionals, as well as common, garden-variety men and women, have displayed uncommon devotion, sacrifice, and inspiration far beyond normal industry standards. I express deep appreciation to my counselors and to all individuals who have shared their talents on this project.

I've been in this building many times during its construction, but as I see it filled with priesthood holders tonight, I marvel at its size and beauty. For you who follow international soccer (football), the distance from where I stand to the very last row of the balcony is about three-fourths the length of one field. The distance is the equivalent of three basketball courts placed end to end or nearly four tennis courts fashioned in the same manner. A golfer would probably select