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The Two Great Commandments

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Abstract: The author tells of his challenge to the Saints to read the Book of Mormon, and gives examples of people whose lives benefited from it. Keeping the two great commandments, first to love God with all your whole soul and the second to love your neighbor, begins within the walls of your own home.

genesis of the statement or its circumstances, but I report accurately what he said): "When he gets a few drinks in him, he is really ugly and mean."

I'm not sure anybody can improve upon that description of one who makes the mistake of getting involved in a substance that dulls his judgment, that inhibits his natural anxiety to control himself, that imposes upon his will.

God bless us to have the courage of conviction to live the principle and therefore inherit the promise, and to be courageous enough as we mingle with those who do not understand the principle, to appreciate their value and their worth, and share with them, as they will permit, the important reasons why we should be concerned to be obedient to this law of God, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Two Great Commandments

President N. Eldon Tanner
Of the First Presidency

It's good to be here, my brethren, and to partake of the Spirit that has been here with us this evening and to hear the admonition which is good for all of us. All I wish to say on the Word of Wisdom this evening is to tell you an experience which I told you once before. When I was driving along and had two young men with me in my car, and a young man thumbed a ride with us, I asked the boys who were with me if we should take him with us, and they said yes. I picked him up, and after we had driven along a little way he said, "Do you mind if I smoke in your car?" I said, "No, not at all if you can give me any good reason why you should smoke." And I said, "I will go farther than that." (I was stake president at this time.) "If you can give me a good reason why you should smoke, I will smoke with you."

Well, these two young men looked at me and wondered. We drove on for some distance, about twenty minutes, I think, and I turned around and said, "Aren't you going to smoke?" And he said, "No." I said, "Why not?" And he said, "I can't think of a good reason why I should."

I would like that word to go to all of our young men, and when you can think of a good reason, and only when you can, then begin to smoke.

At the priesthood meeting in October, I reminded you that President Joseph Fielding Smith had said a year before that we should all read the Book of Mormon. I said that I had read it, and

I appealed to all under the sound of my voice to read the Book of Mormon before Christmas. I am happy to report that I received letters, telegrams, and people told me orally as they met me on the street, as they came into my office, and over the telephone, from some young boys in Montreal, Canada, to the General Authorities who said, "I read the Book of Mormon as you asked me to do, and I appreciated this challenge and have enjoyed reading the Book of Mormon."

Now I have two letters here that I should like to read to you: "Marg and I have accepted your challenge to reread the Book of Mormon and have extended it to include Steve. We have spent several pleasant evenings taking turns reading to each other and explaining passages to Steve. Though he is only eight he grasps the story very clearly. It gives him an opportunity to learn new words and meet new ideas that will be of value to him throughout his life. We are enjoying this rich experience and thank you for the challenge."

Another letter which I received:

"Dear President Tanner,

"I am the young boy, twelve years of age, you challenged to read the Book of Mormon after General Priesthood outside the temple grounds on the sidewalk by the drinking fountain.

"I want to thank you for the challenge. It was a great opportunity for me to work to accomplish the goal set by you, and it strengthened my testimony of the gospel a great deal.

"I would have written to you sooner, but I had some passages and some scriptures to memorize for my certificate of award.

"I know that the Book of Mormon is true, and it has helped me to become a better boy."

I might say that I received written replies from 261, and I am sure there were many more who did not take the time to write, and I didn't expect anyone to write.

Now this evening I had hoped to talk to you for a little while on the answer that Jesus gave to the lawyer who, tempting him, said,

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

"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." (Matt. 22:36-39.)

I won't have time to deal with that as it refers to "thy neighbour," other than I would like to say this: I should like you to include as your first neighbor the neighbor to whom you are most directly responsible, and that is

the neighbor who lives in your house with you, your wife and your children.

Brethren, I have had a number of women in my experience come to me because they were not loved in the home. That is just too bad. It is a condition that just cannot exist where we have the priesthood at the head of the home. Surely a man thinks as much of his wife as he does of someone else who comes into the home, and surely he is prepared to treat her with the same courtesy, the same consideration, as he would a stranger coming into the home. Yet I remember as a boy going to homes where that was not true. And I remember going into homes where it was true, and the difference in those homes was very noticeable.

Brethren, if I gave you any challenge tonight, it is to go home and, when you go into the house, express appreciation to that wife who is there, and let those children know that you love them, and don't be afraid to do it.

When I was in the mission field interviewing missionaries I thought it was a very important thing for them to have love in their hearts if they were going to preach the gospel and be representatives, ambassadors, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I asked those missionaries every time if they loved the Lord, and they said yes. And I said, "How does he know?" And they said, "Well, we have told him."

The Lord said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (See John 14:15.) That's the way he knows. Then I asked those boys, "How many of you love your mothers?" There wasn't an exception. I said, "How many times have you told your mother you love her?" And on many occasions the answer was, "I don't know when I told her or how many times I have told her," or, "I don't think I ever told my mother I love her."

Imagine, any young man, an elder, out representing this Church, having never told his mother that he loved her. Do you know why he hasn't? Because his father didn't tell his wife that he loved her.

I felt like writing to the fathers of those boys every time, but each time I had that boy promise me that he would sit down and write a letter and say, "Mother, I love you," and tell her why he loved her. It is so important, brethren. Don't let another day go by without telling your wife you love her, how fortunate you are to have her, how much you think of her. And do what you can to make her believe it. Be the same with your children. "There is beauty all around when there's love at home." Be courteous. Be considerate. Be kind. I don't know of anything that is more important, and I think I am agreeing with the Lord when he says the same thing, "And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt

love thy neighbour as thyself," and surely the most important neighbor is the one who lives with you in your home.

Now, if we love the Lord God with all our hearts and with all our souls and with all our minds, as he said, we will keep his commandments. And we who hold the priesthood of God have a covenant from the Lord which we read in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 84, verses 33 to 40:

"For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit," as Brother Hanks said, "unto the renewing of their bodies."

What an example we have before us tonight. "They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

"And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord; "For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

"And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

"And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

"And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood."

I hope every stake president in this Church, when he interviews a young man who is to be advanced in the priesthood and ordained an elder, reads this covenant and explains it to him: "And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

"Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved."

Who cannot break? The Lord cannot break. That is the only thing I know the Lord cannot do, is break a covenant that he has made with his people; and when he says, "All that I have is thine," (see *ibid.*, 84:38) I would like to know, my brethren, what more we could ask for; and all we need to do is to keep the commandments and magnify our priesthood. Accept responsibility, brethren, and when you accept responsibility, carry out the responsibility that is placed upon you.

It has been a great strength to my testimony, to my appreciation of what this Church means and the strength it has as I have interviewed men to be set apart to preside over missions and over stakes, and those who have been chosen to be bishops. Since being in this office and interviewing men for any of these offices, I have never had an individual, regardless of his condition, but who has said, "If this is a call, I will go when you want me

to go, where you want me to go, and remain as long as you want me to stay."

Now, brethren, what a testimony! I am sure all of us would do the same thing, but as Brother Sill says, it isn't a big redwood tree that is going to trip us up; it's the underbrush in life. Any of us would accept the great call, but will we live every day, magnifying our priesthood and doing what the Lord wants us to do?

Now, I want to give you this thought, brethren, that we who hold the priesthood of God are members of the greatest brotherhood in the world. We are expected to love one another and not judge our brother. If anyone here tonight has ill feelings or ought against his brother, I urge, as the Savior has admonished, that we all forgive one another and show our love for him. No matter who you are, ill feelings or a desire to hinder or hurt your brother will canker your soul, keep you from enjoying the Spirit of the Lord as you could if you would love and forgive. Under no conditions should anyone holding the priesthood wish to harm or hurt his brother. We must keep that in mind.

Coming back to this thought that I expressed, if we love the Lord, we will keep his commandments, we will accept calls that come to us and magnify the priesthood and carry out the responsibility.

Now in closing I should like to read a letter that I received from a young doctor. This is dated January 26, 1965:

"It has been a little over a year since you set me apart to my calling on the priesthood committee. I have been so thrilled with the experiences of the past year and the tremendous blessings that this calling has brought into my life and that of my family, as well as my associates at the clinic, that I thought I would like to write you concerning two or three of these items.

"In your blessing to me, the promise was made that my practice would not suffer during my absences from it. During the past year, my calling took me away from the practice 84 days. An additional six days were spent attending the April and October conferences, all of which made a total of 90 days absence."

Listen, brethren: "As I mentioned to you before, my colleagues are very willing to support me or any of us in church responsibilities and were pleased to vicariously share the experiences and blessings I enjoyed. During our business meeting earlier this month, at which time we made an accounting of our past year's production, we were all surprisingly shocked to see that in spite of my absences, my gross production was the highest of all the partners. During last year, my admissions to the hospital also outnumbered each of the

other partners, and for that matter, all of the doctors in the community. During the year 1964, I had no deaths in my practice. Certainly the windows of heaven have been opened unto me and unto my associates in that we have never prospered better as a family or as a clinic than we have during the past year! It is a testimony to all of us of how the Lord blesses us for living the law of consecration in even a small way.

"Again, I am thrilled with this calling and the opportunity to serve the Lord and you brethren and appreciate very much this privilege."

Brethren, may we realize what a great privilege it is for us to hold the priesthood of God, which is the power of God to act in his name, and may we magnify our calling, that it may be possible for us to enjoy immortality and eternal life, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Tuesday Morning Session,
April 6, 1965.

The Way to Peace Revealed

Marion G. Romney
Of the Council of the Twelve

President McKay and Counselors, President Smith, the rest of the General Authorities, brothers and sisters and friends. I am embarrassed. Since my secretary gave the press and translators my notes, I have decided not to use them. Please accept my apologies, and don't blame her. Brother Evans, my co-worker, advised me on the way over here this morning that we have a much larger television and radio audience than I thought we would have. Therefore, on the 135th anniversary of the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have decided to say a word or two about the message the Lord charged this his Church to declare, particularly with respect to present and future world conditions.

I make no apology for the scriptures I am going to read. Of them the Lord said: "What I . . . have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, . . ." (D&C 1:38.) In using these scriptures, I have no ill will toward the world—nothing but love and a hope that the world will listen to what the Almighty himself has said.

Fifteen months ago, in the *Deseret News*, was a column in which Sydney