

“SACRED TO ME”

Fireside By Hyrum L. Andrus

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This is a very delicate and important topic. I would like, in short, to speak to you about you. You might entitle my talk “Sacred to Me” maybe in a way this is misleading. Sacred to me implies that there is something external to the individual that is sacred to that person. Better still, you are sacred to yourself, and it’s of this particular theme that I’d like to develop my talk this evening.

You are a very vital intricate Being. Science can’t duplicate you, they can’t even approximate a duplication. You are a creature of God. A Being formed in His very likeness and nature. An individual who has the same organs, endowments, and physical attributes in embryo that He has. You are a very special creature. The value of the human soul in this sense is certainly an important issue. The Lord has said (D&C 18:10-11): “Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God: For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him.” On the basis of repentance.

The Prophet Joseph Smith talked about the purpose of mortality, and he had this to say: “... we came to this earth that we might have a body, and present it pure before God in the Celestial Kingdom. The great principle of happiness consists of having a body, all Beings that have bodies have power over those who do not.”

May I give you the words of John Taylor, written in his intelligent and poetic language. He wrote about why we are here, where we came from, and the great issues of life. A lady had written him on this particular theme and he answered her as follows:

“Knowest thou not that eternities ago thy spirit, pure and holy, dwelt in thy Heavenly Father’s bosom, and in His presence, and with thy mother, one of the queens of heaven, surrounded by thy brother and sister spirits in the spirit world, among the Gods? That as thy spirit beheld the scenes transpiring there, and thou grewest in intelligence, thou sawest worlds upon worlds organized and peopled with thy kindred spirits who took upon them tabernacles, died, were resurrected, and received their exaltation on the redeemed worlds they once dwelt

upon. Thou being willing and anxious to imitate them, waiting and desirous to obtain a body, a resurrection and exaltation also, ... Thou longed, thou sighed and thou prayed to thy Father in heaven for the time to arrive when thou couldst come to this earth ...

“At length the time arrived, and thou heard the voice of thy Father saying, go daughter to yonder lower world, and take upon thee a tabernacle, and work out thy probation with fear and trembling and rise to exaltation. But daughter, remember you go on this condition, that is, you are to forget all things you ever saw, ... or transpire here; but you must go and become one of the most helpless of all beings that I have created, while in your infancy, subject to sickness, pain, tears, mourning, sorrow and death. But when truth shall touch the cords of your heart they will vibrate; then intelligence shall illuminate your mind, and shed its lustre in your soul, and you shall begin to understand the things you once knew, but which had gone from you; you shall then begin to understand and know the object of your creation. Daughter, go, and be faithful as thou hast been in thy first estate.”

There is purpose, my brothers and sisters, in receiving a mortal body. First, a mortal body gives us power to express the intelligence that we have within us. And it gives us power to progress in ways that we did not have. It opens up a whole avenue of endowments and of continued progression. The Lord has told us that spirit and body, “inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy.” (D&C 93:33) The physical body is good, it’s wholesome, it’s purposeful, it’s given unto us that we might rise and achieve a fulness of joy.

The next thing to keep in mind, relative to President Taylor’s statement, is that we waited a long time for the opportunity to come into this world. Probably, if we were to measure the time it would be a matter of eons of ages that we waited in order to come here and partake of these physical endowments, and undergo this very brief, but vital and important probation period.

In the LDS view the endowments of the flesh are good. We are not Puritans, who believe only in restraining the emotional expressions that God has given unto us. Instead, we believe these things have been ordained of God that they were given for the joy and happiness of man. We believe on the other hand that we are placed under great restriction to express and develop them, according to the gift of wisdom and within the spiritual endowments of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

For example, let me read a comment from Parley P. Pratt in his very important book “Key to the Science of Theology,” page 100-102, He says: “An intelligent being, in the image of

God, possesses every organ, attribute, sense, sympathy, affection that is possessed by God Himself.

“But these are possessed by man, in his rudimental state, in a subordinate sense of the word. Or, in other words, these attributes are in embryo; and are to be gradually developed. They resemble a bud, a germ, which gradually develops into bloom, and then, by progress, produces the mature fruit, after its own kind.”

Then he talks about the need of bringing these physical endowments in tune with the spirit that they may fulfill their logical purposes, continuing, he says:

“The gift of the Holy Ghost adapts itself to all these organs or attributes. It quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use. It inspires, develops, cultivates and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings and affections of our nature. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation and social felling. It invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.”

These physical endowments, God has given to us. As endowments they are to be kept within their proper area of expression within their proper channel and thus kept, they lead to exaltation, they lead to eternal life, and they lead to a continuation of a posterity for ever and ever.

Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants is vital on these subjects, as it indicates that those to receive the eternal covenant of marriage and who do so in purity and virtue are given an endowment of glory and power that no other individuals can or will be given. It says in verse 6:

“And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.”

Those who do not, who either will not enter into this sacred relationship of what God has ordained, or those who entered therein and desecrate that sacred relationship, these individuals come forth short of that great glory and of them the Lord has this to say in verse 17:

“For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever.”

Let me clarify that these great physical endowments that we have received here in morality are given to us in probation, they are given to us to determine that which we will do with them. And those individuals who do not follow the plan of life, so these endowments can be useful, and wholesome, and purposeful in exalting the individual; and adding the joy and the happiness and the strength that God designs us to have, are wasting the days of their probation. Those individuals will come forth in the resurrection, not only without the eternal relationship of marriage, but also without the physical attributes and endowments associated therewith. They will come forth, in other words, without the sexual drive and without the sexual powers of increase, they will come forth separate and single. But these things are reserved for those who sanctify the physical.

These things are given to us in probation, experimentally to see what we will do with them; and to see if we can expand and develop these great endowments of the flesh, that we might attain the fulness of joy and happiness in the world to come.

Regarding the physical body, there is a purpose in the union of the sexes. First, man is not designed in the Lord's plan of economy to live alone. No man is an island, we say for example. Marriage is the Lord's way, for men and women to supplement each other's needs. For example, in the sacred relationship of matrimony as the Lord intends it, man, the individual, becomes the priest within his home, the high priest, the patriarch if you will and it is his responsibility in that sacred marriage covenant to act as the Lord would have him as a priest; and to make sure that the priesthood is a living vital power and influence in his life. The Lord has said relative to the priesthood: (D&C 121:41-42)

“No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;” By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile.”

There is something to pure knowledge!

This is the individual's responsibility as a priesthood bearer in the home. That man who has entered into the temple of the Lord and partaken of the sacred covenant of eternal

marriage, who is not willing if necessary to give his life for his wife and family, that individual who has no disposition to do this is not worthy of the great charge and responsibility given to him associated with the eternal covenant of marriage.

Man, then in this sacred relationship, is designed to be the priesthood bearer in the home, to be the bread winner, to be the protector, and to be the teacher in that sacred relationship. Nephi had it correctly when he says: (1 Nephi 1:1)

“I Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore, I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father ...”

Nephi doesn't talk about being taught in his Sunday school. He didn't talk about Mutual. He didn't talk about his religion class. He said, “Therefore, I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father.” A priesthood bearer who is not a teacher is not a priesthood bearer.

On the other hand, a wife should be the queen of the home and should be honored in this particular calling, and upheld, and sustained in this sacred relationship. She is a companion; she is a mother; she is a helpmate. May I say this, that while the priesthood covenant of eternal marriage places the man, in that sacred relationship, under the law of the Lord; it places the wife under the law of her husband in their joint relationship with the Lord with their unique roles and responsibilities. In this sense it is not a matter of two heads within the home.

As long as the man, the priesthood authority, is doing that which is required of him in the exercise of his priesthood, then the covenant the girl enters into, requires her to uphold and sustain him in the Lord and to be one with him as a companion. And then in that loving, righteous relationship the spiritual endowments within the woman are unfolded in light and truth that literally radiates through their relationship and that of their children. She is a companion in a spiritual sense; a companion is the physical relationships of life; a companion emotionally, and in all other areas that they might be one.

Jesus, for example, to illustrate this said that relative to divorce, that a man who putteth away his wife, except for fornication, causes her to commit adultery. Jesus in this particular statement had no reference to fornication as illicit sexual relationships before marriage. He was referencing that a woman in the sacred covenant of marriage, can commit fornication against her husband.

Let me look at it in this particular light. A woman under the law of the priesthood is

bound by that law to be one with her husband, and support, and uphold, and sustain him in that sacred relationship. If she because of perverse action within her soul and heart; because she loses the spirit of the gospel; because she fails to uphold that covenant, while her husband is righteous and faithful thereto, she has sown the seeds that will destroy the relationship that was based on the Lord's covenants and promises. And Jesus could have reversed the statement and used the man as an example of someone who through selfishness, covetousness, etc. would destroy the sacred character of that relationship.

Therefore, should the husband or wife estrange himself or herself, and cease to be a companion and breaks that covenant; then he or she commits fornication against the injured party; then he or she acts in such a way as to destroy the foundation of that physical union. This is not adultery, but it is a perversion. It's a perversion of that physical union and as the Lord expressed it, it constitutes fornication.

To illustrate this particular point, let me note this. Anciently in the days of Israel the Lord considered himself, appropriately as the husband, and Israel was considered as a wife. He says, I am married to you. I was a husband unto you; yet when Israel, as the wife, perverted the ways of the Lord and departed from those ways; then she, as a people, committed fornication against the Lord. The same is true with Christianity. The Lord is rightly spoken of as being the husband and the church the bride or wife, and we say go ye out to meet him. Make the bridegroom ready for the coming of the Lord.

This is what happened when the church in the ancient Christian period perverted itself and apostatized from the ways of the Lord. That church committed fornication against the Lord and is, therefore, called the great fornicator; and it is, therefore, said that the apostate church causes the nations of the earth to commit fornication against the Lord. And for this reason the Lord designates apostate Christianity as the harlot, as one who perverts these particular relationships.

The union of the sexes has as its first objective the bringing forth of children and a family into the world, and for its care. And as it has been indicated already this evening, this is the most sacred and exclusive power that God has given unto us. In order that we might have physical bodies God has implanted this tremendous power within us. He expects us to bring forth children in purity and cleanliness. It's the heritage of each individual to be well born, and to have within that birth a true foundation, a true home where the spirit of the Lord prevails.

Marriage also constitutes the commencement of a couple's patriarchal kingdom. That

kingdom as the Lord designs it is to extend into eternity. Now while we are given here in mortality the endowments of procreation, endowments of the flesh that leads to birth and to the production of physical bodies, those individuals who keep this sacred law will have added to it in the resurrection the power to bring forth and beget spirit children unto themselves. So as President Brigham Young once explained, a resurrected being who attains the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom will have power to produce both a spirit and a physical body through the process of procreation.

Jesus, for example, is a good illustration to this particular point. He is both the son of our Father in Heaven as the firstborn of His spirit family; and he is also in a literal and biological sense the only begotten of our Father in Heaven in the flesh. And in this sense, he is literally and actually the son of the Eternal Father, Elohim. And may I add parenthetically that he was born within the eternal marriage covenant.

The union of the sexes has as its purpose the union and strength of those within that sacred relationship. In the Lord's eternal plan, each brings to the other, that which they require to complete or to be complete physically and emotionally; and to feel a sense of belonging and satisfaction. The individual who is truly in love, for example, can tell as one of the symptoms of true love, if I can put it that way; whether it's real or genuine. They can tell by noting the feeling of real emptiness within. The guy who is really in love after his girl has been away and she is back home says, I feel now like a real individual. I feel now like a part of my very soul, a part of my very being has been brought back and has been united again with me.

That sense of strength, and of union, of bringing to the other that which completes the other is a sacred part of the eternal relationships of marriage. Physically and emotionally we need to have a sense of belonging and union. This is the way we were built. For example, as we begin to develop and grow up it becomes a pleasant thing to hold hands. Now holding hands is an expression of this inner sense of union, the need for union.

We also feel a thrill and sense of satisfaction in a way in embracing each other. And to carry the expression a little bit further, the mere mechanics of a kiss aren't very attractive to a young person before he is about ten years of age or so. These things aren't very attractive and they can't really be appreciated unless you put them within the context of this built in desire for union.

This real, built-in desire for union can be expressed verbally. You, for example, in a real and meaningful way say to a person for whom you have genuine affection, I love you. What

effect does it have? It's the expression of a desire, and it has its reciprocation; and that reciprocation is expressed then in a similar expression. It's that type of thing that the marriage covenant is ordained to bring into focus, and into union, and to build into an eternal relationship of happiness and of joy. It's for this same reason that the deeper emotions of life have been given to the individual.

It is necessary to note, and I don't say this facetiously, that men and women are built differently. This is obvious in the sense of the physiological differences between us. But have you ever thought, and as simple as this may be, I know a lot of unconcerned husbands who don't realize that women are built emotionally different than they are.

And the same is true with women, they don't realize that the men are built emotionally different than they are. Let me illustrate. Within the male organization we have what may be termed a built-in cock-eyed propensity, if I can put it that way. The fellows understand what I am talking about. Man is stimulated, for example, in his sexual drives by sight, particularly by suggestive sights. This is the reason we have this modern advertisement, the big Buick and a babe standing beside it. He doesn't look at the Buick first, as much as the fellow would like to have a new car. He looks at the fair damsel standing beside it because there is built into his very nature something that attracts him to this particular kind.

Next, man is experimental by nature and it's designed within his nature that he should take the initiative in the dating and the love making process essentially. On the other hand women are different, and I'm speaking of a general principle. They must be fondled, caressed, given attention, given consideration, etc. before they are sexually aroused. Some husbands ten years after marriage fail to remember this point. They are stimulated physically in one way and their wives are stimulated physically in another way. They fail to recognize this very basic and simple relationship and distinction, and it creates problems.

The way to ensure, brethren, for example, that your wife will love you and respond to you is to genuinely love her and to let her know that she is needed and that she is appreciated, and to understand and give her consideration.

I once was talking in a rather flippant tone and nature years ago. I was the stake superintendent of the mutual in Rexburg. We had as a young ladies president of the stake. She was a very gracious and attractive women, older than myself, in her thirties. I was a young twerp of something less than that. But on an occasion, I made a passing reference to her husband. He was one of these good steady, stable souls who had very little of a flower of

personality and of brilliance about him. I made some comment that I should not have made, and she came back with this rhetoric. She said, I genuinely love my husband, because he understands me and he is sympathetic to my needs and he appreciates me and he knows my inner feelings and has a sense of sympathy for my inner desires.

I learned a valuable lesson that day. This type of thing leads to love brethren. It isn't just the masculine physical attraction that really builds the substantial home. It's the individual who recognizes that his wife is built different than he is built. And who builds upon, in their relationship, that distinction and who gives her the interest and the appreciation that she needs.

The Lord has designed that the marriage union in His plan is a great and fundamental part of that eternal program of exaltation for the individual. When we come to the illicit relationship, the perverse expression of these physical endowments, then we must recognize that this corrodes and this destroys. It corrodes and destroys the very foundation of life within us. I have never in all my experience as a bishop and religion teacher, where I've had the opportunity to teach and counsel young people, where the individual having participated in degrading practices ever found true joy and true happiness – until after true repentance. Invariably just as the law of gravity is a reality that can't be set aside, you find the individual who participates in these things corrodes the very life and the virtue and the soul within.

Let me define illicit activities. This is any activity that stimulates you sexually to express the emotions reserved for the marriage covenant, whether you engage mentally or physically. For the boys, looking at a girl with lustful desires is an illicit activity. Thinking about the opposite sex in a lustful sense is a corroding, damnable activity – and I'm stressing lustful. For the girls, dressing so as to simulate the sex drive in the boys to get attention is an illicit activity. For the boys and the girls, kissing another person in such a way as to stimulate the desire for further intimate union is an illicit activity.

Kissing is not a pass time or a payment or a date. As the Lord intends, it is instead a genuine act of affection, reserved for those whom you really love in dating or that person you seriously consider to marry. Let me promise you this, that those boys or girls that pass out their kisses freely, as water, they just may go down a road that could destroy the real foundation of a happy congenial relationship when they finally settle down to the person they really love.

Here is the situation in our day and age. The Lord made this statement, and it deals with the restrictions associated with these great endowments of the body. (D&C 63:16)

“And verily I say unto you, as I have said before, he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear.”

The Lord might also have directed this statement to women as well as men. That man or woman who dresses so as to entice the opposite sex to look upon them with lust causes them to commit adultery in their heart and that person has lead another to that perverse action in their soul.

In the Lord’s loving counsel, he has said, “Thou shalt not steal, neither commit adultery nor kill nor do anything that is like unto it.”

When it comes to sexual perversions, what is like unto adultery? Filthy thoughts are like unto adultery. It is mentally experimenting in a perverse way in this sacred and holy relationship of life. What else is like unto it, smutty stories. This again approaches that perverse thing about which the Lord is speaking. Pornographic literature, whether it be some of the pictures in our modern magazines or whether it be something that is definitely designed within a book itself to stimulate sexual sentiments and feelings.

Let’s turn from the subject to the philosophical background to this whole deal. The Lord has given unto us these sacred endowments. There is a way by which we can control and use them as the Lord would have us. The question is oft-times asked, and sometimes discussed heatedly in our Sunday school and religion classes, as to whether man is basically good or evil. But the question itself is absurd. It is not founded in fact. It is not founded in the correct approach to the problem. Man is a dual being, he is a spirit and also a physical body. The question ought rather to be asked what are the conditions or nature of his spirit? Then what are the conditions or nature of his flesh in mortality? How do they relate to each other; and what’s the situation on a dual rather than the singular plane of existence?

The endowments of the flesh are good. The spirit is pure. When the spirit comes to this earth, it receives by virtue of the atonement of Christ a renewal of original innocence. And that individual by the atonement of Christ becomes innocent, as the Lord has said: “Man was in the beginning innocent before God” and every spirit or child that comes to mortality is by the atonement of Christ renewed in that original innocence.

But while it is innocent, we need to note that spirits differ in the basic endowment, the basic potential, the basic possibility, the basic desire of individuals. These things are different

in all of us. When it comes to the flesh though, as we have already said, the flesh in its endowments are good, but there has come into the flesh through the fall certain corrupt elements that act upon the flesh and endeavor to entice the individual to use these physical endowments in perverse and improper ways. For example, as Lehi, the great Nephi prophet spoke to his sons and daughters about the alternatives of life, he had this to say: (2 Nephi 2:28)

“And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words, and choose eternal life, according to the will of his Holy Spirit;”

You choose eternal life by responding to the Holy Spirit and not merely espousing ideals and standards. Response to the spirit is the essential thing. He says: (2 Nephi 2:29)

“And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom.”

Note that the endowments of the flesh are good, that there is an element of evil therein which gives the adversary power to bring you down and to rule over you. The same thing is beautifully expressed by the Apostle Paul as he talked about the dilemma in mortality in the 7th chapter of Romans, he says this: (Romans 7:15)

“For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.”

How many times do you find yourself in that situation? He says: (Romans 7:17-19)

17 “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

18 “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) ...” not in your spirit, the spirit is pure innocent and desires to do good, but in the flesh “... dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”

19 “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

And then he says: (Romans 7:22-24)

22 “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:”

23 “But I see another law in my members ...” the inward man who is a spirit sees another law in his members, the physical organization, and he says: “... warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”

24 “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

Where is deliverance from this particular situation? The Prophet Joseph Smith in his inspired revision of this chapter gave us in a very pointed way the solution. Let me read the verse as he clarified by revelation the real intent of the Apostle Paul, he quotes the apostle: (Romans 7:19)

19 “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good I find not, only in Christ.”

There is the distinction. The Apostle Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans gives us the answer to it when he says of those who live by the spirit are spiritually minded; and those who follow the spirit become thereby Sons of God. So all of us are plagued, my brothers and sisters, with the dilemma of the flesh; while we have here these great endowments that God has given that are wholesome in their design and intent. A part of our probation is that when we come to mortality we need to rely, not upon the arm of flesh, not upon the strength of man, but we are forced by the very nature of things to rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit. And to use that divine power to sanctify our bodies and to renew and purify our souls that we might come and become spotless before God.

An angel of the Lord on one occasion thought so much of this doctrine that he appeared to King Benjamin and gave to him this basic concept of life, in which he talked about man's dependence upon the spiritual powers of Christ through the atonement. (Mosiah 3:18-19)

18 “... men drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.”

19 “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 putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord ...”

Here is our alternative. There isn't a person here who can stay the deteriorating power of death in your life. It is all around us in nature. There's not a person here who can say, I will think mentally or exercise my muscles physically to deter completely the deteriorating power of physical degeneration in life. And in a single way, while the spirit within you is good, and desires that which is right, there is not a person here independent and of themselves that can prevent and check the corroding forces within the flesh. There is no person who can do that,

and hence men drink damnation to their souls, except, they are to take this one alternative, and that is, that they humble themselves and get the spirit of the Lord in their lives.

May I suggest that while God has given us these great endowments of the flesh. He has also given the charge that we must come unto that great Being who is our savior and our redeemer. That we must rely upon His merits and His mercy and His power, not just His philosophy and doctrine; His divine power, the spirit that is given to us through faith and the ordinances of the gospel.

The way to choose righteousness is first through prayer, secondly through wholesome activities that supplement and build into your life the strength and influence of the spirit. Another way by which this can be done is through reading and studying the scriptures, keeping yourself close to the source of spiritual power, or to the stimulus by which spiritual power can be developed within your life. And another way is to suppress bad thoughts in the beginning, not let them develop or they become an emotional struggle within you.

You may not be able to prevent the birds from flying overhead, but I promise you can keep them from building nests in your hair. You can do something if you check them in the inception period, if you get hold of the perverse emotion and check it in the beginning. But if you allow it to wallop within you, to build upon that corruption that is within the flesh, and to cause you to transform your thinking over into this realm of fantasy, and it is a matter of fantasy to transform yourself over into this realm of fantasy where you begin mentally to go along with the stimulus and build it and allow it to be built and add upon it to this extent.

Bring it out into the open, bring it to a state open and above board, where the inspiration and power of the spirit of the Lord can begin to act and to assist in the solution. In this sense let me come to the subject of repentance and of meeting the issues that pertains to our problems.

Repentance is a wonderful thing. Think for a moment of a person who commits fornication, a person who perverts these basic and very important drives. That individual, if the law of justice were strictly enforced, would continue to suffer a loss of the spirit. But because the Lord loves you, he has left a little leeway because of His desire to save the souls of men. But if the law of justice were actually enforced, the individual who perverts these great endowments of life, that person loses light and truth.

One recourse is to meet the issue head on and bring it to your bishop who has the

responsibility of being a judge in Israel; and has the right and prerogative to wave the demands of justice; and set aside the execution of justice or the penalty. On true and genuine repentance this allows the person room to build back into his or her life the substance of virtue to where the Lord can forgive them.

There is another reason this matter needs the personal and confidential attention of the bishop. It is simply that there are several times in your life when you will be interviewed according to moral worthiness, for example, advancement in the priesthood, ordinances, temple recommends, temple marriage, receiving positions of trust and responsibility in the church, etc.. These are times when you will be asked specifically if you are morally clean, and that person who is not morally clean and has participated in illicit activities, that person then as they come to the interview cannot say that they are morally clean.

But if they have the strength of character to meet the issue of genuine repentance and have gone to their bishops and have confessed, laid it out on the table, as grinding as it can be, but then have the strength of character to repent and put it aside, then when they come to an interview and they are asked if they are morally clean, then they can say yes I am morally clean.

Let me finally say, you can know as far as the Lord is concerned that through repentance you have satisfied the demands of justice. The Holy Ghost does not dwell in an unclean tabernacle. The Holy Ghost does not dwell in an unjustified person. The Light of Christ might dwell there to stimulate repentance and remorse, and the justification of that person's life, but the real gifts and powers and manifestations of the spirit, these do not dwell in an unjustified personality.

So when the individual having met the requirements of repentance, confessing, and making proper restitution according to the judgment of the bishop, then when that person lives in tune with the spirit to the extent that the spirit of testimony is vibrant with her life or his life they know of the Lord's forgiveness. When that person lives to where the Holy Ghost begins to be your constant companion, when that person lives to where the powers of the spirit are manifest in strength, and in truth, and in light, then that person can know of the witness of those manifestations that the demands of justice are met,. You have heard it said, for example, when a person sins, it is something like beating nails in a board and when you repent you pull the nails out, but the holes are still there. This is not a true doctrine, this a perverse approach to the subject of repentance. The truth is, that if a person will make proper restitution, repent,

and live so that the power of the Holy Ghost comes again into his or her life, then the power of the spirit renews that person, as it says in Section 84 that they can be sanctified by the spirit unto the renewal of their bodies.

There can be a renewal, and that person who has violated the law of chastity can become a clean receptacle of the Light of Christ by repentance and the atonement, Christ having paid the debt. This is by the action and power of the spirit as a divine power building within your life the substance of virtue and truth and strength to where the individual becomes virtuous. You can build virtue upon virtue. Where you have lost virtue it can be built back. It's a great road, it's a difficult road, but it is possible.

Let me leave you my testimony, my brothers and sisters. This great plan of life in which we are engaged is real. It is real in the sense of all the physical endowments of God is given unto us. That these things are wholesome. These gifts and endowments of the flesh are God ordained, but they were given to us in a state of probation. They were given to us, furthermore, under a period of testing and the Lord has wisely designed and allowed that there should and have come into the flesh certain corrupt elements to test our integrity, to test our allegiance to truth, to test our reliance upon the spirit, and even to force us at times to get in tune with the spirit as an addible of escape to meet the problems of the flesh.

I bear you my humble testimony that if you will be humble and if you will get the spirit of the Lord in your life, and if you will rectify your life where it is necessary, that the Lord will be with you and he will forgive your sins and transgressions and He will build within your life a virtue and a truth and enlightening, stabilizing influence that will add joy and happiness thereto. May the Lord bless us to realize these vital and important issues. To realize that here at this period of life, this very vital and important period of life, that we need to keep ourselves pure and ourselves holy.

As Elder Ballard put it, we need to get the young people of the church over fool's hill. Let them see the real issues and talk to them about the real issues of life and bring them by consideration of the great issues that are before them to the happiness that lies beyond. May the Lord bless us that we might realize these things and I give you my humble testimony of the divinity of this plan and also to the fact that the only solution to meeting the problems of life is to live in tune with the spirit of the Lord. I bear you that humble testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen